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GREEK CULTURE IN HELLENISTIC EGYPT

PERSISTENCE AND EVOLUTIONS

Edited by Lucio Del Corso and Antonio Ricciardetto

TRENDS IN CLASSICS

Greek Culture in Hellenistic Egypt

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Lucio Del Corso and Antonio Ricciardetto

Introduction

It is difficult to find a comprehensive representation of the peculiar 'cultural blend' of Egypt in the three centuries from the conquest by Alexander the Great to the death of Cleopatra VII. Even the terminology to employ is problematic: *Hellenistic Egypt* has been consciously chosen by Jean Bingen for the title of the English edition of his collected papers, which illuminate many aspects of the social and economic history of the country,[1] but in his preface the editor of the volume, Roger S. Bagnall, significantly puts an emphasis on the complementary term, 'Ptolemaic'.[2] 'Hellenistic' evokes continuity and insists on the common traits with a 'transnational' Greek diaspora that conflicted, interacted and finally mixed with local cultures, from the Mediterranean basin to the far East, generating more or less stable state structures, and long lasting cultural consequences; on the contrary, 'Ptolemaic' seems to better reflect the individual traits and the peculiar characteristics of the Egyptian experience, inside the Mediterranean continuum, even if 'from above', from the standpoint of the new rulers and elite. One term needs the other, and both are expression of a complex, multifaceted historical reality.

It may seem paradoxical, but the measure of their interconnection is best reflected in some artifacts originally made far from the country. One of the most famous is certainly the 'Nile Mosaic', now exhibited in a hall of Palazzo Barberini, in Palestrina (Fig. 1).

It is a truly iconic image of the society which flourished along that great river. When looking at its glittering tiles, viewers are fascinated by a tantalizing juxtaposition of idealized sketches of daily life, propaganda, and myth: satisfied farmers, with well-fed animals, and soldiers with shields and shining helms, marching in procession; happy people enjoying a drinking party, with music and songs; small papyrus boats, which sail across swamps dotted by islets, and larger warships; all around, exotic animals — a giant snake, a rhino, an hippopotamus and many other creatures — bathing in the water or wandering on lone mountains, sometimes chased by pygmean hunters; and picturesque buildings: 'pharaonic' pylons and fortified walls with quadrangular towers, obelisks and kiosks with columns surmounted by 'Greek' capitals, dovecotes, granaries, and tents. The date of this masterpiece is still questioned: some of the most recent hypotheses range from the middle to the last quarter of the 2nd c. BC, but it is even possible that its

1 Bingen 2007.
2 Bagnall 2007.

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111334646-205

figurative model could date back to the reign of Ptolemy II.[3] Similarly, it is not yet clear the function of the building where it was originally placed, an apse in the city forum, connected with the basilica.[4] Such uncertainties, together with the restorations and changes the mosaic experienced during the centuries, do not help to achieve a full understanding of the purposes which inspired the artists and the patrons, and of the overall meaning of the composition, with its multiple subtle implications, and allusions.

Fig. 1: The Nile Mosaic of Palestrina. Photo: Yann Forget. Public Domain.

3 The bibliography on the mosaic is long, and ever growing. We only mention the works by Meyboom 1995 (esp. 16–19 on the date: last quarter of the 2nd c. BC), Zevi 2008, and especially Gatti 2016. The connection of the scene with the *pompe* of Ptolemy II has been first suggested by Coarelli 1990 (1996).

4 See the recent discussion in Gatti 2016, esp. 125–132.

Indeed, the seemingly unarticulated vignettes strongly suggest the impression to share the same background: a cultural space where the Egyptian exoticism of the subjects, even the presence of 'Pharaonic' architecture, is 'translated' into a Greek artistic language, whose formalism and conventions are exploited to convey, at the same time, a distinct sense of identity and the feeling to belong to a larger community, whose roots were far away, in time and space.

The necessity to distinguish identitarian issues and shared cultural factors, 'local' and 'global' elements, is an underlaying element of most of the scholarship flourished during last decades on the multifaceted society established in Egypt after the Persian rule and before the Roman conquest. In this perspective, a special emphasis has been given to the reflections on ethnicity and its consequences on daily interrelations among individuals, social groups and state structures: a topic much exploited after the well-known volume by Koen Goudriaan.[5] The edition of new texts, and especially the progress in our knowledge of bilingual, Graeco-Demotic texts, has offered crucial contributions in this direction, providing a different view on ethnic interactions and casting new light on a wide range of topics, which encompass economic structures, religion, and, in general, mentalities.[6]

Indeed, framing extant evidence inside a unified picture is still an uneasy task, made even more complex by the profusion of archaeological and papyrological material not fully explored, and mostly unequally distributed, so as to be much more abundant for peripheral regions than larger cities. The sources we may rely on, scattered as they are, as well as variegated and polysemic, often give the impression that a juxtaposition of individual tales sometimes may be useful to outline a bigger scenario, even if approximate and affected by gaps.

Such approach has been also followed in the present collection of papers, which does not aim to offer a systematic reconstruction of the different topics evoked by the title, but at most to suggest their common origins and background. The contributions it contains were originally discussed in three thematic conferences (two held at the University of Cassino and Southern Latium, one at the University of Florence), between October 2021 and April 2022.[7] Even if the COVID

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5 Goudriaan 1988.

6 Even a quick browse of the *Bibliographie papyrologique* (easily accessible online) shows the relevance of this topic over last years. In order to show the incredible potential of a comparison between Greek and Demotic sources, we just mention the fundamental historical commentary added to the texts masterfully edited in *P.Count*.

7 *Greek Culture in Hellenistic Egypt*. 1. *Ethnic Interactions through Documents and Literary Texts*, 21st October 2021, University of Cassino and Southern Latium; 2. *The Literary Experience*, 15th December 2021, University of Florence; 3. *Persistence and Evolutions: Space, Images and Literary Representations*, 20th April 2022, University of Cassino and Southern Latium.

pandemic greatly conditioned those events, most of the speakers were so keen to attend the meetings in person, making those days truly memorable. The conferences were organized within the project “Greek and Latin Literary Papyri from Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Fayum: Texts, Contexts, Readers” (funded by the Italian Ministry of the University and Research, programme “Research Projects of National Relevance” PRIN 2017). They were intended as a way to reflect on the different facets of the main topic of the research: reconstructing the rise, developing, and fading of a Greek literary culture in Egypt, with all its historical and social implications, starting from extant papyrological material and using the region of Fayum as a case-study.

The volume which collects the results of our discussions is organized in three sections (which recall, but do not overlap the structure of the original conferences). The first (*Images and Space*) focuses on archaeological evidence, and starts with a study of the forms of interaction between Greek and Egyptian elements in the ‘iconography of the power’ elaborated by the Ptolemies (E. Ghisellini); then, it offers a reflection on the spatial organization of the villages founded and enlarged under the new ruling dynasty, with a special attention to three places: markets, bath houses, and gymnasia (C. Römer); finally, the section comprises a discussion on the changes and evolution of Fayum landscape, which plays a crucial role in any attempt to reconstruct the social and economic history of the country (P. Davoli).

The second part (*Ethnic Interactions*) offers new hints on the discussions on ethnicity, relying on a wide range of Greek and Demotic sources. The study of neighbour relations through the lens of legal documents (B. Legras) is flanked by fresh reflections on bilingualism and translation for administrative purposes (S. Wackenier); bilingual documents, as 3rd c. sureties from Fayum, are explored in order to understand the presence of Greeks in texts mostly written by Egyptians (M.-P. Chaufray), and similarly Greek petitions addressed to the authorities (*enteuxeis*) are scrutinized looking for the presence of Egyptians (A.-E. Veïsse); finally, the rise and development of Greek public notaries is examined through a study of the dossier of agoranomic documents from Fayum (S. Marmai).

The third part (*The Literary Experience*) shifts the attention from documents to literary material, examining the circulation of Greek texts and books in Egypt, from different angles. It starts from an overall, critical survey of extant literary papyri, which are studied from a global perspective, joining papyrological, palaeographic and textual elements (M. Capasso). Then, some case studies are taken into account, consciously chosen among genres which cannot be considered the most popular in Hellenistic Egypt, but are well-attested in the Roman period, so as to raise serious questions about the dynamics of transmission of Greek literature: Old Comedy papyri (S. Perrone), Menander papyri from Fayum, with some reflections on comic *adespota* (R. Carlesimo), historiographical papyri (N. Pellé). The study of the selection of epigrams of the *Livre d'écolier*, a well-known 'scholastic' anthology, offers a good example of the reasons that may determine some peculiar textual selections (C. Meccariello), while the two following contributions show the widespread diffusion of Greek medical texts since the very beginning of Ptolemaic rulership: one is the presentation and the first (partial) edition of a nosological treatise, P.IFAO grec inv. 520 (A. Ricciardetto/N. Carlig), while the other offers a discussion and commentary of an early collection of medical recipes (N. Reggiani). The section is concluded by a discussion of the evidence on the circulation of Greek literary and musical pastimes, and books, offered by the Zenon archive, an invaluable source of information on many aspects of Egyptian society (L. Del Corso).

As it emerges from this short synopsis, the nature itself of our starting questions implied a focus on the 'Hellenistic' component, which is reflected in the relevance given to the Greek sources; but it was clear to the speakers that the 'Hellenistic' elements were always declined in an 'Egyptian' way, and that local specificities could hardly be understood without considering them in a wider context. During the reign of the Ptolemies, the Hellenic heritage persisted and evolved in some of its aspects, through the contact with Egyptian 'traditional' culture, the only one that the Greeks perceived as more ancient than their own, and with local customs that were more suitable to the new environment. The title of the volume reflects this perspective.

Nonetheless, the relevance of Arsinoitic evidence, well beyond literary papyri, determined a coexistence of contributions programmatically focused on Fayum with others that examine the problems from a different angle, and use evidence from all the country. Such oscillations between different plans may seem confusing, but they reflect the inherent quality of our sources, which affects also the current state of many research projects.

Several topics are not included in this volume, even if some have been widely examined in recent, inspiring studies: to give just a few examples of a long list, the organization of the Ptolemaic army,[8] the evolutions of the fiscal system,[9] the epigraphic habits.[10] And many other categories of literary texts would have needed a full discussion: the array of contents, scripts, formats of extant papyri is much more variegated than what we might conceive to cover.

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8 Fischer-Bovet 2014, with attention also to social and cultural aspects.

9 See, e.g., Monson 2012, focused on the transition from Ptolemaic to Roman system, but with theoretical perspectives which could be used also for other phases of Egyptian history.

10 Bowman/Crowther 2020.

This book, with the different style and points of view of its contributors, cannot give a full account of such intricate histories, but only hint at possible paths for further researches.

Rome – Cairo, February 2024

Editorial remarks and acknowledgements

Inscriptions are quoted according to the conventions of the *GrEpiAbbr. List of Abbreviations of Editions and Works of Reference for Alphabetic Greek Epigraphy.*[11]

Papyrus editions are quoted according to the *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca, and Tablets.*[12] Papyrological databases have been largely used by all the authors (and the editors), even if we decided to leave to each contributor the choice to add or not an explicit reference to them. They are quoted with the following abbreviations (all accessed on June 2024):

TM = *Trismegistos. An Interdisciplinary Portal of the Ancient World*, https://www.trismegistos.org.
LDAB = *Leuven Database of Ancient Books*, https://www.trismegistos.org/ldab.
MP^3 = *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires grecs et latins* (*Mertens-Pack^3*), https://www.cedopal.uliege.be/ cms/c_7615320/en/cedopal.

We wish to thank all the people who contributed to the organization of the conferences: for Cassino, Bruna Andreoni, Daniela Cagnazzo, Elio Cipriano, Lorenzo Sardone; for Florence, all the staff of the Istituto Papirologico “G. Vitelli”, and especially Ilaria Cariddi and the director, Francesca Maltomini.

The progress of the volume benefited of the advice of many other friends and colleagues: above all, Sergio Knipe — who cared for the linguistic revision of most contributions and translated the essay by E. Ghisellini with great courtesy and professionalism —, Giulia Mirante and Rossella Villa, who prepared the index of inscriptions, papyri, and other manuscripts.

Finaly, during the last editorial steps we were reached by the sad news of the sudden death of Mario Capasso, one of the contributors, who so much did for the study of the Herculaneum Papyri and Graeco-Roman Egypt. This book is also a tribute to his work and efforts.

11 Online at the URL https://www.aiegl.org/grepiabbr.html (last visit June 2024).
12 Online at the URL https://papyri.info/docs/checklist (last visit June 2024).

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Part I: **Images and Space**

Elena Ghisellini

Greek-Egyptian Forms of Interaction in Ptolemaic Portraiture

Abstract: The paper attempts to analyse and classify the variety of typological and stylistic directions assumed by portraiture in Ptolemaic Egypt. The article examines royal and non-royal portraits, classifying them into three main categories: traditional Egyptian-style statues, Egyptian-style statues with Greek elements, Greek-style statues. Especially the Egyptian-style statues with Greek elements allow us to grasp an interesting phenomenon of interaction and exchange between Egyptian and Greek artistic forms.

Keywords: Egypt, Ptolemaic period, Egyptian portraiture, Greek portraiture.

In the multicultural context of Lagid Egypt, where an indigenous Egyptian majority and a minority of foreign immigrants, primarily Greeks and Macedonians, coexisted side by side, the figurative language was characterised by a range of traditions and tendencies that developed in parallel, intersected, and combined, resulting in innovative stylistic solutions.

Within this diverse scenario, even portraiture — both royal and non-royal — reflects a remarkable variety of directions, typologically as well as stylistically. In the following pages I will attempt to analyse and classify these directions, albeit with an awareness of the limitations implicit in any classification, which tends to reduce a varied and multifaceted situation to overly rigid categories.

1 Royal Statues

Significant indications about the appearance of royal images are provided by the priestly decrees that, starting from the Decree of Canopus in 238 BC, were written in the country's two official languages, Greek and Egyptian. These decrees established the location and function of statues and dictated their materials and typology: evidently, the utmost importance was attributed to these factors, to the point that the ruler himself, in agreement with the indigenous clergy, exercised close control over them. The Decree of Canopus ordered that gem-studded gold statues of Princess Berenice — the daughter of Ptolemy III Euergetes and Berenice II,

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deified after her premature death — be erected in all first- and second-class temples. The Raphia Decree of 217 BC ordered that statues of King Ptolemy IV and Queen Arsinoe III Philopatores be erected in the most prominent place in each temple and recommended that they be sculpted in the Egyptian manner (*tropos*). Similar prescriptions are contained in the Decree of Memphis, issued for the coronation of Ptolemy V Epiphanes in 196 BC.[1]

Simplifying a complex and varied scenario, three categories of royal statues can be identified in the monumental heritage: 1. traditional Egyptian-style statues; 2. Egyptian-style statues with Greek elements; and 3. Greek-style statues.[2]

1.1 Traditional Egyptian-style Statues

The statues in this category follow the local tradition in terms of the choice of materials and figurative schemes, and depict the ruler as a pharaoh, addressing the Egyptian section of the population. They are generally carved in locally quarried coloured stone, predominantly pink granite and basalt; to a lesser extent alabaster, diorite, and greywacke, and in some rare cases steatite. The use of limestone and sandstone is also common, while marble rarely occurs.[3] As these stones were traditionally used in Egyptian statuary to immortalise the pharaoh, their use for the Ptolemies is in all likelihood charged with a symbolic value and intended to emphasise their nature as Egyptian pharaohs, as well as Macedonian *basileis*, and thus to reaffirm their reign's continuity with respect to the dynastic past.

The statues are fitted with a back support and represent the king in a strictly frontal pose, with his left leg forward, his arms stretched along his sides, dressed in a *shendyt*, his head covered by the *nemes* — the insignia of pharaonic kingship — or surmounted by the double crown of Lower and Upper Egypt with a frontal

1 On priestly decrees: Smith 1988, 24; Ashton 2001, 19; Stanwick 2002, 6–14; Brophy 2015a, 9–16, 21–22; *I.Ptolemaic*, nos. 119, 129, 176 (the Decree of Canopus), 122, 126 (the Decree of Memphis), 144, 190 (the Decree of Raphia).

2 The classification here follows — with some variations — the one suggested by Smith 1988, 86–98, which seems more in keeping with the multifaceted reality of images than the proposals put forward by: Ashton 2000, 102–108; Ashton 2001, 13–36, 43–44; Stanwick 2002, 85–88; Brophy 2015a, 35–40. For an overview of the scholarship and a review of classifications to date: Ashton 2001, 5–7. For general remarks on royal and private portraiture from the Ptolemaic era: Bianchi 2018, 141–147; on royal portraiture see also: Queyrel 2022.

3 Albersmeier 2002a, 18–19; Stanwick 2002, 11, 34.

uraeus.[4] The queen is also portrayed in a frontal, striding pose, with her arms at her sides or with one arm folded across her chest; she usually wears a sheath-like robe, tightly clinging to her body, and has a tripartite wig with a *uraeus* on her head.[5] The faces are impersonal and stylised, and show a marked tendency towards geometrical shapes.

The earliest examples in this category are the twin effigies of Ptolemy II and Arsinoe II Philadelphoi in the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco, inv. nos. 22678 and 226811 (Figs. 2 and 3).[6]

Made of pink granite, they were found in Rome, in the area of the *Horti Sallustiani*, but most probably came from Heliopolis. Like these two statues, several other specimens are much larger than life-size.

These statues were crafted in traditional specialised workshops,[7] which often reproduced the statuary canons of the 30th Dynasty, the last indigenous dynasty, with which the Ptolemies consciously associated themselves in order to promote their role as legitimate pharaohs in the eyes of the local elites and the indigenous population.[8] The endurance of the 30th Dynasty's stylistic traits increases the difficulty of dating the pieces due to their idealised physiognomy, which prevents the identification of the sovereign based on a comparison with coins. Moreover, hieroglyphic inscriptions on the back support become increasingly rare. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that hieroglyphic inscriptions are sometimes replaced by inscriptions in Greek characters engraved on the front side of the base, according to a typically Hellenic usage.[9]

4 Ashton 2001, 13–24; Stanwick 2002, 34–36. The traditional representation of the pharaoh in the form of a sphinx also continued; see e.g. Brophy 2015a, 94–96, no. 16, 100–101, nos. 20–21, 141, no. 69, 149–150, nos. 82–83.

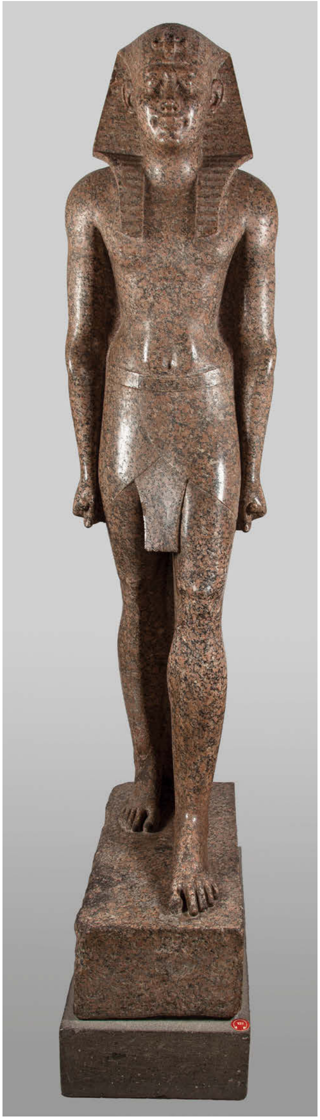
5 Ashton 2001, 37–43; Albersmeier 2002a, 9–13, 38–67, 77–85.

6 Ashton 2001, 38, 84, no. 6 (Ptolemy II), 100, no. 35 (Arsinoe II); Albersmeier 2002a, 165, 371–373, no. 136 (statue of Arsinoe II); Stanwick 2002, 98–99, 157–158, nos. A 3–A 4; Brophy 2015a, 111–113, nos. 36–37.

7 P.E. Stanwick notes that Egyptian-style statues were probably crafted as much in quarries as they were in major temple centres, continuing an Egyptian practice: Stanwick 2002, 11.

8 Stanwick 2002, 81–82, 88; Albersmeier 2002a, 165, 181.

9 Stanwick 2002, 38–39; Stanwick 2005, 249; cf. Brophy 2015a, 54–55, 122–123, no. 46, 134, no. 62, 138–139, nos. 67–68. A base in Chicago, Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, inv. no. 10518, bears an inscription in Greek characters at the front (Ἀρcινόηc Φιλαδέλφου) and a hieroglyphic inscription on the upper level (Fig. 4): Albersmeier 2002a, 306–307, no. 45; Stanwick 2002, 100–101, A 14; Brophy 2015a, 134, no. 62; Kovacs 2016, 225–226. For the Ptolemaic period, 18 Egyptian-style statues with Greek inscriptions engraved on the body or base are known so far: Clarysse 2020, 39–42.



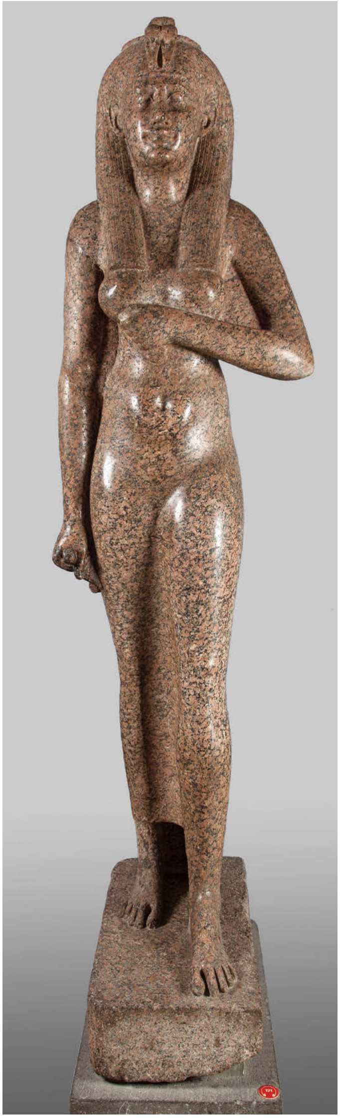


Fig. 2 (left): Statue of Ptolemy II Philadelphos. Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregoriano Egizio, Città del Vaticano. Photo: E. Ghisellini 2018, fig. 5.
Fig. 3 (right): Statue of Arsinoe II Philadelphos. Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregoriano Egizio, Città del Vaticano. Photo: E. Ghisellini 2018, fig. 6.

Fig. 4: Base of a statue of Arsinoe II Philadelphos. University of Chicago, Oriental Institute, Chicago. Photo: University of Chicago, Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures Museum – D.019265_E10518_001_Front_Condition.jpg.

1.2 Egyptian-style Statues with Greek Elements

Within this category, three distinct groups of images can be identified.[10]
a. The statues from the first group conform to the Pharaonic tradition, but the bodies and especially the faces denote a more or less marked naturalism which, in some cases, goes so far as to personalise the facial features. This is best exemplified by the diorite portrait of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II in Brussels (Fig. 5):[11] the plump face

10 I am consciously avoiding definitions such as "mixed style" or "mixed school", which have often been used in the past but lend themselves to misunderstandings. See Ashton 2001, esp. 6.

11 Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, inv. E 1839: Kyrieleis 1975, 174, G 2; Smith 1988, 93–94, 170, no. 73; Smith 1996, 207–208; Walker/Higgs 2000, 79, no. I. 71 (L.J.H. Limme); Ashton 2001, 22–24, 86, no. 8; Stanwick 2002, 112, C 1; Beck/Bol/Bückling 2005, 566, no. 137 (H. Kyrieleis); Spier/Potts/Cole 2018, 179, no. 111 (J. Spier). A realistic rendition of the face characterises a fragmentary statue of a queen, of dubious identification, in the Egyptian Museum in Turin, inv. no. 1385, while the pose,

is reminiscent of the Egyptian Physkon type, but remodelled through a higher degree of plasticity, a fine modulation of the surfaces, and a precise characterisation of the physiognomy. The head is probably modelled after an 'official' portrait, created in the court milieu, perhaps, as suggested by Kyrieleis,[12] for the coronation of Ptolemy VIII, which was performed according to the Egyptian ritual in Memphis in 144 BC.

Fig. 5: Head of a statue of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II. Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Bruxelles. Photo: E. Ghisellini 2018, fig. 7.

Among the statues pertaining to this group are the colossal images of a king and queen that were recently discovered at Herakleion-Thonis in the Delta and dated to the late 2nd/early 1st c. BC.[13] These impressive statues display opulent body forms and a hint of individualisation in their rounded, fleshy faces.

Also of particular interest is a limestone statue found at the end of the *dromos* of the temple of Soknebtunis at Tebtunis, which combines an Egyptian-style body with

clothing, and hairstyle are purely Egyptian: Walker/Higgs 2000, 122–123, no. II. 9 (E. Leospo/S.-A. Ashton); Ashton 2001, 38, 100, no. 38; Albersmeier 2002a, 369–370, no. 134; Stanwick 2002, 127, F 5.

12 Beck/Bol/Bückling 2005, 566, no. 137 (H. Kyrieleis).

13 Alexandria, Maritime Museum, inv. SCA 279–280: Goddio/Clauss 2007, 138–140, 370, nos. 105–106; Albersmeier 2010, 191–195; Brophy 2015a, 98–99, nos. 17–18.

a face displaying Greek features. This sculpture, which has a provincial appearance, has been associated with a base, also made of limestone, discovered nearby, which on its front side bears a Greek inscription in honour of Ptolemy XII Auletes dated 15 April 55 BC.[14] Some scholars have questioned the connection with this base and identify the statue as Ptolemy X Alexandros I.[15] As noted by E. Brophy, the effigy attests the meeting of two cultural traditions and reflects the special situation in Fayum, which has yielded different material from the rest of Egypt owing to its high concentration of immigrants and its economic prosperity.

b. The statues from the second group adhere to Egyptian figurative conventions, while at the same time reflect the assimilation of Greek iconographic motifs and attributes.[16]

In effigies of the king, the main new element is the presence on the forehead of locks of hair, the arrangement of which may connote a specific ruler. In addition, the double crown and the *nemes* of the pharaoh are associated with the diadem, the insignia of the Hellenistic *basileus*.

The earliest pharaonic-type image with a crown of hair around the forehead may be a much-debated pink granite statue in Frankfurt, Liebieghaus, inv. St.P.565, which has been assigned to the late 4th or early 3rd c. BC and variously identified as Alexander the Great, i.e. Ptolemy I Soter, or Ptolemy II Philadelphos.[17]

Among the most striking examples of the series are three pairs of royal statues, made of pink granite and much larger than life-size, which were discovered during underwater investigations at the Citadel of Qaitbay in Alexandria. The discoverers ascribed the six sculptures to the original layout of the Pharos, dating back to the age of Ptolemy II or a little later, but in any case to sometime in the 3rd c. BC.[18] Other scholars attribute them instead to a later phase, between the first half of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st c. BC; some question their association with the building.[19]

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14 Statue, Alexandria, Graeco-Roman Museum, inv. no. 22979: Ashton 2001, 24, 86, no. 11; Brophy 2015a, 51–54, 122, no. 46.A. Inscribed base: Bastianini/Gallazzi 1989; Stanwick 2002, 123, E3, figs. 157–159; Brophy 2015a, 123, no. 46.B.

15 Queyrel 2019 (with previous bibliography).

16 Ashton 2001, 25–36; Stanwick 2002, 36–38, 47–48, 50–51, 61.

17 Reinsberg 2004, 319 (the author attributes the statue to a Greek sculptor working in an Egyptian workshop, where he would have had the traditional Pharaonic type as his model and could have learned the technique of sculpting granite); Bol 2005, 15–19, 563–564, no. 134; *Kleopatra und die Caesaren* 2006, 51, Kat. 9 (B. Andreae).

18 Empereur 1998a, 86–95; Empereur 1998b, 63–81. Cf. Hairy 2007, 61–89; Guimier-Sorbets 2007, 163–176; Queyrel 2009, 20–22.

19 Ashton 2001, 47, 90–92, nos. 19–21, 110, nos. 56–57; Albersmeier 2002a, 17–18, 224–226, 292–294, nos. 24–27; Stanwick 2002, 15, 17–18, 73–74, 115–116, C 21–C 27; Ashton 2004, 26–28, 33; Schmidt 2005, 275; Brophy 2015a, 62–64, 146–147, no. 78.

The identification of some Egyptian-style alabaster heads with Ptolemy V Epiphanes seems certain.

Fig. 6: Head of a statuette of Ptolemy V Epiphanes. Staatliche Museen, Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Berlin. Photo: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Inv. No. 14568 – Photo: Margarete Büsing.

These heads bear the double crown or *uraeus* and preserve remnants of a back support, but present a compact mass of stylised curls, enriched by the "Horos curl" and encircled by the Macedonian diadem (Fig. 6).[20] According to S.-A. Ashton, the assimilation of Greek features in Egyptian-style royal statues began at the time of Ptolemy V and is connected with the relocation of the court to Memphis, where Greek artists may also have moved, working side-by-side with Egyptian artists for the first time.[21] Regardless of the possible examples I have just mentioned of Egyptian statues with Greek elements prior to the age of Ptolemy V, Ashton's hypothesis is not entirely convincing, as contact between the two different artistic milieus may have already taken place in Alexandria, where native sculptors' workshops must have been operating alongside Greek ateliers since the early Ptolemaic age.

20 Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, inv. nos. 14568, 13457, 23140: Kyrieleis 1975, 172, E 1 – E 3; Ashton 2001, 27, 88, nos. 13–14; Stanwick 2002, 106–107, B 1–B 3; Lembke 2003, 393–394; Gagetti 2006, 141, 151–152, A9–A11; Spier/Potts/Cole 2018, 177, no. 109 (J. Spier); Känel 2020, 331–332.

21 Ashton 2001, 16; cf. Smith 1996, 209–210. In a later contribution, Ashton (2004, 32) does not rule out that the new style may have been developed in the Ptolemaic capital.

The cartouche inscribed on the dorsal support ensures the identification with Ptolemy VI Philometor of a colossal granite head from Aegina, with a *nemes* and double crown;[22] it can be compared with another head, also of granite, from Canopus[23] and with a white marble portrait in the Museum in Alexandria, inv. no. 240923 (Figs. 7 and 8).[24]

A comparison shows clear similarities in the facial features and hairstyle around the forehead, which repeats the same pattern, so as to constitute — like the facial features — a distinctive element of the sovereign, making him immediately recognisable. It seems clear that the three specimens derive from a single model, probably with Greek features, which must have been designed by a court artist under the supervision of the king and his advisors. The model was intended to be disseminated in the *chora*, as well as in regions under Ptolemaic influence, for the crafting of statues to be erected in local shrines.[25] This practice must have been widespread and has its roots in the Pharaonic era, when great importance was attached to models in the production of statues.[26] What is radically different, however, is the formal interpretation, which in the two granite portraits is linked to the Egyptian tradition through the stereometric conception of the head, the stiffening of the planes — flattened and with sharp edges — and the predominance of the frontal side, where the rigidly symmetrical physiognomic features are concentrated.

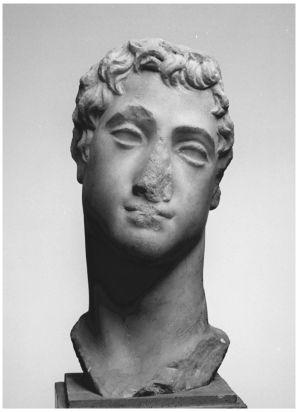
22 Athens, National Museum, inv. ANE 108: Kyrieleis 1975, 174, F 1; Smith 1988, 93, 170, no. 71; Smith 1996, 205; Ashton 2001, 27, 90, no. 16; Stanwick 2002, 27, 33, 61, 107, B 6; Brophy 2015a, 162, no. 101; Känel 2020, 329.

23 Alexandria, Maritime Museum, inv. no. 3357: Kyrieleis 1975, 174, F 2; Smith 1988, 93, 170, no. 72; Smith 1996, 205; Walker/Higgs 2000, 77, no. I. 68 (S.-A. Ashton); Ashton 2001, 27, 88, no. 15; Stanwick 2002, 107–108, B 7; Brophy 2015a, 89, no. 7.

24 Kyrieleis 1975, 174, F 3; Smith 1988, 166, no. 55; Smith 1996, 205; Ashton 2001, 54.

25 Smith 1996, 209–210; Ashton 2001, 26, 33, 36. Cf. von den Hoff 2021, 174–175; Queyrel 2023, 390–391.

26 Capriotti Vittozzi 1995, 435–436; La Rocca 2011, 60–63, with previous bibliography. Concerning a complex 3rd-century BC limestone and plaster model discovered by Petrie in Memphis: Ashton 2001, 26. A plaster bust, which can be interpreted as a model and depicts a late Ptolemy, came to light in a tomb at Saqqara together with other Greek- and Egyptian-style artefacts: they demonstrate the existence of a workshop at the site devoted to the production of statues of kings and other sculptures in different styles (Brophy 2015a, 47, 48–49, 116–117, no. 40). A limestone head of Ptolemy II, which may have served as a model for a local workshop of sculptors, comes from the artisan district of Athribis: Mysliwiec 1997, 307–315; Mysliwiec 2004, 464, 467.



Figs. 7 and 8: Heads of a statue of Ptolemy VI Philometor. Graeco-Roman Museum, Alexandria. Photo: E. Ghisellini.

The portrait of Philometor from Canopus offers one of the earliest attestations of the practice of crafting the eyes separately,[27] in ivory, bone, glass paste, or marble. This is a technical procedure in use in Egyptian sculpture from the Old to the New Kingdom, which enjoyed little popularity after the Ramesside period, but experienced a resurgence in the middle and late Ptolemaic periods. It has often been argued that the revival of the technique was fuelled by the desire to emulate Greek bronze statuary, but it could also be attributed to a desire to enhance the naturalism and vitality of the face, as well as the intention to create vivid colour contrasts through the combination of different materials.

Egyptian-type male portraits with hair on the forehead multiplied in the 1st and 2nd c. BC.[28]

Perhaps already from the time of Berenice II, statues of queens sometimes came to be furnished with a cornucopia, an attribute of Greek origin introduced — in its *dikeras* version — by Ptolemy II for images of Arsinoe II Philadelphos (Ath., XI 497b; X 425e; XIII 576f). A double cornucopia is found, for example, in a basalt statue in St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, inv. no. 3936, with a back support,

27 Belli Pasqua 1995, 34; Bothmer 1996, 225; Ashton 2001, 27, 47 with n. 255; Albersmeier 2002a, 20–21, 252–253; Bianchi 2007, 32. The eyes were also crafted separately in a colossal head of pink granite from Canopus, now in Alexandria, Graeco-Roman Museum, inv. no. 3364. According to Kyrieleis (1975, 171, D 2) it portrays Ptolemy IV, but not all scholars agree (Smith 1988, 97, 171, no. 80: identity uncertain; Ashton 2001, 94, no. 27; Albersmeier 2002a, 200, n. 225, 239–240: late 2nd or early 1st c. BC; Stanwick 2002, 76–77, 119, D 13: Ptolemy IX; Brophy 2015a, 89, no. 6).

28 See Ashton 2001, 120, tab. 1; Stanwick 2002, 214, fig. 198.

sheath dress, and tripartite wig with triple *uraeus*. The identification of the queen is debated and fluctuates between Arsinoe II and Cleopatra VII.[29]

From the late 3rd c. BC, a profound transformation occurs in the iconography of sovereigns, who from this moment onwards almost invariably wear a tunic and a fringed cloak tied across the chest,[30] and cork-screw curls.[31] The new type of clothing belongs to the Egyptian tradition, but the cloak is often draped with pleats in the Hellenistic style;[32] what is also of Greek origin is the hairstyle, adopted for the first time for the effigies of Cleopatra I (203–181 BC). The faces display varying degrees of naturalism and are sometimes marked by an individual imprint.

The same type of clothing and hairstyle is found in statues of Isis, which sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish between images of the goddess and those of the queen.

A female headless statue in black granite, recently found in Canopus,[33] is furnished with a cornucopia and stands out on account of a number of anomalies: the lack of a back support, replaced by a vertical fall of folds; loom weights visible at the ends of the dress flaps; and a diaphanous robe, which is tied at the chest and, without the presence of a tunic, sticks to the body, highlighting its sensuality (Fig. 9).

The identity of this high-quality image is debated: some scholars consider it to be a divine effigy of Isis or Aphrodite, while others have identified it with Arsinoe II or Cleopatra VII.

An inscribed limestone statuette of Arsinoe II Philadelphos in New York, datable to the second half of the 2nd c. BC, shows that statues of this type probably served as cult simulacra of deified queens (Fig. 10).[34]

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29 Beck/Bol/Bückling 2005, 577–578, no. 150 (A.O. Bolshakov); *Kleopatra und die Caesaren* 2006, 35, Kat. 7 (B. Andreae).

30 The earliest depiction of a queen with a tunic and shawl tied on her chest is found on a stele from Tanis in the British Museum, inv. EA 1054, which represents Arsinoe III and Ptolemy IV before the Tanis triad: Ashton 2001, 45; Albersmeier 2005, 254; Beck/Bol/Bückling 2005, 578–579, no. 151 (S. Albersmeier).

31 On the “Isiac” iconography adopted for queens: Ashton 2001, 45–53; Albersmeier 2002a, 34–38, 67–75, 85–105, 194–200, 217–220; Albersmeier 2005, 253–257; Albersmeier 2010, 191.

32 Bianchi 1989, 71; Ashton 2001, 50; Stanwick 2002, 37; Albersmeier 2002a, 85–105.

33 Alexandria, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, inv. no. 842, SCA 208: Goddio/Clauss 2007, 144–150, 358, no. 18; Albersmeier 2010, 196–198; Brophy 2015a, 88, no. 3; Bianchi 2018, 144 (the author attributes the sculpture to a Greek artist); Libonati 2018.

34 Metropolitan Museum, inv. no. 20.2.21, Rogers Fund 1920: Kyrieleis 1975, 178, J 1; Stanwick 2002, 37, 39, 45, 50, 59, 62, 87, 117, C 28.

The 'Isis-type' images of the queen were especially popular in the second half of the 2nd c. BC, but then experienced a decline in the 1st c. BC, when traditional representational schemes, inspired by models from the early Ptolemaic period, came back into vogue.[35]

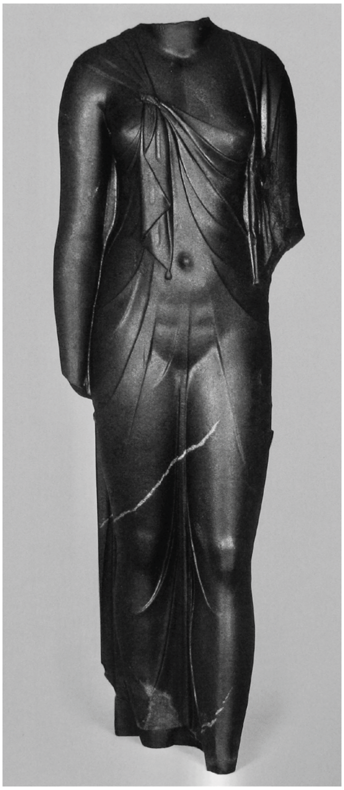


Fig. 9 (left): Female statue. Museum of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria. Photo: E. Ghisellini.
Fig. 10 (right): Statuette of Arsinoe II Philadelphos. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art – open access.

35 Albersmeier 2002a, 207–253 and 2005, 255–256.

c. Effigies from the third group conform to the Egyptian tradition in the rendering of the bodies; the sovereigns, however, are depicted with bare heads encircled by a diadem, Greek-style hair, and individualised features. The earliest examples include a portrait attributed to Ptolemy II in Warsaw[36] and a greywacke head of Arsinoe III in Copenhagen.[37] The evidence becomes richer in the 2nd and 1st c. BC. A basalt head in the Louvre Museum, inv. MA 9701,[38] has been dated to the 1st c. BC and identified with Ptolemy X Alexandros I (107–88 BC), partly based on the curly mass of hair, which swells above the forehead to evoke Alexander the Great's *anastole* (Figs. 11 and 12).

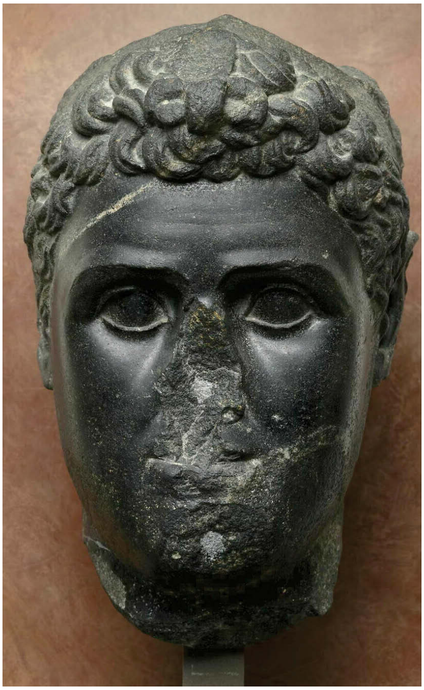
Although no remnants of the dorsal support survive, the link with Egyptian formal qualities is evident in the geometrical rendition of the face, with planes meeting at sharp angles, flat cheeks, physiognomic features concentrated on the frontal plane, and eyebrows in an abstract shape. To the same stylistic horizon belongs a greywacke portrait in Wien,[39] which may depict a queen in her old age, possibly Cleopatra II or III. It is characterised by rigorous frontality, simplified contours, an energetic expression, and aggressive, masculine features. The head bears witness to a new mode of representing queens which emerged around the mid-2nd c. BC and reflects the new role acquired by female sovereigns: as they ruled in the name of child kings or weak and inept male sovereigns, all power effectively lay in their hands.

36 Muzeum Narodowe, inv. no. 148171: Kyrieleis 1975, 166–167, B 5; Ashton 2001, 96, no. 30 (Ptolemy XV [?]); Queyrel 2009, 29, no. 20.

37 Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, inv. no. 586: Kyrieleis 1975, 183, L 8; Belli Pasqua 1995, 37, no. 2; Ashton 2001, 43, 104, no. 43; Albersmeier 2002a, 192, 331–332, no. 81; Stanwick 2002, 80–81, 127, F 4 (unidentifiable, 2nd or 1st c. BC). Stylistically similar is a second head, in basalt, in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, inv. AE.1472, which has been identified as Cleopatra I or II: Kyrieleis 1975, 184, M 5 (Cleopatra I); Ashton 2001, 43, 104, no. 44 (Cleopatra I or II); Albersmeier 2002a, 76, 200, 330–331, no. 80 (first half of the 1st c. BC); Stanwick 2002, 115, C 18 (Cleopatra II).

38 Kyrieleis 1975, 175, H 2; Smith 1988, 97, 170, no. 76; Belli Pasqua 1995, 38–39, no. 4; Ashton 2001, 65, no. 2.3; Stanwick 2002, 114, C 11; Beck/Bol/Bückling 2005, 569, no. 141 (H. Kyrieleis).

39 Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. no. 406: Smith 1988, 94–95, 170, no. 74; Belli Pasqua 1995, 40, no. 5; Smith 1996, 209; Walker/Higgs 2000, 80, no. I. 72 (A. Bernhard-Walcher); Ashton 2001, 42, 44, 106, no. 47; Albersmeier 2002a, 212–214, 377–378, no. 142; Stanwick 2002, 74, 117–118, D 4. E. La Rocca believes that the face's physiognomic features are more in keeping with male portraiture, and sees the headband as a priestly insignia: La Rocca 1984, 54–55.



Figs. 11 and 12: Head of a statue of Ptolemy X Alexandros I. Musée du Louvre, Paris
Photo: 2010 RMN-Grand Palais.
Musée du Louvre / Hervé Lewandowski - https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010279261 (last accessed July 9th, 2024).

No specific studies have been carried out so far on the location and mode of operation of sculpture workshops from the Ptolemaic period. As regards Egyptian-style royal statues with Greek elements, although no provenance data is available for many specimens, the particular concentration of finds in Alexandria and Canopus suggests that most workshops were active in this area, where the presence of Hellenic ateliers may have promoted a fruitful exchange of experiences and possibly given rise to forms of collaboration between indigenous and Greek craftsmen.[40] According to a practice already consolidated in the Pharaonic era, Egyptian artists probably worked on the basis of models provided by the court milieu and filtered them through a new language, which in the rendition of heads created a skilful osmosis between local figurative conventions and Greek iconographic and formal motifs, while remaining faithful to the Pharaonic tradition as far as the rendition of bodies was concerned. The images thus conceived spoke a double artistic language, comprehensible to the Greek/Macedonian population as well as native Egyptians. These works therefore faithfully mirror the increasing integration we find — at least in certain areas of the country — between the two main cultural components of Lagid Egypt. Significantly, statues of this type are documented with certainty from the age of Ptolemy V Epiphanes, when the process of Hellenization and the Egyptian element's political-social ascendancy acquired greater vigour. This is reflected, among other things, by the phenomenon of double names and Egyptians' increasingly frequent access to the highest offices of the peripheral and central administration.[41] The kingdom's changed socio-political conditions also explain the prevalence from the 2nd c. BC of Egyptian or Egyptian-style portraits of rulers at the expense of Greek-style portraits, which become much less numerous.

The synthesis of Greek and Egyptian figurative elements accomplished in royal portraits served as a suitable means to translate into visual forms the special status of the king, who was both a Hellenistic *basileus* and an Egyptian pharaoh.

40 There are interesting considerations in this regard in: Capriotti Vittozzi 2003, 73–98. Cf. Ashton 2001, 25; Stanwick 2002, 11, 50–51, 87–88. Kyrieleis points to the possibility of collaboration between artists belonging to different traditions and speculates that Egyptian sculptors crafted the statues in accordance with traditional types, while Greek portrait specialists may have executed individual facial features: Kyrieleis 2005, 237–239. Stanwick believes that the hair and facial features in Egyptian statues with Greek elements may have been completed in Alexandria and the Canopus area, where plenty of Greek models were available: Stanwick 2002, 11, 86–87. A fair number of limestone royal statues with hair on their foreheads come from Tebtunis and Medinet Madi in the Fayum: Stanwick 2002, 23–24, 28.

41 On the socio-political changes taking place from the late 3rd c. BC: Thomas 1975, 94–96; Dunand 1983, 49, 53, 54, 70; Gorre 2009, 603, 626; Moyer 2011, 20–26, 37–38.

1.3 Greek-style Statues

Greek-style portraits immortalise the king as a Hellenistic *basileus* and address the population's Hellenic component.[42] This category is documented by a large number of heads, carved in marble, limestone, bronze, terracotta, faience, and — more rarely — coloured, even semi-precious stones. The bodies were made of perishable material, mainly wood, and are usually lost. Small effigies of sovereigns are common: they were offered in public sanctuaries as votive gifts or were objects of private devotion, serving as cult simulacra in domestic shrines.[43] The spread of small-sized royal portraits may have been influenced by the Egyptian tradition, in which pharaoh statuettes had been common since ancient times.

The portrait of the dynasty's founder, Ptolemy I Soter, combines a frank realism in the physiognomic rendering, which objectively reproduces the character's irregular features, with idealising elements such as luxuriant hair and vividly emotional overtones, borrowed from effigies of Alexander the Great.[44] The reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphos marked a turning point in Lagid portraiture, which came to isolate itself from the main currents of Hellenistic plastic art by moving towards an idealised reproduction of sovereigns' faces, crystallised in an eternal youth, dominated by immense eyes, and usually characterised by scarcely individualised features, smooth and motionless planes, and calm expressions.

Kyrieleis has traced these characteristics back to the influence of Egyptian art.[45] This influence, in his view, is particularly noticeable in heads such as that of Arsinoe II in Bonn,[46] in which the strongly geometrical shapes, the isolation of physiognomic

42 Royal portraits in the Greek style are analysed and catalogued by Kyrieleis 1975; Brunelle 1976. General monographs are complemented by numerous texts focusing on the iconography of an individual king or queen. An overview is offered by: Queyrel 2020, 179–200.

43 On the set of marble statuettes from Thmouis/Tell Timai: Lembke 2000; Queyrel 2003; Schernig 2004. For medallion portraits: Galbois 2018, 36–37, 186–203. On portraits in semi-precious stones: Gagetti 2006, 116–131, 135–141, 142–162, A1–C1. Consider also the greywacke statuette in Brooklyn Museum of Art, inv. no. 54.117 (Ashton 2001, 96, no. 31; Stanwick 2002, 125, E 16), the small head in Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico, inv. KS 1803 (Queyrel 2009, 29, no. 21: Ptolemy II; Ashton 2001, 98, no. 32: Ptolemy XV Caesarion [?]; Stanwick 2002, 125, E 15: Ptolemy XV; Beck/Bol/Bückling 2005, 567–568, no. 139 [H. Kyrieleis]: Caesarion), and the two small heads from Dresden, inv. nos. ZV2600/A28 and ZV2600/A27: Laube 2012, 112–113, no. 33, 136, no. 47. On the function of small-format sovereign images: Brophy 2015a, 31–33.

44 Kyrieleis 1975, 4–16, 165–166, A 1–A 4, tab. 1–7.

45 Kyrieleis 1975, 40–41, 92, 129–136.

46 Bonn, Akademisches Kunstmuseum, inv. B 284: Kyrieleis 1975, 179, J 8, tab. 76–77; Wildung/Schoske 1989, 195–196, no. 60; Schmidt 1997b, 37–38, no. 1, tab. 1.

features, the abstract conception of details, and the cold, alabaster-like surfaces are said to be due to the assimilation of Egyptian formal principles (Fig. 13).

This theory has been disputed, because according to some scholars the elements of alleged Egyptian origin may in fact derive from the Greek artistic tradition.[47]

Fig. 13: Head of a statue of Arsinoe II Philadelphos. Akademisches Kunstmuseum, Bonn. Photo: Akademisches Kunstmuseum Bonn – Jutta Schubert.

47 Criticism of Kyrieleis' theory has been advanced by Smith 1988, 88; Ashton 2001, 10–11.

Kyrieleis himself has noted that the indistinct treatment of the features — the so-called *sfumato*, frequently seen in Lagid portraits — was designed to sharpen the contours by means of linear painting with bright tones and strong colour contrasts, which would depend on the pharaonic tradition.[48] Recent analyses have confirmed the use of red and black lines to demarcate the eyes of the Ptolemaic heads, but have at the same time shown that the complexion was painted in the natural colour of the skin or left in the white of the marble.[49] Thus, what is preserved is only a schematic grid of colours, while the epidermis' wide range of colour gradations, which must have markedly distinguished Greek heads from Egyptian ones, has been lost.[50]

Greek-style royal portraits carved in local hardstone are sporadically attested from as early as the 3rd c. BC:[51] the heads possess a full three-dimensionality, the faces are modelled with organic transitions of planes, and the features are rendered with more or less marked asymmetries. Unfortunately the bodies have not been preserved, but some heads display a twisting motion that suggests that they may originally have belonged to statues in a Greek pose. Only in a few examples do traces of a back support survive. Effigies of sovereigns usually wore a diadem, while some images of queens or princesses were furnished with a Hellenistic-type diadem and an Egyptian crown. This is the case with a greywacke head from the British Museum, inv. GR 1926.4–15.15 (Fig. 14), which has been dated to the first half of the 2nd c. BC and may have been fitted with a back support,[52] and a small head from the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, inv. no. 252643,[53] which is also made of greywacke and can be associated — based on the hairstyle — with a monumental limestone portrait found in Alexandria, in the area of the *Basileia*.[54]

48 Kyrieleis 1975, 132–133. Similar concepts are expressed by: Laube 2012, 51–52.

49 Blume 2012, 755–756; Blume 2014, 172–178; Blume 2015, 22, 23–29, 49–56, 74, 77, 111–112.

50 Daszewski 1996, 141–144.

51 Ashton 2001, 12, 68–69, nos. 3.1–3.4. In addition to the specimens catalogued here: a possible posthumous portrait of Berenice II, in diorite, from Canopus (Alexandria, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, inv. SCA 204: Goddio/Clauss 2007, 358, no. 17; Brophy 2015a, 87–88, no. 2), a relief head of Berenice II, in greywacke, in Athens, National Museum, inv. no. 19567 (Kyrieleis 1975, 181, K 6; Belli Pasqua 1995, 35–37, no. 1), and a basalt head of Ptolemy II in Turin, Museo Egizio, inv. no. S 18350 (Kyrieleis 1975, 167, B 7; Stanwick 2002, 123, E 6; Queyrel 2009, 28, no. 15).

52 Walker/Higgs 2000, 76, no. I. 65 (S.-A. Ashton); Ashton 2001, 69, no. 3.3. It is unclear whether the granite head from Canopus in the Graeco-Roman Museum of Alexandria, inv. no. 28107, was equipped with a back pillar: Kyrieleis 1975, 184, M 9 (1st c. BC); Albersmeier 2002a, 289–290, no. 18 (first half of the 2nd c. BC); Stanwick 2002, 118, D 6 (Cleopatra III); Brophy 2015a, 92, no. 11.

53 The head, only 12 cm high, shows no traces of a back support: Belli Pasqua 1995, 37–38, fig. 4; Stanwick 2002, 437–438, C 18; Albersmeier 2002a, 288–289, no. 16 (second half of the 2nd c. BC).

54 The head, in the Graeco-Roman Museum of Alexandria, inv. no. 21992, is 80 cm high and retains the top of a back pillar: Kyrieleis 1975, 184–185, M 10; Albersmeier 2002a, 287, no. 13.

The production of Greek-style royal portraits carved in hardstone can at least partly be ascribed to Greek craftsmen who acquired the technical skills necessary for working Egyptian stones early on.[55] The experimental character of this production is betrayed by the small number of pieces and their low quality, which suggests that the craftsmen struggled to mould certain stones, since they were not fully familiar with their characteristics and the formal outcomes it was possible to achieve from them. In the transition from traditional materials — marble, limestone, and sandstone — to local stone, shapes became more rigid, surfaces harder, contours more pronounced, and linearity prevailed in the rendering of details. Furthermore, sculptors frequently assimilated from Egyptian statuary the refined contrast between the rough texture of the hair and the polish of the face, whose smoothness may recall the sheen of bronze surfaces.[56]

Fig. 14: Head of a statue of a queen or a princess. British Museum, London. Photo: E. Ghisellini 2018, fig. 14.

55 See Belli Pasqua 1995, 42; Bianchi 2007, 35–38.

56 The contrast between the smoothness of the facial planes and the rough treatment of the hair is a typical feature of Egyptian statuary from the Late Period onwards: Bianchi 1989, 75–76.

Regrettably, we have very little data concerning the provenance of royal statues and the contexts in which they were found. This makes it impossible to trace their distribution and determine their function. Nonetheless, it may be useful to review what we know so far, while being aware of the aleatory nature of the scenario that emerges.

Purely Egyptian-style statues were usually displayed inside pharaonic temples, in the court, at the sides of the entrance or along the *dromos*. Especially in the 3rd c. BC, they were the most common statues, with a geographical spread encompassing Alexandria, Lower Egypt — where the largest number of pieces came from — and Upper Egypt, where few specimens have come to light. In this region, by contrast, there is abundant evidence of reliefs carved on the walls of temples, often newly-built ones.[57] Egyptian-style sculptures with Greek elements are concentrated in Alexandria, Canopus, and Herakleion-Thonis in the Delta, and Medinet Madi and Tebtunis in the Fayum, while isolated pieces are said to come from Memphis[58] and Karnak/Thebes.[59] In the rare cases where the place of discovery is known, it is a pharaonic temple.

Greek-style portraits carved in white marble are especially common in Alexandria and several locations in the Delta (Thmouis/Tell Timai, Paraitonion, Canopus, Athribis, Boubastis/Tell Basta), but examples are also attested in Memphis, Fayum, and Hermopolis Magna. Pure Greek-style effigies in hardstone are exclusive to Alexandria and Canopus. The provenance of Greek-style portraits from urban centres is noteworthy: they were set up in sanctuaries or in buildings or areas of public use, much as in other Hellenistic *poleis*.

In sanctuaries, such as the *Serapeia* in Alexandria and Memphis, Egyptian-style statues must have been displayed next to Greek-style ones.[60]

Two significant facts emerge from this overview: the clear numerical prevalence of the royal statues discovered in Lower Egypt, especially in and around Alexandria, as well as a correlation between the style of the sculptures and the

57 On the geographical distribution of different types of statues and their presumed contexts: Stanwick 2002, 15–32, 214, figs. 197–198; Stanwick 2004, 399–420; Brophy 2015a, *passim*; Brophy 2015b, 59–69.

58 Diorite head in Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, inv. no. 294: Kyrieleis 1975, 177, H 13; Smith 1988, 170–171, no. 78; Ashton 2001, 34, 94, no. 26; Stanwick 2002, 113, C 10.

59 Granite statue of disputed identification in Cairo, Egyptian Museum, inv. JE 12108 (Ashton 2001, 25, 88, no. 12; Stanwick 2002, 128, G 2; Queyrel 2023, 391-392) and basalt statue, also of disputed identification (Caesarion or Mark Antony or C. Caesar), in Cairo, Egyptian Museum, inv. no. 13/3/15/3 (Walker/Higgs 2000, 126–127, no. II. 12 [S.-A. Ashton]; Ashton 2001, 25, 98, no. 33; Stanwick 2002, 119–120, D 14; Queyrel 2023, 395). See Ashton 2001, 120, tab. 1 (provenances).

60 Brophy 2015a, 60–62.

places where they were found. The Greek-style sculptures mainly come from Hellenistic buildings, and the Egyptian-style ones mainly from Egyptian temples. Egyptian statues with Greek features have been found in Egyptian temples, but on sites characterised by the presence side by side of Greek and Egyptian artefacts. As E. Brophy has observed, the cultural context of the images and the structuring of the space that housed them were determining factors in the choice of both the material with which the sculptures were made and of their formal language.[61]

2 Statues of Private Citizens

In addition to statues of kings and queens, Ptolemaic Egypt has yielded a considerable number of sculptures depicting non-royal individuals. Within this class of statues it is possible to identify three categories, which correspond to those already identified in the field of royal portraits: 1. traditional Egyptian-style statues; 2. Egyptian-style statues with Greek elements; and 3. Greek-style statues.

2.1 Traditional Egyptian-style Statues

Those private sculptures that may be regarded as Egyptian in terms of the choice of materials, figurative patterns, and forms draw upon a tradition that originated at the time of the 1st Dynasty.[62]

These statues, both male and female, are made of a wide range of coloured stones, but also of limestone, wood, metal, marble, and ivory. The male images can be divided into different categories: block statues, seated, kneeling, striding, *theophoroi*, and *naophoroi* (Fig. 15) kneeling and standing. Particularly common are striding figures, which are depicted frontally, with the left leg forward, arms stretched along the sides, and dressed in a *shendyt* or a high-waisted skirt, sometimes associated with a tunic with braces.

The heads are shaven, bald, or covered by a wig; the faces are usually marked by youthful and generic features.

61 Brophy 2015a, 50–55; Brophy 2015b, 66–67.

62 On Egyptian private sculptures from the Late Period: Bothmer 1960; Bianchi 1989; Perdu 2012a; Perdu 2012b; Cafici 2021. An overview of the modes of representation adopted by the Egyptian elite is offered by: Ballet/Carrez-Maratray 2001; Baines 2004; Trotoux 2010; Cafici 2014.

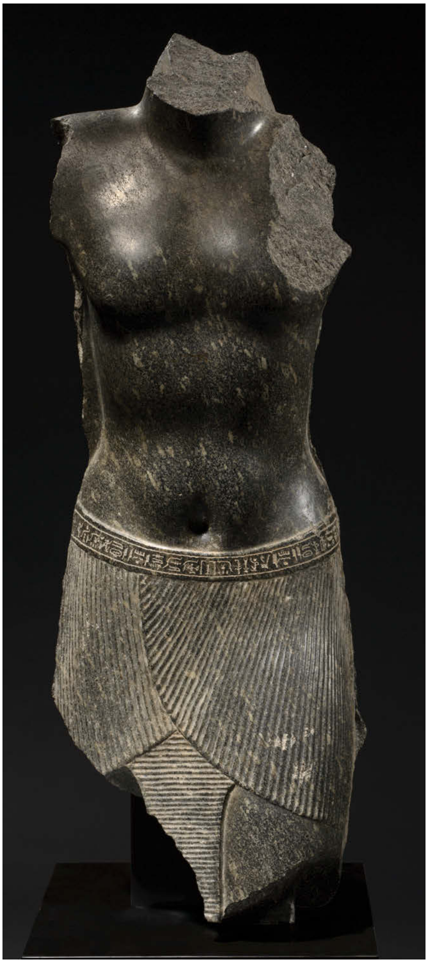


Fig. 15: Torso of Amenpayom. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland. Photo: The Cleveland Museum of Art – open access.

A vertical support appears on the back, on which a hieroglyphic inscription is usually engraved with the name of the individual depicted and a succinct biography. The inscription is sometimes placed on the base, and in a few instances it is written in Greek characters. In rare cases the owners of the statues have a Greek name or a double, Greek and Egyptian one.

I will now provide a few examples. A Greek inscription is engraved on the back and the base of an acephalous, basalt statuette from Karanis, Fayum, depicting a seated figure, dressed in a tight-fitting tunic and holding a papyrus scroll open on his thighs with both hands.[63] This statue was erected by an Egyptian, Peteesis, in honour of his "*soter*" Herodes, who must have belonged to the Hellenic milieu. A colossal statue (h. 3.60 m) of Egyptian form, from a native sanctuary in Naukratis, depicts Haremhab/Armais, the son of a Greek father and an Egyptian mother, who, in the hieroglyphic inscription engraved on the back support, proclaims himself to be *Hau-nebut*, "the Greek", and claims to have dedicated bronze statues to his parents.[64] The *dioiketes* Horpakhepesh, son of Djedhor, is immortalised in a standing statue of the *naophoros* type and is possibly to be identified as Apollonios, son of Theon.[65] A standing granite statue was erected in honour of Harchebi/Archibios, a priest and *dioiketes* who was awarded the title of *syngenes*. The figure is dressed in a smooth *shendyt*, and on its belt, as well as on the back support, a hieroglyphic inscription is found enumerating the man's merits.[66]

The traditional-style statues depict high-ranking individuals, priests, or officials of the central or regional administration. When their provenance is known, it is Egyptian temple complexes across the country. According to tradition, in the temple context these statues had an honorary and religious function: on the one hand, they served to commemorate the euergetism of the personages honoured, whose merits towards the community were listed in inscriptions; on the other hand, their display in a sacred context allowed the individuals portrayed to benefit from their proximity to the deity and ensured their survival after death.

The female statues are usually smaller than life-size and standing in a rigid frontal pose, with their legs close together or in the act of striding with the left foot forward; the arms are close to the hips, i.e. one arm is stretched along the side, while the other bent at a right angle across the chest. They usually wear a sheath dress which emphasises the contours of the body, with a full and soft shape. They usually have a wig on their heads, which may be plain or tripartite; their faces are impersonal and stylised.[67]

The statues depict priestesses and, like the male effigies, they were displayed in temples, probably in large courtyards and in prominent view, so as to make them

63 Cairo, Egyptian Museum, inv. no. 49370: *I.Fayoum* I 97, tab. 74; Bingen 1976, 213–214. There is not enough evidence to date the statuette precisely, but J. Bingen has assigned it to a period between the second half of the 1st c. BC and the 1st c. AD.

64 Cairo, Egyptian Museum, inv. CG 1230: Borchardt 1934, 120–121, no. 1230; Vittmann 1998, 1240–1241, no. 24; Baines 2004, 49–50; Verhoeven 2005, 282.

65 Yale Peabody Museum, inv. no. 264191: Klotz/LeBlanc 2012.

66 The statue is now in Kansas City, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, inv. no. 47–12. The dating is disputed, but it may date from the reign of Ptolemy VIII: Gorre 2009, 390–392, no. 77; Klotz 2009; Cole 2019, 157.

67 Albersmeier 2002a, esp. 254–273; Albersmeier 2002b; Trotoux 2010, 170–171.

fully visible to the people visiting these sacred complexes, while also securing divine protection for the individuals they represented.

2.2 Egyptian-style Statues with Greek Elements

Within this category, it is possible to identify two distinct groups of images.

a. Female statues with "Isiac" dress

From the 2nd c. BC, following the model of queens, the so-called Isiac dress was adopted for female statues of private individuals. This garment consists of a tunic and a fringed cloak, enlivened by folds and fastened with a knot between the breasts. It would appear to have been reserved for priestesses of Isis, who also sport the typical ringlet hairstyle.[68]

Among the numerous examples is a fragmentary statue from Alexandria, depicting a lady whose name is inscribed in hieroglyphic characters on the back support: Ptolemaia, daughter of Ptolemaios.[69] This sculpture can be said to be emblematic of the accomplished integration of the two worlds, Hellenic and native: in Alexandria, a woman with a Greek name and patronymic is immortalised in an Egyptian-style sculpture with a hieroglyphic inscription and Isiac iconography, alluding to her role as a priestess of the goddess.

b. Striding Draped Male Figures

A new figurative scheme was created for male statues in the late Ptolemaic period which spread throughout Egypt. It is evidenced by over 130 specimens ranging from the second half of the 2nd c. BC to the early Roman period.[70]

These figures, which have been defined as "striding draped male figures", are portrayed frontally, with the left leg forward; the right arm is stretched along the

68 On the relationship between portrait statues of queens and those of private females: Albersmeier 2002b.

69 London, British Museum, inv. EA 985: Albersmeier 2002a, 134–135, 270–271, 335, no. 85; Beck/Bol/Bückling 2005, 591, no. 164 (St. Schmidt).

70 Some essential studies of striding draped male figures: Bianchi 1976; 1978; Kaiser 1999, 243–247; Warda 2012; Cafici 2021, *passim*. See also Bianchi 1989, 71; Zivie-Coche 2004, 18, 19; Gorre 2009, 464–465, 537; Fischer-Bovet 2014, 308–310.

side, while the left arm is bent across the abdomen, with the hand clutching a hem of the robe. They wear elaborate ceremonial clothing consisting of three garments: a short-sleeved tunic, a sort of long wrap skirt, and a fringed shawl.

Innovative traits are to be found not only in the clothing, but also in the heads, which often are ever so slightly turned, breaking the image's rigid frontality. Although some heads are still shaven, the hair is usually short and curly, with a more or less pronounced receding hairline and locks that are either engraved or moulded in relief, as are the moustaches and beards that sometimes shadow the face. The hair is occasionally encircled by a headband or a diadem embellished with rosettes in relief. A wide range of stylistic solutions can be observed in the faces, ranging from idealisation to extreme realism.

The statues always have a back support, which may feature a hieroglyphic inscription with the name and title of the person portrayed. In a few rare cases, however, they are accompanied by inscriptions in Greek characters, which are engraved directly on the robe or on the front of the base, according to Hellenic custom, and refer to Egyptian individuals albeit sometimes with Greek names.

Greek inscriptions can be found on two basalt statues from Soknopaiou Nesos (Dimeh, Fayum), which may date from as early as the end of the Lagid period, although their chronology is highly controversial. One of the statues bears on its base a dedication to a deity in favour of the Egyptian Pisois, which is written according to the typical form of Greek votive inscriptions (Fig. 16).[71]

On the other statue, the inscription is vertically engraved on the folds of the robe and mentions the dedicator, Eirenaios, and the offering's recipient, the crocodile god Soknopaios.[72]

71 Alexandria, Graeco-Roman Museum, inv. no. 3202: Trismegistos 47192; *I.Fayoum* I 78, tab. 58; Lembke 1998, 113, 114–115, 128, no. 14, figs. 12–16; Warda 2012, I, 198–201; Bowman/Crowther 2020, App. no. 640; Cafici 2021, 120–121, 173–175, 254–262, IP–2, figs. 55–56, 70–75. Different dates have been suggested: early imperial period (É. Bernand); 12 BC (K. Lembke); 44 BC–AD 48 (Trismegistos); late 1st c. BC (G. Cafici).

72 Alexandria, Maritime Museum, inv. no. 3192: Trismegistos 47191; Bianchi 1976, 242–247, cat. XVIII M, tab. 86, fig. 116; *I.Fayoum* I 77, tab. 57; Peremans 1978, 48; Lembke 1998, 113, 114–115, 117, 128, no. 15, figs. 17–19; Warda 2012, I, 196–198, 269; Clarysse 2020, 47–48; Bowman/Crowther 2020, App. no. 641; Cafici 2021, 120–121, 173–175, 247–253, IP–1, figs. 54, 66–69. Different dates have also been suggested for this specimen: 70–60 BC (W. Peremans); late Ptolemaic or early Roman period (É. Bernand; G. Cafici); Augustan age (K. Lembke); Tiberian age (R.S. Bianchi).

Fig. 16: Statue of Pisois. Graeco-Roman Museum, Alexandria. Photo: E. Ghisellini.

In some cases, hieroglyphic inscriptions on the back support mention individuals with Greek names. A sculpture from the Karnak *cachette*, datable around the beginning of the 1st c. BC, depicts Platon, son of Platon, and the Egyptian woman Ta-Djehuti/Tathotis. A member of an illustrious family originally from Alexandria, he resided in Latopolis (Esna) and was a *strategos*; he was awarded the title of *syngenes* and had held numerous priestly posts in Upper Egyptian cities.[73] Aristonikos had a similar career, which is illustrated by the hieroglyphic text engraved on the back support of a statue discovered at Matboul, in the Delta, a few kilometres from Xoïs: he too held priestly functions and offices high up in the administration, and was awarded the title of *syngenes*; his acts of euergetism in favour of native deities are also recorded.[74] Two statues, one *naophoros* and one of the striding draped male figure type, were erected at Dendera in honour of one of the military officer Psenpchois-Ptolemaios' sons, who was *strategos* and *syngenes* and had a Greek name, possibly Korax.[75]

Inscriptions inform us of the social status of the individuals whom the statues portray. They generally belonged to the Egyptian elite; held administrative, military and priestly positions; and often boasted courtly titles emphasising their proximity to the court.[76] Many of them acted as the benefactors of local temples, financially supported the development of temple complexes and communities, and received the honour of a statue as a reward for their euergetism.[77] Alongside this honorary function, the images retain a religious and votive function aimed at ensuring the deity's protection both for those honoured and the donors. We have little information on the images' dedicatees, which may have been private individuals or even local priestly bodies.[78]

The provenance of most of the sculptures is unknown; the few specimens where the circumstances of their discovery are known have been found within or in close proximity to temple precincts, a location that is consistent with a practice in use from the beginning of the Old Kingdom.[79]

The creation and diffusion of striding draped male figures has been associated with the profound changes that affected Egypt in the late Ptolemaic period.[80] The

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73 Cairo, Egyptian Museum, inv. JE 38033: Warda 2012, I, 115–116, 251–254. Platon's career is discussed by: Verhoeven 2005, 282–283; Gorre 2009, 94–98, no. 24; Gorre 2013, 108–109.

74 Cairo, Egyptian Museum, inv. JE 85743: Guermeur 2000; Gorre 2009, 381–384, no. 75.

75 Gorre 2009, 122–131, no. 29; Warda 2012, I, 113, 118, 224, 226–231.

76 Warda 2012, I, 111, 113, 118, 121–122, 142–143, 269; Cafici 2021, 115–122.

77 Warda 2012, I, 121–122. On euergetism as a means of achieving fame, in both the Greek and the Egyptian world: Fischer-Bovet 2020, esp. 116–123.

78 Warda 2012, I, 274.

79 Warda 2012, I, 132–147, 272. An analysis of known provenances is in Cafici 2021, 122–144, cf. 180.

80 Yoyotte 1998, 209; Kaiser 1999, 243–247; Ballet/Carrez-Maratray 2001, 228–229, 235; Stanwick 2002, 47–48; Savvopoulos 2010, 80–82.

new scheme is believed to have been devised in order to visually transpose the status achieved by the Egyptian elite at the end of a slow process of socio-political ascent that began in the late 3rd c. BC and culminated in the time of Ptolemy VIII. Indeed, Euergetes II adopted a policy of openness towards native elites, who acquired a new role within the kingdom's social structure, at times obtaining citizenship, boasting courtly titles, and reaching the highest positions in the central and peripheral administrations.[81]

From an iconographic and stylistic point of view, interpreting the striding draped male figures is controversial. Bianchi denies any Greek influence and identifies Egyptian precedents for all the defining features of this type, linking it to the Pharaonic tradition alone.[82] B. Bothmer instead admits a Hellenic contribution in the naturalistic treatment of the facial features, hair, beard, and moustache.[83] Other scholars see the assimilation of Greek figurative experiences as responsible for the modelling of the body, the draping of the folds of the dress, the position of the left arm, the treatment of the hair, the presence of a beard and moustache, the headgear, the asymmetries visible in the face and breast, and the realistic nature of a fair number of heads.[84] From this perspective, the new scheme represents the blending of Egyptian conventions and Greek formal solutions, an osmosis between the two idioms that transfers the bicultural dimension of the statues' recipients onto the visual plane.

A similar critical debate concerns the realistic heads, which complement numerous striding draped male figures, as well as some statues in the traditional style (Fig. 17).[85]

81 On Ptolemy VIII's measures and their consequences: Braunert 1964, 75–80; Fraser 1972, I, 61, 70–71, 78–79, 82, 85–89, 121, 130–131; Legras 1999, 234–236; Mittag 2000, 416–424.

82 Bianchi 1978.

83 Bothmer 1996, 215, 226.

84 Kaiser 1999, 243–247; Zivie-Coche 2004, 18, 19; Warda 2012, I, 27, 104, 184–185, 265–266, 282, 283–284, 285, 287; Cafici 2021, 97, 98–99, 103, 181–182.

85 An overview of the scholarship is provided by Cafici 2021, 9–21.

Fig. 17: Head of a male statue. The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore. Photo: The Walters Art Gallery – online collection.

The heads portray elderly men and display certain recurrent features: the forehead is almost invariably furrowed by horizontal wrinkles; the eyebrows are contracted and dominate the concentrated eyes, which are often marked by bags and crow's feet at the outer corners; and the cheeks are sometimes enlivened by folds and nasolabial grooves enclosing the mouth, which has vigorously taut lips. The physiognomic features are rendered with varying degrees of stylisation, ranging from a sober and expressively restrained naturalism to a striking degree of realism.

Bianchi exclusively associates lifelike heads with the Egyptian tradition, noting that they cannot be considered true portraits but rather typified images, characterised by multiple variations yet still constructed on the basis of a codified repertoire of formulas suitable for rendering age markers.[86] The aim of these images is not to objectively reproduce an individual's physiognomy, but to visually transpose his status and social rank, which finds expression precisely in signs of old age. In reiterating these concepts, C. Zivie-Coche emphasises that the rendering of the head reflects the traditional Egyptian canons of frontality, the simplification and geometrisation of forms, and absolute symmetry between the two halves of the face.[87] B. Bothmer also connects the heads to a realistic current in Egyptian statuary dating back to the Old and Middle Kingdom, but at the same time points to a more intimate expressive tone, a mood that he considers to be of Hellenistic derivation, and in some examples he identifies a mixture of Egyptian and Greek forms.[88]

Conversely, various scholars maintain that the realism of Ptolemaic portraits must have been inspired by contact with the naturalistic tendencies of Hellenistic statuary, with which Egyptian sculptors must have been very familiar.[89] Bothmer himself, followed by Adriani, envisaged the possibility that Egyptian realistic portraiture influenced late-Republican Roman portraiture.[90] Lately such a perspective has been overturned by G. Cafici, who, on the contrary, believes that late-Republican Roman portraiture provided a model for Egyptian portraiture, to the point that Egyptian notables had themselves immortalised in portraits whose features were modelled on those of the most prominent Roman politicians of the time.[91]

It is interesting to note that, as far as it is possible to tell, Egyptian statues with lifelike heads mostly come from locations in the Delta, while only a few specimens have come to light in the Fayum and Upper Egypt.[92]

86 Bianchi 1989, 61, 68; Bianchi 1996, 194, 198; Bianchi 2018.

87 Zivie-Coche 2004, 16–17. On the repetition of codified formulas for representing age: Trotoux 2010, 172–175.

88 Bothmer 1960, XXXVIII; Bothmer 1988, 52; Bothmer 1996, 221–223.

89 Drerup 1950, *passim*; Adriani 1970, esp. 92, 95, 98–109; Adriani 1972, 63–64; Schmidt 1997a, 13–34 (with an attempt to trace the evolution of private hardstone portraits); Kaiser 1999, 243–247; Ballet/Carrez-Maratray 2001; Baines 2004, 55; Trotoux 2010, 174–176; Warda 2012, I, 152, 177–178, 179, 184–185. Lately, Bianchi himself has come to acknowledge the presence of Hellenistic stylistic elements in Egyptian portraiture of the 1st c. BC: Bianchi 2018, 143.

90 Bothmer 1960, 133–135, 166; Adriani 1970, 92, 98–106; Adriani 1972, 63–64; Bothmer 1988, 54.

91 Cafici 2021, 146–165, 182–183.

92 Warda 2012, I, 152, 184–185, 201, 208, 261.

2.3 Greek-style Statues

It is commonly believed that Lagid Egypt did not have any private portraiture in the Greek style. In fact, non-royal Greek portraits are attested by passages from ancient authors, some thirty inscribed bases and decrees, and a number of heads and statues.[93]

The materials used to craft statue bases and stelae with decrees were limestone and hardstones. This choice is entirely in keeping with a well-established local tradition and was based on the availability of such materials in Egypt, where they were certainly much cheaper than marble. The inscriptions on the bases and decrees are predominantly honorary and faithfully reproduce the kind of formulas shared throughout the Hellenistic world. However, certain peculiarities emerge that adumbrate forms of interaction between Greek and Egyptian elements.

An inscription from an uncertain location in the Delta recalls the dedication to an Egyptian deity of a portrait statue of a member of the Greek high society of Alexandria by his son Theagenes, who also belonged to the courtly class.[94] In Hermopolis Magna, the Egyptian priests of the god Thot commissioned a statue to commemorate the Rhodian Leonnatos, son of Polykrates, who was awarded the courtly title of *syngenes* and held the position of *strategos* of the Hermopolites.[95]

Particularly revealing is the case of the *strategos* Kallimachos,[96] a member of a family originally from Alexandria, who, as the decree in his honour recalls, had distinguished himself by repeated acts of euergetism in favour of both the citizens of Diospolis Magna and the ancient shrines of Egyptian deities (Fig. 18).

93 The literary, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence has been collected by Ghisellini 2022.

94 The marble slab, now in Warsaw, National Museum, inv. no. 198768, might come from Alexandria or, more likely, from Pharbaitos: Trismegistos 7194; *I.Alexandrie Ptol.* 58, tab. 31; Łajtar 1997, 28–30, fig. 2; Łajtar 1999, 157, no. 51; *I.Mus.Varsovie* 48; Ma 2013, 185–186; Bowman/Crowther 2020, App. N. 619; Fischer-Bovet 2020, 123; Ghisellini 2022, 67–68, no. 31.

95 Limestone statue base, Alexandria, Graeco-Roman Museum, inv. no. 26050: Trismegistos 44138; *SB* X 10707; *I.Hermoupolis* 3, tab. 4; Bowman/Crowther 2020, App. no. 316; Ghisellini 2022, 53–54, no. 22.

96 Black granite stele with decree, Turin, Museo Egizio, inv. no. 1764 (formerly in the Drovetti collection): Trismegistos 6325; *SB* V 8334; *I.Égypte Prose* I 46, II 46; van Minnen 2000, 444–445; Heinen 2006, 22–44; Fischer-Bovet 2014, 344–345; Fischer-Bovet 2016, 127–128; Spier/Potts/Cole 2018, 171, no. 102 (F. Poole); Cole 2019, 158; Bowman/Crowther 2020, App. no. 387; Fischer-Bovet 2020, 126–129; Mairs 2020, 25–28, fig. 3.1; Ghisellini 2022, 58–61, no. 27.

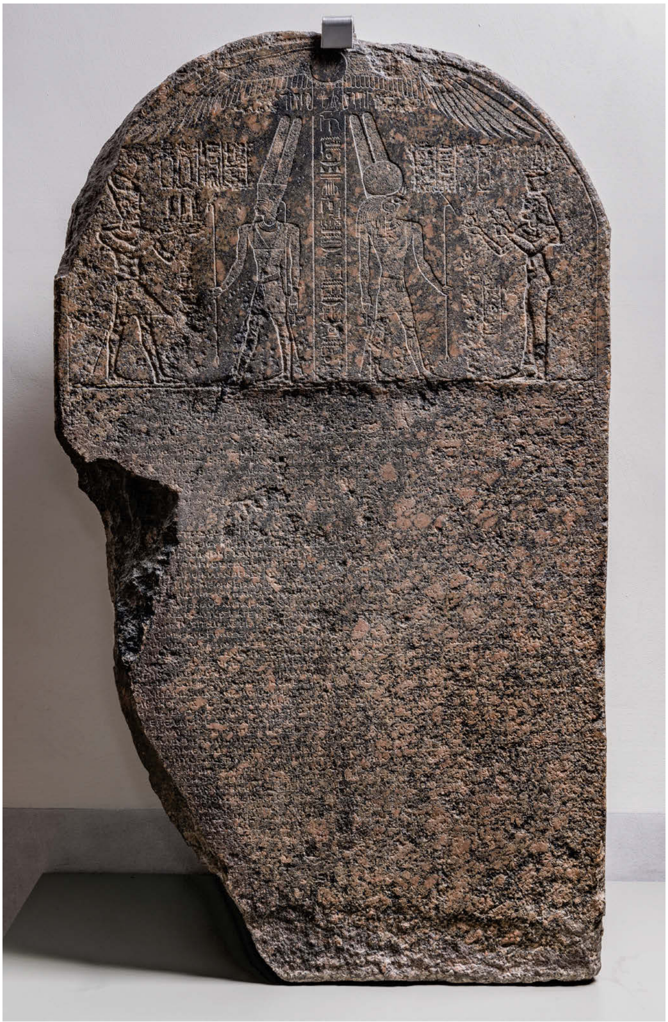

Fig. 18: Stele with honorific decree for Kallimachos. Museo Egizio, Torino. Photo: Museo Egizio – open access.

As a sign of their gratitude, the priests of Amonrasonther, in collaboration with the city community, bestowed innumerable honours on him, including three statues — two made of hardstone, according to Egyptian custom, and one of bronze, according to Greek custom. The statues are displayed in the most prominent places of the god's temple, in a sacred landscape marked by the widespread presence of images in the local style.

Other inscriptions as well attest to the dedication in the setting of an Egyptian temple of statues of officials, which are sometimes double-named. This is the case with the effigies of Ptolemaios, son of Apollonios, and Apollonios, son of Theon, whose inscribed bases, dated to the years 186–180 BC, were found at the entrance to the hypostyle hall of the temple of Bastet at Boubastis.[97] It has been hypothesised that Apollonios, son of Theon, is to be identified with Horpakhepesh, son of Djedhor, who is portrayed by an aforementioned Egyptian-style statue with a lengthy biographical inscription.[98] The inscription informs us that Horpakhepesh held important priestly and civil offices — also at court — including that of *dioiketes*. If the identification is correct, this would be an influential Egyptian official adopting a Greek name for Greek documents.

Someone who certainly had a double name was Hierax, a *syngenes* and general who is mentioned on the basis of a statue dedicated to him from Apollonopolis Magna.[99] The high-ranking official was also called Pachom and is portrayed in a statuette of the striding draped male figure type,[100] datable to the middle years of the 1st c. BC and bearing a hieroglyphic inscription that lists the titles and offices he held (Fig. 19).

97 Base of the statue of Ptolemaios, now lost: Trismegistos 7013; *SB* I 2637; Klotz/LeBlanc 2012, 682–683; Cole 2019, 156–157; *I.Ptolemaic* I 177; Ghisellini 2022, 47–48, no. 18. Base of the statue of Apollonios, son of Theon, at Alexandria, Graeco-Roman Museum, inv. R.337: Trismegistos 6394; *SB* V 8874; Bernand 1982, 27, no. 100; Klotz/LeBlanc 2012; Cole 2019, 156–157; *I.Ptolemaic* I 178; Ghisellini 2022, 46–47, no. 17.

98 Yale Peabody Museum, inv. no. 264191: cf. *supra*, n. 65.

99 Base now lost: Trismegistos 6627; *SB* I 1560; *I.Portes du désert* 108; Gorre 2009, 38; Bowman/Crowther 2020, App. no. 405; Ghisellini 2022, 61–62, no. 28.

100 The Detroit Institute of Arts, inv. no. 51.83: Walker/Higgs 2000, 131–132, no. II. 24 (W.H. Peck); Gorre 2009, 35–38, no. 9; Cafici 2021, 119, 143, 327–333, IP–11, figs. 9–10, 119–122, with previous bibliography. While the provenance is unknown, it is believed that the statuette was placed in the court of the temple of Hathor at Dendera: Moyer 2011, 33–35.

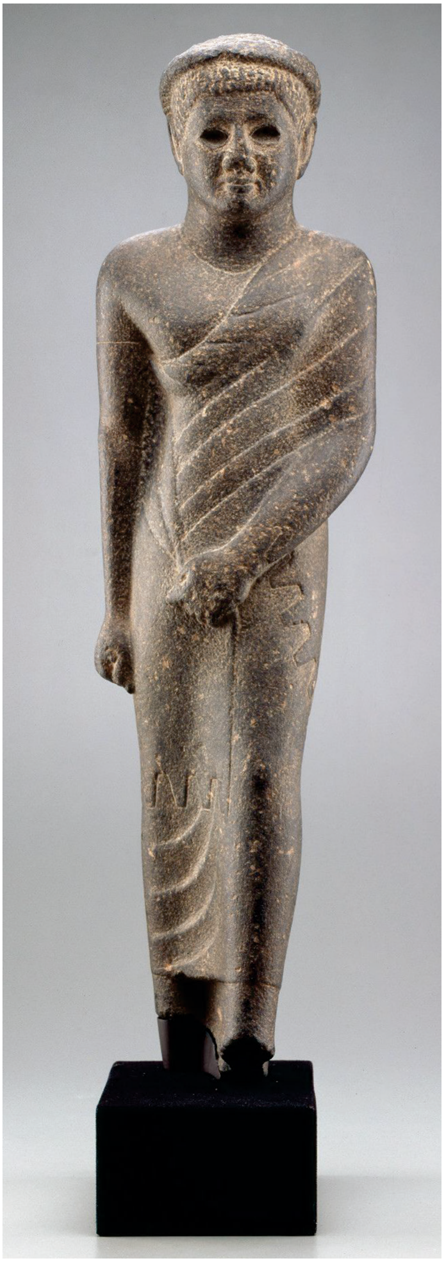

Fig. 19: Statue of Pachom. Institute of Arts, Detroit. Photo: Institute of Arts – https://www.dia.org/art/collection/figure-pakhom-44006 (last visit June 2024).

Bronze was the preferred material for Greek-style portrait statues which have not survived, however, having been recast over the centuries. The surviving portraits are carved in marble, limestone, and — very rarely — in hardstone. The translation of Greek forms into local hardstone entailed, at least initially, considerable difficulties, as exemplified by a female basalt head from Ptolemais Hermeiou (Fig. 20).[101]

Fig. 20: Head of a female statue. Akademisches Kunstmuseum, Bonn. Photo: Akademisches Kunstmuseum. Photo: Jutta Schubert.

101 Bonn, Akademisches Kunstmuseum, inv. B 98: Schmidt 1997b, 22, 39–40, no. 3; Gkikaki 2014, 186–187; Ghisellini 2018, 17 and 2022, 169–170, 196, Rf 15.

It depicts a young girl with the so-called melon hairstyle (*Melonenfrisur*), invented in Attica in the second half of the 4th c. BC and often adopted for effigies of queens, such as Arsinoe II, Berenice II, and Cleopatra VII.[102] The head is characterised by roughly-outlined physiognomic details and a harsh treatment of the surfaces, which are marked by deep depressions. There are no clues as to whether the artist was an Egyptian sculptor awkwardly interpreting a Hellenistic model from the early 3rd c. BC or a Greek artist struggling with a material new to him.

One artefact that instead reflects a full mastery of local stonework is a greywacke head from Alexandria,[103] which captures with penetrating realism the refined features of a young Egyptian man with a dry, bony face; a hooked nose; large, almond-shaped eyes; and fleshy, barely-parted lips that give his physiognomy a touch of pathos. This head, which can be dated to around 100 BC, reveals a profound knowledge of Greek structural principles. It is linked to the Egyptian tradition, however, by the residual geometrisation of the forms and by the effective contrast between the clear, luminous surfaces of the face and the rough mass of curly hair, with its highly stylised treatment.[104] The absence of any traces of a back support and the slight asymmetries found in the features and at the attachment of the neck suggest that the head originally crowned a statue with a Greek-type pose, although slight asymmetries sometimes also occur in statues of the striding draped male figure type.

Points of convergence with Egyptian statuary are also to be found in some marble portraits. Among the most unusual portraits of Egyptian provenance is a specimen in the Archäologische Sammlung der Universität Zürich, which is unusually endowed with a back support, even though it has been sculpted in white marble (Fig. 21).[105]

102 On *Melonenfrisur*: Dillon 2010, 114–116; Gkikaki 2014, 173–211, esp. 178–182, 193, 194–195, 199–200, 201, 206–207, cat. Mc–M 3a – Mc–M 9, 210, cat. Mc–P 5, 211, Mc–P 13 – Mc–P 14 (Ptolemaic queens).

103 London, British Museum, inv. EA 55253, formerly in the A.C. Harris collection: Adriani 1970, 86–87; Adriani 1972, 152, tab. XXXII, 4; Belli Pasqua 1995, 40, no. 8; Bothmer 1996, 221–223; Walker/Higgs 2000, 175, no. III. 29 (S. Walker); Beck/Bol/Bückling 2005, 592, no. 165 (St. Schmidt); Trotoux 2010, 175–176; Ghisellini 2018, 15; Spier/Potts/Cole 2018, 168–169, no. 100 (J. Spier); Ghisellini 2022, 144–145, 194, Rm 13.

104 Cf. *supra* n. 56.

105 The head was originally known as "Testa A. Sambon": Adriani 1970, 72–74, tabs. 32,1.2, 34.1; Jucker/Willers 1982, 58–59, no. 19 (Hans Jucker); Smith 1988, 88; Cafici 2021, 75; Ghisellini 2022, 145, 194, Rm 15.

Fig. 21: Head of a male statue. Archäologische Sammlung der Universität, Zürich. Photo: Archivio CeRAM, Dipartimento Culture e Società, Università di Palermo.

This head reproduces the physiognomy of an old man, whose signs of physical decay are noted with objective realism. Hellenistic-style naturalism, evident in the modelling of the planes, merges here with formal tendencies typical of the Egyptian tradition, such as the rigid frontality imposed by the presence of a back support, the concentration of the physiognomic features at the front, their symmetry, and the geometrisation of the wrinkles.

Similarly, the portrait of a mature man from Egypt now in the Louvre Museum, inv. E 259631 (Fig. 22),[106] combines sober realism in the rendering of the physiognomic traits with Egyptian formal principles, such as the predominance of the frontal view, the schematic and abstract lines of the eyebrows and wrinkles, and the relation between the eyes and the orbital cavity. Comparisons with late Ptolemaic Egyptian heads can also be found in the arrangement of the hair on the forehead, the contour of which is defined by a clear line of demarcation and is marked by a deep receding hairline.

106 Gombert-Meurice 2012, 79, fig. 43; Queyrel 2020, 176, with n. 104; Ghisellini 2022, 146, 194, Rm 17.

Fig. 22: Head of a male statue. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: 2007 Musée du Louvre / Christian Décamps – https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl0002357 (last accessed July 9th, 2024).

In conclusion, the overview conducted so far has highlighted some interesting phenomena, which can be summarised as follows:

1. Royal portraits and portraits of private individuals essentially share the same lines of development and formal tendencies.

2. In both the group of royal effigies and that of private individuals, a category of Egyptian-style portraits can be distinguished that is characterised by the assimilation of iconographic motifs, attributes, and sometimes formal stylistic tendencies of Greek origin. Conversely, some portraits in the Greek style are characterised by the use of materials, technical solutions, attributes, and — in some cases — stylistic features from the Egyptian tradition.
3. Monuments that attest to forms of interpenetration between Egyptian and Hellenistic figurative conventions are mainly concentrated in Alexandria and the Delta region. Moreover, in this area archaeological finds document the activity of indigenous workshops alongside Greek ones, as well as the collaboration of Egyptian and Greek workers within the same workshop.[107]
4. Evidence of osmosis between the Greek and Egyptian traditions intensified significantly from the 2nd c. BC onwards, and thus constitutes a faithful mirror of the process of cultural and social integration between the two worlds that began in the aftermath of the Battle of Raphia in 217 BC and reached its peak in the late Lagid period.

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Cornelia Römer

Life in the Villages of the Ptolemaic Period: Ray Oldenburg's "Third Places" Revisited in the Fayum Oasis

Abstract: In 2001 the American urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg formed the theory of the "Third Place". Oldenburg suggests that "Third Places" are the heart of a community's social vitality, and even the foundation of a functioning democracy. For him, the "First Places" are the homes of the individuals, the "Second Places", the areas in which the individuals work. Between the two, people move nearly every day. In addition to the two first places, Oldenburg argues that there should be a Third Place "Where one may go alone at almost any time of the day or evening with assurance that acquaintances will be there". This paper traces the "Third Places" of the people living in the villages of Graeco-Roman Fayum.

Keywords: Fayum Oasis, baths, gymnasia, markets, Ray Oldenburg's "Third Places", villagescape.

1 Introduction

The title of this paper promises a close look into how people lived in that part of Egypt which lies just one hours drive south-west of today Cairo, the Fayum Oasis; it gives the expectation to know about lives that were lived more than two thousand years ago. Using the modern theory of "Third Places" in modern-day American suburbs may allow for new insights.

We all know of exhibitions in museums around the world that promise such close looks into people's lives in antiquity. What the museums show are mosaic stones of an image; perhaps they show an assemblage of objects as in the British Museum at the exhibition of the Mummy Portraits of the Fayum in 1997;[1] a doll, shoes, wooden spindles, combs etc. coming from excavations, where a dry climate has preserved such objects (they date to the Roman rather than to the Ptolemaic period). It is then left to us — with the help of the museum curators and the catalogues they write — to create the image of a life that may have been lived around and with such objects. It will never be possible to understand fully how those

1 Walker 1997, 213.

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111334646-002

societies of which we see single pieces of evidence really functioned. Texts written in antiquity within — not necessarily about — these societies may help — to these I will come later.

The fragmentary image of life that is shown in the museums is wholly different from what we experience when reading the report of the American anthropologist and journalist Richard Critchfield, who — in the mid '70s — lived for more than half a year with the people around the village of Medinet Habu near Luxor.[2] Critchfield's book "Shahhat an Egyptian" impressed me enormously when I first stayed in Egypt for a longer period of time in the early '80s, but, there is something voyeuristic in this kind of a report, which makes us understand — yes — the functioning of real characters in the village, their sentiments and reasons for their changing moods on different days, that what makes "Life". When I later visited Medinet Habu and was told by the waiter that Shahhat would come to the coffee shop in a few minutes, I left that coffee shop, because I found it unfair to meet him when I knew so many of even his intimate thoughts. Perhaps a problem of modern anthropological studies.

Well such problems of voyeurism we do not have; of course, there is no chance to get ever as close as that to the people in the Fayum in the Ptolemaic period, notwithstanding the fact that there is no other antique landscape of which the people are so well known to us as the Fayum Oasis.[3] This is on the one hand due to the numerous excavations by the British, French, Germans, Americans and Italians that were carried out since around 1900, and on the other hand to the thousands of papyrological documents found in those excavations.[4] The papyri were often the main and only objective of the work in Theadelphia, Euhemeria, and the other places of the Graeco-Roman period in the Fayum.[5]

Papyri: We may encounter an old woman in Philadelphia who complains that her daughter has been abducted without whom she is not able to run her beer shop,[6] or we may witness a runaway donkey belonging to the army in another village.[7] As the doll and spindles, these are just isolated and little mosaic stones of the picture, perhaps more telling than the doll alone.

How to choose and single out single bits and pieces to form an image of the life in those villages? The abduction of the inn keeper's daughter takes us a far as

2 Critchfield 1982.

3 About the Fayum in general in antiquity (if not satisfactory in all respects) see Malleson 2019; about its people see *P.Count.*, II; Vandorpe/Clarysse/Verreth 2015; about its landscape, in particular the north-western part see Römer 2019; about the archaeology see Davoli 1998; Römer 2020.

4 Cuvigny 2009, 30–58.

5 For the two named places in the north-western Fayum see Römer 2019 Chapters 13 and 14.

6 *P.Lond.* VII 1976 from 253 BC; English translation in Rowlandson 1998, 209.

7 *P.Köln* VIII 348; March 177 or 166 BC; from an unknown village in the Arsinoite nome.

imagining a modest bar in the village and how it was run — very interesting in itself —; the notice of the runaway donkey might tell us about the employment of donkeys in the army, and we can compare the reward for finding the runaway donkey with the reward of someone who found a runaway slave.

Of course, there are also the remains of buildings excavated in those villages, but they may raise more questions than answers if they are empty and not clearly recognizable as temples.

Fig. 23: Members of the team of the DAI looking towards the stairs to the main hall of the gymnasium in Philoteris. Photo by C. Römer, 2019.

In the picture above (Fig. 23), the steps which the three scholars are examining with curiosity are part of a well identified building. We will hear about who may have walked up here, and who was certainly excluded; to what purpose did people come here? We can know this because there is enough written evidence about this kind of building to understand what it is; on the other hand, this is the first building of this kind ever archaeologically attested in Egypt. Bits and pieces — as I said —, and how do they come together?

2 The "Third Places" of Ptolemaic Villages

I have chosen an approach to the subject of life in the villages, which — I hope — will provide a new and perhaps closer look into that life; it may also teach us more clearly something about these very peculiar societies which can be called "multicultural" in its true sense.

From the beginning, the Ptolemies aimed at establishing a Hellenised Kingdom in which the Greek language was the language of the army and the administration. Ptolemy I, and most notably his son Ptolemy II invented a sophisticated plan to attract new settlers to Egypt for setting up the army and administration. The Nile Delta, and in particular the Fayum Oasis became centres of land reclamation programmes. Numerous new villages were founded along newly dug canals where before swampy ground did not allow any habitation (Fig. 24). Theadelphia, Euhemeria, Philoteris, Dionysias and others were founded in the first half of the 3rd c. BC by Ptolemy II and were named to show the close connection to the King's house; Philoteris, on which I will focus later on, was named after the second sister of Ptolemy II, Philotera (Arsinoe being his other sister and wife).[8]

According to the papyrus rolls in which taxpayers were listed there were at the time ca. 1200 people living in each Dionysias and Philoteris, two thirds indigenous Egyptians relocated from other areas, and one third newcomers from around the Hellenised Mediterranean, including Jews and Syrians.[9] How strongly was life determined by this variety of cultural backgrounds?

To form a new image of the life in these villages, I will present village institutions which were accessible for everybody, other ones that were partially accessible for everybody, and one other one to which access was clearly restricted. I will ask where those institutions were located within the areas of the villages and what such locations meant for those who attended them.

In 1989 and again in 2001 the American urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg formed the theory of the "Third Place".[10] Oldenburg suggests that "Third Places" are the heart of a community's social vitality, and even the foundation of a functioning democracy. For him, the "First Places" are the homes of the individuals, the "Second Places", the areas in which the individuals work. Between the two, people move nearly every day. In addition to the two first places, Oldenburg argues that there

8 For Philoteris in particular see Römer 2019, Chapter 16.

9 Cf. *P.Count.* 11 from between 243 and 217 BC.

10 Oldenburg 1989; Oldenburg 2001.

should be a Third Place "Where one may go alone at almost any time of the day or evening with assurance that acquaintances will be there".[11]

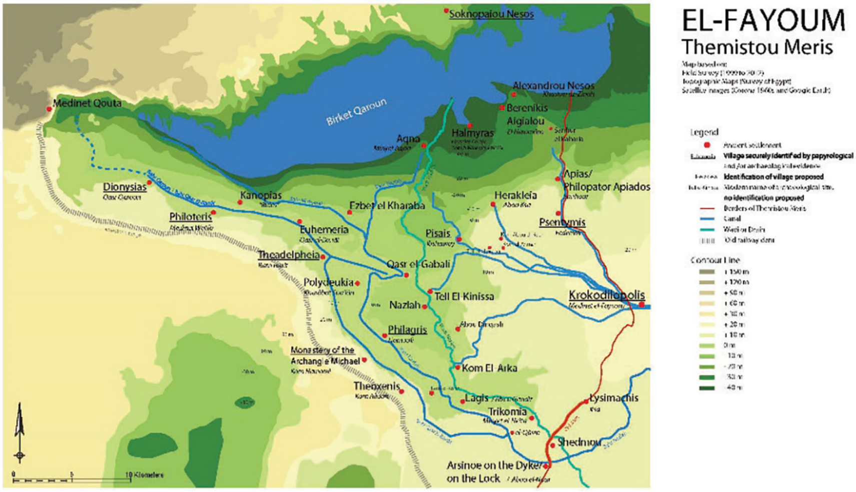

Fig. 24: Map of the Themistou Meris by I. Klose (from C. Römer, *The Fayoum Survey Project*, A, *The Themistou Meris*, Leuven 2019).

There are of course many differences between American suburbs of the big cities for which Oldenburg created his theory on the one hand, and the villages of the Ptolemaic Fayum on the other, and I do not want to take this any further. However, the idea about a Third Place which is different from the place where one lives, and the place where one works, is certainly essential for any community; this may give a good point of departure to understand people's lives in the Ptolemaic villages as well.

I will focus here on three of such "Third Places" which are deeply different from each other in character, and in accessibility. I will give brief glimpses into the character of these institutions and ask basic questions about their functionality, their location, and their meaning for the inhabitants of the villages. My three places are — and I believe that those were the most popular ones: (1) the markets, (2) the bath houses and (3) the gymnasia. While the markets were freely accessible to everybody, there was a fee to be paid for the baths; to become a member in the gymnasium

11 Oldenburg 1989, 32; cf. 16: "The third place is a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work. The term will serve well. It is neutral, brief, and facile".

a quite considerable amount of money had to be paid, and a social background to be shown that was to be judged by others.[12] The gymnasia are the only places of our three where women were not admitted.

Where and how far did people have to move to attend these Third Places in their villages? Is there a recurring pattern of location for these three meeting places?

If we succeed in locating markets, baths, and gymnasia within the layout of the villages, we may gain new insights into the social villagescape of the period.

The visits to all the three places I have mentioned are not devoid of a genuine purpose. People went to the market to buy and sell, to the baths to wash themselves, and to the gymnasium for physical exercise. But all the three places also gave the chance to leave the monotonous life behind, meet others in a different environment, and to talk.[13]

3 The Markets

(1) The markets in the villages are the most open or least restricted of the three places proposed by me. Most likely, Ray Oldenburg would not have recognized them as “Third Places”, unless they were institutions fixed by weekday and time;[14] were they in the Ptolemaic period? Going into this topic, I realized how little we know about markets and where and when they were held in Graeco-Roman Egypt. Of my three Third Places the markets are the only place which is not of Hellenistic origin, while both the baths and the gymnasia were cultural newcomers to Egypt after Alexander conquered the country. It is therefore necessary to look back also into the pharaonic period to find out about recurring patterns of the market locations in the villages. Of course, there always existed locations, where people regularly gathered for the purchase and sale of provisions, livestock and other goods. When we look for example at a scene in the tomb of Nianchchnum und Chnumhotep from the 5th Dynasty in Saqqara,[15] we see a market being held on the shore of a

12 With these restrictions, the gymnasia would not be “Third Places” as defined by Oldenburg 1989; see p. 24: “Third places counter the tendency to be restrictive in the enjoyment of others by being open to all and by laying emphasis on qualities not confined to status distinctions current in the society”; cf. 42: “Third places exist on neutral ground and serve to level their guests to a condition of social equality”.

13 For Oldenburg 1989, 26–31 conversation is the main activity in the Third Places.

14 Oldenburg 1989, 17 mentions the *agora* or the forum as prominent third places, acknowledging their political significance, which the markets in Ptolemaic Egypt did not have.

15 See Moussa/Altenmüller 1977, Abb. 10; see further with more examples Fischer-Elfert 2000, 67–82.

river. This seems to be a natural location for a place where the merchandise arrived and was dispatched by boat.[16] Herodotus' observation that in Egypt also women were active in the marketplaces (II 35) is corroborated by this tomb decoration of the 5th Dynasty and elsewhere.[17]

We now go to Philoteris, where a team of the German archaeological Institute in Cairo has conducted excavations under my directorship since 2010. At a first glance, this site is not very inviting, but a geomagnetic map proved this to be mistaken (Fig. 25).[18]

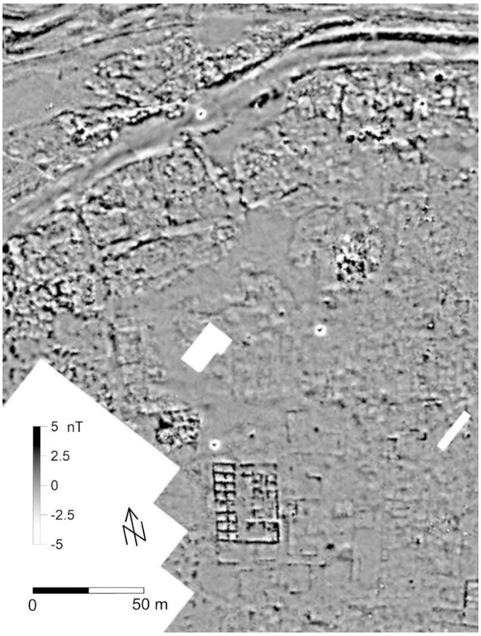

Fig. 25: Geomagnetic map of Philoteris (by Th. Herbich and team); in the north, the canal with the landing place.

16 For marketplaces on the shore of the river — in the Fayum this would be on the shore of the canals — see Altenmüller 1980, 1193–1194; Römer 1992, 257–284, in particular 259–260.

17 Of great interest is C. Eyre's article from 1998, 173–191; Eyre comments also on the location of markets on the river shore in 177 with note 22.

18 Detail of the geomagnetic map created by T. Herbich and his team between 2011 and 2017.

We have here a nice landing place close to a bridge, and a street leading up into the village, towards the temple and towards a granary, and there are other areas, where such landing places existed. Main roads of the village would have been along the canals. The canals and their shores were main meeting places; there is no doubt, life in the village was also a life on the canal. Here, the views widened from the narrow alleys of the central villages, news arrived with the boats (or donkeys) from the neighbouring settlements, and merchandise which may not be available at one's home village. Here the world opened up.

Of course, this is true for all settlements of whatever period and area around the world, whether we think of medieval cities on the Rhine or Danube, or the village of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn on the Mississippi, who waited impatiently for the steamboat to arrive once a week. But medieval towns and cities also had other centres of encounter: the churches, around which marketplaces popped up, if not even within the churches themselves.

What about the temples in Egypt? This question is a daring one, in particular for someone like me who is not an Egyptologist.[19]

It is possible — as I understand — to assume institutionalized markets to have existed in the near environment or, indeed, in the first courtyards of the temples, even though the courtyards were part of the sacred space as were the *dromoi,* the sacred alleys leading from and to the temples. The connection of sacred space and market that comes so naturally to us from our own experience of medieval churches and markets may have existed in ancient Egypt and may have developed further in the Graeco-Roman period.[20] Without being able to go further into this subject here, I provide only some short ideas. The papyrological evidence is scarce, and dates to the Roman period. In *P.Köln* V 228, 3–4, a list of earnings from the letting of market stalls (Oxyrhynchus; AD 176), a "market of the Sarapeion" or rather the "market administration of the Sarapeion" is mentioned: ἀγορα( ) | Cαραπείου; the expression is paralleled in *SB* XVI 12695 (P.Lond. inv. 1562v), 3 and 7,[21] and seems to speak a clear language. Of course the area around the temple entrances and perhaps the first courtyards must have been places of social encounter. Here the questions to the oracles were submitted and answers waited for. Among the temple staff

19 I thank Peter Dils and Stephan Seidlmayer who both gave me new insights and ideas about this topic from Egyptologist's view.

20 Unfortunately, the excellent paper by Jördens 1995, 37–100, does not go into the subject of market locations which are in anyway difficult to ascertain from papyrus texts; for the frequency of the big cattle markets which she considers to have taken place every second week or more often in Alexandrou Nesos and Kerkesoucha near Karanis see 50–52. For the "Invisibility of the local market in the historical and archaeological record" see Eyre 1998, 174.

21 Rea 1982, 191–209, with commentary on l. 3, ἐπιτη(ρηταὶ) ὠν(ῆc) Cαραπε(ίου), on p. 200.

there were the *pastophoroi* "doorkeepers" who apparently supervised the temple area open to the public.[22]

Possible evidence for market stalls in the courtyards of temples are certain inscriptions which read "Topos of" = "Place of" or "Location of" and then a personal name, as we find them on the parapet of the terrace belonging to the Chnum Temple in Elephantine. There, a more than 2 metre wide graffito reads: Δημητρίου καὶ Ἑρμίου καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ὁ τόπος αὐτῶν "The place belongs to Demetrios and Hermias and their brothers". There is no doubt that the τόποc is here written in reference to human beings who may have had their stalls at this very place.[23] Other such inscriptions would have marked the place where a god was venerated like in examples of Kom Ombo, where the word τόποc is followed by the name of a god.[24] Examples from the North Temple of Karanis in the eastern Fayum — to stay in the Fayum — have human names after τόποc.[25] If these inscriptions were place markers for merchants and their stalls for selling goods then this would be evidence for commercial activity in the close vicinity or even within the sacred space of the temple. The word *topos* seems to be ambiguous, indicating a property either of humans or of a god. Or were these place markers perhaps indications where certain people had a permanent right to worship, without being a religious association which would be named after the god? So it seems that such inscriptions are not conclusive — at least not in all cases — for the question as to how far temples were places of commerce.

I would be happier if we could date these inscriptions more precisely. The *topos* inscription in Karanis is certainly from the Roman period because the North Temple was not built earlier than the Roman period, but in Narmouthis the case is not so clear. Here, the temple from the Middle Kingdom was enlarged in the Ptolemaic period and the *topos* inscription (more precisely a graffito in red colour)[26] is found in a part dating to the Ptolemaic period, but the inscription could also be later, of course. Were these *topos* inscriptions all certainly from the Roman period (as it seems), they would perhaps be a further indication of the change in the relationship

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22 For the *pastophoroi* as "doorkeepers" of the temples see recently Hoffmann/Quack 2014, 127–154; with more details about the housings called "pastophoria" Thomas 2014, 111–132.

23 This is the interpretation of such inscriptions and graffiti by Maehler 1979, 138, Inschrift G 24, with commentary on pp. 138–139. Maehler cites further examples also from Asia Minor. Or were these the places where certain people had a standing right to worship, without being a religious association which would be named after the god?

24 See Quaegebeur 1984, 161–176; graffito no. 1021 on pp. 162–163. Quaegebeur also refers to a Greek inscription from the same location (*SB* I 5776) which reads: τόποc Νεχθαροῦτο[c] θεοῦ μεγάλου. Here, the meaning of *topos* is beyond doubt clear.

25 *I.Fayoum* I 95 and 96.

26 Vogliano 1937, 38–39.

between the priests on the one side and the government on the other in the Roman period.[27]

Let us look just briefly into an enigmatic place in Narmouthis. In front of the Ptolemaic temple that was attached to the Middle Kingdom Temple, there is a huge square that was surrounded on all sides by colonnades.[28] In the Ptolemaic period, there existed a small sanctuary and it was only in the Roman period that the colonnades were installed. Statues of Roman military men adorned the square.[29] Was this a marketplace now functioning in front of the temple? Some have thought so.[30]

To come back to the Greek word *agora*: the Greek word *agora*, "market", is not often used in the papyrological documents of Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt. The scarce ca. 20 attestations that we have all come from the Roman period and refer to cattle markets, not the usual markets that must have existed along the shores of the canals or the streets in the villages. They do not tell anything about the locations of such markets. The Greek word *agora* has a much wider connotation including that of a place for political exchange. Such a connotation was certainly not popular in Egypt, and therefore the word avoided (?).[31]

Until we have clear evidence for the stable location of a market, I propose to see markets as, if not exclusively, then at least partially happening on the shores of the canals, or in the streets that had good access to the canals (to bring merchandise in easily) and were broad enough to hold the expected increased numbers of people, as perhaps the landing place in Philoteris.

4 The Baths

In comparison to the markets, we know much more about the baths in the villages; we know, how they functioned and often we also know where they were positioned.[32] The access to these "Third Places" was more restricted than the access to the markets, but it was still open for men and women, for free men and slaves.[33]

27 For this change in general see Monson 2012, 220–227.

28 See Bresciani/Giammarusti 2018, 5–23.

29 See Ashour 2020, 89–107, in particular Cat. No. 20–22.

30 See Bresciani/Giammarusti 2018, 5–23, in particular 20.

31 Litinas 1997, 601–606; for the use of the word *agora* see also De Ligt 1993, 39–41.

32 An overview of many aspects gives the volume by Lucore/Trümper 2013; see also Redon 2017; Fournet/Redon 2017, 389–435.

33 Redon 2015, 59–87.

However, to access the baths a fee had to be paid.[34] According to the texts from the Zenon Archive, one had to pay a quarter or half of an obol to take a seat in a bathtub. Whether this was "an amount affordable for most", as Bérangère Redon and Thomas Faucher argue in 2014, is difficult to ascertain.[35]

Bath houses in the villages must have been extremely popular all over Egypt. So far, there are 34 archaeologically securely identified such baths, most of them in the Fayum and in the Delta.[36]

The baths excavated in Egypt show a pattern which they share with other Hellenistic baths in Greece or the Magna Graecia: two circles of hip bathtubs offered bathing facilities for around 20 bathers each; one tholos served the women, the other the men. People were sitting naked side by side, their clothes being stowed behind them in little niches, while a bath man moved in the middle of the circle and poured water on the bathers. What a potentially cosy atmosphere to have a nice and relaxing chat sitting side by side and feeling the warm water on your skin — as long as you were comfortable with exhibiting yourself naked in such an environment and with others. For people coming from a Greek cultural background, it was most likely not a problem to relax here, but such a setting must have been completely unusual if not embarrassing for people from the Egyptian background. As far as our evidence goes, very soon bath houses were fully accepted also by the indigenous Egyptian inhabitants of the villages in the Fayum and elsewhere.

A text often cited in this respect is *P.Enteux.* 83 from 221 BC.[37] It offers also a deeper insight into the value of these "Third Places" and their meaning for the inhabitants of the villages than just the question about who attended such baths.

P.Enteux. 83 is a letter addressed to king Ptolemy IV by a woman named Thamounis. She was visiting in the village of Oxyrhyncha and attended the bath house of that village, when she was attacked, thrown out of the bathtub and beaten by another woman named Thothortais; Thothortais also took her necklace. We do not have to follow that event any further — the komarch does not play a good role in the further development. Interesting is that Thamounis states, why she was mistreated by the other women: she says (ll. 4–5):

> ἐμοῦ δὲ οὐκ ἐκχωρούϲηϲ, καταγνοῦϲά μου ὅτι ξένη εἰμ[ί, πλη]γάϲ μοι ἐνέβαλεν καὶ πλείουϲ εἰϲ ὃ τύχοι μέροϲ τοῦ ϲώματόϲ | μου,

34 There are only a few cases attested in which the access was free for some people; see Faucher/Redon 2014, 836.

35 Faucher/Redon 2014, 848–849. For many this fee meant to spend half of the daily income on a bath.

36 See the catalogue of Fournet/Redon, 2017, 389–435.

37 Chrest.Mitt. 8.

> "When I did not give way, she, disdaining me because I was a stranger, struck me a great deal on whatever part of my body she might hit."

Thamounis was a foreign body in the bath. She was not disdained because she was Greek — her name is as Egyptian as the name of her attacker — but because she was not a local. At least this is what she perceived and reported.

We may understand that villagers were jealously protecting their baths from the visits of those not belonging to their own community — perhaps not surprisingly because places in the baths were not unlimited, and during rush hours, there may have been a shortage of free tubs: it is a pity that no exact time is reported in *P.Enteux.* 83.

Thus *P.Enteux.* 83 is not only a vivid attestation for women visiting such baths unaccompanied, a clear attestation for women (and men) coming from the Egyptian background attending the baths, but it also draws a picture of such baths as objects of self-identification of the villagers. Such self-identification may have become even more prominent, if the baths were decorated in fancy ways or had pebbled floors and limestone pots making them rather luxurious specimens of their kind.[38]

It is also of some interest to look at the location of the baths within the layout of the villages. As I had observed during the Fayum Survey Project of the Themistou Meris in Theadelphia, Euhemeria, and Dionysias, the bath houses of these villages were located on the fringes of the settlements. In Euhemeria they clearly mark the boundaries of the settlement,[39] and I have argued that in Theadelphia they mark the boundaries of the original Ptolemaic settlement.[40] The reason to locate them on the boundaries may have been primarily practical: the way was open and short for the transport of the necessary water from the canals on the one hand and for the disposal of the sewage, on the other. I do not share the view of Bérangère Redon, who considers the volitional location of the baths close to the gates of the villages in order to attract as many visitors as possible.[41] The baths may also have been welcome places of encounter for those who came home from the fields, and wanted to have a stop, before returning home, i.e. a classical location for a "Third Place" as Oldenburg describes them.

38 Limestone pots were found for example in Bath 2 at Euheremia: see Römer 2013, 229–238, in particular 232–235, and Römer 2019, 181–184; see also the description of the bath in Philadelphia/Fayum where a mosaic with the image of a poppy flower covered the floor of the women's tholos: *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59665 from the middle of the 3rd c. BC.

39 Römer 2019, 179–184 and plan on p. 200.

40 Römer 2019, 127–130 and plan on p. 154.

41 Redon 2015, 66.

If it is true that the bath houses in Euhemeria, Theadephia and Dionysias mark the boundaries of the original Ptolemaic settlements, we may also ask, whether the bath houses belonged to the layout of the villages as they were put on void ground in the first half of the 3rd c. BC by the first Ptolemaic Kings, and whether a certain prototype of such villages existed that included at least one bath house. If so, we may get new insights into the politics of the early Ptolemies and their strategies to attract newcomers into Egypt.

In Philadelphia, on the other side of the Fayum, bath houses were part of what Apollonios, the *dioiketes*, and therefore obviously the king as well wanted to see in this prototype of a new settlement. As mentioned above, special care is taken for the decoration of one of the bath houses, where the centre of the "Women's Tholos" is adorned by a huge poppy flower with a band of seashells around it.[42]

Bathhouses were meeting places as "Oldenburg's Third Places", in the same sense as fitness centres are today. They must have had a highly integrating force, because except for the money you had to pay for entry, everybody could attend them. And they seem to have supported the corporate feeling among the villager whether indigenous or from elsewhere.

5 The Gymnasia

Of a completely different character are the gymnasia. These "Third Places" were highly restricted places of encounter and reserved for men only.[43] In the other parts of the Hellenistic world gymnasia were part of exclusively urban settings. It was a special development in the villages of the Egyptian countryside to include gymnasia, perhaps according to a clever plan of the Ptolemaic kings (see below).

There is not much known about the early phases of gymnasia in the countryside, most of them started to pop up during the latter half of the 3rd c. BC. By the beginning of the 2nd c. BC an astonishing number of villages in the Fayum had gymnasia within their boundaries, and this we know from papyri and inscriptions. In the Themistou Meris in the north-western Fayum, there were 3 gymnasia within a radius of 15 km in three villages: in Philoteris, Euhemeria, and Theadelphia.[44] Perhaps, there was a certain rivalry between their inhabitants, as we have seen already

42 See above p. 60 with n. 38.

43 For the Hellenistic gymnasia in Egypt in general see Paganini 2022.

44 In Philoteris attested by archaeological excavation: see Römer 2020, 109–121; in Euhemeria attested by a papyrus (*SB* VI 8964 from the 2nd c. BC): see Römer 2019, 197; in Theadelphia attested by inscriptions: see Römer 2019, 144–145 (+2 and +3, 2nd c. BC).

a certain sense of pride in the tenure of the inhabitants of their baths. The gymnasia were founded by well-to-do settlers, who wanted their villages to become more "Greek". Membership was granted to "free men, who behaved as Hellenes and could afford to pay", as M. Paganini puts it in his *Gymnasia and Greek Identity in Ptolemaic Egypt*.[45]

Much more cannot be said. We do not have anything like the Gymnasiarchic Law from Beroia in Macedonia (from 180 BC),[46] or the Ephebarchic Law of Amphipolis (24/23 BC)[47] a text which provides us with clear rules for admission in the gymnasium of this *polis*, and which states that slaves, freed-men and their sons could not enter; also excluded are untrained people (there the idea that the gymnasium has still something to do with physical training is clear). The gymnasia all over the Hellenistic world offered facilities for physical training — including racetracks and "shower rooms" (λουτρά), meeting halls for discussions and small talk, and perhaps lecture halls. With a modern term, we would call them best "Cultural Centres" for those who felt committed to that Greek culture that combined physical and intellectual training.

So far only one village gymnasium has been excavated; it is the one in Philoteris/Watfa that the team of the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo unearthed and identified under my directorship between 2014 and 2019 (Fig. 26).[48] This gymnasium was located outside the village albeit although within view from it. Its location had been chosen carefully: next to it there extended a terrace on the natural bedrock that could be used for a racetrack, and the area was ideal to receive water from two nearby canals. Within the main complex of the building the usual facilities were found: a courtyard to hold encounters of combat sports as wrestling and boxing, a washing room for the athletes after running or wrestling etc., a main hall for the meetings of all members, at least one dining room with restricted seating for the few chosen ones of the hierarchic structure of such institutions, and something like at least one lecture hall, where performances of orations and of other texts might have been given.

What an impression did this institution make on those who were not allowed to enter? When we see the relationship of the village on the one side and the gymnasium on the other, an aspect of that village life becomes concrete: there were two groups at least which may have been sitting together in the baths, but who did not encounter in an other space very nearby.

45 Paganini 2022, 173.

46 *I.Beroia* 1; for its date see Paganini 2022, 31 with n. 39.

47 *SEG* LXV 420.

48 Preliminary report in Römer 2020, 109–121; Kopp/Römer forthcoming.

Fig. 26: The gymnasium and the race track outside the village (reconstruction by P. Kopp).

6 Final Remarks

To sum up: while the bath houses were institutions which favoured of the coexistence of the ethnically diverse population in the villages and were markers of a perceived community, the gymnasia were places of separation and open exclusion of certain groups. For those who came from different parts of the Greek speaking world, the gymnasia may have been experienced as places to converge with one another, whether they came from Thracia, Achaia or Asia Minor. Even those belonging to the upper class minority had to find their life balance in a “Third Place”. The Ptolemaic kings may have fostered gymnasia in order to form a corporate identity among the Greek speaking settlers from all over the Mediterranean.

All three of the so-called “Third Places” — the markets, the baths, and the gymnasia — were usually located on the fringes or outside of the main villages. They must have given a sense of separating oneself from the narrow alleys, the steam of the workshops, and the noise of the streets inside the village (Fig. 27). However, only the gymnasium was founded with the clear message of a separation. This is also visible in its location outside the village.

Fig. 27: A typical alley in a modern day Fayum village. Photo: I. Helmedag 2016.

Thus, life in the villages of the Ptolemaic Fayum was characterised by a centrifugal movement from inside the village to the fringes and backwards. To know more about this phenomenon, we would have to know more about the frequencies of the “Third Places”. Presumably, it was the time after work that would have attracted most users of the baths and the gymnasia. Movements towards and from the “Third Places” must have made an important part of the life of many in those villages whether they went there from the village centres or returning back from work.

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Paola Davoli

The Fayum: A Changing Landscape

Abstract: In the last years several articles and volumes have been published on Fayum's history, archaeology, and geo-morphology, with an increasing interest for the impact of climate-changes on the landscape evolution, in a multi-disciplinary perspective. The region has proved to be an interesting case-study, for its environmental characteristics and for the possibility of comparing them with a large number of literary and documentary sources. This paper will put together the available evidence and the results of recent researches to offer an overview of the eventual changes in the Fayum landscape, which in the past was quite different from what we may see today.

Keywords: Fayum landscape, climate change, geo-morphology, landscape archaeology.

1 Introduction

Landscape and environment are topics much discussed today, with good reasons, and as a consequence there is much interest also for studies on climate change in the ancient world. The present contribution aims to be a critical overview, albeit short and partial, of some studies and projects carried out on such topics during last decades, all focused on Fayum. The purpose is to bring to the attention of historians and papyrologists some crucial characteristics of the region, whose geomorphological evolution has been long debated, with conflicting results and not fully proven outcomes.

The geomorphological situation of the region and the evolution of its lakes, and therefore of the landscape, are topics of great interest to specialists of different disciplines and have been addressed in numerous publications since the *Description de l'Égypte*.[1] This is a complex subject, since many factors have contributed to its natural and artificial evolution. Attempts by research groups or individual scholars to establish a narrative of these changes have often led to contradicting conclusions. Recently, physicochemical studies on soil, water, and water microorganisms, possible indicators of changes in climate and vegetation, have also proliferated. However, until now, the study has been approached in a sectorial and not multidisciplinary manner.

1 For a geological overview Embabi 2018, 153–162.

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Reading through the vast bibliography, one realizes that the arguments are often circular. Geologists and sedimentologists base the interpretation of the core samples on the syntheses of historians, who often make use of the geologists' conclusions, without there being a real interaction and a cross-over of secure data. In this way, we continue to consider as certain data that are not certain at all.[2]

Knowledge of the region's current situation is essential to understand the complexity of the agricultural and hydrological dynamics at work today and in the past. Still, it must be remembered that the current landscape differs from the ancient one and can mislead us. The main changes in the Fayum landscape over time are due to the extent of the lake, which has changed many times by shrinking and widening with pulsations of different magnitude and duration, to the consequent extension of the cultivated and inhabited areas, as well as to the natural and artificial hydrographic system. Establishing these dynamics and dating them with a fair margin of certainty is essential to understanding the actions taken by the rulers in the various periods.

The study of the Fayum landscape should be approached in a multidisciplinary way, with new data collection campaigns in the area. A similar study, in which historical sources were examined compared to sedimentological, geological, and archaeological analyses, was recently undertaken to reconstruct the evolution of the lakes in the Mareotis, with good results (Crépy/Boussac 2021). The topic is also of particular interest for papyrological studies if the information handed down to us by written sources is to be given substance. Wide-ranging ground investigation would be indispensable, and as James Cook (2011, 20, 144–146) wrote in his interesting doctoral dissertation on the canals at Karanis, there are still few archaeological excavations of canals and hydrographic structures. Recent archaeological excavations have brought to light a complex hydrographic system in Philoteris, composed of dikes, locks, basins, canals, and wells (Kopp 2019, 343–355).

That the Fayum landscape is subject to changes even in recent times, is evident even if one limits oneself to reading the accounts of travelers from the 17th century onwards: Vansleb and Lucas (1672, 1699–1717: Davoli 2001, 354) report of a lake whose shores lapped Sanhur (-5 m). P.D Martin, an engineer who contributed to the survey of the Fayum with E. Jomard, saw dried forests at the eastern and western

2 Hassan/Tassie 2006 is often mentioned as a source of data derived from scientific investigations. This is a short and informative article in which the dynamics of the lake are reconstructed starting from data which are only stated, such as the analysis of some core samples that have never been scientifically published; nonetheless, it gave rise to reconstructions of the lake that are now widely accepted. In subsequent articles by the same authors the narrative changed, but the data was not made public for verification.

ends of the lake during the circumnavigation of the Birket Qarun carried out in early 1801; moreover, he attests that the water of the lake was brackish and still drinkable (Martin 1813, 212–213; *Description de l'Égypte*, Atlas F.lle 19–20; Fig. 28). Jomard, for his part, describes the region as one of the most fertile in Egypt, but with a cultivable area equal to about half of the current one, a sparse population and an inefficient canal system. The area to the west was completely abandoned and covered by sand dunes; El-Gharaq was deserted, as it was the southern shore of the lake and other areas. Jomard attests to the presence of only 60 villages (Jomard 1809, 80–81).

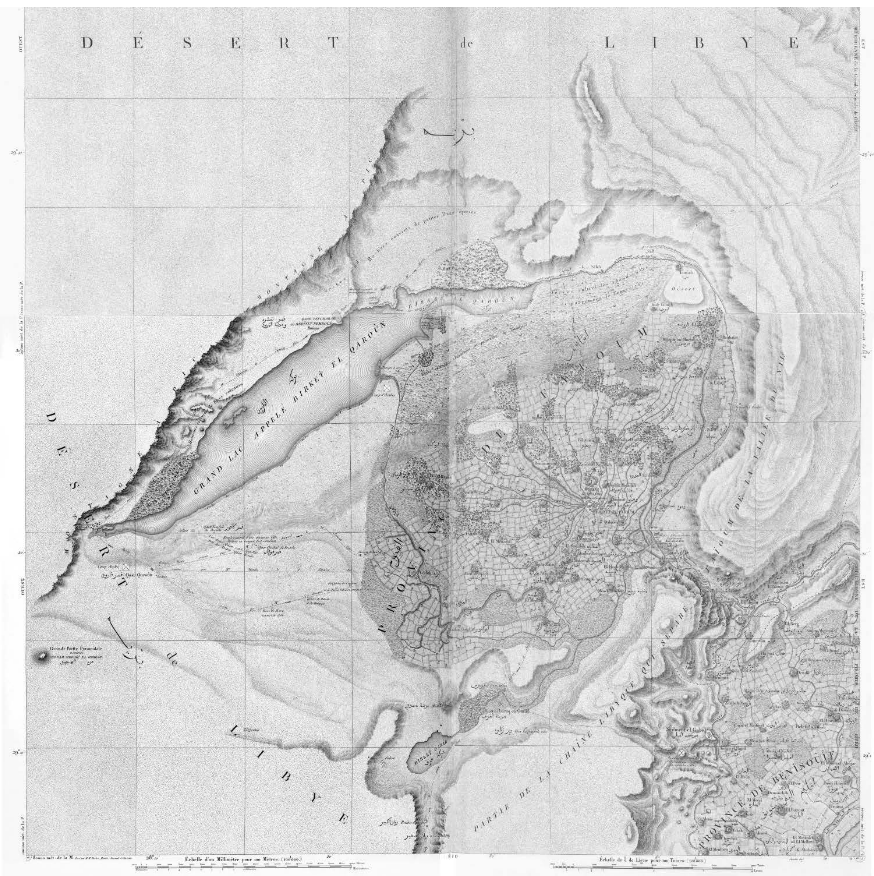

Fig. 28: *Description de l'Égypte*, Fayoum, Atlas F.lle 19+20.

Lake Qarun itself is described as brackish and not yet salty by G.B. Belzoni in 1819 (Davoli 2001, 357). Belzoni himself attests to the presence of ruins on the southern shore of the lake, which have now completely disappeared, while a group of artists following the orientalist painter Jean-Léon Gérôme, who went to the Fayum three times on hunting trips between 1856 and 1868, describe a natural environment rich in fauna that has now disappeared, including wild boars and pelicans, and a wilder countryside than today (Lenoir 1872, 87–95).

Landscape changes from antiquity to the 19th century are well illustrated by Claire Malleson, in *The Fayum Landscape,* published in 2019 (Malleson 2019). The author effectively summarizes the narrative of classical and medieval writers, travelers and scientists and highlights the perception they had of the landscape, having visited the region but also reinterpreted it in the light of previous narratives, as well as local traditions. Herodotus often strongly influenced travelers who visited the Fayum. On the other hand, Malleson's volume does not address the topic from a geoarchaeological or climatic point of view.

Today the population of the Fayum is close to 4 million, and the reclamation of desert lands has reached a scale never seen before. The fields, sometimes organized on terraces, are carefully measured, and leveled with the aid of advanced technology and efficient, invasive tools. The land is intensively cultivated and urbanized. The recent constructions of military areas, roads, quarries, and landfills have obliterated and often destroyed archaeological evidence and significantly changed the landscape. Desert tourism has also altered the surface of the desert on the fringes of the region, sometimes causing very serious damage.

Lake Qarun has reached a high level of salinity (34 g per kg) in recent years with artificially introduced marine fauna. Salinity increased rapidly during the 20th century and not only due to evaporation: in 1929 it was 21 g per kg.[3]

3 Today Birket Qarun occupies ca. 240 km^2 (40 × 6 km, depth 5–8.5 m), with a surface at -43–45 m below sea level. The lake water is currently salty mainly due to the fact that the lake does not have an emissary and the salts precipitate by evaporation remaining in the basin. The increasing salinization in the last decades is also due to perennial irrigation, intensive agriculture, and increased population. Drainage waters bring with them, as demonstrated by a recent study, salts that contribute to the constant increase in the salinity of the lake: Mahmoud et al. 2014. The lake was defined as "lagune saumâtre" in 1929 when the salt was 21 gr/kg: Hug 1929a, 66. Azadian/Hug 1931, 242 determined that the lake was a "chloro-sulfate-magnésien" type and that the salinity varied according to the seasons. According to Schweinfurth in 1884 it was "ziemlich trinkbar" (Schweinfurth 1886, 127). Salinity measurements started in 1901: Keatings et al. 2007, 263.

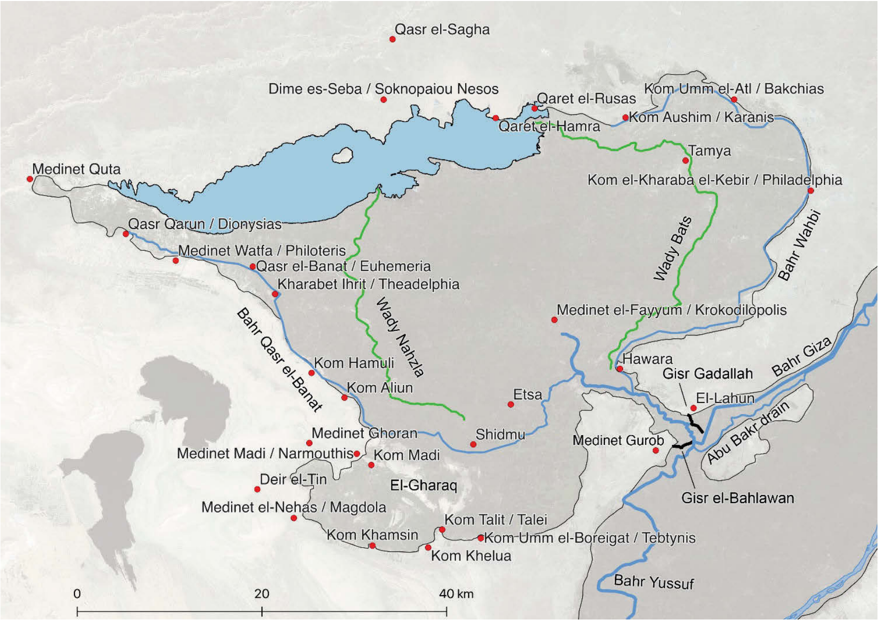

Fig. 29: Satellite image of the Fayum with the main sites and features mentioned (by B. Bazzani).

2 Geomorphological and Water Characteristics of the Fayum

The Fayum is a natural depression in the western desert, closed and fed by a single source of water, the Nile, which enters the region through its natural arm called Bahr Yussuf (Fig. 29). Today there are two incoming canals: in addition to the Bahr Yussuf, an artificial canal, the Bahr Wasef, was built in 1905.[4] It is well known that not all the water brought by the two canals enters the Fayum: a certain quantity is blocked at upstream of the locks at El-Lahun and diverted into a spillway channel, the Bahr Giza, which continues north. A second spillway channel (Abu Bakr drain), which returns the waters to the Nile, was active when basin floods were in use during the nineteenth century. This canal was reactivated in 1973 to divert excess winter water.

4 Ibrahimiya canal was realized to feed the agricultural lands of Khedive Ismail during summer months: Brown 1892, 9–11; Linant de Bellefonds 1872/1873, 548–554.

The amount of incoming water is today, and since 1885, calculated on the basis of the needs of the population and crops. An excess of water would cause a rise in the level of Lake Qarun, which occupies the lowest part of the depression. It should be remembered that the deepest point of the lake is -53 meters below sea level, while the Bahr Yussuf at the entrance to the so-called El-Lahun corridor is located at +25 m. A second lake, which was present in ancient times in El-Gharaq depression, disappeared in the last century.[5]

More attention has been paid to the history of Birket Qarun, which, moreover, is still not entirely clear. Less investigated but not less important was the role of Lake Gharaq in historical times, albeit of very limited size since the depression is much shallower: the bottom is about 2 m a.s.l.

The Fayum, with its lakes, constitutes a closed environment surrounded by the desert, comparable to that of the oases, but fed by Nilotic water and not by groundwater. Like the oasis environment, the Fayum also suffers from critical issues due to its proximity to the Saharan desert, with self-propelled dunes and strong winds blowing mainly from the north. Unlike the oases, life in the region depends on Nilotic water and silt, therefore sharing sedimentological characteristics with the Valley and the Delta. Thanks to recent sedimentological studies carried out in various locations in the Delta and the Valley, it has become clear how much the Egyptian landscape has changed over the centuries and millennia. The Fayum, like the Nile Delta, is characterized by a thick sediment of Nilotic clays covering the geological floor of the depression. This sediment was deposited on the bottom of the ancient Holocene lake, which, according to recent sedimentological studies, covered the entire depression up to an altitude of 40–44 m (Marks et al. 2016). A furthermore recent deposit was formed by the input of the Bahr Yussuf and spreads in the shape of a fan from the terrace on which the capital Shedet/Krokodilopolis/Medinet el-Fayum is located (+18 m) down to 0 m a.s.l. According to Beadnell (1905, 12), a British geologist of the Geological Survey of Egypt, the so-called Ptolemaic land reclamation was able to use this fertile soil — extending up to 40 m a.s.l. — for the new agricultural fields.

Being a closed depression, water entering the region stays there and can only leave by evaporation. It is therefore clear how important the control of incoming water was in historical times for the agricultural exploitation of the region and for the containment of the size of the lakes. The study of the history of Lake Qarun, its variations and whether it can be identified with Lake Moeris described by classical authors, has produced a vast bibliography which, however, as mentioned above, has not reached unambiguous and certain conclusions.

5 According to Grenfell and Hunt, at the end of the 19th century, there were still small lakes at the western end of the depression: Grenfell/Hunt/Hogarth 1900, 1.

Since the Napoleonic expedition, studies have been based on empirical observation and the analysis of written sources, in particular the accounts of Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo. The breakthrough in studies occurred only in the 1920s, when the well-known Gertrude Caton-Thompson and Elinor Gardner began to employ geological and archaeological investigation methodologies. More recently, deep core drilling has been carried out at different places in the region, the study and analysis of which have helped to define different types of issues, such as the causes of the lake's salinity increase, microfauna changes, and soil permeability. A much-studied aspect is also the diatoms (unicellular algae) embedded in clay sediments, which can be dated with the ^{14}C technique. They can also be identified in different types corresponding to different climatic and environmental conditions. Teams of Polish and English scientists have analyzed the Fayum lake deposits using core samples, one of which was 26 meters deep. These analyses suggest numerous environmental climate changes due to different water availability (rain and Nilotic), increasing/decreasing temperatures, and salt concentration. Five major climate changes have been identified during the Holocene (from approximately 11,000 years ago to the present),[6] in which water was alternately fresh and brackish. Unfortunately, these cores have not contributed definitively to providing a clear and well-dated history of the pulsations of the lake, in particular of the period that interests us most, from the 4th century BC to the 4th century AD, since the ^{14}C dates are not considered reliable for such a short period of time by the scholars themselves.

El-Gharaq lake has not been specifically investigated until now, nor have the two natural wadis, El-Bats (or Bahr bela-ma) to the east and El-Wadi drain (or Wadi Nazla) to the west, which convey the waters towards the lake. The history of the formation of the two wadis would be of great interest in understanding the changes in the territory since they constitute deep cracks in the Nilotic clay deposit that are difficult to cross and characterized by steep slopes that convey water rapidly towards the bottom of the depression. These wadis are 200 m to 2 km wide and 8 to 12 m deep, being real barriers in the canal network. Their nature suggests a formation caused by short and periodic alluvial activations, but no systematic geoarchaeological study has ever been conducted that could clarify the period of their formation (Butzer 2014/2015, 66).

6 Project funded by the Polish National Science Center in 2012: Zalat et al. 2017; Marks et al. 2016; 2018.

3 Nilotic Studies

The continuous mobility of the course of the Nile is now well established: it moved eastward and westward, creating islands or incorporating existing ones at the shore, as in the case of the Karnak area as well as Memphis.[7] In the Delta, the landscape has changed even more drastically over the centuries with extensive marshes that have gradually shrunk due to the constant input of sediments, the same ones that have buried natural and artificial channels. This phenomenon is particularly clear when we look at the present Delta, in which there are two arms of the Nile, and no longer seven as Herodotus describes. Even the present location of the ruins of the ancient capital Memphis, once at the apex of the Delta, has decidedly changed: the Delta's apex has moved away towards the north for several tens of km. Because of this same phenomenon, the coastline of the Delta must have been quite different from what it is today.

The Egyptian landscape in its broad outlines has certainly not changed from antiquity to the present, but if we take a closer look at individual areas and places, we notice strong changes due to natural phenomena of erosion and accumulation. Also, human action contributes to the changing landscape: the more incisive factors are the greater population density and the adoption of more sophisticated technologies.

The most dramatic and recent change in the landscape can be attributed to the conversion of the country's hydrographic system, from a hydrography based on the annual cyclicality of the Nile to a perennial one, made possible by the construction of the Aswan High Dam and the creation of Lake Nasser. Since 1971, the Egyptian territory has no longer been flooded once a year, with direct and evident consequences on the land, which lacks silt deposition (at least approximately 1 mm per year, i.e. 1 m in 1000 years), and the removal of salts from the soil. The consequences of this drastic change are also reflected in the agricultural rhythms, food production, a decrease in widespread plagues during the flood, and a complete change in the distribution of settlements in the country and the network of canals.

The process of hydrographic transformation that ended with the construction of the Aswan High Dam began with Mohammed Ali and featured Egyptian, French, and English engineers, whose technical solutions were not always successful. The land and the hydrographic system were completely modified with the excavation

7 See at least Bunbury/Rowe 2021; Bunbury et al. 2023. The evolution of the Nile and the changing landscape in Medieval Egypt is well described in Cooper 2014.

of new canals and drainage channels, and with the creation of extensive chains of irrigation basins bordered by dams or embankments.[8]

4 Perennial Irrigation

The Fayum has benefited from perennial irrigation since 1886 (Brown 1892, 96) thanks to the construction of the Assyut Dam and the Ibrahimyia Canal. According to Linant de Bellefonds (1872/1873, 57) the surface of the Birket Qarun was at -29 m in 1840, while by 1890 it had dropped to -43.30 m. This rapid change was explained by R.H. Brown, engineer of the Irrigation Department, with the fact that following the introduction of perennial irrigation the surface of the lake decreased due to intensive agriculture which since then allowed three harvests a year (Brown 1892, 7, 96).

Irrigation in this depression without an emissary works by gravity starting from +25 m above sea level, the altitude of the El-Lahun locks. This system is and was very sensitive to inaccuracies (Hopkins 1999, 375–376). The numerous inefficiencies of the Egyptian and Fayum hydraulic system are well described by the engineers who dealt with the country's hydrographic conversion such as Linant de Bellefonds (1872/1873) and Sir C.C. Scott-Moncrieff (1910), who headed the Hydrographic Department. It is clear from the Ottoman documents, from the cadastral reports, and from the studies carried out in the region prior to the creation of the perennial irrigation system, that the territory and the canal network have undergone drastic changes, with continuous modifications.[9] In fact, the dams built to retain water on the fields during flooding also had the effect of retaining Nilotic sediments, which over time raised the level of the soil. The change in slopes due to natural deposits is a constant in reclamation systems and they result in continuous changes in the location and depth of distributary and drainage canals. The archaeological investigation recently carried out by J. Cook (2011, 147–148) of the ancient canal near Karanis also found the continuous change of its route.

The 1878–1888 cadastral map of the Fayum shows a very small agricultural region, limited within the bounds of natural channels.[10] According to C. Audebeau (1918, 186, 191), the works carried out by the Irrigation Survey between 1885 and 1917

8 Anthropic activity has profoundly affected the use of the different areas of Egypt and the Fayum: the changes caused by the new irrigation system can be appreciated from the cadastral maps, from the geographical maps created during the 19th and 20th centuries, and from the publications of the Irrigation Department.

9 Linant de Bellefonds 1872/1873; Lyons 1908; Brown 1908; Scott-Moncrieff 1910; Mikhail 2010.

10 Lyons 1908, Plan XVII; on the beginning of the cadastral surveys cf. *ibid*.

improved water management and expanded the cultivated area. The Bahr Qasr el-Banat on the west side of the depression was dug in 1900, and since then new settlements have been built near the ancient ones, abandoned in Late Antiquity (Davoli 2015, 101). The same occurred along the eastern perimeter of the region, where the new Bahr Wahbi was excavated between 1900 and 1907, partly following the old Bahr Wardan. The latter, described by Al-Nabulsi (governor of the Fayum in 1245) as a silted canal,[11] appears to have been active in the Hellenistic-Roman period.

In the 1960s, the government began researches on soils and water to improve cultivated land and food production.[12] In 1963, the soil maps made in collaboration with the F.A.O. were published. In the Fayum, investigations focused on desert territories to understand in which direction artificial irrigation and reclamation could be expanded. An example of new reclaimed lands is the so-called Kom Aushim Shooting Club area, north-east of the Fayum, with three artificially created lakes (Hussein et al. 2013). In the 1963 map (El-Fayum-Cairo Sheet VI) the area was classified as "III medium suitable". In this area Caton-Thompson and Gardner found a system of canals and buildings from the Ptolemaic and Roman periods which suggested the presence of an artificially reclaimed area.[13]

Important hydrographic changes were carried out in the 1970s. The creation of the Wadi Rayan lakes in 1973 introduced new irrigation parameters: by means of an artificial connection with the hydrographic system of the southern Fayum, it made it possible to increase the water entering the region and to dispose of around 30% of the water drainage, which flowed into Lake Qarun through Wadi Nazla, into the new Rayan lakes (Wolters et al. 1989, 106). In 1984, further drainage was activated towards Wadi Rayan (Wolters et al. 1987, 161), and a new Egyptian-Dutch project started with the aim of improving water distribution for a more uniform supply in the region.

It is therefore clear that the territory has undergone heavy changes until very recent years, due to natural causes and anthropogenic intervention. Lake Qarun has changed, widening, and shrinking: the progressive reduction of its extension assumed by Caton-Thompson and Gardner (1934) has long been outdated. It is extremely difficult to establish the reasons for ancient pulsations, whether of natural or artificial origin. Therefore, studies on the Nile's water flow in various periods are of extreme interest and theoretically can help us understanding the extent of

11 Rapoport/Shahar 2018, 47.

12 Achthoven et al. 2004. Maps 1:100,000 July 1963, UAR High Dam Soil Survey Project, in cooperation with United Nations Special Fund (FAO).

13 This and the surrounding areas were re-investigated by Cook 2011 as part of the URU Fayum Project of the University of Los Angeles directed by W. Wendrich.

the artificial interventions implemented during the 12th dynasty and the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Here we enter the scientific field of those who study the African lakes from which the Nile originates. Ancient sources on the Nile floods are not numerous until the Islamic era. The Nile's water flow is due to rainfall and is therefore affected by climate variations, which are periodic but also long-lasting. Climate change's influence on ancient civilizations is still too underestimated, especially when studying areas in precarious ecological balance, such as the oases. The comprehension of the activity of the primary source of water in the Fayum, the Bahr Yussuf — its accessibility by the Nilotic water at its starting point, and at the entrance at El-Lahun — would also be crucial for our understanding of the regional hydrographic dynamics.

Sedimentological studies in various areas of Egypt and the Near East seem to agree that a major climatic shift toward greater aridity occurred around 2100 BC (the end of the Old Kingdom) and would have led to the crisis of entire civilizations in North Africa and Asia.[14] This would have been produced by the change in the North Atlantic circulation, and therefore, the monsoons became weaker over these areas. Some scholars believe that there was a lowering of the water of Lake Qarun during the Late Predynastic and Early Dynastic (Butzer 1976, 36; Hassan 1986), and a further decrease around 2100–2000 BC (First Intermediate Period) in which different sources attest to a strong political and economic crisis. Recovery in the Middle Kingdom appears to be linked to high levels of flooding of the Nile as evidenced by rock inscriptions near Semna (Bell 1975). The so-called first reclamation of the Fayum is ascribed to the 12th dynasty, but what this project consisted of is not yet known. The presence in the region of imposing monuments erected by the rulers of this dynasty, as well as two of their pyramids significantly at the entrance to the region in El-Lahun and Hawara, suggested an artificial intervention, which some scholars today define as "valorization" of the region,[15] rather than a reclamation: an elegant way to express our complete ignorance on the methods of intervention on the territory implemented in this period.

14 It is commonly accepted that among the reasons of the collapse of the Old Kingdom state there were years of low Nile floods. In that period (ca. 4200 BP) famines and climate crises also occurred in the Eastern Mediterranean. Around 3000 BP the vegetation in the Nile Delta testify to aridity (which also coincides with the fall of the kingdom of Ugarit and famines in the kingdoms of Syria and Babylon). Bernhardt et al. 2012 state that between 4200 and 2000 calibrated BP the Nile was characterized by moderate but not constant floods. Stanley et al. 2003, 395–402 argue on the base of analysis of some core samples from the Delta that the fall of the Old Kingdom was due to climate change. A gradual desiccation of Egypt occurred from 6000 BP (Predynastic) to 4300 BP (Old Kingdom).

15 Veymiers 2016, 141. Also C. Malleson 2019 argues our complete ignorance of what type of intervention was carried out by the Pharaohs of the 12th dynasty in the region.

According to an interesting and well-documented article on the changing hydrographic landscape of the Bahr Yussuf valley published by Harco Willems and collaborators, there are no direct sources testifying the nature of the activities occurred in the 12th dynasty in the region. However, the toponymy and few remains suggest which kind of activities may have been carried out.[16] The presence of the two pyramids of Sesostris II and Amenemhat III near the dam Gisr Gadallah is significant, according to the authors, as is the toponym Ra-Henet, or "mouth of the canal" which identifies El-Lahun since the Middle Kingdom. These would be the only evidence attesting hydraulic works in the Middle Kingdom, in which two large dams were built, the Gisr Gadallah to the north and the Gisr el-Bahlawan south of the canal near El-Lahun. These were probably equipped with locks, later also controlled from the site of Gurob in the New Kingdom. Hawara is a toponym deriving from the Egyptian *Hwt-wret*, already known to designate a legal institution in the Old Kingdom. Hawaret el-Maqta and Hawaret el-Adlan are two settlements closely connected to the El-Lahun dams and can suggest, according to the authors, the presence of settlements or institutions controlling the locks (Willems et al. 2017, 332). This study does not address the topic of the lake's width and the problems relating to the altimetry of the region. If the construction of the locks at El-Lahun by the rulers of the Middle Kingdom can be accepted on an inductive basis, it remains to be ascertained what the condition of the lake was: it is generally taken for granted that the reclamation action undertaken in the Middle Kingdom and then early Ptolemaic times intended to decrease the size of the lake and drain the waters that formed swamps and marshes.[17]

In this context, the term reclamation means agricultural reclamation, or a set of operations aimed at making a territory productive. These actions are not necessarily limited to the drainage of water and marshes but can consist of infrastructure works of a different type, such as water regulation and distribution systems. In fact, if the Fayum had been an arid region at the end of the First Intermediate Period, with a reduced or even absent lake, the work of the rulers of the Twelfth Dynasty would have been centred on the artificially regulated use of the newly available water and aimed at preventing the depression once again became an immense lake leaving no room for agricultural use. The commonly accepted opinion, which however should still be scientifically demonstrated, sees the creation of a new lake whose shores were at +14 m, which therefore also entirely covered El-Gharaq. On the

16 Willems et al. 2017, 332.

17 Butzer (2020, 106), a well-known expert on the hydrography of Egypt, puts forward the hypothesis that the lake of the Middle Kingdom reached +15 m and had a smaller size compared to previous eras. However, Butzer does not explain how it was possible to lower the lake level.

shores of such a lake are the monuments and settlements known until now and dated to the Middle Kingdom. The largest agricultural area would thus have been limited to the highest step, on which the capital is located, to the El-Lahun corridor and to the south-eastern end of the region.

Yet we do not have certain data to establish what the width of the lake was during the periods that preceded the Hellenistic era: according to some scholars, a certain stability around +14 m is probable, which also needs to be demonstrated given that it is known how the flow of the Nile was not constant. The existence of a high lake for ca. 1500 years would have resulted in a continuous deposit of lake sediments, to which an input of aeolian sand coming from the north must be added. In these lake conditions — at +14 m above sea level — it is difficult to imagine that the two natural wadis (Wadi Nazla and Wadi Bats) could have been formed before the Middle Kingdom, since they would have been eroded and leveled again by the high lake. Geologists believe that (Embabi 2004, 179) these deep ravines originated on the surface of the clay deposit (the Fayum delta) after a recession of the lake. The wadis cut through the Nilotic sediments and reach the Eocene limestone in some places. The soil eroded by this or these events must have formed fan-shaped accumulations in the southern part of the lake. Great damage and washing away of the soil certainly occurred during the extraordinary floods of the Nile: in the last two centuries some of these events have been recorded as catastrophic (for example the breaking of the El-Lahun dam in 1819).

Determining when these wadis were formed is important for our understanding of the natural and artificial hydrographic system in use during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, since they constitute real barriers in the canal system, but they are also formidable collectors of water due to their depth and slope. For this reason, dams were built to prevent the water from draining rapidly into the two wadis: these are massive walls of stone and fired bricks built near Tamya and Miniet el-Heit (or Etza-Shidmu). Ottoman documents from the 18th century also mention a dam protecting El-Gharaq and numerous works carried out to repair and maintain the dam system (Mikhail 2010, 6–10), including those at the entrance to the Fayum (Gisr el-Bahlawan and Gisr Gadallah). It is therefore also important to establish the dating of the construction of the dams, which is not easy due to numerous renovations and restorations that took place until recent times.

The history of Wadi Bats and its Tamya Dam also affects understanding the northern route of the ancient perimeter canal that preceded the Bahr Wahbi. This canal passes west of the Hawara pyramid cutting through the labyrinth, a Roman settlement, and a 6th century church, following the route of another canal already present in the K.R. Lepsius' cartography (1843) and called Bahr Sharkhiya. Bryan Kraemer (2007; 2010), who has studied the history of this canal in detail, believes that the Ptolemaic canal, the Kleon Canal, must have passed for orographic reasons even further west of the pyramid, very close to the Wadi Bats, which constitutes a danger for the capture of water towards the lake. Precisely because of this wadi, the Bahr Sharkyia was excavated, perhaps between the 8th century and 1240, further east, cutting through the labyrinth. As I underlined at the beginning, there is a lack of studies that allow us to date the formation of the deep Fayum wadis, which were certainly created due to a very shallow lake and one or more violent Nilotic floods. The history of the Bahr Sharkyia may therefore suggest that the Wadi Bats did not exist in Ptolemaic period, and this would have allowed the ancient Kleon canal to pass much further west of the pyramid and the present canal. If so, we would have to admit one or more catastrophic floods before the inspection of Al-Naboulsi (1240), but after the construction of the so-called Kleon Canal. According to Willems (Willems et al. 2017, 332) the dam near Hawaret el-Maqta, which closed the entrance to Wadi Bats, was built in Roman times.

5 The Hellenistic Period

After these premises, let us turn to the Hellenistic period, in which we know that the Fayum became one of the most productive agricultural regions in the country. The impressive papyrus documentation mentions numerous settlements and canals, of which we have archaeological evidence for only a few of them. According to Katja Müller, there were 147 settlements in the 3rd c. BC; 118 in the 2nd c. BC and 61 in the 1st c. BC (Müller 2005, 114). These data seem to testify to a change in the population distribution and therefore in the agricultural landscape during the Hellenistic period. Papyri attest to low floods of the Nile in the reign of Cleopatra VII (Casanova 1984, 192), which seem to be proved by levels of abandonment, at least in some Fayum settlements, and perhaps by the interruption of public works, such as the construction of temples whose decoration remained unfinished. A new flourishing period occurred during the principate of Octavian Augustus, in which the settlements were repopulated and public works resumed. The canal works carried out in this period throughout Egypt are generally interpreted as a necessity caused by state negligence in the previous period. More likely, however, they became necessary due to a series of low Nile years. Whatever the cause, the result does not change and we can agree with J. Cook that in Egypt, and in particular in the Fayum, the development of the irrigation system was not a single event, but a continuous process in which not only annual maintenance was needed (attested by papyri), but sometimes a variation of their course was necessary, to adapt the flow of the water to changes in the orography (Cook 2011, 79).

In Bart Van Beek's important volume (2017) on the archive of Kleon and Theodoros little space is dedicated to the geographical context. The study of the archive is particularly interesting and points to a series of activities under the responsibility of the two engineers, such as those at the stone quarries,[18] in addition to the works connected with the hydrographic system.[19] In the introduction the author briefly traces the history of the lake which occupied the Fayum depression from 7500 BC to the beginning of the Ptolemaic period. However, he does not specify the sources that he has used to draw data on the height/width of the lake over very long periods. The result is a sort of summary of a history of the territory, which now seems to be well established and free of uncertainties. According to Van Beek, the lake would have reduced in size very quickly at the beginning of the Hellenistic period due to natural evaporation, and following the construction of a dam which blocked the incoming water at El-Lahun. According to this narrative, the water level dropped to -2 m, and therefore the lake assumed its current size.[20] Needless to say that the shores of the present lake are at -45 m, so well below -2 m.

On these bases Van Beek then moves on to the study of Ptolemaic land reclamation which intended to expand agricultural areas for well-known needs. He suggests that the reclamation — the drainage and water distribution works — were carried out by Greek engineers. As D. Thompson already noted,[21] Greek engineers had extensive and consolidated experience in Boeotia (Lake Kopais) and in Macedonia (Philippi and Pella areas).[22] Unfortunately, the papyrus documents from the archive of the two Greek engineers Kleon and Theodoros dates back to a time when the reclamation works had already been carried out (256–237 BC) and therefore does not explain what the reclamation actually consisted of. The narrative that

18 Van Beek 2017, 26 claims no stone quarries in the Fayum exist. However, it is well known that the plateau around the depression was used as a calcareous sandstone quarry to build temples and tombs: see at least Minaya 2012, 104 and Fig. 37.

19 Van Beek 2017, 17 agrees with G. Garbrecht and H. Jaritz (1990) in believing that Lake Moeris was a seasonal (from October to February), artificial lake located in the Hodd el-Tuyur or el-Mala'a basin, artificially created with retaining walls equipped with locks. Lake Garaq was connected to this reservoir and served in case of excess water. The Etsa-Shidmu stone wall, dated by Garbrecht and Jaritz to the 1st–2nd c. AD, probably replaced a Hellenistic earth dam, similar to the Gisr el-Bahlawan and Gisr Gadallah, both of the Ptolemaic period. According to the two German authors, the earth dam was broken by high water in the reign of Claudius (41–54 AD) or Nero (54–68 AD) although there are no sources that can attest to the event. See also Erbich 2020, 68.

20 A lake at 0 and -2 m is hypothesized by Hug, Ball, and Schwartz (1927, 1939, 1950): cf. Davoli 1998, 356.

21 Thompson 1996, 43–59; 1999, 107.

22 On the reclamations carried out by Philip and mentioned by Theophrastus, *De causis plantarum* 5.14.4–6, cf. Hammond 1989, 152–154.

emerges from the archive in question concerns the maintenance of water infrastructure, the organization of work and administration. Very significant is the fact that these papyri were reused in the cartonnages of the Gurob necropolis, that is at the entrance to the Fayum and near El-Lahun locks. The papyri mention four locks (*thurai*) at El-Lahun, and locks on other canals, on whose opening and closing the flow of water and the irrigation of the fields depended (Van Beek 2017, 26). Such sluices, it is said in the texts, could be raised vertically to let water pass through. This is a very important acquisition, since the presence of a lock necessarily implies control of the water which can be diverted into different channels. A dam without locks, on the other hand, involves the creation of a reservoir upstream of the dam itself, something that never seems to have occurred upstream of El-Lahun.

As Van Beek points out, in addition to canals, great importance is played by dykes, to hold back water during flooding, and sluices. The careful study of the Greek vocabulary of the archive reveals the use of several terms that point to dams having different functions, as *choma*, used to retain water, or *gephyra*, a raised bank that acted as a passage at the time of flooding. Also mentioned are “new dams”, an “old dam”, and “common dams”, perhaps built by locals as opposed to government ones.

To understand the extent and type of works carried out at the beginning of the Ptolemaic period, it is necessary to know the conditions of the lake at that time, but I am not aware of any studies or data on the 30th dynasty lake. Recent discoveries of structures dating back to the 26th dynasty in Bakchias and north-west of Soknopaiou Nesos (Marchand 2012), would seem to indicate the presence of a high lake on whose banks there were settlements, or the presence, already hypothesized by Cook, of an eastern perimeter canal that passed through Bakchias. So far, no canals have been identified that could reach Soknopaiou Nesos. Herodotus’s testimony also seems to refer to a large lake. However, this evidence and account date back to the 7th and 5th centuries BC, and cannot be considered representative of the situation existing at the end of the 4th century BC.

According to Fekri Hassan (Hassan 1986, 495) the lake naturally shrank at the beginning of the Ptolemaic period due to a low level of the Nile, attested by a lowering of the water level of Lake Rudolf. If this were the case, the land reclamation project would have benefited from a natural reduction of the lake. The intervention therefore may have been concentrated at the entrance to the Fayum on the Bahr Yussuf, to control the incoming water and convey it through artificial canals to increase the agricultural area. Such a hypothesis seems more realistic than the artificial reduction of the lake in a short time, as is commonly stated.[23] An artificial

23 The recurring idea that the lake was artificially reduced is not based on any evidence: Cook 2011, 65 ff.

reduction of the lake can only have occurred through the closure of the Bahr Yussuf, that is the diversion of the water northwards, so that the lake would not be continuously fed and would have been reduced by evaporation over a long period of time. There is no doubt that Greek engineers were capable of great reclamation works, such as that, above mentioned, of Lake Kopais in Boeotia. In that plain, scholars have identified artificial works dating back to the Mycenaean era (13th c. BC), as well as to Hellenistic and Roman times. However, the reduction of Lake Kopais made use of the possibility of draining water through cracks in the rock to the subsoil. As with the Fayum, Lake Kopais was the subject of repeated interventions until very recently, and scholars find it difficult to date the individual works and understand their efficiency. Other impressive hydraulic works were also carried out in Greece, such as the excavation of the Khephalari underground canal (resembling a *qanat*), attributed to Crates, Alexander the Great's engineer.[24] The Fayum, however, is a closed environment that is difficult to drain from the inside, although we may be reminded of Herodotus, who believed there was an underground canal that conveyed water from the lake into the gulf of Sirti. Such a drain has never been found, and its existence appears very unlikely; but it certainly resembles the system implemented in Lake Kopais and at Khephalari.

In 2003 a project was launched by University College London: "Environmental Change and History of Water Management in the Faiyum Depression during the Holocene", directed by F. Hassan and R. Flower (Hassan/Tassie 2006). Drill cores were carried out in several places, and articles examining their contents were published by different teams, focusing on different fields, as limnology, salt concentration, diatoms, and more.[25] However, as we have already mentioned, the geoarchaeological and historical results are presented but not discussed and fully published (Hassan/Tassie 2006; Hassan et al. 2011).[26] According to Hassan, the lake would have been at a height of +10 m in the MR, then at +22 m in the New Kingdom, at -5m in the Ptolemaic period, to reach -20 m in the Roman era. However, these conclusions, as already noted, have never been demonstrated but only announced. On the contrary,

24 A recent multidisciplinary project focuses on the dynamics and history of Lake Kopais: Kountouri et al. 2013. See also Mamassis et al. 2015. On hydrographic works in the Pella area cf. Greenwalt 1999, 168.

25 See e.g. Flower et al. 2006; Keatings et al. 2010; Abu-Zied et al. 2011; Flower 2016. Here I mention only the articles that can give clues to the historians about the topic.

26 Hassan et al. 2011 should be used with cautions: some data are not correct, and several assumptions are not demonstrated by evidence. The mentioned results of the geological analysis in Hassan 1986 are not from drill cores. In the web site of the project there is no detailed information nor an effective scientific publication of the research results: https://www.geog.ucl.ac.uk/people/emeritus/roger-flower/research/qarun (last visit August 2020).

the sedimentologists who are part of the same project have concluded that the certain dating of the core deposits is only possible up to the 18th century of our era. Another project obtained different data from the analysis of a 26 m deep stratigraphic core. According to these analyses, the lake in the Ptolemaic period would have been at 0 m (Marks et al. 2016 and 2018).

These hypotheses do not consider the altitudes at which the Greco-Roman settlements known to us would be located compared to the hypothesized lakes. On the other hand, other scholars have theorized lakes of different sizes depending on the periods, due to the presence or absence of dated ruins. In both cases these are method errors, as I have already demonstrated (Davoli 2001). In fact, the ruins of the ancient settlements have undergone different modes of destruction over time and for different causes, not least the growth of the lake's water level at different periods and up to 1840.

El-Qara el-Hamra and Qaret el-Rusas are two settlements submerged by the waters of the lake, that have been recently studied by Hans Barnard and the team from the University of Los Angeles (Barnard et al. 2015): the first is located on the north shore of Birket Qarun at -39 m, while the second, which was already known, is on a limestone promontory at the eastern end of the lake at -41 m. According to Barnard, the two settlements were abandoned after a catastrophic rise of the lake which occurred during the 4th century, as the pottery found seems to testify. The inhabitants probably moved to Karanis, which saw considerable expansion southwest of the kom in the 4th century AD. The excavation of this area of Karanis involved some very degraded buildings with ceramics dating from the 4th to the 6th century AD. According to this study, in the Ptolemaic era the lake must have been at -37 m and in the Roman era at -44 m (Barnard et al. 2015, 67). The rise of the lake in the 4th century AD may have been caused by a strong flood that broke the dams and poured into the lake, rapidly raising its level. C. Römer, who studied the western area of the Fayum, hypothesized that the 4th century crisis recorded in that area was due to the breaking of the Etza dam caused by an anomalous flood. The water would have flowed rapidly towards the lake through the Wadi Nazla and since then it would no longer have reached the canals of the western area of the region, leading to the abandonment of the settlements. Particularly attractive is the hypothesis that it was the same catastrophic event that led to the breaking of the El-Lahun and Etza dams, with the consequent increase in the lake level and the submergence of the two settlements of El-Qara el-Hamra and Qaret el-Rusas during the 4th century. However, upon closer archaeological examination, the ceramics found in the recent excavations carried out in El-Qara el-Hamra have been dated between the 2nd c. BC and 2nd c. AD (Ringheim 2019): the abandonment of the site would appear to precede the supposed flood of the 4th century AD. According to

Ringheim, the settlement was a Hellenistic foundation, dating back to the 2nd century BC, and thus testifies to a low lake (at least -39 m) already in this historical period.

6 The Bahr Yussuf

The study of the hydrographic system of the Fayum cannot be separated from that of the Bahr Yussuf, in Antiquity the only source of water in the region.

An important multidisciplinary study, directed by Harco Willems, of the course of the Bahr Yussuf up to the Fayum found that the water from the Nile flood which poured into the Bahr Yussuf valley did not all flow into the Nile at the end of the flood period. Part of it descended towards the north, following the natural slope of the Bahr Yussuf valley up to the Fayum, which therefore received both the flood of the Nile and the water from the outflow of the areas located south of the Fayum (Willems et al. 2017, 323). This project also studied the dam system in El-Lahun (Gisr el-Bahlawan and Gisr Gadallah), considering it essential to understand the ancient hydrographic situation of the region. In addition to the two above mentioned dams, the existence of a third dam, no longer preserved, was assumed, which blocked the flow of runoff waters between El-Lahun and Gebel Abu Sir. The surviving dams are embankments (sometimes covered in stone), 28 m wide at the base and 8 m at the top, approx. 3.25 m height (reaching +29.25 m). In this area the land towards the Fayum is approx. one meter lower than that of the other side of the dams. The system of double locks currently active in El-Lahun, which dates back to the beginning of the 19th century, is already attested in documents from the 11th century, but must have also been present in ancient times. According to the authors, in Greco-Roman times there must have been multiple locks in the Hawara area, which had the function of diverting excess water from the Bahr Yussuf. Without a system of locks the artificial hydrography of the Fayum could not be operational (Willems et al. 2017, 135). The canals branching off the Bahr Yussuf and fanning out towards the region had to be already equipped with locks in more ancient times. A lock still exists, southwest of Hawara: it controlled the water flowing into the Hodd el-Tuyur (Mala'a basin, a plain north of Tebtunis), as found by Garbrecht and Jaritz while investigating the function of the Itza-Shidmu wall.[27]

27 According to Garbrecht, the wall allowed the formation of a lake, a reservoir that could allow a second harvest a year in this area, and which the author identifies with Lake Moeris: Garbrecht 1987.

The Lahun system of dams and locks was therefore meant to convey the water into the main Bahr Yussuf canal and then from this into branch canals with different directions. This complex system also had the function of controlling the amount of water entering the region and avoiding excessive flooding: a spillway channel was needed for this purpose from the moment of their construction.

Such a canal is present in the cartography of Egypt by Ibn Hawqal (943–988 AD) (Fig. 30),[28] and according to G. Goyon (1971, 148–253) it was created at the beginning of the 1st dynasty (at the time of Menes). This would be the canal called *Iter-aa* in Egyptian texts, the "Great Canal", and then the Memphis Canal, created when the hydrography of the Memphite area was organized. It served, according to Goyon, to irrigate the extreme western side of the Delta, but also as a waterway to reach the ports of the Giza pyramids. It started from Bahr Yussuf near El-Lahun and reached Lake Mareotis. Goyon's hypothesis is well supported by ancient, medieval and modern sources. The existence of such a spillway since the 1st dynasty implies that well before the Middle Kingdom there was a way to control the waters that flowed inside the depression. In his work on the canals of the north-eastern area of the Fayum, J. Cook believes that there was no drainage of the lake in the Ptolemaic period, and that the engineers Kleon and Theodoros were only administrators of a pre-existing system, in continuous evolution and maintenance; this system could date back to the Old Kingdom, as Caton-Thompson and Gardner (1937, 268 ss.) already hypothesized, after having found the remains of a canal dated to that period near Bakchias (Cook 2011). Unfortunately, the changing landscape in this area due to recent land reclamation works prevents any further investigation.

Finally, we cannot trust the account of Herodotus, and others after him, who claim that the water accumulated in the lake after the flood, flowed from the Fayum towards the Nile for six months of the year: this account is unrealistic, as the depression is closed. The story, however, takes on a less fanciful aspect, as it considers the existence of a spillway canal already before the Hellenistic period, the above mentioned *Iter-aa* of the Egyptian texts, which conveyed the post-flood runoff waters, captured by the Bahr Yussuf valley, towards the north.

28 Ibn Hawqal, *Manuel de géographie* (end of 10th century; copies of two 16th century maps after a manuscript of 1443–1444), manuscript BnF Arabe 2214, f. 11v–12; https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc12992d, last viewed 8/30/2023. See also Ducène 2004.

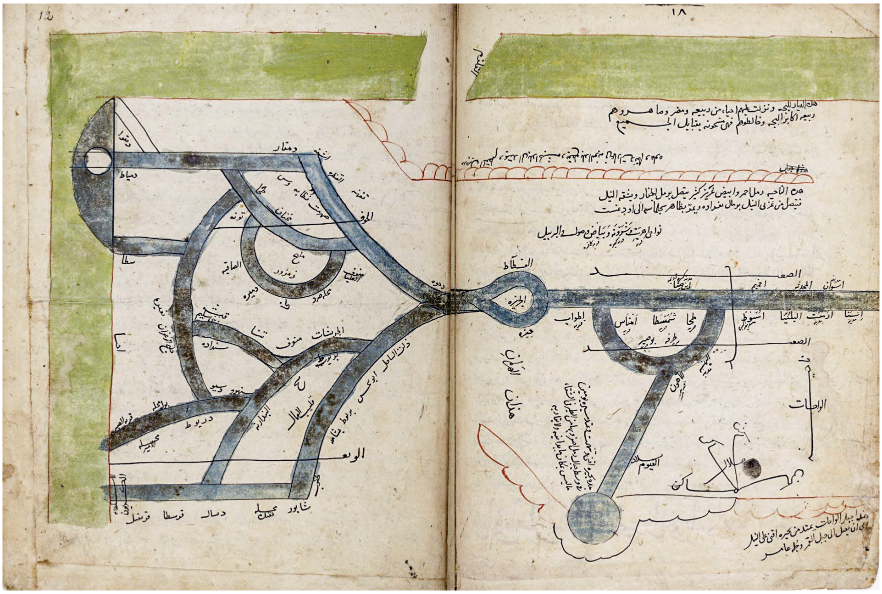

Fig. 30: Ibn Hawqal's map. Image of public domain: source gallica.bnf.fr / BnF (https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84061557, last access July 8th, 2024).

7 Final Remarks

As already stated, much remains to be done to achieve a scientifically based, historical picture of the changes in the Fayum landscape. The extensive bibliography on the topic reveals a varied picture of methodologies adopted, which have led to different results, demonstrating the importance of addressing complex phenomena through a multidisciplinary approach. Good examples are the works on Lake Mareotis and on the Bahr Yussuf valley which I have discussed.

Recent works have provided some reliable data, useful for targeted and multidisciplinary research, that can determine the width of the lake (Figs. 31–36): the identification of new settlements — such as those in the area of Soknopaiou Nesos and Bakchias, in Medinet Quta (Davoli 2018), the one in Qara el-Hamra, dated between the 2nd BC and the 2nd AD and located at -39 m, as well as the presence of Qaret el-Rusas at -41 m — may offer useful evidence for the presence/absence of the lake at certain altitudes that must be combined with other sources of information. It would be important to be able to have a certain dating for the foundation and abandonment of Qaret el-Rusas before venturing into hypotheses on the dating of supposed catastrophic event that caused the lake to increase in level with the consequent rapid abandonment of the sites located at ca. -43 m on the shore. However, given the existence of these settlements, and perhaps others not yet identified, there can be no doubt that the lake in the Hellenistic and Roman periods had an extension like the current one, as already hypothesized by Caton-Thompson and Gardner. Therefore, I believe that the proposed reconstructions of lakes at different altitudes (0, -2, -5, -17 m) in the Greco-Roman period are not reasonable, unless we consider them short-lived pulsations.

As already underlined, the type and extent of the works carried out during the 12th dynasty and the Hellenistic era are not known, but they certainly concerned primarily the control systems of the water entering from El-Lahun. If, as now suggested by various scholars on mutually independent data, at the beginning of the Old Kingdom, or even during the 1st dynasty, there was already an albeit rudimentary and partial control of the waters of the Bahr Yussuf, with a spillway channel that allowed excess water to be diverted, we should reconsider many of the most deeply rooted beliefs relating to the reclamations of the subsequent eras.

In conclusion, the current Fayum region is the result of a stratification of natural and artificial actions: a sort of palimpsest. As demonstrated by the extensive bibliography, it is difficult to establish the natural causes and types of artificial interventions in various historical periods and how these have gradually changed the hydrographic structure and consequently the landscape and the settlement network.[29] The call for caution in assuming yet unproven solutions is a must.

29 On a methodological perspective cf. Butzer 2011.

The lake at different elevations based on the present geomorphology of the region (by B. Bazzani, based on ASTER GDEM 2, a product of Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) and NASA)

Fig. 31: Lake at 20 meters below sea level.

Fig. 32: Lake at 15 meters below sea level.

Fig. 33: Lake at 0 meter above sea level.

Fig. 34: Lake at 10 meters above sea level.

Fig. 35: Lake at 15 meters above sea level.

Fig. 36: Lake at 22 meters above sea level.

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Part II: **Ethnic Interactions**

Bernard Legras

Landed Property and Neighbour Relations in Ptolemaic Egypt

Abstract: This study aims to examine neighbour relations in Greek papyrological documents as they relate to Greek and Hellenistic law. It focuses on the city of Alexandria where the legislator implemented measures to restrict the rights of real property owners (measures that are considered in the light of Athenian law: Solon's laws, see also the Law of the Twelve Tables), and the *chora* where Ptolemaic law also governed relations between neighbours as a way of avoiding potential disputes. Documentation is sourced from legal records conserved in *enteuxeis* and *prostagmata*. These documents afford the opportunity to examine relations between Egyptians and Greeks, and between women and men.

Keywords: documentary papyri, Hellenistic Egypt, neighbours, social history.

Neighbour-related questions are integral to social science research. The subject has long been explored by legal practitioners, legal historians, historians, philosophers, sociologists, architects, urbanists, politicians, psychoanalysts, novelists and filmmakers. This study therefore starts with a methodological overview of recent neighbour-related research for historical periods other than antiquity. From the earliest written laws, law in antiquity organised neighbour relations from the point of view of both people and landed property. This legislation, which had a moral connotation, aimed to assert the responsibility of owners, who were required to avoid abnormal annoyance to their neighbours and abuse of their property rights.[1] This paper studies neighbour relations in Greek papyrological documents as they relate to Greek and Hellenistic law.

1 See Carbonnier 1990, 275; David 1994, 333–337. The absence of individualist and absolute land ownership in Pharaonic Egypt has a bearing on neighbour-related questions: see Menu 1982, Chapter 1. Le régime juridique des terres. It is worth noting the non-universality of laws on relations between neighbours, which do not exist in traditional sub-Saharan African societies.

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1 Neighbour Relations: an Historiographical Perspective

Although research into the modern and contemporary periods (18th to 20th centuries) is dominated by the work of legal practitioners and legal historians, the range of questions explored in this field has considerably widened in scope. Researchers now take a "sociocultural" approach to these questions, in addition to the traditional legal consideration of individual rights and responsibilities.[2] In a stimulating book published in 2016, philosopher and psychoanalyst Hélène L'Heuillet explores the conditions of human coexistence created by the relationships we form with our neighbours. Focusing on the early 21st century, in her introduction she notes that,

> The neighbourhood is our condition: we are all neighbours now. Not only, as Rousseau wrote in *Emile*, is there no more fallow land, but Robinson Crusoe has disappeared from the childhood imagination — there are no more deserted islands. Although, as Kant remarked, the Earth's roundness makes neighbours of us all, developments in transport and the growth of the global population, which increased fourfold in the 20th century, particularly after the Second World War, have transformed this *de jure* truth into factual data (...).

In her introduction, Hélène L'Heuillet not only refers to the philosophers Emmanuel Kant, Emmanuel Lévinas and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, but also the sociologists and political scientists Loïc Blondiaux, Achille Mbembe and Martha Nussbaum, psychoanalysts Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan and Charles Melman, geographers including Jacques Lévy and Armand Frémont, and historians such as Georges Duby, Marc Vacher and Michelle Perrot.

She believes that "neighbour-related questions are central to contemporary ethical and political issues" and regrets the fact that "neighbour relations (are) the poor relation of (contemporary) political and moral thinking".[3] For her, a neighbour is fundamentally a person with whom we have a spatial relationship of adjacency or proximity. Neighbours are therefore a common unit. The question is naturally to understand how we determine this unit. For H. L'Heuillet, it is "more than a street and less than a town".[4] This relationship expresses the power of place, which results in a relationship different to friendship, and requires us to encounter the other and

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2 See Vacher 2007, 7, who, at the time his book when to press, found a single exception in the extensive research done in this field: Arnauld Cappeau, whose thesis, defended in 2004 and published in 2010, included findings from the work of Marc Vacher.

3 L'Heuillet 2016, 9.

4 L'Heuillet 2016, 9.

otherness. A neighbour is not a friend; we have a different way of interacting with them: we welcome a friend into our home, but we have a more fleeting interaction with a neighbour, usually outside the home.

The proximity of a 'neighbour' can be extremely varied, from absolute intimacy, which Michelle Perrot describes as historically female, "not only between cousins and sisters, but also between women living on the same landing, women at the washhouse, and the female friends you make at boarding school,"[5] to the horror of the denunciation and massacre of neighbours in 20th-century Europe, during the pogroms and the Second World War, or the genocide in Rwanda, and modern suicide attacks, which are also part of a war between neighbours.[6] There is a sliding scale between these two extremes, from mutual support to mistrust, spying and gossip. This space exists between the private and the public sphere within a specific framework revealed through variable living spaces, between town and countryside, individual homes and collective housing, with in this case neighbours below, above, and next door,[7] giving rise to a type of urbanism in which we "brush against" one another, as studied by Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie in the *Histoire de la France urbaine* directed by Georges Duby.[8] The social chain that defines a physical line of separation, such as a wall or partition, between neighbours, can also be a psychological chain for human beings who, despite their close proximity, live in another social, economic, mental and religious space.

For the historian Marc Vacher, the status of neighbour in Lyon on the eve of the French Revolution, and the attribution of this status, "fluctuated (…) according to multiple criteria not found in dictionaries or legal documents: the criteria of distance and geographical proximity, of course, but also 'socio-affective' criteria, which are more difficult to determine".[9] One of the advantages of research in this field are the documents, the legal archives, which he describes as "the most extensive available in terms of the information they provide on daily life". By counting mentions of the word neighbour and by examining its function and its uses in judicial procedures, he notes "the possibility of determining its deep meaning". He demonstrates how a neighbour might live in an adjacent house or close to other inhabitants. In Latin, in the first case, the neighbour is a *vicinus*, and in the second, a *proximus*.[10]

5 Perrot 1998, 51.

6 L'Heuillet, 16–17. See also Jérémie Foa 2021 who believes that the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre of French Protestants "took place between neighbours".

7 L'Heuillet 2016, 21.

8 Le Roy Ladurie 1981, 439–481.

9 Vacher, 22.

10 Vacher, 23–29, in particular 27.

We know that neighbours and neighbourhoods are also a source of inspiration for literary and artistic works. *Tre Piani*, a film by Nanni Moretti (2021), set in Rome and based on a work by Israeli novelist Eshkol Nevo,[11] which was released at the same time as the symposium, and the novel *The Yacoubian Building*, which takes place in Cairo, by Egyptian novelist Alaa al-Aswany (2002),[12] are just two examples.

Greek-Roman antiquity offers ample scope for reflection on neighbour-related questions. Philosophical thought offers fertile ground: Aristotle, for example, asserts that solitude makes for a difficult life, while a desirable life is shared with a few close friends;[13] Marcus Aurelius, a Stoic, saw cities as universal neighbours, since man is a citizen of a city "of which other cities are like households".[14]

2 Neighbour Relations in Egypt under Greek and Hellenistic Law

In a legal papyrology seminar at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris, Joseph Mélèze Modrzejewski once observed that the highly legal theme of neighbour relations in Greek papyrological documents with regard to Greek and Hellenistic law would make a fine subject for a thesis.[15] None of his students or those attending the seminar took up his suggestion, although Andreas Helmis did address the subject of neighbour relations in his doctoral thesis, sadly unpublished.[16]

In this paper, we confine ourselves to neighbour relations between people without ties of kinship as they relate to landed property, including both real property and purely agricultural holdings. We leave to one side disputes over inheritance and family matters, and those related to sales, rental and debt collection where neighbour status is not explicitly mentioned in the documents. It focuses on the city of Alexandria where the legislator implemented measures to restrict the

11 The book *Chaloch Komot*, published in Israel in 2015, was translated into French by Jean-Luc Allouche in 2018 (Éditions Gallimard).

12 The book *Imrat Ya'qubyan*, published in Cairo (Éditions Merit) in 2002, was translated into French by Gilles Gauthier in 2006 (Éditions Actes Sud). Egyptian director Marwan Hamed made a film adaptation of it the same year.

13 See Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 8–9, in part. 9.10.

14 M.Aur., *Med.* 3.11: "… τίνα δὲ ὡς πρὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον πολίτην ὄντα πόλεως τῆς ἀνωτάτης, ἧς αἱ λοιπαὶ πόλεις ὥσπερ οἰκίαι εἰσίν".

15 This suggestion, made verbally, does not feature in the annual *Rapports* published by Joseph Mélèze Modrzejewski.

16 Helmis 1986, in part. 63–67.

rights of real property owners, and the *chora* in which Ptolemaic law also governed relations between neighbours as a way of preventing potential disputes, as attested in *enteuxeis* and *prostagmata*. These types of documents also allow us to address the question of relations between Egyptians and Greeks, and between women and men.

The challenge of compiling a study corpus is made considerably more difficult, however, by the fact that the sources are often silent on the degree of geographical proximity between the individuals in question. A useful example is the affair recounted in *P.Enteux.* 86[17] relating to witness intimidation. The papyrus records a petition addressed by a woman, Tetosiris, against a man, Apollodoros, who contests her ownership of a house (*oikia*). The case was undoubtedly judged by a court in Krokodilopolis. (The editor, Octave Guéraud, refers to a *koinodikion.*)[18] The object of dispute, the house, is in the village of Berenikis Thesmophoru. Tetosiris wants to summon a *hekatontarouros klerouchos* (l. 7) and Egyptians (l. 9) to prove her right to the property. Apollodoros has gone to great lengths to dissuade them from testifying in her favour, including the use of violence. Tetosiris notes that Apollodoros also threatened the victims with torture, *apotumpanismos*,[19] and eviction from the village.[20] We learn that some of the witnesses were the builders of the house, brick carriers and masons (ll. 12–13). Apollodoros was clearly a man of influence and able to instil fear by himself or using henchmen. But who was he? What was his connection with Tetosiris? Why was he interested in the house in Berenikis Thesmophoru? Was he a neighbour, a *vicinus* whose property adjoined hers and who wanted to expand his own landed property, or a *proximus* who lived in the village and had his eye on another property? Was he a resident of another locality who wanted to get his hands on a house in a village where he did not live? Was this locality far from Berenikis Thesmophoru? We can only give hypothetical answers to these questions. As Apollodoros is clearly well-informed on the people around Tetosiris, and Apollodoros is physically present in the village, since he personally threatens the *hekatontarouros*, they were most probably neighbours in the same village. The affair is a clear example of ethnic tensions between Greeks and Egyptians, since Tetosiris, an Egyptian woman, makes a connection between the fact that her witnesses were Egyptians and "intimidated and withdrew without testifying".[21]

17 *P.Enteux.* 86, Magdola, 26–27 February (?) 221 BC; see also below, 147–152.

18 Guéraud 1931, 210.

19 On this form of capital punishment, see Legras 2011.

20 *P.Enteux.* 86, 6: ἐγβαλεῖν ἐκ τῆς κώμης.

21 *P.Enteux.* 86, 9–10: πα]ρὰ τὸ δὲ εἶναι τοὺς μέλλοντάς μοι μαρτυρ[ε]ῖν Α[ἰγ]υπτίους, εὐλαβηθέντε[ς] ἀνεχώρησαν [ὥστε] μὴ μαρτυρῆσαι. See Lewis 1986, 60–61; Volt 2011, 333–340.

3 Neighbour Relations in Ptolemaic Alexandria

Our study is on firmer ground with the legal texts related to neighbour relations from the *nomos politikos* of Alexandria[22] dating from the mid-3rd c. BC.[23] Legal texts 1, 2 and 3 relate to "Planting, building, and excavation" (ll. 79–107); legal texts 4 and 5 to "Cutting and cleaning of ditches". They relate to the urbanised space (ἄϲτυ, ll. 89–90) and the agricultural *chora*. The term "neighbour", γείτων, appears in legal text 4 (l. 108). The legal texts are based on a right of ownership given concrete form in space by boundary markers (ὅροϲ, l. 87) separating one plot from another plot with a different owner (ἀλλότριον χωρίον, l. 85). As a whole, three very different situations in which neighbours enter into contact emerge from these texts: communicating information, agreeing on shared work, and legal disputes. Legal texts 2 and 3 set out the legal procedure launched by a neighbour whose rights have been infringed. Legal text 2 (ll. 99–102) on planting and digging the earth, conserved in full, states as follows: "If anyone plants [contrary to these rules, he shall dig it up within five] days from when the injured party complains, and if he digs it up, he shall make it level again. But anyone who does not [act according to the] regulations shall be liable to judgment for the damages, and the injured party shall be allowed to remove the building and plantings and to level out the digging without penalty…".[24] Legal text 4 (ll. 107–111) on the cutting and cleaning of ditches requires that anyone wishing to dig a ditch or to extend an existing one shall "inform the neighbours of it" in order for them to contribute a share towards the expenses. It emphasises the need to disclose the works in order to reach an agreement on their execution: "And he shall cast up half of the excavation [earth] on each side" (l. 109).[25] The law then provides for the possibility of a disagreement leading to a dispute and legal proceedings: "If anyone does not wish to contribute, the person cutting the ditch or digging it up shall cast up [the dirt] for his side onto the land of whichever one is willing (to

22 *P.Hal.* 1, ll. 79–114 (= *Jur.Pap.* 55).

23 On "Nachbarrecht", see Partsch 1920, 45–54.

24 Transl. Bagnall/Derow 1981, 174, slightly amended. See also French translation Velissaropoulos, 1972, 49–50. Greek text: (…) ἐὰ[ν δὲ παρὰ ταῦτα] φυ-|τ[εύϲηι, ἐξορυϲϲέτω πέντε ἡμερ]ῶν ἀφ' ἧ[ϲ] ἂν π[ρο]είπηι ὁ |ἀδικούμενοϲ, ἐ[ὰν] δὲ ὀρύ[ξη]ι, ἀνομοιού[τω]· ὁ δὲ |μ[ὴ ποιῶν κατὰ τὰ γεγραμ]μένα ὑπόδικο[ϲ ἔϲ]τω τοῦ βλάβουϲ, ἐξέϲτω δὲ [τ]ῶι ἀδικουμέν[ω]ι |κ[αθαιρεῖν τὰ ᾠκοδομημέ]να \καὶ/ ⟦η⟧ πεφυτ[ευ]μένα καὶ ἀνομοιοῦν τὰ | ἑωρ[υγμέ]να ἀζημίωι [ὄ]ντι.

25 Trans. Bagnall/Derow 1981, 174, slightly amended. See also French translation Velissaropoulos, 1972, 49–50. Greek text: τοῦ δὲ χοὸϲ τοῦ ἐξορ]υϲϲομένου τὸ ἥμυϲυ ἑκατέρωϲε ἀναβαλλέτωτοῦ.

contribute), and if successful in a suit he shall exact twice [the expense]".[26] Legal text 5 (ll. 113–114) likewise places an emphasis on joint work shared between consenting neighbours for the cleaning of a ditch: "If a ditch on someone's own land [is choked (?)…] they shall contribute to him for the cleaning of the ditch… each according to his share, and anyone who does not contribute shall be [liable to the person doing the cleaning] for thrice the expense if he is defeated in a suit".[27]

The law of Alexandria therefore authorised neighbours to demand the removal of illegal planting or construction, and to initiate proceedings according to the general procedure of δίκη βλάβης (l. 102). The law also provided for a judicial appeal in the event of a dispute between neighbours in relation to the cutting, extending and cleaning of ditches. Unfortunately, there are no judicial archives on the inevitable disputes arising between neighbours in the city of Alexandria or the surrounding countryside.

On the other hand, these legal texts have been studied as part of comparative legal research and work on the transfer of rights in antiquity. In fact, we know that these sorts of neighbour relations were taken into account in a law of Solon, and this law was said to have influenced the Roman Law of the Twelve Tables. This is why Gaius incorporated the Solonian law into the *Digest*.[28] Neighbour obligations caught the attention of the Roman legislator very early on; this legislation limited, like the Greek and Hellenistic legislator, the rights of owners, who would not have enjoyed absolute ownership.[29] There are some differences, however, between the laws of Solon and the law of Alexandria where the texts include parallel provisions on construction and planting (Legal text 1 of the *P.Hal.* 1, ll. 84–99).[30] The laws of Alexandria make a distinction between the city and the countryside, proscribing different distances for each, which reflects the development of ownership rights in a context of growing urbanisation during the Hellenistic period. From an urbanistic and architectural point of view, Catherine Saliou placed the law of Alexandria within the context of other data known for the Hellenistic space, in particular the

26 Trans. Bagnall/Derow 1981, 174, slightly amended. See also French translation Velissaropoulos, 1972, 49–50. Greek text: ὃϲ δ[ὲ] ἂμ μὴ βούλητ[α]ι ϲυ[μ-]|βα[λέϲθαι, τὸν μὲν χοῦν τὸν κατ' αὐ]τὸν ὁ τέμνων ἢ ἀνάγων εἰϲ τὸ | χωρίον ἀναρριπτ[έ]τω εἰϲ ὁπότερον ἂ[ν] | βο[ύληται, τοῦ δὲ ἀναλώματοϲ τὸ δι]π[λ]οῦν πραξά[ϲ]θω δίκηι νικήϲαϲ.

27 Trans. Bagnall/Derow 1981, 174, slightly amended. Also French translation Velissaropoulos, 1972, 49–50. Greek text: ὧι δ' ἂν τ[ο]ῦ αὐτοῦ χωρί[ο]υ τά-|φρ[οϲ — ca.12 –, ϲυμβαλλέϲθωϲ]αν αὐτῶι εἰϲ τὴν ἀνακάθαρϲιν τῆϲ | τάφρ[ου]…κατὰ μέροϲ ἕ[κ]αϲτ[οϲ] | τ[ῶι δ' ἀνακαθαίροντι ὑπόδικοϲ ἔϲ]τω ὁ μὴ ϲυμβαλλόμενοϲ τριπ[λ]αϲίου τοῦ ἀναλώματοϲ, ἐὰν δίκηι | νι[κηθῆι].

28 *Dig.* 10.1.13. See Ruschenbusch 1966, 91–92, n°F66a.

29 See Saliou 1994, 75–76; Gaudemet/Chevreau 2009, 227–228.

30 See Paoli 1949, 505–517; Seidl 1962, 2; Velissaropoulos 1972, 54.

Astynomoi Law from Pergamon.[31] The *nomos politikos* of Alexandria appears to offer a choice, for new constructions, between the construction of a free-standing building, and the use of an existing wall to support the new building (*P.Hal.* 1, ll. 195–197).

This law of Alexandria aims to reconcile two requirements: the right of owners to exploit, improve and increase the potential of their property, and the right of neighbours to benefit from the integrity of their own property undisturbed.

4 Legal Archives on Neighbour Relations: the *Enteuxeis*

The *enteuxeis* of the Arsinoite nome, dating from the 3rd century, is an outstanding group of sources for creating a typology of neighbour relations. For the purposes of problematization in this study, we can group these documents into three categories each represented by several documents. To these petitions we can add the six *prostagmata* of Ptolemy II on the requisition of lodgings and the institution of *stathmoi* requiring the inhabitants of the country, in this case Egyptians, to billet travelling soldiers or public servants in their homes, and to become *stathmouchoi*.[32] However, the study can clearly be widened to include other disputes between neighbours, such as aggression and unlawful entry.[33]

Ownership disputes
1.1. *P.Enteux.* 68. Dispute over a boundary between two *kleroi*
1.2. *P.Enteux.* 69. Illegal encroachment on land
1.3. *P.Enteux.* 75. Violence against a steward of *kleroi*

Disputed division of property
2.1. *P.Enteux.* 65. Division of a vineyard
2.2. *P.Enteux.* 66. Division of land

Usurpation of lodgings by *klerouchoi*
3.1. *P.Enteux.* 11. Pasis wronged by Geroros

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31 Klaffenbach 1954; Saliou 1994, 75, notes that the text from Pergamon “does not include a definition of what it is to be neighbours”.

32 *C.Ord.Ptol.* 5–10.

33 See *P.Enteux.* 80. Incursion into an Isieion; *P.Enteux.* 81. Expulsion from a house; *P.Enteux*. 77. Aggression in a house; *P.Enteux*. 79. Violence from a house.

3.2. *P.Enteux.* 12. Bithys wronged by Hellanikos
3.3. *P.Enteux.* 13. Asia wronged by Poêeis
3.4. *P.Enteux.* 14. Dizaporis wronged by Deinias and "an Egyptian"

We have only selected documents that enable us to evaluate the degree to which people are neighbours, near or more distant, and the social status of the neighbours.

1. Group 1 provides an initial insight into the diversity of neighbour relations. No. 68 is a conflict involving *klerouchoi*. The petitioner is a Thracian orphan whose father had received, in addition to his *kleros*, land to cultivate. He claims that his neighbour, the *klerouchos* Zoilos, encroached on his land and cut wood on a dyke the orphan says belongs to him. The petitioner requests the involvement of a *geômetrês* to assign appropriate boundaries between the two *kleroi*. They are clearly immediate neighbours, or *vicini*.

This is not the case in no. 69 where Hediste, a Macedonian, is wronged by Demetrios, a doctor who lives in Karanis. Demetrios brings bricks and digs foundations to build on a plot of land she owns by contract of sale. Both protagonists live in Karanis, but are they immediate neighbours or simply *proximi* — people living in the same locality?

No. 75 is a petition by a steward of *kleroi*, Krateuas, attacked by shepherds as he tried to chase them and their ewes off a plot of land under his supervision. This affair relates to property violation, but the owners of the *kleroi* are not named. They are unlikely to live on the land. The information provided on the geography of the places is also sketchy: the village where the incident takes place is not named; the exact location of Alabanthis, where the shepherds are from, is not given. It is most certainly in the *meris* of Herakleides; perhaps to the north of this district.[34] The grazing of livestock requires a degree of nomadism. In the six Ptolemaic texts in which farmers complain of the encroachment of animals onto their land, the home of the shepherds is mentioned as being in the same locality in three of the texts; the three others are in a village different to that of the farmers.[35]

2. Group 2 also highlights the problem of localising people involved in property disputes. The problems experienced by Marres son of Petosiris wronged by Herakon, Hippon and Peitholaos, concerning the division of a vineyard, fail to shed light on the nature of their relationship as neighbours, or the name of the village where the land is located (no. 65). Maron, heir to the rights of his son Euktos to a plot of land held on a 99-year lease (a quasi-property!) is in conflict with Theodosios, the co-tenant. The two plots of land share a common boundary and the petition relates

34 TM, Fayum Project Text, *s.v.* Alabanthis.
35 Helmis 1986, 63–64.

to their equitable division. Both men are therefore neighbours with a common boundary and share a common path giving access to both spaces.

3. Group 3 is the easiest to analyse, because it relates to all requests made by inhabitants complaining about the abuse of *klerouchoi* in relation to a *stathmos*. The farmer Pasis says he has been wronged by the *hekatontarouros* Geroros, who evicted the farmer and his animals from his house. However, Geroros already has a *stathmos* in the village. This neighbour may not be living next to his house, but he does live in the same village, and he was now living in his home! (no. 11).

Forced occupation of a house is also a factor in the petition (no. 12) made by the *klerouchos* Bithys against Hellanikos, who occupies the *stathmos* of Bithys. It is impossible to know if Hellanikos is the original owner and wanted to reclaim his property or another *klerouchos*. The second hypothesis may be confirmed by the onomastics of Hellanikos. The dispute takes place in Sebennytos in the Faiyum. The petition addressed by Asia, widow of the *klerouchos* Machatas, is an example of the division of a house between the original owner, Poêeis, and the *klerouchos* (no. 13). She complains that she is unable to complete a wall in the part of the house she occupies. The house is in the Arsinoite village of Pelousion. The fourth document is a petition by the Thracian *klerouchos* Dizaporis who lost his house due to the malpractice of the *epistatês* Deinias. We do not know if this house was a *stathmos* on a mortgaged house that the lender seized at the end of the mortgage, or if the mortgage was in favour of Dizaporis who may have been unduly evicted. Dizaporis describes the individual who evicted him as Egyptian (l. 7).

Other texts can be included in this corpus, such as *BGU* VI 1244, of the 9 January 225 BC, from the Herakleopolite nome.

Front
(Hand 2) Ἀπολλ[ω]νίωι ἐπ(ιστάτηι) φ[υλακιτ(?)]ῶ̣ν̣ | ι̣ζ \⟦α⟧/ ἀποβιαcθῶcι ὑ̣π̣ὲ̣ρ̣ οὗ [...] | παρὰ Τοκολ̣λ̣[ούc]ι̣ο̣ς̣ | (ἔτουc) κβ | Ἀθὺρ κγ.
(Hand 1) Ἀνικήτωι οἰκονόμωι | παρὰ Τκολλ[ο]ύcιοc | ζυτοπο̣ι̣[ο]ῦ κ[ώ]μηc | Φνεβίεωc καὶ̣ Π̣[ε]ενcχων| ἐνεcτηκυίαc [μ]οι κρίcεωc | ἐπὶ τῶν τὰ πρ[οcο]δικὰ | κρινόντων [χ|ρ]ημα-|τιcτῶν πρ[ὸc] Πᾶcιν | καὶ̣ [...] c̣ ̣θ̣έαν [τ]ὴν | μητέρα αὐτῶν περὶ | οὗ̣ ἐ̣πενεν̣η̣ν̣ό̣χ̣α̣c̣ι̣ν̣ | κατ' ἐμοῦ καὶ τῶν παρ' ἐμοῦ | φόνου ἀγενήτου παιδίου | πεντεκαιδεχημέρου | καὶ διὰ τούτ[ο]υ̣ τῶν ἐγκα-| λουμένων εἰcβιαcαμένω̣ν̣ | εἰc τὴν οἰκίαν μου, ἣν καὶ | τυγχάνω ἠγορακυῖα | παρὰ τῶν πριαμένων | αὐτὴν παρ' αὐ̣τῶν, νυνὶ δὲ | εἰcωικικότων Ἰcιάδα | τινὰ δι' ἑαυτῶν, | ἵν' εἴ πωc δύναιντο διὰ | παρευρέcεωc ε̣ἰ̣κ̣α̣c̣τ̣ῆ̣c̣ | [γ]ε̣ί̣νεcθαι τὴ̣ν̣ ἐ̣ν̣ο̣ί̣κ̣η̣c̣ι̣[ν], | [ἀ]ξιῶ cε cυντάξαι γράψ[αι] | Ἀγαθοκλεῖ ἀποc̣τε[ῖ]λ̣[αι] | τὴν Ἰcιάδα ὅπωc ἀ ̣[...] η̣ | καὶ̣ β̣ί̣α̣ι̣ ἐ̣κ̣χ̣ω̣ρ̣[ήcη]ι̣ μ̣ο̣ι̣ | τ̣ο̣ύ̣τ̣ο̣υ̣ γενομένου [ὦ τε-]|τευχ̣υ̣[ῖ]α τ̣[ῆ]c βοηθεία̣c. | [εὐ]τύχει.
Back
(Hand 2) Ἀπολλωνίωι.
(Hand 3) (ἔτουc) κβ Ἀ[θ]ὺ̣[ρ] κδ̣ | π̣α̣(ρ') Ἀ̣π̣ο̣λ̣λ̣ω̣(νίου) | [Ἀ]γαθ[ο]κλεῖ ἐπ(ιστάτηι) Φνεβιέωc | τοῦ δ̣[ο]θ̣έ̣ν̣τοc Ἀνικ̣ή̣τωι | τῶι *vac.* ὑπομνήμα[τ]οc | ἀναπεμφθέντοc δ' ἐφ' [ἡ]μ̣ᾶ̣c̣ | [...]

γραφο̣ῖ̣ς ὑπόκειτ[αι] | τὸ ἀν[τίγρα]φον \κ̣α̣ὶ̣ τῶν συντάξεων [...] /, κ̣α̣τ̣α̣πεμφθή[τω] | ο̣ὖ̣ν ἡ ̣ [...]
η ἐ̣π̣[ὶ] τ̣ὴν Ἰσιάδα, | ἵνα περὶ τῶν γεγραμμένων | ἐπισκεφθῆι ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀνι̣κή̣το̣υ̣.
Traces 1 line

Translation
Front
(Hand 2) To Apollônios, *epistates phylakitôn*. 17 [?]. Let them be evicted [?] as regards what [we have received] from Tkollousis. Year 22, Hathyr 23.
(Hand 1) To Anikètos, *oikonomos*, from Tkollousis, brewer from the village of Phnebieus and Peenschôn I had a trial against Pasis and [...]thea, their mother, before the *chrèmatistai* who adjudicate in matters that concern the (royal) revenues, concerning the baseless charge of the murder of a slave fifteen days ago, (a charge) which they leveled against me and my agents. On account of this, the accused broke into my house, which I happen to have purchased from the people who bought it from them. And now they have moved a certain Isias into it through their own agency, so that perhaps somehow they may be able, through a similar pretext, to establish habitation. Wherefore, I ask that you please write to Agatoklès to send Isias, so that she may [...] and give way to me by force. For if this happens, I will have met with your assistance. Farewell.
Back
(Hand 2) To Apollônios
(Hand 3) Year 22, Hathyr 24. From Apollônios. To Agathoklès, *epistates* of Phnebieus. Below lies a copy of the petition given to Anikètos and sent to us. Therefore, let [...] be sent to Isias, so that an investigation about the events recorded may be carried out by Anikètos.[36]

The petition addressed to the *oikonomos* Anikètos was sent for opinion to the *epistates phylakiton* for examination, who sent it to the *epistates* of the village of Phnebieus.[37] It concerns a property dispute between the inhabitants of the same village of Phnebieus. Tkollousis, the village brewer, initiated proceedings against Pasis and their mother, [Pasi]thea, concerning the murder of a baby slave fifteen days before. The case was brought before the *chrematistai* (ll. 9–10). The accused decide to take revenge against the brewer by moving a woman called Isias into her house. By doing so, they intend to lay claim to the house, which Tkollousis bought from unnamed individuals, who themselves bought it from Pasis and [Pasi]thea. Although we do not know the outcome of the case, it is interesting in several ways: it sheds light on a certain mobility in property ownership, attests to the existence of female property owners, and highlights the interweaving of legal action and revenge in this Herakleopolite village.

36 Translation Bauschatz 2013, 86–87 (slightly modified).
37 On this procedure see Bauschatz 2013, 87.

5 Conclusion

As a whole, these documents reveal the tensions between legal principles and the practices of certain inhabitants of the Ptolemaic kingdom.

1. The law of Alexandria on neighbour relations are consistent with the aims of civil peace, including respect for property rights, and the punishment of its abuses, found elsewhere in Greek and Hellenistic law and in Roman law.

2. The *enteuxeis* reveal tensions that should obviously be seen within a broader context of respect for the order imposed by the Ptolemaic State and the drift towards disorder, as revealed by individual injustices.

There is an obvious aspiration on the part of *klerouchoi*, holders or not of *stathmoi* legitimately awarded by the king, to put down roots in the country, even to the detriment of the people living in the villages before the Greco-Macedonian conquest. These tensions shed light on the determination of Hellenes to supplant the Egyptians, and their readiness to claim *stathmoi* as property. These documents dating from the 2nd century provide insight into the evolution of the *kleroi* towards an economic more than a military institution, although they continued to fulfil the latter role until the end of the dynasty.[38] The documents also reveal the existence of women owners in the *chora*, and women were just as ready to defend their rights as men, and to appeal to royal justice in order to do so.

3. The *enteuxeis* revealed, as is natural, the only cases of disputes between neighbours, but the status of these neighbours is yet to be examined. The term *geitôn* which appears in Alexandria is absent from this corpus. These texts most often bring to light disputes between immediate neighbours, *vicini*, separated by a wall in the same house or a fence between properties. However, the geographic distance between neighbours in the same village is often unclear. These texts also suggest disputes could be with people coming from outside, and the degree to which they may be considered as neighbours is not explicitly mentioned in the petitions. Are they occasional neighbours, people who had one unfortunate encounter, or people already in contact with the petitioner? The study should therefore also take into account the movements and mobilities that create *promixi*. It is therefore part of a global approach to history, at the crossroads between several inter-disciplinary questions.

38 See Bussi 2021, 56–70.

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Bilingualism and Translation in the Early Ptolemaic Administration

Abstract: Bilingualism has been often studied in private contexts, as a marker of the multiculturalism of an individual or a family. Such view has been extended to the study of administrative practices in Hellenistic Egypt, where officials needed to use two languages. But if a 'family' bilingualism can be assumed for the last two last centuries of the Ptolemaic rule, it is not obvious that the same might happen during the third century BC, when bilingual families were not so many. The aim of this paper is to examine the issue of administrators' bilingualism during the first part of Ptolemaic bilingualism from a new perspective, starting from new or neglected documents.

Keywords: bilingualism, Hellenistic Egypt, documentary papyri, ethnic interactions.

1 Introduction

Antonio Ricciardetto recently wrote a very inspiring paper on a papyrus belonging to the archive of the *katoichoi* of the Serapeum.[1] Since its first publication, this papyrus has been considered crucial to the question of bilingualism in the 2nd c. BC:[2] it is a letter, sent by a woman to a man of her family, Hephaistion, congratulating him on learning Egyptian in the hope of working with a physician. As the woman's letter was written in Greek, Rémondon thought that Hephaistion was a Greek who was learning Egyptian to act as an interpreter between the doctor and his slave students. But, as Antonio Ricciardetto wrote, "il est connu que le bilinguisme était surtout le fait d'Égyptiens, et que les Grecs ont eu bien des difficultés pour apprendre la langue des pharaons."[3] Following M. Vierros,[4] he demonstrated that Hephaistion was more likely a member of a bilingual family who learned to read and write his mother tongue in order to teach it. His parents may have chosen to give

1 Ricciardetto 2020, 93–125.

2 See esp. Rémondon 1964. For a history of the publication of the document, see Ricciardetto 2020, 93, n. 2.

3 Ricciardetto 2020, 114.

4 Vierros 2012, 51.

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him a Greek education first, but in order to work with an Egyptian physician, he needed to know his *enchoria grammata* perfectly.

The difference between the two interpretations is very important because it reminds us that in Antiquity, as today, people were not necessarily able to read and write their mother tongue, even though they could speak it. Hephaistion was certainly not a child, but a young man who took his future in his hands. Education was not limited to children: young adults could improve their knowledge of Greek or Egyptian in order to gain a better position. This was especially true in the administration: administrators had to understand all people, whether Greek or Egyptian. They also had to write Greek properly if they wanted to make a career in the service of the King at the middle or high levels of the administration (toparchy and nome).

The issue of the bilingualism of the administrators and the need for translation is very noticeable in the first c. of the Ptolemaic reign, when society does not seem to be as multilingual as in the subsequent centuries.[5] The Arsinoite Nome is the best place to study this question, since more papyri from the 3rd c. BC have been discovered in the Fayum than in the other nomes of Middle Egypt, the area where the Greeks were settled at the beginning of the Ptolemaic reign.

The aim of this work is to propose a preliminary study of the bilingualism of the administrators of the early Ptolemaic administration in the Arsinoite Nome (3rd c. BC–early 2nd c. BC) and to consider their use of biliteracy. Since we cannot hear ancient people talking and since we can never be sure that a man or woman who sent a petition or letter also wrote it, the best approach might be to concentrate on studying the skills of the scribes themselves.[6] Working on different types of documents (e.g. *enteuxeis* and their drafts, administrative reports) has led me to focus not only on the author of the document but also on the scribe, not necessarily the same person. This investigation, which focuses on a few cases of study, remains a work in progress.

5 For a study of bilingualism in Ptolemaic society, see the seminal works by Peremans: Peremans 1964 and 1971.

6 It is necessary to distinguish between the author of a text, the man or the woman who intends to send a document, and the writer who holds the pen or the pencil. The word writer is usually used for both, as in Torallas Tovar 2015, 28, which uses the word to mean either the author or the sender of the document: "it is impossible to know if the writer was mainly a speaker of Greek or Egyptian, if he was literate or illiterate, or whether he was using an interpreter." Although the meaning in this sentence is obvious, this is not always the case, and this common practice can lead to confusion. In this paper, the word scribe will be used for the writer of the document and the word author for the speaker or the man or woman who intended to compose the text.

Since not all the people living in Egypt in the 3rd c. BC could have been bilingual, the need for some experts in both languages must have been great in the administrative offices.

2 Detecting Bilingualism in the Ptolemaic Administration

2.1 The Administrators' Ethnic Background

When Alexander the Great conquered Egypt, he didn't have the strength to replace the old administration with a new one. The most obvious change concerned the language of the central administration: Greek replaced Aramaic.[7] At the lower levels of administration (toparchy, village) Egyptian scribes remained in place and continued to use the Egyptian language. The nomarchs also remained in office for a few years, until they were replaced by Greek *strategoi*.

The ethnic origin of the administrators can only be deduced from their names, since the father's name is generally omitted, especially in Greek texts, and their *patris* or *origo* is never given. Some examples illustrate the existence of the practice of double names since the 3rd c. BC, even if it was not very common. For example, Semtheus, son of Teos, alias Herakleodoros, worked in the *logeuterion* of Phebichis (Herakleopolite Nome) from 229 to 226 BC.[8] This Egyptian probably chose a Greek name because of his work in a bank office. Was he from a multicultural family? Did he learn Greek to gain access to the administration? Because of his functions and his double name, it is quite certain that he was able to speak and perhaps write in both the administrative languages of Ptolemaic Egypt. However, it is rare to know both names of an administrator bearing a double name, as administrators would sometimes use their Greek name and sometimes their Egyptian one.[9]

In the early Ptolemaic administration, people with Egyptian names worked in the *grammateia* (as royal scribes at all levels), whereas administrators with Greek names were appointed to higher levels and in the enforcement forces. For example, the *basilikoi grammateis* had mostly Egyptian names, whereas the *strategoi* had Greek names.

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7 For a useful overview, see Clarysse 2017.

8 Clarysse 2017, 113, Wackenier 2013, 18–20.

9 On the practice of using double names, see Coussement 2016. The author found only 12 people bearing a double name in the 3rd c. BC but 106 in the 2nd c. BC.

Another clue is the language the administrators used in their correspondence and in their archives. But in a previous survey of the administrative texts from the Herakleopolite Nome,[10] I found only one demotic text, mainly because all the surviving documents came from high levels: the nome or toparchy and the banking administration.[11] In the Fayum the situation was more complex because of the division of the nome into *merides* and nomarchies. The nomarchs had Greek names, like the famous Aristarchos,[12] but their archives are bilingual (*P.Sorb.* III). This does not mean that Aristarchos himself could read and write in both languages, but Demotic and Greek scribes worked in his office and some of them were bilingual. On the contrary, the *basilikoi grammateis* had Egyptian names but their archives are in Greek, because they were in charge of the central administration of the *grammateia* at the nome level. All their subordinates had Egyptian names and mostly wrote Demotic documents; the *basilikoi grammateis* had to be bilingual in order to check and record the Demotic accounts coming from the toparchy and to communicate in Greek with the *strategos*' office. Even though the *basilikoi grammateis* are mostly known through Greek documents, it is certain that they had to understand, read and write both languages.

Therefore, ethnic designations and the origin of the names are not enough to know the linguistic ability of the administrators. Furthermore, as far as the documentation is concerned, a distinction must be made between bilingual archives and bilingual documents.

2.2 Bilingual Archives

Some archives from the 3rd c. BC are bilingual. This means that some documents in the same archive are written in Greek, while others are written in Demotic. However, this does not always prove that the owner of the archive was bilingual, because several scribes worked in the office. This is the case with the archives of two nomarchs of the Arsinoite Nome. Suzanne Héral studied them in 1992;[13] then her list was corrected following the publication of the Aristarchos archives by W. Clarysse in *P.Sorb*. III. Clarysse found other fragments in the Sorbonne collection, which will be published in the next volume of the EFJD's *P.Sorb.* series.[14] They

10 Wackenier 2009 (unpublished) and Wackenier 2016.

11 Denkmäler III 50148 (= *P.Hib.* I 164).

12 Clarysse 2010, 66–68.

13 Héral 1992.

14 EFJD = Équipe Fonds Jouguet Démotique.

confirm that Aristarchos' archives are bilingual, and that Aristarchos himself is the son of Demetrios (Inv.Sorb. 2735e).

The census lists published as *P.Count* by W. Clarysse and D.J. Thompson are also from bilingual archives.

Unpublished documents of the Papyrological Institute of Sorbonne University allow a better study of the dossier of Dionysodoros, *oikonomos* of the Polemon district.[15] B. Bakech and myself have identified six (or maybe more) unpublished opisthographic fragments in Greek and Demotic in the Sorbonne collection.[16] At the XXIXth Congress of Papyrology in Lecce, we showed that they were part of an administrative roll; on the verso (written against the fibers) are fragments from the archives of Dionysodoros, dating from 227 BC.[17] On the recto it is possible to read undated Demotic accounts, mostly for barley, clover, and vetch.[18] These accounts must have been made at the toparchy or *merides* level because of the high figures recorded. The roll was first written on both sides in Greek, one side having been washed and reused by Egyptian scribes. The roll itself cannot be identified as a bilingual document, because we cannot establish any link between the two sides, but it was kept in an office where Egyptian and Greek scribes worked. Dionysodoros was already known from an administrative letter published by R. Pintaudi (*SB* XX 14699) and from *P.Köln* VIII 341–345, published by K. Maresh. Among the material from this archive is a bilingual document written by Dionysodoros himself or one of his agents, which will be examined in the second part of this study. Is it enough to say that this archive is bilingual? No proof exists for now that this document was kept with the roll.

2.3 Bilingual Administrative Documents

M. Depauw drew up a list of so-called bilingual documents.[19] As he noticed, some of them are semi-bilingual documents: in most cases, one text is simply the summary or translation of the other.

– Receipts: The Theban receipts on ostraca published by Brian Muhs (*O.Theb. Taxes* 1 and 2).

15 Wackenier 2022.

16 The publication of the texts (Inv.Sorb. 88 a, b, c; 708 a and b and 2332a) has been delayed by the recent discovery of small fragments that may belong to the same roll.

17 Wackenier 2022.

18 Bakech 2022.

19 Depauw 1997, 42–43.

- Declarations, acknowledgements of debt, Demotic oath with Greek subscription (Inv.Sorb. 749), etc.
- Internal administrative documents such as orders (*P.Köln* VIII 342 R) or internal letters.

In the case of semi-bilingual documents, it is very difficult to establish whether or not the Greek text and the summary in Demotic were written by the same scribe. This would require a comparative palaeographic study of the two scripts. This type of study requires collaboration between papyrologists specialising in Demotic documentation and papyrologists specialising in Greek documentation, a collaboration that Clarysse called for as early as 1984.[20] Although there are now more papyrologists trained in both languages, comparing Greek and Demotic documents from a palaeographical standpoint remains complex due to the opposite orientation of the ductus and the use of different writing instruments.

3 How to Identify a Bilingual Scribe

A good way to examine the bilingualism of the scribes is to determine their degree of biliteracy.

3.1 The Habits of Professional Scribes

"In the face of a Greek document written with a brush, the reasonable assumption is that the scribe was Egyptian".[21] This statement was expressed by J.D. Sosin and J.G. Manning, in their study of P.Duk. inv. 320, a private Greek letter concerning a sesame crop, written with a brush. These scholars are implicitly referring to two landmark articles by J. Tait and W. Clarysse,[22] who reached the conclusion that Egyptian scribes used a brush to write Demotic signs and Greek a pen to write Greek letters. The posture of the scribe and the ink material also differed, so in the case of bilingual documents it was more practical not to change the tool by switching language.

W. Clarysse identified 58 documents and concluded: "it is clear that after 230 B.C. the use of the brush for writing Greek texts was quickly abandoned"[23] (the only

20 Clarysse 1984.
21 Sosin/Manning 2003, 202.
22 Tait 1986 and Clarysse 1993.
23 Clarysse 1993, 193.

certain example for the 2nd c. BC are the Greek subscriptions of a Demotic sale contract), for Sosin and Manning "perhaps the break ca. 230 was not so clean as it appears" because they dated P.Duk. inv. 320 to 211/210 or 194/193 BC. P.-L. Angles noted that the use of a brush instead of a pen is not sufficient to identify an Egyptian scribe. The nature of the text, but also of the support, and the intention of the scribe must be examined.[24]

3.2 Back to the Administrators' Origin

The only bilingual text from the Ptolemaic period is a private letter (TM 554) written by Ptolemaios to Achilles in Greek and Demotic. The Greek letter was first published by Wilcken (*Chrest.Wilck.* 50), while the Demotic text was published by G.H. Renberg and F. Naether only in more recent years.[25] Ptolemaios began his letter in Greek and switched to Demotic to explain a dream to his correspondent. According to the editors, "Ptolemaios (or his scribe) appears to have possessed a fairly trained hand, writing both the Greek and Demotic texts semi-cursively and without obvious errors".[26] The tone of the letter, the quality of both languages and the narrative itself reveal that the author is part of the educated population. If Ptolemaios relied on a scribe, it is certainly not because he could not write, but because he was a member of the elite and dictated his letter; so he was still bilingual, but perhaps not biliterate. I am inclined to assume that he was the author and writer of the letter and a native of Egypt, because his dream was reported in Egyptian and was set in an Egyptian temple, although he used a pen rather than a brush. His correspondent would also have been Egyptian, given his knowledge of the language. It is reasonable to follow the editors, who hypothesise that "both Ptolemaios and Achilles were probably Egyptians working somewhere in the Ptolemaic administration".[27] The text is dated to the late 3rd c. BC: the script is characteristic of that century and the use of a pen would place the composition after 230;[28] the provenance is unknown.

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24 Angles 2019, 388.
25 Renberg/Naether 2010.
26 Renberg/Naether 2010, 51.
27 Renberg/Naether, 64, n. 51.
28 See *supra*, p. 118 and n. 23.

3.3 Back to the Case of the Dionysodoros Dossier

Three Greek documents of the dossier are written with a brush:[29]

- *P.Köln* VIII 341 V, 2 September 232 BC, Dionysodoros' reply to Asklepiades.
- *P.Köln* VIII 342 R and 342 V, 2 October 232 BC: order from Sokmenis (and?) Dionysodoros to Inaros and the latter's reply.
- *P.Köln* 342 R has a Demotic subscription giving the name of the scribe: Sokmenis. So the Greek hand could also be identified with the hand of Sokmenis. K. Maresh translated the Demotic line as "Geschrieben Sokmenis an Inarûs". However, the reading Inarous seems impossible.[30] The reading *sbk-mn* (Sokmenis) is not certain but likely.

In his review of the publication,[31] A. Verhoogt proposed to identify the hand of *P.Köln* 341 V, which is a Greek reply of Dionysodoros to Asklepiades, as the hand of Dionysodoros and concluded that he was an Egyptian who used a brush. So this *oikonomos* may have been bilingual and biliterate. This hypothesis is very tempting, but it is difficult to establish who writes in an administrative office: the official in charge or a subordinate scribe? In the unpublished roll kept in Dionysodoros' office, at least two hands can be identified.

The hand of *P.Köln* 342 R could be the same as that of *P.Köln* 341 V, which would thus also be the hand of Sokmenis. So I have to disagree with A. Verhoogt: Dionysodoros did not write *P.Köln* 341 V and it is impossible to establish that he was Egyptian. On the contrary, it seems that he needed Egyptian scribes in his office, such as Sokmenis and Inarous.

A third and very daring assumption might be that A. Verhoogt and I are both right: "Sokmenis Dionysodoros" does not mean "Sokmenis and Dionysodoros", but Sokmenis "also named" Dionysodoros. However, there are two arguments against this third hypothesis: in *P.Köln* VIII 342 V, Inaros inverts the two names and uses the plural ποιήϲετε γράψαντεϲ and then ὑμῶν. It is certainly more reasonable to accept the second hypothesis: Sokmenis wrote the text.

Another question arises: why did Sokmenis and Inarous use the Greek language to exchange orders and information when they could use their native language?

29 Besides the reproductions in the *editio princeps*, online images of the papyri are easily accessible on the website of the Kölner Papyrussammlung (https://papyri.uni-koeln.de/, last visit March 2024), or through papyri.info.

30 I would like to express my gratitude to Michel Chauveau, who spent time closely examining photographs of this document with me.

31 Verhoogt 2000.

The words of *P.Köln* 342 R are not those of Sokemnis, but those of Dionysodoros. The latter is the man in charge and it is he who gives orders to Inarous, using Sokmenis' hand. *P.Köln* 342 R was written by Sokmenis but dictated by Dionysodoros. This could explain the strange formulation Sokmenis Dionysodoros without a καὶ and the switching between the two names by Inarous. The latter knew that the order came from the *oikonomos*, but that Sokmenis, perhaps as one of Dionysodoros' secretaries, would probably be the one to read his text.

P.Köln 346 can be identified as a part of the same dossier. It is a list of payments with several toponyms from the Polemonos Meris. The fragment is opisthographic and is part of a roll, probably the same roll to which the unpublished Sorbonne fragments belong. A palaeographical study shows that the same scribe wrote this text and Inv.Sorb. 708b.

The use of the brush is very limited in the documents belonging to the Dionysodoros file: all the texts on the Sorbonne's roll are written in Greek using a pen. Only the documents written on small pieces of papyrus, which circulated within the administration, are written with a brush.

Three hypotheses are available:

– the documents kept in Dionysodoros' central office were written by Greek scribes, while some of the scribes who worked with him for daily duties were Egyptians like Sokmenis. These scribes could be useful in translating orders to Egyptian subordinates or in interacting with Egyptians;
– the scribes were always the same, but when they had to write on the roll to be stored in the archives, they used a pen, so to have a more conventional handwriting;
– the scribes of the roll changed their writing habits, because on the basis of Inv.Sorb. 2332a the roll can be dated to 227 BC, i.e. after 230 BC.

The second hypothesis is certainly the most reasonable, but it does not completely exclude the other two.[32]

32 Brigitte Bakech and I are still working on the palaeographic analysis of the entire dossier.

4 Was Biliteracy very Common in the Early Ptolemaic Administration?

4.1 The Need for Translation within the Administration

The question of the evidence and need for translators or interpreters was studied by W. Peremans in 1983 and in two core papers published by B. Rochette in the 1990s.[33] It is quite surprising that the study recently carried out by R. Mairs[34] did not provide any new evidence for the Ptolemaic period, given the high number of papyri published since the 1990s. Actually, very few attestations of *hermeneis* can be found in the Ptolemaic documentation. A new attestation can be added to Mairs's list, Inv.Sorb. 103r°, l. 17.[35] Two obols paid to a *hermeneus* are recorded in a list of payments for the unloading of a boat, but the work of this anonymous interpreter is unclear. He may have translated some orders from Greek into Egyptian and vice versa. It is reasonable to think that the translation was only oral. The well-known example of Apollonios, *hermeneus* of the Trogodytes in *UPZ* II 227 (134 BC–Thebes), who was illiterate, provides a good comparison.[36]

Interpreters were needed to communicate between the central administration and the Egyptian people. The case of the *enteuxeis* is relevant. Who wrote these complaints to the king? The *enteuxeis* are indeed addressed to the king. The text had to be written in Greek because it was sent to the central administration of the nome, in the person of the Greek *strategos* responsible for resolving the case. The petitioner could be Greek or Egyptian, a man or a woman. It is very difficult to know who wrote these petitions: was it the petitioner himself? Or a public writer? Or an administrator assigned to this task in the *strategos*' office?

P.Enteux. 79 (218 BC) is a petition from a Greek called Herakleides who lived in Crocodilopolis. He was being harassed by a woman he called Psenobastis. The confusion he made between Tsenobastis, a female name, and Psenobastis, a male name, could be an argument to say that this petition was written by a Greek who did not know the Egyptian language. It may have been the petitioner himself.

Some *enteuxeis* were issued by Egyptian women, who certainly did not write them themselves. People had to go to the nome capital to submit their petitions,

33 Peremans 1983, Rochette 1994 and 1996.

34 Mairs 2019.

35 Wackenier 2019, 440 and 443. Mairs 2019 could not have been aware of this new attestation published the same year as her own paper.

36 On this text see in particular Rochette 1995 and Mairs 2019.

either by handing them to the *strategos* or leaving them in a box. It is reasonable to assume that they would explain their problems to a bilingual administrator who specialized in writing this type of document and had a good knowledge of the required form. When he published the corpus, O. Guéraud did not study the hands of the texts or the subscriptions: this work remains to be done, as A.-E. Veïsse and I explained at the XXXth Congress of Papyrology, held in Paris in 2022.[37]

4.2 The Case of a Draft Petition

Drafts of *enteuxeis* are known from the Fayum of the 3rd c. BC. It may seem surprising to find drafts in the corpus compiled by Guéraud, insofar as these documents, which come from *cartonnages*, undoubtedly originate from the offices of the *strategos*, as indicated by the numerous registration marks on the reverse. They were certainly given or resold to the *choachytes* in batches, which explains the temporal coherence of the documents. It therefore seems strange to find drafts among them. The most emblematic case is that of *P.Enteux.* 84, which Guéraud describes as follows:

> Ce texte, écrit dans une petite cursive mal formée, date de Philadelphe, ou, au plus tard, d'Évergète. C'est un brouillon, à en juger par son caractère négligé et par la présence d'un texte démotique au verso. Ainsi s'explique peut-être la disposition du texte en colonnes, qui est unique dans notre série.[38]

This case seems easy to solve: since Dionysodoros was imprisoned, he must have had some difficulty in obtaining a papyrus on which to write his complaint. He almost certainly used a secondhand sheet, which explains the presence of the Demotic text on the reverse, and he was unable to respect the diplomatic format used for *enteuxeis*, so he wrote his complaint in two columns. The absence of a registration note on the reverse may be explained by the fact that the text is not complete, so we cannot know whether it was apostilled and registered as such by the *strategos*' office. Nevertheless, this text shows that the complainants could send or carry a text written by themselves to the central office of the nome.

Another draft seems to show that it was also possible to go and tell one's misfortune to the scribe in charge of drafting the *enteuxeis* at the central office. This document is *SB* XVI 12687, a complaint by a certain Tenes, daughter of Marres, against her husband Heroides. It has been published by G. Bastianini, who dates it

37 Veïsse/Wackenier forthcoming.
38 *P.Enteux.* 84, descr.

to the last quarter of the 3rd c. BC, essentially on palaeographical grounds.[39] The editor rightly considers it to be a draft of an *enteuxis*. The text ends with the abbreviation of the word *archiphylakites* followed by a blank. It would seem, therefore, that it is not the *choachyte*'s chisel that has deprived us of the rest of the text, but rather the author himself. The fact that the text was written with a brush suggests that its author was of Egyptian origin.[40] It cannot be ruled out that the author of the complaint was Tenes, daughter of Marres, an Egyptian married to the Greek-speaking Heroides.[41] It is more likely, however, that the writer was a bilingual Egyptian scribe responsible for collecting complaints from Egyptians in their own language and translating them into Greek. This hypothesis could explain the unorthodox aspects of the document:

– it is written in Greek using a brush, whereas most *enteuxeis* are written using a pen, as they were official documents;
– the text is arranged in columns rather than according to the official diplomatic layout;
– the handwriting seems rather clumsy and the text includes an interlinear addition between lines 9 and 10;
– the text stops abruptly at an abbreviation just as it is about to become a formular.

The bilingual scribe who received the complaint, noted down in Greek that the complainants told him the facts in Egyptian: so he had to translate their words in Greek at the very moment when he wrote the document. This could explain why the handwriting seems rather clumsy and why the scribe added a word in the space left blanck. Apart from the introductory formula, only the facts are described: the draft contains only the basical elements that were needed to prepare later the formal version of Tenes' *enteuxis*, which had to be written with a pen and in a clearer script, in order to pass it on to the *strategos*; the rest is formulaic, and from the facts it is easy to reconstruct the claim of this woman wronged by her husband.

This document could be proof that bilingual and biliterate scribes worked in the central offices of the Arsinoite Nome and acted as intermediaries between the Greek-speaking administrators — in this case the *strategos* and his subordinates — and the Egyptian population. Undoubtedly, one of the only times when the villagers

39 Bastianini 1981.
40 *Contra* Angles 2019, 385: "G. Bastianini pensa que le texte qu'il éditait avait été tracé avec un pinceau de jonc, et qu'on trouvait ce phénomène parfois dans les textes grecs."
41 For example, in the 2nd c. AD, a woman, Rhodous, needed an interpreter to understand a Greek letter, even if she bore a Greek name (*SB* XVIII 13867): see Bülow-Jacobsen/McCarren 1985.

of the Fayum were in direct contact with the *strategos*' office was when they submitted *enteuxeis*.

From the 3rd c. BC, the need for bilingual and biliterate scribes led Egyptians or men from mixed families to learn or perfect their knowledge of written Greek in order to rise through the administrative ranks.

4.3 An Egyptian Scribe Learning Greek

An unpublished papyrus from the Dionysodoros roll, kept in the Institut de Papyrologie de la Sorbonne,[42] proves that training in Greek was not limited to childhood.[43] In inventory number 708b, under the Demotic account it is possible to read parts of three lines, which contain:
– the end of an alphabet sequence (from ξ to ω);
– the beginning of the reverse of an alphabetic sequence (from λ to α);
– the letters η̣ς̣φλεγμοδρω[.

These three half-lines can be easily interpreted as parts of a school exercise. The third line is itself an alphabetic sequence, but "in scrambled order", to use the words of R. Cribiore: a *chalinos*, a writing exercise attested since the early Hellenistic age,[44] which can be restored in the well attested formula κναξζβιχθυπτ]η̣ς̣ φλεγμοδρ̣[ωψ.[45] Although few examples from the Ptolemaic period have been discovered, they can serve as points of comparison both for the nature of the exercise and for palaeographic study. Normally, the scribe would start with the alphabet, then practise writing the alphabet in reverse, before finishing with the *chalinos*. The scribe must have done the same here, but starting from the bottom of the papyrus. This exercise, found in an administrative context, cannot be described as a school exercise; it was done by an Egyptian administrator.

The purpose of the exercise was certainly to practice calligraphy in order to be able to write Greek properly. It seems that the scribe used a fine brush instead of a pen, and if this assumption is correct, the brush was still used in the Fayum some years after 227 BC (date of the washed Greek text) to write Greek letters, as in *SB* XVI 12687, dated on palaeographic grounds to the reign of Ptolemy III or IV.

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42 Wackenier 2022, 1030.

43 As *UPZ* I 148 shows the same thing for the learning of Demotic. On the literate instruction of administrative officials see also the contribution of L. Del Corso in this book, esp. 369–372.

44 On *chalinoi* in the 3rd c. BC, see Fournet 2000.

45 Cribiore 1996, 39–40 (words quoted, p. 39).

5 Conclusions

The question of bilingualism and translation is relevant for understanding the work of the administrative offices in Early Ptolemaic period. The multicultural nature of Ptolemaic society has been the subject of several congresses and studies.[46] A few studies have been devoted to the issue of translation and translators. The issue of translation in the context of bi- or trilingual Ptolemaic decrees has already been addressed, especially by W. Clarysse.

Bilingualism was certainly more developed than our documents suggest. Even in the Arsinoite Nome, the best-documented area of Egypt in the 3rd c. BC, both the number of semi-bilingual documents and the evidence for biliterate scribes and interpreters are very limited. But how common were bilingualism and biliteracy in the 3rd c. BC? In the next two centuries, bilingual scribes were certainly born into bicultural families and could learn Greek and Egyptian — their paternal and maternal languages — from childhood. In the 3rd c. BC, the bilingualism of the scribes was more the result of the learning of Greek as a second language.

In the ranks of bilingual scribes, the administration could find interpreters to meet different needs, especially at the toparchy level, a level of transition between local and central administration, but no interpreters appear in the documentation.

To study bilingualism and biliteracy in the Arsinoite Nome during the 3rd c. BC, historians must examine bilingual or semi-bilingual documents, as well as the use of a brush to write Greek in certain contexts, and learn to make palaeographic comparisons between Greek and Demotic scripts.

The study of bilingual archives or documents could also be improved by a more systematic joint publication of both parts of the archive or documents in the same paper or book. As early as 1984, during the Naples Congress, W. Clarysse[47] called for a further cooperation between specialists of different languages. Comparisons with neighbouring kingdoms, especially the Seleucid one, would be another way of gaining a better understanding of the need for and practice of bilingualism and biliteracy within the Lagid administration. The Marisa archives show that after the conquest of Coele-Syria by Antiochos III, the administration recorded marriage contracts in Aramaic for people from families with Aramaic and Greek names.[48] A comparison with

46 Peremans 1964; Rochette 1996; Thompson 1994.

47 Clarysse 1984.

48 This fact can be interpreted as a proof of the rise of a local administration independent of Seleucid control, since the use of Greek by the Seleucid administration was only based on the assumption that the Seleucid administrators were all native Greek speakers who could not understand the practices of the Babylonian scribes would certainly also be useful.[49] With due caution, the comparison could be extended to other forms of centralised monarchy where the citizens did not speak the language of the administration, or spoke it only at a very rudimentary level. This was the case in France from the 16th to the 18th c.: with the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts, King François I imposed the use of French in official and legal documents, even though a large part of the population spoke only the local dialect, which meant that local administrators had to be proficient in both languages. The studies carried out by Early Modern historians can shed light on both our methods and our results.[50]

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Aramaic. The Ptolemaic administration proved the contrary. For the publication of the document see Eshel/Amos 1996.

49 The comparative work carried out by the GEMH (Groupe d'Étude du Monde Hellénistique) between the Lagid and Seleucid monarchies is extremely useful in this respect. It allows us to put our methods of investigation of the sources and our results into perspective.

50 For example, Audisio 2015.

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Marie-Pierre Chaufray

Greeks in the Bilingual Sureties of the Fayum (3rd c. BC)

Abstract: This article studies the role of the Greeks in the bilingual (Graeco-Demotic) corpus of the Ptolemaic surety contracts of the Fayum, preserved in the Jouguet Collection of the Institute of Papyrology of Sorbonne University. In such documents the Greeks are mentioned as part of the administration, guarantors and, at the same time, as individual taking sureties. Although a minority compared to the Egyptians, they represented a significant percentage of the population of the Fayum region in the 3rd century BC, and they were well integrated in the local daily life.

Keywords: Demotic documentary papyri, Greek documentary papyri, sureties, Hellenistic Fayum, ethnic interactions.

1 Introduction

After the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great in 332 and the establishment of the Ptolemaic dynasty, many Greeks settled in the country, particularly in the Fayum region. The records of Zenon, a Greek from Asia Minor, who was responsible for the management of a large agricultural estate in the Fayum, show the many interactions between Greeks and Egyptians in the region at different levels.[1] To study the integration of the Greeks into the everyday life of this region, this paper will focus on another corpus of documents which I have been studying for several years together with Willy Clarysse:[2] the bilingual sureties from the Fayum, discovered by Pierre Jouguet in 1901–1902, during his excavations in the cemeteries of Ghoran and Magdola.[3] Willy Clarysse has already examined the general characteristics of such documents, and the role of the Greeks, in a seminal article

1 Orrieux 1983, Clarysse/Vandorpe 1995.

2 The study of the corpus has been carried out within the project GESHAEM, *The Graeco-Egyptian State: Hellenistic Archives from Egyptian Mummies*, funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement no. 758907), and more generally focusing on the role of Egyptians in the Greek administration of the early Ptolemaic State.

3 Jouguet 1901; 1902; Jouguet/Lefebvre 1902. For a recent summary of Jouguet's excavations, see Jacques 2022.

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written in 1992 and based on that part of the corpus which was available at the time.[4] As new texts have been identified over the last 30 years, the present work can be considered an update of Clarysse's conclusions.

The corpus of sureties, now part of the Jouguet collection at Sorbonne University, comes entirely from mummy *cartonnages*: this explains the fragmentary state of the texts and the need to restore and reconstruct them, before they can be studied. The papyri which were reused for the *cartonnage* pieces mainly date from the 3rd century BC, and were part of administrative archives belonging to officials at various levels of the Fayum administration.[5] About 200 sureties and fragments of sureties have been identified in the Jouguet collection, coming from at least twenty different mummies.[6]

Five documents from an early date (247–236 BC) are surety deeds for prisoners.[7] The Greeks mentioned in these sureties are all watchmen or prison guards, and the prisoners are all Egyptians. Philoxenos, mentioned in *P.LilleDem.* I 1 (TM 4452) and 4 (TM 2857), is the chief watchman in the district of Themistos. In *P.LilleDem.* I 2 (TM 4453), a Greek prison guard named Rhôdon, the son of Thalios and Myrto, stands as surety for one of his Egyptian colleagues. In *P.LilleDem.* I 1 (TM 4452), the Egyptian who stands as surety for one of his colleagues presents himself with the Greek name Phegemon. In these examples Greeks have higher-ranking positions than Egyptians, and the latter take Greek names when working in the Greek administration. The picture is not exactly the same in the other sureties, written only a few years later.

The other sureties from the Jouguet collection date between 229 and 209 BC.[8] Each of these documents involves at least nine individuals:

- two officials, the *oikonomos* and either the royal scribe or *topogrammateus*;
- one scribe, who writes the deed;
- one or more guarantors, who stand surety for other individual(s);[9]

4 Clarysse 1992.

5 See Vandorpe/Clarysse/Verreth 2015, 78–79, 123–125, 300–303, 406–407 and *P.Sorb.* III.

6 The indication of the mummy *cartonnage* for each inventory number in the inventory book is sometimes erroneous or lost, but the number of the mummy *cartonnage* can sometimes help to reconstruct a document. On this point, see Jacques 2022, 575. On the current state of the surety corpus, see Chaufray 2021.

7 Chaufray 2021, 151, n. 6: *P.LilleDem.* II 65 (TM 2860) was not recognized as a surety for a prisoner by F. de Cenival but belongs to this small dossier.

8 Chaufray 2021, 151. The unpublished documents are identified by their inventory number: Inv.Sorb.

9 Two guarantors appear in *P.LilleDem.* II 43+70, 48+67, 84, 90, 91, mostly sureties of payment, and three in *P.LilleDem.* II 42+79, 81 and Inv.Sorb. 1369, which are sureties of presence.

- one or more individuals who are the subjects of the surety and responsible for a task in a village, probably in relation to the payment of a labour tax or a fiscal duty. Most of the individuals who are the objects of the sureties in the Sorbonne papyri are brewers or beer sellers. The surety is either a surety of payment, should the individual fail to pay the Crown the money he owes, or a surety of presence, should the individual leave the place where he is engaged. For one person, several people can also stand surety in separate documents;
- four witnesses;
- one scribe, who writes the Greek docket on the verso.

Greeks, i.e. people with a Greek name, alias or mentioned with the ethnic "Greek", are not numerous in these documents. They appear among the administration staff, the guarantors, and also among the people for whom the guarantors are making these contracts.

2 Greeks in the Administration

As regards the administration, the *oikonomoi* are always Greek, and their patronymic is never given, as is usual for officials. Five different persons are mentioned in the Sorbonne sureties: Apollonios (69 documents), Aristokritos (15 documents), Artemidoros (1 document), Herakleides (1 document) and Lysias (1 document).[10] They are all *oikonomoi* from the district of Themistos, in the north-western part of the Fayum.

The royal scribes and/or *topogrammateis* are always Egyptian and their patronymic is almost always given:[11] Petechonsis son of Imouthes (26 documents), Harmais son of Harnebonychos (22 documents), Imouthes son of Paueris (6 documents), Paneresouret son of Imouthes (4 documents), Horos son of Imouthes (1), Anchhoutnetjer (1 document), Paanher (1 document), Marres son of Pasis (1 document) and Harthothes (1 document).[12]

There is probably a family around Imouthes. In a salt-tax register, a scribe called Petechonsis son of Imouthes is registered as enjoying exemption from the

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10 Apollonios = TM Per 16279, Aristokritos = TM Per 5818, Artemidoros = TM Per 16281, Lysias = TM Per 16295.

11 Exception in *P.LilleDem.* II 41 (TM 2859) for Anchhoutnetjer, *P.LilleDem.* II 54 (TM 4484) for Paanher and *P.LilleDem.* II 60 (TM 4488) for Harthotes.

12 Respectively TM Per 16199, 5896, 16195, 76850, 465485, 16187, 16198, 16219 and 464978.

obol tax.[13] This was a privilege given to Hellenes, Arabs and Persians.[14] Thus, though Egyptian, Petechonsis, who is certainly the *topogrammateus* and royal scribe mentioned in the Sorbonne sureties, has a Hellenic status. S. Coussement noted that "he was also Greek in other aspects of his daily life", since he had a slave, a feature more common among Greek families.[15]

The 29 scribes whose names are preserved in the Sorbonne sureties all have Egyptian names and patronymics. On the contrary, the scribes who write the Greek dockets on the verso never sign their archival notes. Sometimes the note is written with a *kalamos* (generally used by Greek writers) or a brush (generally used by Egyptians), but it is not always easy to distinguish the two.[16] However, there are many declension errors in Greek and probably most scribes were Egyptian speakers.

3 Greeks as Guarantors

Out of the 97 guarantors, whose names are preserved, only 13 have a Greek name, patronymic or the ethnic "Greek".

Tab. 1: Greek-named guarantors.

	Name	Place	Date	Document
1	Achilleus son of Dioskourides (TM PER 17422)	Arsinoe	224 BC	*P.LilleDem.* II 96 (TM 4517) + Inv.Sorb. 812a+b
2	Agathon son of Dorion (TM Per 19544)	Philagris	224 BC	Inv.Sorb. 1396a+b
3	Ammonios [son of NN and NN] alias Petosiris (TM Per 467706)	Philagris	224 BC	Inv.Sorb. 791 + 803a + 795
4	Apollonios son of Eubios and Hetpeus (TM Per 76830)	Philoteris	225 BC	*P.LilleDem.* II 64 (TM 4492) + Inv.Sorb. 811b
5	Bedj son of Bedj (TM Per 19528)	Philoteris	228 BC	*P.LilleDem.* II 95 (TM 4516)

13 *P.Count.* 4 (TM 44391), l. 42.

14 *P.Count.*, II, p. 159.

15 Coussement 2016, 148; *P.Count.*, II, p. 253.

16 For the Greek *kalamos*, see for example *P.LilleDem.* I 11 (TM 4460) verso; for the Egyptian brush, see *P.LilleDem.* II 90 (TM 4513) verso. On the differences between rush and reed, see Tait 1988, 477–481, and Clarysse 1993, 188–189.

	Name	Place	Date	Document
6	Chairophanes son of Apollonios (TM Per 19526)	Philagris	226 BC	*P.LilleDem.* II 69 (TM 4447)
7	Dor[iôn?]	Apias		Inv.Sorb. 1441
8	Hierax, alias Stotoetis, son of Pais and Taues	lost	lost	Inv.Sorb. 3045
9	Marres son of Arion and Tasis (TM Per 35006)	Philagris	222 BC	*P.LilleDem.* II 85 (TM 4508) + Inv.Sorb. 789
10	Philotera daughter of Demetrios and Isidora	Arsinoe	226 BC	*P.LilleDem.* II 81 (TM 4504)
11	Seleukos, alias Sokonopis, son of Pyrrhias and Isidora	lost	lost	*SB* XXIV 14524
12	Themistos (brother of Philotera n° 2)	Arsinoe	225 BC	*P.LilleDem.* II 81 (TM 4504)
13	[…]krôn […]	lost	lost	Inv.Sorb. 1306d+e

All guarantors are men except Philotera (10). Usually the guarantors are identified by their father and mother's names. This is the case with six guarantors (3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11), but for four of them only the father's name is given (1, 2, 5, 6). In the case of another two, there are lacunas (7, 13). Themistos (12) is a special case.

The mothers of Philotera and of Seleukos (10, 11) are both named Isidora, which is a good Greek name, despite the fact that it contains the name of the Egyptian goddess Isis. Apollonios' mother (4), on the contrary, has an Egyptian name, Hetpeus, which shows that Apollonios belonged to a Graeco-Egyptian family. A Graeco-Egyptian background can also be found in the case of Ammonios (3), Hierax (8) and Seleukos (11), who belong to the category of polyonymous individuals, i.e. individuals with double names.[17] Seleukos (11) bears the Egyptian theophoric name Sokonopis. This combination of a basilophoric name with a theophoric name is popular in double names,[18] but the Egyptian name Sokonopis is somewhat surprising in the Themistos district. The name is more frequent in the south, in the villages of Narmouthis or Tebtunis in the Polemon district. In the Egyptian text, Seleukos is identified as a "Greek born in Egypt", a designation which is often used for soldiers.[19] In the Greek text, he is only a *georgos*, a farmer. Seleukos may have been a cleruch. Double names were frequent in the army. Hierax (8) also has

17 Coussement 2016, 18–29.

18 Coussement 2016, 86.

19 Coussement 2016, 110.

an Egyptian alias, Stotoetis, as does Ammonios (3), Petosiris. Marres (9) has an Egyptian name, like his mother Tasis, but his father, Arion, has a Greek name.

Achilleus son of Dioskourides (1) is identified by his title, which is, in Demotic, *wn-pr* (usually translated as *pastophoros* in Greek) of Sarapis, and, in Greek, *nakoros* (for *neokoros*) of Sarapis. This is an interesting mention of the Greek cult of Serapis in the Fayum in the 3rd century BC, and this Achilleus is certainly a Greek coming from a Greek family.[20] Agathon son of Dorion (2) is a Greek born in Egypt. According to Willy Clarysse, Dorion is often used as a Greek substitute for Egyptian names in *Pꜣ-di͗*.

Bedj son of Bedj (5) stands out: the name Bedj is neither Egyptian nor Greek, but Bedj son of Bedj is identified with the ethnic "Greek" in the Demotic part of the surety: "*Bḏ sꜣ Bḏ pꜣ rḫṱ Wynn*: Bedj son of Bedj, the Greek washerman".[21]

The term "Greek" is certainly a tax designation. In its summary in Demotic, one bilingual tax register lists Greek washermen as a subgroup of the category of people who are considered Greeks for tax purposes.[22] Among the washermen mentioned in the tax registers, the Greek ones apparently enjoyed a privileged position. But the exact nature of this privilege is not known, except for the exemption from the obol tax.

Chairophanes son of Apollonios (6) is also mentioned with the ethnic "Greek", but the signs that follow this designation are not clear. In the Greek docket, he is identified as a donkey driver. The name Chairophanes is a bit strange. It is clearly written in Greek, on the verso, probably by a Greek scribe, since the whole Greek docket was written with a *kalamos*. But on the recto, in Demotic, the name is written twice, with two different transcriptions which point phonetically to the Greek Καλλιφάνηc. This name Kalliphanes is somewhat more frequent than Χαιροφάνηc, which is not attested elsewhere in Egypt, and only once in the Greek world.[23] The Greek scribe may have made a mistake in spelling the name, which was, surprisingly, correctly transcribed in Egyptian.

There seems to be a mistake of the same kind with Themistos (12). He appears in the contract mentioning the woman Philotera, where he acts as surety for her. F. de Cenival calls those people standing surety for guarantors "garants en second", "guarantors in the second degree".[24] The name Themistos is mentioned in the *scriptura interior* and in the Greek docket on the verso. However, at the end of the *scriptura exterior*, a certain *Gwrn pꜣ ꜥꜣ* in Demotic, probably Kleon or Kouron the elder in

20 Clarysse/Paganini 2009, 78.

21 *P.LilleDem.* II 95 (TM 4516), l. 1.

22 *P.Count* 2 (TM 44106), ll. 497–498, cf. *P.Count.*, II, p. 164.

23 *Lexicon of Greek Proper Names*, IV (*SEG* XLII 580, ll. 5, 12, Kalindoia).

24 Cenival 1973, 176–179.

Greek, stands as surety for Philotera, his sister.[25] In the surety, Philotera acts as a guarantor, with two other women, but she is the only one who has a guarantor in the second degree. This guarantor is certainly her *kyrios*, since Greek women were required to have one, whereas Egyptian women could act by themselves.[26] The scribe probably made a mistake when he wrote the name *Grn* instead of Themistos.

All these Greek or Greek-named guarantors stand surety for Egyptians, mostly brewers.

4 Greeks as Individuals Taking Sureties

Out of the 54 individuals whose names are preserved, 11 have a Greek name.

Tab. 2: Greek-named individuals for whom sureties are taken.

	Name	Place	Date	Document
1	Ammonios (or NN son of Ammonios)	Philoteris	lost	Inv.Sorb. 1444
2	Ammonios (or NN son of Ammonios)	lost	lost	Inv.Sorb. 1317e
3	Artemidoros son of Agathon (TM Per 22092)	Philoteris	222 BC	*P.LilleDem.* II 45+76a (TM 4478), 77 (TM 4500), 82 (TM 4505), 84 (TM 4507), Inv.Sorb. 1253 (TM 44570), 1258
4	Diodoros son of Petron	lost	226 BC	Inv.Sorb. 1369
5	Heliodoros […]	Dionysias	lost	Inv.Sorb. 810a
6	Hermaiskos son of Dionysios (TM Per 25992)	Theadelphia	225 BC	*P.LilleDem.* II 46 (TM 4436), inv.Sorb. 810b, 1443
7	Lysimachos (?)	lost	lost	Inv.Sorb. 1321o
8	Lysimachos son of Pasion	lost	lost	Inv.Sorb. 1321a
9	Peteharmotnis alias Arist-[…]	Berenikis	224 BC	Inv.Sorb. 1393
10	Philo-…	Arsinoe	226 BC	Inv.Sorb. 1269
11	Zenodoros son of Bedj (TM Per 36216)	Philoteris	228 BC	*P.LilleDem.* II 95 (TM 4516)

25 The name was read Kyros by W. Clarysse (see Clarysse 2013, 72), but we know read *Gwrn*.
26 Clarysse 2013, 73.

The Greek names of three individuals are either badly preserved or partially lost (7, 9, 10). The alias of Peteharmotnis (9), which seems to be Greek, points to a Graeco-Egyptian context. In the case of 1 and 2, it is difficult to know if Ammonios is the name or the patronymic because of lacunas.

The sureties for the washerman Artemidoros son of Agathon (3) have increased from three to six compared to what Clarysse knew in 1992.[27] Most documents have preserved only the upper part of the deed (the *scriptura interior*), which however gives the essential elements of the surety. Thus, we know that all his guarantors are Egyptians, and they stand as surety for 10 to 160 drachmae. Artemidoros was involved in the natron business, but also in Philoteris' brewery. As already noted by F. de Cenival, the same man paid the natron tax for Philoteris together with the Egyptian Semtheus son of Teos in ca. 222 BC.[28] Von Reden considers Artemidoros a 'washerman' and 'tax-farmer'. She refers to him as evidence of the fact that tax-farmers often belonged to this professional class.[29] The γναφεύϲ Agathon, attested several times in Zenon's records, may have been his father, working in the same profession.[30] His son or father is also mentioned in an unpublished list of payments, where he is said to pay ¼ *kite*.[31]

Diodoros son of Petron (4) is mentioned in a contract along with three (or four?) colleagues, for whom three Egyptian guarantors stand as surety. The text is badly preserved and nothing can be said about this person.

Hermaiskos son of Dionysios (6), who was known through only one document in 1973, is now mentioned in three documents. He is a brewer, which is a rare occupation for a Greek.[32] The people standing as surety for him are unknown, except for an Egyptian woman in Inv.Sorb. 1443.[33] This Hermaiskos is certainly identical to the oil seller of the same name mentioned in some Greek papyri.[34] In *P.Petr.* III 58e (TM 4435), col. IV 14–15, a list of six guarantors is given for him, all with Egyptian names. He is apparently concerned with both beer and oil: maybe he owned a shop in Theadelphia.

27 See, however, Clarysse 2013, 72, n. 10 for the new attestations, with a minor mistake: 1278a = *P.LilleDem.* II 82 (TM 4505).

28 *P.Petr.* II 27.3 (TM 7575), ll. 7–8, cf. Cenival 1973, 248.

29 Von Reden 2007, 108.

30 TM Per 22093 = TM Per 597?

31 Inv.Sorb. 2738a verso, col. II 6: *ꜣgtn pꜣ rḫ̮ty*.

32 Greeks are generally involved in the wine business; see also Lysimachos son of Pasion (8).

33 The Greek docket indicates πρὸϲ Νεβώνιχọν τῆϲ Νεχθνίβιοϲ where the filiation τῆϲ proves that it is a woman. However, the name Nebonychos is masculine in Egyptian, which is problematic.

34 *P.Petr.* II 28 (TM 7514), col. I 8, II 23, IX 7, X 18; III 66b I 3, cf. Préaux 1939, 82, n. 2.

Lysimachos son of Pasion (8) is also a brewer, like Hermaiskos. In a fiscal register, a cavalryman Lysimachos son of Pasion is mentioned with his whole family, as well as five slaves and a nurse, 20 sheep and two goats.[35] If it is the same person, then Lysimachos was more of a businessman than a simple brewer. For his business, however, he needed Egyptian guarantors.

Lastly, Zenodoros son of Bedj (11) is a washerman like Artemidoros. His guarantor, Bedj son of Bedj, is either his father or his brother, and he is also a washerman. Zenodoros is just described as a washerman, whereas his father or brother is a Greek washerman.[36]

5 Conclusions

To conclude, there are not many Greeks in the Sorbonne sureties. Not one single Greek name can be found among the witnesses: all are Egyptians, which is rather different from what we find in the 3rd-century BC Demotic deeds from Thebes, where a few Greek names occur.[37]

The Greeks or Greek-named people in the Sorbonne surety contracts are: the *oikonomoi*, who are always Greek, although one surety from the Ashmolean would appear to mention an Egyptian *oikonomos* in a year 22;[38] a dozen guarantors, several of them coming from Graeco-Egyptian families, and three having double names; and ten individuals, including brewers and washermen, with Egyptian guarantors.

Though the documents were found in Ghoran and possibly in Magdola (but the latter provenance is unsure) in the district of Polemon in the Fayum, they all concern villages within the district of Themistos. Out of the 15 villages concerned with sureties, Greeks are mentioned as guarantors or as objects of sureties in only six villages: Apias (1), Arsinoe (4), Berenikis (1), Philagris (4), Philoteris (5) and Theadelphia (1). Compared to the number of Egyptians mentioned in these texts, Greeks are definitely a minority, even though they accounted for a rather significant percentage of the population, as is known from the fiscal registers for the same district. These Greeks or Greek-named people are interesting because they

35 *P.Count* 2 (TM 44106), l. 413.

36 See *supra*, p. 136.

37 Chaufray 2021, 153 and Clarysse 1995, 13–15.

38 Chaufray/Clarysse forthcoming.

were completely immersed in an Egyptian environment and conducted their business using the Egyptian language, whatever their mother tongue may have been.

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Anne-Emmanuelle Veïsse

Greek Petitions by Egyptians in 3rd-century BC Egypt

Abstract: This article aims to investigate the way the Egyptians adopted the practice of addressing the authorities by means of petitions written in Greek (*enteuxeis* and *hypomnemata*). The first part examines some general features relating to the use of petitions by Greeks and Egyptians in 3rd c. BC Egypt. The second compares the above observations with a case study, *P.Enteux.* 86, which pits an Egyptian woman against a Greek man.

Keywords: Dispute resolution, ethnicity, *enteuxeis*, *hypomnemata*, petitions.

The establishment of Greek rule in Egypt introduced new ways of addressing the authorities, through complaints and requests written in Greek and adopting the form of the *enteuxis* (when the addressee was the king) or the *hypomnema* (when it was one of his agents).[1] These documents that modern scholars refer to as "petitions" have been found in particularly large numbers: in his study of 2020, G. Baetens collected 911 of them for the three centuries of the Ptolemaic period, the earliest ones dating from 260–259 BC, i.e. Ptolemy II's reign.[2] In this paper, I will investigate the Egyptians' attitude towards this "Greek-style" petitioning process, by focusing on petitions composed in the Fayum — a region with a large number of Greek settlements — during the 3rd c. BC, when petitions begin to appear in the documentation. On the basis of a corpus of 180 documents, I will first try to identify some general features related to the use of petitions by Greeks and Egyptians. Then, narrowing the focus, I will compare my observations with a case study, *P.Enteux.* 86, which pits an Egyptian woman against a Greek man.

1 On these different types of petitions and their formal characteristics, see Baetens 2020.
2 Baetens 2020. The oldest surviving *enteuxeis* are *P.Sorb*. I 13 (ca. 260), *P.Enteux*. 1 (259), and *UPZ* II 151 (259). The oldest *hypomnema* with petitioning function addressed to an official is *P.Cair.Zen.* III 59368 (241 BC).

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1 Petitioning behaviour among Greeks and Egyptians

For the first part of this study, I have tried to collect all petitions to the king or his agents composed in the Fayum in the 3rd century and containing at least one piece of information about the petitioner (other than gender).[3] The total number of documents is 180: 129 *enteuxeis* addressed to the king (but in practice dealt with by the *strategos* of the nome), six *enteuxeis* addressed to recipients other than the king ("non-royal *enteuxeis*" according to the terminology established by G. Baetens),[4] and 45 *hypomnemata* "with petitioning function" — for *hypomnemata* could fulfil other functions as well.

A first question is whether the Egyptians used petitions as often as the Greeks, but this requires clarifying the criteria for identifying petitioners. Let us acknowledge from the outset that such documents do not allow us to grasp the problem in its anthropological dimension. The great contribution made by the "anthropology of ethnicity" —, developed by F. Barth and his students in the 1970s — has been to show that ethnic identity is, first and foremost, a matter of self-definition: groups claiming the same ethnic origin may in practice display very distinct cultural traits, while others who share the same cultural traits may claim to be different peoples.[5] But such results could only be obtained through direct observation and oral enquiry, both of which are inaccessible to the historian of antiquity, who is obliged to limit himself to cultural traits. At an elementary level of reflection, certain markers nevertheless allow us to reason in terms of Egyptians — understood as the former inhabitants of Egypt, sharing a common culture — and Greek immigrants — people coming from the Greek world and sharing a common culture, or coming from the non-Greek world but in the process of acquiring this culture (i.e. "Hellenes" as understood in the great ordinance of 118 BC).[6] The language of writing cannot be a criterion, insofar as the vast majority of surviving Greek *enteuxeis* and *hypomnemata* were clearly written by scribes. The other identification criteria are, in order of reliability: ethnics and demotics, which indicate belonging to the group of the

3 This corpus, therefore, does not include all the petitions of Fayumic origin from the 3rd century BC, and is destined to evolve. The date or origin of some petitions may be disputed, and other such documents will be published. Petitions to the king or his agents from the archives of Zenon have been taken into account, but not requests addressed to Zenon himself.

4 Baetens 2020.

5 The founding work is the volume edited by Barth 1969.

6 *P.Tebt*. I 5 (= *C.Ord.Ptol*. 53), ll. 207–220: "And they have decreed, in cases in which Egyptians and Hellenes are opposed, etc.". Cf. Veïsse 2007.

Hellenes;[7] information related to the procedure;[8] information about the professional[9] or cultural environment;[10] and names. The onomastic criterion is strong for individuals identifying themselves through a single Egyptian name in petitions written in Greek and addressed to Ptolemaic authorities. It is certainly weaker in the case of Greek names, which may have been adopted by Egyptians as early as the 3rd c. BC, but it is nevertheless more reliable than for later centuries. In her 2016 study, S. Coussement identified 179 cases of individuals known by both a Greek and an Egyptian name during the Ptolemaic period: 106 cases date from the 2nd c. BC, 55 from the 1st, and only 12 from the 3rd;[11] even if the 3rd-century documentation has yielded fewer private archives, in which the phenomenon of "polyonymy" is particularly likely to occur, this contrast reinforces W. Peremans' observations on the relative validity of the onomastic criterion in the 3rd century.

By crossing these different criteria, and accepting an (in my view limited) risk of error, we may assume that, among the 180 petitions under consideration, 121 were composed by Greeks in the broad sense of the term (114 different petitioners) and 44 by Egyptians (43 different petitioners), while the remaining cases are ambiguous (Tab. 3).[12] The ratio between the petitioners — 73% Hellenes to 27% Egyptians — is thus almost exactly the opposite of the actual distribution of the two population groups in the nome in the same period, as established by W. Clarysse and

7 The situation is different in the 2nd c. BC, when cases of "pseudo-ethnics" multiply. In contrast, we know of no proven cases of a Hellene changing ethnics, or of an Egyptian being given an ethnic in the 3rd century.

8 This is the case, for example, with petitions mentioning recourse to the *koinodikion*, the "mixed court" that tried cases opposing Greeks and Egyptians.

9 The fact of being an officer or a cavalryman might seem like a fairly safe criterion of belonging to the immigrant group in the 3rd century, even in the absence of any ethnic.

10 E.g. Nikias, who does not give his ethnic, but competed in the cavalrymen's *agon* during the festival of Hermes at Psinachis (*P.Genova* III 107).

11 Coussement 2016. Only one petition in our corpus was composed by a double-name holder (*P.Sorb*. III 111; Coussement 2016, Cat. n° 393). Double names remain exceptional among petitioners in general.

12 I.e. the woman with a double name in *P.Sorb*. III 111; the petitioners with a Greek name but an Egyptian patronymic (*P.Enteux*. 40, *P.Enteux*. 95, *P.Tebt*. III.1 770); the Arab barber with the Egyptian name Parates (*P.Enteux*. 47) and the "decadarchs of the Arabs" with Greek names (*PSI* V 538); the woman with a lost name, the spouse of Philon, in *P.Enteux*. 81; the (*basilikoi) georgoi* responsible for *Chrest.Wilck*. 304, *SB* XVI 12468, *P.Lond.* VII 1954 and 1955; Menes (*P.Petr*. III 29 fgt); the two petitioners of *P.Petr*. III 32g R b, one bearing a Greek name and the other possibly an Egyptian name; the two petitioners of *P.Tebt*. III.2 933, one of whom bears a Greek name, while the other is possibly an Egyptian woman; the *komogrammateus* of the petition Trinity College inv. Pap. Gr. folder 127 (= Baetens 2014b).

D.J. Thompson in the light of the *P.Count*: 70% against 30%.[13] Yet, this imbalance cannot be explained by the fact that the Egyptians addressed their petitions to the Ptolemaic authorities in Demotic, as the works of G. Baetens have shown.[14] On the one hand, Demotic petitions (*mḳmḳ*) occur in such small numbers compared to Greek ones — the ratio being roughly 1:30[15] — that this cannot be only a matter of documentary bias. On the other, there is no known Demotic equivalent to *enteuxeis* to the king; the term itself, when used, is simply transcribed into Demotic.[16] Finally, there are no certain examples of *mḳmḳ* addressed to high-ranking Ptolemaic officials: one of the two Demotic petitions addressed to *strategoi* is a translation of a Greek *hypomnema* (P.BM Siut inv. 10591 V, coll. I–II); the other, written on an ostracon, is probably a draft (O.Ifao Edfu Dem. 632).[17]

How, then, must we explain the under-representation of Egyptians among petitioners? Is it a sign of mistrust of the Greek-style petition process and the Greek authorities? At first glance, we might be tempted to relate this under-representation to certain clauses in the Demotic rules of religious associations, which prescribe that conflicts between members be settled "internally", and discourage members from seeking recourse outside the association. This is especially the case with *P.LilleDem.* 29 (= F. de Cenival, *P.Assoc.*, pp. 3–10), which was written in the Fayum around the same time (223 BC) as the petitions under consideration.[18] Yet, such associations were openly loyalist: they were devoted to the dynastic cult as much as to the cult of their own specific gods.[19] Besides, *P.LilleDem.* 29 also discourages members' recourse to other religious associations.[20] For F. de Cenival, clauses of this sort testify to "une tendance naturelle à l'auto-défense d'un groupe vis-à-vis de l'autorité quelle qu'elle soit".[21]

13 *P.Count*, II, pp. 138–140.

14 Baetens 2014a, and Baetens 2020, Chap. IV.

15 Baetens 2020, 153.

16 Baetens 2014a, 46–47.

17 Baetens 2014, 38, 46–47, 63.

18 Ll. 22–23. Such clauses are also to be found in 2nd-century regulations: P.Stanford Green Dem. 21 (early 2nd century: ed. Arlt/Monson 2010); *P.Cairo* II 30606 (156); *P.Cairo* II 31179 (147); *P.Cairo* II 30605 (145); *P.Cairo* II 30619 (145); *P.Assoc.* pp. 83–91 (= *P.Prague*; 137).

19 In *P.LilleDem.* 29, the rituals to be performed for rulers constitute one of the very first clauses of the regulation (ll. 5–6). Muszynski 1977, 157, interprets such clauses as an obligation imposed by the State.

20 Ll. 23–25.

21 De Cenival 1972, 192. See also Monson 2006, 236 and 238; Hue-Arcé 2020, 127–128, and Hue-Arcé 2023, 96–97. Lippert 2016, 6, adds the following remark: "In one case, there was also a fine for anyone who appeals against a judgment from "those of the house" before another religious association — but only if he loses his case again. This shows that the underlying motivation was probably

In any event, the numerical disproportion between petitions written by Greeks and ones written by Egyptians contrasts strikingly with the similarities of the texts from the two groups. A comparative analysis shows no significant differences in the use of the main types of petitions, *enteuxeis* and *hypomnemata* (Fig. 37), or of the various categories of petitions (complaints; dispute-related requests;[22] and simple requests)[23] (Fig. 38). Furthermore, the same main grounds for complaint and the same kinds of requests related to disputes between individuals are to be found: the contestation of the ownership or use of a property, the non-observance of written or oral commitments, violence, etc. Egyptians did not hesitate to write petitions in order to denounce criminal acts or breaches of duty on the part of Ptolemaic officials.[24] Finally, according to the preserved apostilles, the treatment of petitions submitted by Egyptians did not differ from that reserved for petitions submitted by Greeks, even when they were directed against Greeks. Indeed, among the small group of petitions known to have been swiftly dealt with by the *strategos* (in 1–8 days), there are more petitions from Egyptians than from Greeks.[25]

Factors other than distrust of the Ptolemaic authorities must therefore be invoked to explain the under-representation of Egyptians among the petitioners. One is undoubtedly the material difficulties in having a request translated into Greek. Another factor is the right and inclination of Egyptians to settle at least some of

not simply to keep one's problems within the community, but perhaps also to bind the members of the associations to Egyptian law, which was not necessarily applied by Ptolemaic officials acting as judges."

22 I.e. requests which are not formal complaints, but which were motivated by a prejudice suffered by the petitioners (e.g. reminder about a previous complaint, denunciation of criminal acts, request for a hearing before the *strategos* or a court...).

23 These three categories are to be found among both *enteuxeis* and *hypomnemata*. The reasons why individuals would choose to write an *enteuxis* to the king or a *hypomnema* to an official, sometimes for the very same reasons (see e.g. *P.Enteux.* 88 and *P.Petr.* III 32a), remain difficult to determine. The same holds true for the reasons that might lead them to choose one official over another in the case of *hypomnemata*. One explanation probably lies in the tendency to turn to people who were already known, or deemed likely to provide assistance. Petitioners' uncertainty as to how to proceed may also have been a factor.

24 Within our corpus, 16 such petitions were submitted by Greeks, between seven and ten by Egyptians (Greeks: *P.Cair.Zen.* II 59236; *P.Cair.Zen.* III 59368, ll. 12–35; *P.Cair.Zen.* III 59460; *P.Enteux.* 1; *P.Enteux.* 14; *P.Enteux.* 28; *P.Enteux.* 62; *P.Enteux.* 85; *P.Enteux.* 87; *P.Enteux.* 88; *P.Mich.* I 71; *P.Petr.* III 32f R (= *Chrest.Wilck.* 262); *P.Petr.* III 36 R; and probably *P.Petr.* III 36 V; *SB* XX 15068; *SB* XXVIII 17175. Egyptians: *P.Gur.* 5; *P.Lille* I 8; *P.Petr.* III 32a; *PSI* V 539; *SB* VI 9556 col. I and *SB* VI 9556 col. II; *SB* X 10260; *SB* XX 14999, and *SB* XX 15001; probably also *P.Lond.* VII 1954–1955, and *SB* XVI 12468).

25 Petitions from Greeks: *P.Enteux.* 37, *P.Enteux.* 79, *P.Enteux.* 82; probably also *P.Enteux.* 81. Petitions from Egyptians: P.Vindob. Barbara inv. 34 (= Harrauer/Pintaudi 2012 [2015]), *P.Enteux.* 65, *P.Enteux.* 80, *P.Sorb.* III 103, *SB* XX 14999.

their disputes through the help of other Egyptians in specific instances. We have just mentioned the case of religious associations. Some documents also suggest that the Egyptians could turn directly to the *laokritai*,[26] and the corpus of Demotic petitions shows that it was possible to address temple officials directly to settle issues concerning temple staff.[27] More generally, it may be assumed that Egyptians were more likely to resort in the first instance to village authorities, who were often of Egyptian origin and spoke the same language as them. This is the case with the anonymous author of the Demotic petition *P.Sorb.* IV 149, who addressed his petition to the "chief of the troop" (*pꜣ ḥry pꜣ mš*)[28] of the village of Apias; it is also the case with Thamounis, who after an altercation with another woman at the baths in Oxyrhyncha personally approached the comarch Petosiris to complain (*P.Enteux.* 83).

Considering the picture just outlined, it is all the more interesting to find Egyptians submitting *enteuxeis* and *hypomnemata* to the Greek authorities about various "intra-community" matters. Out of the 41 petitions submitted by Egyptians concerning disputes between individuals (including both complaints and requests), 18 fall into this category;[29] and at least some of them could seemingly have been settled by other means. In the example mentioned above, the *enteuxis* of Thamounis — formally addressed to the king and intended to be dealt with by the *strategos* Diophanes — served a means of appeal after her unsuccessful recourse to the Egyptian comarch (who put her in jail and seized her cloak). In the case of *P.Enteux.* 21, the petition is submitted by an Egyptian woman, Therous, and by her brother-in-law Teos. The two complain about the members of a women's *thiasos* who have not paid them the expected funeral indemnity (*taphikon*) after the death of Soeris, the sister of Therous and wife of Teos. Judging from the regulations of religious associations, could — or, indeed, *should* — this matter not have been settled "internally"? Other documents suggest that submitting a Greek petition to the Ptolemaic authorities was sometimes a way to avoid a judicial trial in an Egyptian context. As an example,

26 The apostilles of some *enteuxeis* reveal that the *strategos*, after examining the petition, could ask the *epistates* to refer the case to the *laokritai*. Similarly, in the case of the famous "archive of Siut", the trial held before the court of the *laokritai* of Siut/Lykopolis in June 170 BC would appear to have originated with a petition addressed to the *strategos* of the Thebaid. However, other documents suggest that the Egyptians could turn directly to the *laokritai*: see e.g. *P.Sorb.* III 103 (221 BC); *P.Hels.* I 1 (3rd or 2nd c. BC); P.Fordham inv. 5 (= Claytor 2011; 2nd c. BC?).

27 See Baetens 2014a and Baetens 2020, 154–156. Out of a total of 32 Demotic petitions known to date (*mḳmḳ* "with petitioning function"), ten were addressed to Egyptian priests.

28 Possibly an archiphylacite: see M.-P. Chaufray, *P.Sorb.* IV, p. 48.

29 P.Vindob. Barbara inv. 34 (= Harrauer/Pintaudi 2012 [2015]); Dublin, Pap. Env. 86/87 (= Baetens/Clarysse 2016); *P.Enteux.* 18, 21, 24, 50, 80, 83, 96; *P. Petr.* III 29b, 29e; *P.Sorb.* III 104, 107, 109; *SB* X 10271, XXII 15762, XXIV 16285; P.Duk. inv. 698 (= Bauschatz 2005).

we might consider *P.Köln* XV 594 from the archives of the Tanis embalmers, Amenneus and Onnophris.[30] This *hypomnema* was addressed to the *epistates* of Tanis by Onnophris in 202 or 178 BC.[31] It is one of the few petitions whose purpose is to defend oneself against a possible accusation. The embalmer Onnophris' worries stem from the bad luck of some kittens that were born in his house. When their mother abandoned them, he turned to the priests of the temple of Bastet, probably the Boubasteion of Boubastos.[32] No one came to take care of the kittens, so he kept them and fed them until a male cat carried them away into the streets. With the help of some passers-by, Onnophris found one of the kittens and brought it back to the temple of Bastet; he also "gave an official testimony" to the *komogrammateus*, who had been part of the rescue team. Henceforth, he asks that the *epistates* take note of all this "so that — he writes — I am not later denounced (ἵνα οὖν μὴ ἐξ ὑςτ[έ]ρου (...) ϲυκοφαντῶμαι)" for these facts. The matter was obviously of great importance to the embalmer, who made no less than two procedures, one to the *komogrammateus* (bearing an Egyptian name: Phasis), the other to the *epistates* (bearing a Greek name: Machatas). From the latter he requested "assistance" (cf. τῆϲ παρὰ ϲοῦ ἀντιλήψεω[ϲ], ll. 31–32), a term used in connection with matters of quite a different scale in other petitions.[33] For R.W. Daniel, Onnophris feared to be held responsible for the harm suffered by the kittens.[34] As M. Chauveau has pointed out to me, it is also possible that he feared he might be accused of trafficking in cat mummies by the priests of the temple of Bastet, who must have had the monopoly on this activity.[35] In any case, it was obviously to avoid an "internal" settlement of the case that the embalmer chose to report the kittens' disappearance to the Ptolemaic authorities.

2 A Case Study: *P.Enteux.* 86

I would now like to narrow down the focus by examining a specific case in some detail. *P.Enteux.* 86 is an *enteuxis* to the king belonging to the "petitions of Magdola", written at the time of the *strategos* Diophanes.[36] The registration note gives the

30 The other documents from this archive have been published by C. Armoni in *P.Tarich.*

31 Owing to its uncertain date, this petition has not been included in our corpus.

32 Cf. Daniel, *P.Köln* XV, 2017, 5.

33 E.g. *P.Diosk.* 6, about aggravated violence.

34 Daniel, *P.Köln* XV, 2017, 2–4.

35 I sincerely thank M. Chauveau for his comment.

36 TM Arch 80.

following date: month of Gorpaios of the year 1, i.e. February 221 BC, in the early days of Ptolemy IV's reign. The petitioner is a woman bearing the Egyptian name of Tetosiris. She is involved in a lawsuit against a man with a Greek name, Apollodoros, and requests that her witnesses be allowed to testify before the village *epistates*, despite Apollodoros' intimidation.

1. [Βαcιλεῖ Πτο]λ̣εμαίωι χαίρειν Τετο̣cῖρις. Κρίcις μοι ἐνε̣ .[. .]. [.]ν ἐπ[ὶ . . . .]
2. δ̣ι̣[. . . . πρὸc Ἀ]πολλόδωρον περὶ οἰκίας̣ τῆc οὔcηc ἐμ (l. ἐν) Βερεν̣[ικί]δ̣ι̣ τ̣ῆι Θ̣ε̣[cμοφόρου·]
3. χρ̣έ̣α̣ν (l. χρείαν) [ἔχουc]α̣ μαρτυριῶν εἰc τὴν κ̣ρίcιν, ἔλαβον παρὰ τ[ο]ῦ̣ ε̣ἰc̣αγωγέω̣[c . . . .]
4. ἐπιcτολὴ[ν πρὸc] Ἡρακλεόδωρον τὸν ἐ[π]ιcτάτην, οὓc ἂ̣ν αὐ[τ]ῶ̣ι προcαγάγω μάρ-
5. τυρας ἐνομόc̣[α]cθαί μοι τὰc μαρτυρίαc· Ἀπολλόδ̣ω̣ρος ἐπιcύc[τ]αcιν ποιηcάμενος
6. πλέονος ποῶν (l. ποιῶν) τοὺc μάρτυράς μου ἀνε̣c̣όβηcεν πάντας, λέγ[ω]ν ἀποτυπανιεῖν (l. ἀποτυμπανιεῖν)
7. αὐτοὺc καὶ ἐμὲ καὶ ἐγβαλεῖν ἐκ τῆc κ̣ώ̣μηc· Ἔτι δὲ καὶ Βίθ̣υην[37] τινα (ἑκατοντάρουρον) μέλλοντ̣[ά]
8. μοι μαρτυρῆcαι ἐλοιδόρηcεν πολλὰ καὶ ἔφ̣η̣ καὶ τοῦτον ἀποτυπ̣α̣νιεῖν (l. ἀποτυμπανιεῖν), δι' ἣν αἰτίαν οὐκ̣ [ἐ-]
9. μαρτύρηcέ̣ μ̣[οι· Πα]ρὰ τὸ δὲ εἶναι τοὺc μέλλο̣ντάc μο̣ι̣ μαρτυρ[ε]ῖ̣ν̣ Α̣[ἰγ]υ̣π̣τ̣ί̣ο̣υc, εὐλαβηθέντε̣[c]
10. ἀνεχώρηcαν [ὥcτε] μ̣ὴ μαρτυρῆcαι. Ἀξι̣ῶ̣ [οὖν cε, βαcιλεῦ, δεομέ]νη, ἵνα [μ]ὴ̣ π̣αρὰ τ̣α̣ύ̣την̣
11. τὴν αἰτίαν ὑ[cτε]ρήcω το̣ῦ̣ δικαίου καὶ ἀπολ̣[…*ca. 14 letters*… προ]cτάξαι Διοφάνει τῶι cτρ[α-]
12. τηγῶι γράψ[αι Ἡρακλεοδώρ]ω̣ι οὓc ἂν αὐτῶ[ι…*ca. 15 letters*…]μ̣ους τοὺc ὠικοδομηκό[τας]
13. τὴν οἰκίαν τα[ύτην πλιν]θοφόρους καὶ τέ[κτονας… *ca. 10 letters*…] ἀποcτεῖλαι ἐπὶ Διοφάν[ην]
14. ὅπως ἐνομοc[αcθαί (?) …*ca. 27 letters* …ἵνα, τ]ούτου γενομένου, ἐπὶ cὲ κα[τα-]
15. φυγοῦcα, βαcιλ̣[εῦ, τὸν πάντων κοι]ν̣ὸ̣ν̣ ε̣[ὐεργέτην, τύχω τῆc] π̣αρ̣ὰ̣ c̣ο̣ῦ̣ φιλανθρωπ̣[ίας].
16. Ε̣ὐ̣[τύχ]ει.

Traces of the apostille

Verso
(Ἔτουc) α̣, Γορπιαί[ου .], [Τῦβι .]
Τετο[cῖρις]

To King Ptolemy, greetings, Tetosiris. I have a lawsuit pending before [...] against Apollodoros, concerning a house located in Berenikis Thesmophoru. Since I need witnesses for the trial, I have obtained from the *eisagogeus* [...] a letter for Herakleodoros the *epistates* (inviting him) to take for me the witnesses' testimony[38] I will present to him. (But) Apollodoros, having caused trouble (?), frightened all my witnesses by many actions (?), saying that he would subject them and me to *apotumpanismos* and that he would drive us out of the village. And he even heaped insults upon Bithues, a *hecatontarouros* who was about to testify for me, and said that he would subject him to *apotumpanismos* as well, with the result that he did not testify for me. And as those who were about to testify for me were Egyptians (?), they went

37 See below.
38 For the verb ἐνόμνυμαι, see *P.Heid.* VIII, p. 59.

> away filled with fear, and so they did not testify. I therefore ask you, O King, and I beg you, so that for this reason I may not be deprived of my right and Apol[lodoros?...] to order Diophanes the *strategos* to write to Herakleodoros that he send before Diophanes those whom [I shall designate as?] having built this house, brick-bearers and carpenters, to give evidence on oath. Thus, having found refuge with you, O King, common benefactor of all, I shall obtain the effects of your *philanthropia*.
> Farewell.
>
> *Traces of the apostille*
>
> *Verso*
> Year 1 [...] Gorpaios [...], [Tybi...].
> Tetosiris [...]

Although this petition relates to a dispute — a particularly fraught one — it is not a complaint: it is not introduced by the formula ἀδικοῦμαι ὑπό, "I am wronged by", nor does it contain a demand for punishment. It falls within the scope of "dispute-related requests", more specifically those motivated by previous or ongoing lawsuits.[39] At the time of submitting this petition, Tetosiris was already involved in a lawsuit (κρίϲιϲ) against a certain Apollodoros concerning a house (οἰκία) in Berenikis Thesmophoru, near Kerkeosiris, in the southwestern part of the Fayum. For this lawsuit, Tetosiris needed to call as witnesses "those who built this house, brick-bearers and carpenters" (τοὺϲ ὠικοδομηκό[ταϲ] τὴν οἰκίαν τα[ύτην πλιν]θοφόρουϲ καὶ τέ[κτοναϲ]). These people were called to testify before the *epistates* Herakleodoros — probably the *epistates* of Berenikis Thesmophoru, the place where the house had been built — in order to attest to Tetosiris' ownership.[40] The fragmentary state of the first line makes it impossible to know what judges were to hear the testimonies, but a court must necessarily have been involved, rather than an administrative authority, given the mention of an *eisagogeus*. Considering the identity of the parties involved, the *koinodikion* and the chrematists' court are both possible.[41] In either case, it may be assumed that the hearing was to be held in Krokodilopolis, and that this is why the house-builders — for whom it was probably difficult

39 For other examples, see e.g. *P.Sorb.* III 107, *P.Tebt.* III.1 770 (*enteuxeis*); *P.Petr.* III 22a, 29b, 30, and *P.Cair.Zen.* III 59368, ll. 12–35 (*hypomnemata*).
40 This case can be compared with *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59620–59621, in which the testimony of some masons is required, and *P.Sorb.* III 103, 104 and 130, where the masons themselves are implicated.
41 As noted by Guéraud, *P.Enteux.*, p. 212, between the end of line 1 and the beginning of line 2 the reconstruction ἐπ[ὶ τοῦ κοινο]δι[κίου] "coïnciderait avec les traces et comblerait exactement les lacunes". D. Kaltsas, *P.Heid.* VIII, pp. 58–61, believes that the reference here is to the *koinodikion*.

to take time off work — were allowed to give their testimony in writing.[42] However, the trial was suspended after Apollodoros' threats dissuaded Tetosiris' witnesses from giving evidence.

The beginning of the passage, in which Tetosiris describes the acts committed by Apollodoros, is not easy to translate: Ἀπολλόδ̣ωρ̣ος ἐπισύσ[τ]ασιν ποιησάμενος πλέονος ποιῶν, etc. (ll. 5–6). The term ἐπισύστασις in Greek can mean either a gathering in general or, more specifically, a hostile gathering, a rebellion. The expression ἐπισύστασιν ποιησάμενος could thus mean either that Apollodoros "caused trouble"[43] or that he "gathered" some men to intimidate the witnesses.[44] There is no known parallel for the expression πλέονος ποιῶν; πλέονος could be an error for the adverbial form πλεόνως, in which case the sentence would mean that "by many actions" Apollodoros frightened the witnesses.[45] Tetosiris then notes that he threatened to subject them to *apotumpanismos*: "saying that he would subject them and me to *apotumpanismos* and that he would drive us out of the village" (ll. 6–7: λέγ[ω]ν ἀποτυπανιεῖν [l. ἀποτυμπανιεῖν] αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐμὲ καὶ ἐγβαλεῖν ἐκ τῆς κ̣ώ̣μης). The verb *apotumpanizein* used here is a rare term that does not fall under the *topoi* of petitions, so we may assume that it reflects Apollodoros' actual words.[46] In its literal sense, *apotumpanismos* refers to a particularly gruesome form of capital punishment: prolonged exposure by being tied to the stake until death.[47] The verb *apotumpanizein* appears in two other Ptolemaic documents. The first is the *enteuxis* which the fuller Peteuris submitted in 217 BC concerning the violence committed by the *epistates* of Lysimachis, Tettaphos: he and his acolytes had "laid hands" on Peteuris, struck him "with fists and feet at random all over his body", and "rained blows" on him; they had also sought him out "to (subject him to) *apotumpanismos* (ὅπως προσαπ̣ο̣τυπα[νί]σωσ[ίν με], *SB* XX 15001, l. 10).[48] The other document, dated

42 Cf. Guéraud, *P.Enteux.*, p. 210; Scherer, *P.Turner*, p. 80; Kaltsas, *P.Heid.* VIII, p. 59; Kramer/Sanchez-Moreno Ellart, *P.Trier* I, p. 85. *P.Enteux.* 43 and *P.Sorb.* III 132 (= *P.Turner* 16) also mention the sending of written testimonies to the *strategos*.

43 Cf. Guéraud, *P.Enteux.*, pp. 212–213, n. 5: "Notre passage signifie probablement qu'Apollodoros a fait une irruption fougueuse et terrifiante".

44 Cf. Lewis, 1986, 60: "Apollodoros, bringing a gang [?] with him, burst in and terrorized all my witnesses".

45 Guéraud does not translate πλέονος ποιῶν; cf. note 6, 213: "Or Apollodoros par ses violences, …. effaroucha tous mes témoins". It is difficult to tell how N. Lewis understood the expression based on his translation of the passage.

46 Was Tetosiris able to understand such a rare Greek expression, or was she assisted by Greek-speaking witnesses to the altercation when composing the petition? The latter hypothesis seems more likely.

47 See Mélèze Modrzejewski, 2011, 325–331 and 335; Balamoshev 2011.

48 Cf. Caulfield/Estner/Stephens 1989, 252, n. 10; Balamoshev 2011, 18–19.

156 BC, is a report about the violence committed by a certain Harembasnis and his brother Pachrates against some *kikiourgoi* (castor-oil workers), who sought refuge in the Serapeum of Memphis (*UPZ* I 119); Harembasnis swore to kill them unless they obtained a royal safe conduct, and a local priest advised them not to sleep in the *pastophorion* in order to avoid *apotumpanismos*.[49] Neither the *epistates* Tettaphos nor Harembasnis, however, could seriously have considered putting their opponents to the stake until death, any more than Apollodoros could have done with Tetosiris' witnesses. Nevertheless, Apollodoros filled them with terror through this threat — he literally made them "all bristle with fear" (ἀνẹc̣όβηcεν πάντας, l. 6), so that they dared not give their testimony.

In the following passage, Tetosiris explains the attitude of the builders of the house: "And as those who were about to testify for me were Egyptians (?), they went away filled with fear, and so they did not testify ([πα]ρὰ τὸ δὲ εἶναι τοὺc μέλλọντάc μọι̣ μαρτυρ[ε]ῖ̣ν̣ Ạ[ἰγ]ṿπ̣τ̣ί̣ọṿc (?), εὐλαβηθέντẹ[c] ἀνεχώρηcαν [ὥcτε] μ̣ὴ μαρτυρῆcαι)". If the reading Ạ[ἰγ]ṿπτί̣ọṿc was correct,[50] this would be one of the very few instances in which individuals are referred to as "Egyptians" in Ptolemaic sources. At first glance, the explanation given by Tetosiris clearly illustrates the "statistical convergence"[51] between membership in the Hellenic group and dominant social positions. But, at the same time, this document shows that it is not the only interpretative key to understanding the relations between Greeks and Egyptians in the *chora*. Indeed, Tetosiris was not afraid to sue a Hellene who — in light of his behaviour — must have been quite influential: despite being both a woman and an Egyptian,[52] she was not intimidated by his threats — at least not to the point of dropping her charges. Admittedly, the petition in question is not formulated as a complaint, but Tetosiris must necessarily have filed a complaint against Apollodoros at an earlier stage, since a trial had been initiated and the *eisagogeus* was busy collecting testimonies. The urgency at this point was for her witnesses to be heard and her property rights recognised: that Apollodoros be punished for his intimidation may have seemed like a secondary goal to her. Clearly, Tetosiris had sufficient confidence in the Greek authorities to file her request with the *strategos*' office, and the presence of an apostille and a registration note shows that this request was taken into account. Although only a few traces of the apostille survive,

49 The functions of Harembasnis and Pachrates are not specified, but they are not *phylacites* (cf. ll. 20–21: they brought *phylacites* with them). Following Wilcken, *UPZ* I, 1927, p. 558, I believe that they were farm agents rather than police officers (Balamoshev 2011, 19).

50 See Guéraud, *P.Enteux.*, p. 213, n. 9–10. The beginning of the word is badly damaged, but the ending -πτίουc offers few alternatives to Αἰγυπτίουc.

51 Goudriaan, 2007, 57 and 59.

52 On women's petitions in Ptolemaic Egypt, see Veïsse 2023.

there is no reason to suppose that the case was not seriously examined, as was — just to provide a comparison — the complaint against the Jew Herakleides lodged with the *strategos*' office a month earlier by the Egyptian woman Thasos (*P.Sorb.* III 103: 21 January 221 BC).

P.Enteux. 86 also shows the mutual aid relations that could be established between Greeks and Egyptians within the framework of a recourse to petitions. A *hecatontarouros* cleruch, who may be assumed to be a neighbour, initially supported Tetosiris. O. Guéraud had read his name as Βιου[.]ạν, but according to D. Dana's reading it is actually Βίθụηι̣ν, a variant of the well-known Thracian anthroponym Bithus/Bithys.[53] As a *hecatontarouros*, Bithues was undoubtedly a rather important man in Berenikis Thesmophoru. Yet, he too was impressed by Apollodoros, so much so that he withdrew his testimony: "And he even heaped insults upon Bithues, a *hecatontarouros* who was about to testify for me (ἐλοιδόρηcεν πολλά), and said that he would subject him to *apotumpanismos* as well." The other interesting element lies in the way Tetosiris presents this witness: as Bithues, a cleruch, and not "Bithues, a Greek" or "Bithues, a Thracian". In the narrative logic of the petition, the important thing is not that Apollodoros threatened another Greek, but that he threatened a member of the local elite. In this case, Bithues' social status was more significant than his identity as a Hellene, and the intended effect would not have been the same if Apollodoros had insulted a Greek of more modest status.

3 Final Remarks

The case of *P.Enteux.* 86 confirms several of the previous observations, insofar as it illustrates how the Egyptians adopted the practice of addressing the authorities by means of petitions in Greek. Certainly, the Greek *strategos* — the actual addressee of the *enteuxeis* to the king, whose office was located in Krokodilopolis — was a figure more familiar to Greeks, including ones living elsewhere in the Fayum;[54] conversely, it must have been more convenient for Egyptians to address the village

53 I am very grateful to D. Dana for this reading. The ligature preceding the *nu* is compatible with an *eta*, as at the beginning of line 13 in τὴ̣ν οἰκίαν.

54 They did not hesitate to turn to him for "objectively" minor matters, as in *P.Enteux.* 42 (4 drachmas and hoes), *P.Enteux.* 36 (5 drachmas), *P.Enteux.* 48 (10 drachmas), *P.Enteux.* 44 (10 and 14 drachmas respectively), *P.Enteux.* 79 (insults and shoving).

authorities, either orally or in writing,[55] when the latter — as was often the case — were of Egyptian origin like themselves and spoke the same language as them. Nevertheless, it was perfectly possible for Egyptians to submit Greek petitions to higher-ranking officials: they did so for the same reasons and in the same way as the Greeks, and the preserved apostilles show that their petitions were taken seriously, whether they were directed against Egyptians or against Greeks. In some cases, the new "Greek-style" petitioning process would even appear to have provided an opportunity to bypass, and sometimes "short-circuit", Egyptian modes of dispute resolution.

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55 We must take into account the fact that we have very few local archives: as S. Wackenier pointed out to me, recourse to village authorities in the form of requests written in Demotic may have been more frequent than the documentation suggests.

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Tab. 3: List of petitions submitted by Greeks (Hellenes) and Egyptians.

a. Petitions submitted by Greeks: 121, of which 114 issued by different petitioners.

Identification criterion		**Documents**	
Name and/or other marker	*P.Cair.Zen.* II 59236	*P.Enteux.* 45	*P.Enteux.* 106
	P.Cair.Zen. III 59351	*P.Enteux.* 48	*P.Enteux.* 110
	P.Cair.Zen. IV 59620 and 59621	*P.Enteux.* 51	*P.Enteux.* 111
		P.Enteux. 52	*P.Genova* III 103
	P.Cair.Zen. V 59832	*P.Enteux.* 55	*P.Genova* III 104
	P.Col. IV 72	*P.Enteux.* 62	*P.Genova* III 105
	P.Enteux. 3	*P.Enteux.* 66	*P.Genova* III 106
	P.Enteux. 4	*P.Enteux.* 67	*P.Genova* III 107
	P.Enteux. 8	*P.Enteux.* 68	*P.Genova* III 108
	P.Enteux. 9	*P.Enteux.* 69	*P.Heid*. VI 378
	P.Enteux. 12	*P.Enteux.* 70	*P.Köln*. III 140
	P.Enteux. 14	*P.Enteux.* 71	*P.Lond*. VII 2039
	P.Enteux. 15	*P.Enteux.* 72	*P.Petr.* III 30
	P.Enteux. 16	*P.Enteux.* 74	*P.Sorb*. III 105
	P.Enteux. 17	*P.Enteux.* 75	*P.Sorb*. III 106
	P.Enteux. 22	*P.Enteux.* 79	*P.Sorb*. III 108
	P.Enteux. 25	*P.Enteux.* 85	*P.Sorb*. III 127
	P.Enteux. 26	*P.Enteux.* 88	*P.Sorb*. III 128
	P.Enteux. 29	*P.Enteux.* 89	*P.Tebt*. III.2 951
	P.Enteux. 32	*P.Enteux.* 92	*PSI* IV 399
Total: 64 petitions, of which 59 issued by different petitioners	*P.Enteux.* 36	*P.Enteux.* 94	*SB* XX 15068
	P.Enteux. 37		
	P.Enteux. 44		

Identification criterion		Documents	
Name only	*P.Cair.Zen.* III 59368	*P.Enteux.* 59	*P.Petr.* III 29c
	P.Cair.Zen. III 59460	*P.Enteux.* 60	*P.Petr.* III 29f
	P.Col. IV 83	*P.Enteux.* 64	*P.Petr.* III 29g
	P.Enteux. 1	*P.Enteux.* 73	*P.Petr.* III 29h
	P.Enteux. 13	*P.Enteux.* 78	*P.Petr.* III 32c
	P.Enteux. 19	*P.Enteux.* 82	*P.Petr.* III 32f R
	P.Enteux. 20	*P.Enteux.* 84	*P.Petr.* III 36a R
	P.Enteux. 23	*P.Enteux.* 87	*P.Petr.* III 36a V
	P.Enteux. 27	*P.Enteux.* 97	*P.Petr.* III 36b, coll. I–II
	P.Enteux. 28	*P.Enteux.* 100	*P.Petr.* III 36b, col. IV
	P.Enteux. 31	*P.Enteux.* 101	*P.Petr.* III 36c
	P.Enteux. 33	*P.Enteux.* 107	*P.Petr.Kleon* 73
	P.Enteux. 34	*P.Enteux.* 109	*P.Sorb.* III 112
	P.Enteux. 35	*P.Genova* III 109	*SB* XII 10869
	P.Enteux. 38	*P.Lille* I 9	*SB* XIV 11367
	P.Enteux. 41	*P.Mich.* I 71	*SB* XVIII 13256
	P.Enteux. 42	*P.Petr.* III 27 R	*SB* XXVIII 17175
	P.Enteux. 46	*P.Petr.* III 28a	
Total: 57 petitions,	*P.Enteux.* 49	*P.Petr.* III 28e	
of which 55 issued by	*P.Enteux.* 53		
different petitioners	*P.Enteux.* 58		

b. Petitions submitted by Egyptians: 44, of which 43 issued by different petitioners.

Dublin, Pap. Env. 86/87	*P.Gur.* 5	*SB* VI 9556, col. I
P.Duk. inv. 698	*P.Heid.* VI 379	*SB* VI 9556, col. II
P.Enteux. 2	*P.Lille* I 8	*SB* X 10260
P.Enteux. 6	*P.Petr.* III 29b	*SB* X 10271
P.Enteux. 7	*P.Petr.* III 29e	*SB* XVI 12687
P.Enteux. 10	*P.Petr.* III 32a	*SB* XVIII 13312
P.Enteux. 11	*P.Sorb.* III 103	*SB* XX 14999
P.Enteux. 18	*P.Sorb.* III 104	*SB* XX 15001
P.Enteux. 21	*P.Sorb.* III 107	*SB* XXII 15762
P.Enteux. 24	*P.Sorb.* III 109	*SB* XXIV 16285
P.Enteux. 50	*P.Sorb.* III 110	
P.Enteux. 54	*P.Tebt.* III.1 772	
P.Enteux. 65	*PSI* IV 402	
P.Enteux. 76	*PSI* V 539	
P.Enteux. 80	*PSI* V 541	
P.Enteux. 83	P.Vindob. Barbara inv. 34	
P.Enteux. 86		
P.Enteux. 96		

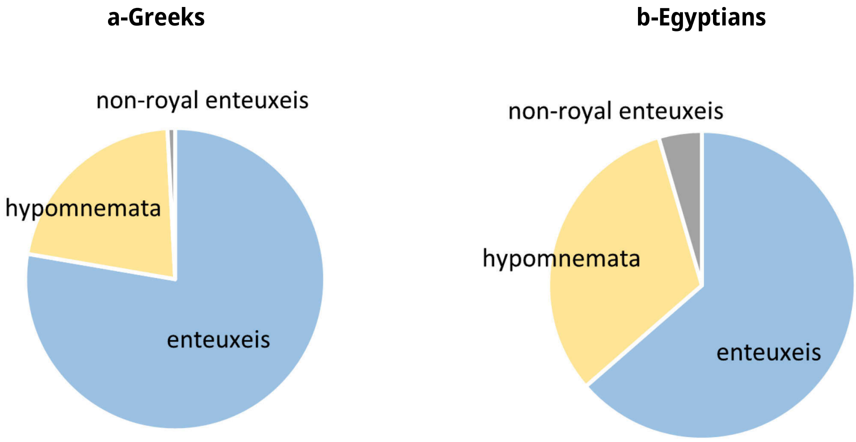

Fig. 37: Distribution of petitions from Greeks (Hellenes) and Egyptians by petition format.

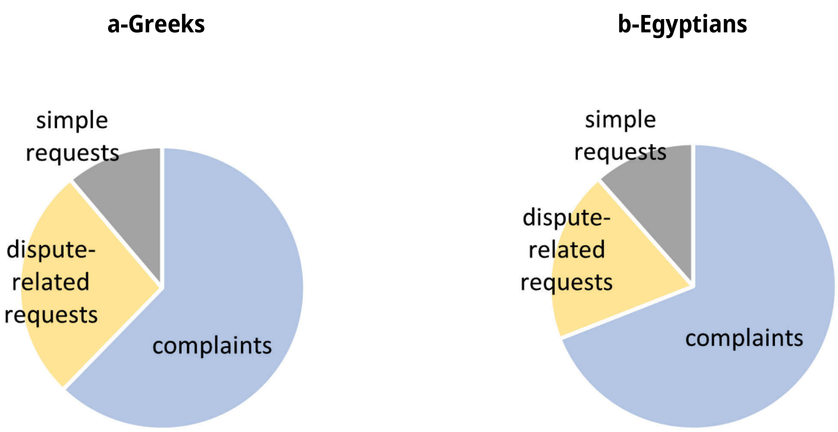

Fig. 38: Distribution of petitions from Greeks (Hellenes) and Egyptians by petition category.[56]

56 Documents whose category is uncertain are not considered here.

Sara Marmai

The Dossier of the *Agoranomoi* of the Arsinoites

Abstract: This paper addresses the issue of the presence of Greek notaries in the Arsinoites under the Ptolemies through a systematic survey of all published documents relating to their activity, gathered here in a dossier. The analysis of these texts and their data, as well as providing useful insights into the notarial procedures and the trends preferred by the people in their daily contractual dealings, can also become the starting point for broader research, to be extended to all other *nomoi* for a more comprehensive understanding of the agoranomic practices throughout Ptolemaic Egypt.

Keywords: *agoranomoi*, Greek notaries, Arsinoites, Ptolemaic Egypt, archival practices.

λθ εἰ ἀγορανομήσω;
Sortes Astrampsychi, *quaestio* 39

1 Introduction

The rise and development of Greek public notaries (ἀγορανόμοι) in Ptolemaic Egypt[1] — though undoubtedly a riveting topic — is rather difficult to examine comprehensively, owing to a series of well-known hindrances. To sum up the issue in brief, our documentation is first of all chronologically and geographically scattered; secondly, the total number of recovered notarial archives still remains very low; thirdly, the main bulk of the surviving agoranomic papers is written in a highly technical language, often referring to offices, types of deeds and procedures which in retrospect are by no means self-evident and could, therefore, lead to misinterpretations and confusion. In the face of so many gaps, we might wonder how far we can venture to look for patterns applicable to the whole kingdom, as well as to reconstruct those dynamics that defined (and perhaps changed) these officials' roles and responsibilities over time.

In such a context, the archives of the notaries from Upper Egypt (mid-2nd – early 1st c. BC) can well be considered our lodestar: unparalleled, rich documentation from

1 A more specific discussion on the subject can be found in Marmai 2021, 83–119.

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which most of our current knowledge on the Ptolemaic ἀγορανομία directly derives.[2] However, Upper Egypt was definitely a peculiar region within the realm, both culturally and linguistically: if we were to take it as a general reference point for the whole kingdom, how reliable would it actually be?

There is no other way to test the broader applicability of the available evidence than to compare materials coming from different districts, looking for common features or possible discrepancies. As already mentioned, when it comes to the rest of Egypt we have to deal with an overall shortage of texts *directly* related to the Greek notaries — i.e. contracts (or drafts thereof),[3] registers and notes of registration;[4] nevertheless, some of the most interesting documents to shed light (albeit *indirectly*) on crucial details of our theoretical reconstruction were actually found between Middle and Lower Egypt, whose contribution should not, therefore, be underestimated.

In this respect, a systematic investigation of all published texts from Egypt for the purpose of identifying every possible mention to the presence and activity of ἀγορανόμοι (in deeds, subscriptions, dockets, registers and bank receipts, as well as in decrees, petitions, letters, memoranda, lists and private papers) is a *desideratum*, as it could lead to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. We can, however, start by investigating the situation which characterised one of these other νομοί, namely the Arsinoites — perhaps the most perfect counterpart to the more conservative regions of the South as far as the Hellenization process is concerned.

2 Building up the Dossier

With the aim of obtaining the most complete and accurate list of testimonies possible, I sifted through all the published texts[5] pertaining to this specific chronological and geographical frame, restricting the results to those that can be traced back (at least plausibly) to the Arsinoites in the period between the late 4th c. and the year 30 BC. This first query produced a few thousand hits, which I have reviewed individually

2 See esp. Pestman 1985, 9–27; Vandorpe 2004, 161–186; Vandorpe/Waebens 2009, 93–95; Vierros 2012, 81–89.

3 Mainly wills, cessions, sales, and loans: see Pestman 1985, 28–33.

4 These occur either in various types of registers (which were kept in the notaries' archives), or at the bottom of the deed itself, or even both. Besides, the ἀγορανόμοι might have been asked to produce further documents for the parties, in order to fulfil specific procedures, usually connected to the payment of the so-called ἐγκύκλιον, the tax on sales due to the State, cf. Marmai 2021, 93–98.

5 I did not include here papyri whose text has only been described but not yet published, at least partially.

in order to identify every possible match.[6] I have classified all those I was able to find into three different groups:

1. Agoranomic documents: texts that can be directly linked to the notarial activity of the ἀγορανόμοι in the area;
2. Indirect mentions: texts that prove the presence of Greek notaries in the area, even though they were not produced by them;
3. Uncertain cases: texts that pertain to the presence and activity of ἀγορανόμοι in the region but cannot be classified with certainty due to their fragmentary state and/or the lack of a precise context.

At the end of the review process, these were the figures:[7]

Agoranomic documents	313
Indirect mentions	14
Uncertain cases	4

With the purpose of refining the analysis on the agoranomic material, I have organised these groups into seven further subcategories (designated below by letters from A to G):

A	Agoranomic deeds (contracts and acts)	5
B	Registration/validation notes in Greek contracts	7

6 One of the major difficulties in sorting the material is to determine whether what appears to be a classic six-witness contract should instead be considered part of an official register, especially when it shows features that might be compatible with archival practices (albeit not necessarily 'public' ones), and in the case of several similar documents most likely obtained through the dismantling of the same cartonnages: see e.g. *P.Tebt.* III.1 817 (Krokodilopolis; Nov. 4, 182) — where two different *kollemata* recording different agreements are glued together as what might possibly be considered a τόμος συγκολλήσιμος — or the group of contracts constituted by *P.Tebt.* III.2 976–979, which are chronologically very close to one another (they can broadly be dated back to the years from 185 to 174). In the absence of any clear clues relating to the Greek notarial dimension, however, I have preferred to leave all doubtful cases out of the dossier.

7 For the sake of clarity, I have considered the *texts* individually, even when they have been published together under the same edition number — see e.g. the case of no. 73, a long roll that contains a list of abstracts of contracts (75 of which have been published and/or at least described by the editors). Since other similar registers (such as *CPR* XVIII and *P.Freib.* III 12–33) have instead been published by treating their entries individually, I have preferred to stick to this latter criterion for the count. This is the reason why the number of texts given is higher than that of the papyri which constitute the dossier itself.

C	Registration/validation notes in Demotic contracts	43
D	Registers of Greek contracts	202
E	Greek registers of Demotic contracts	56
F	Indirect mentions	14
G	Uncertain	4

3 The Dossier

Listed below are the papyri that constitute the dossier, arranged chronologically (all dates are BC):

Tab. 4: Dossier of the *agoranomoi* of the Arsinoites.

No.	Abbreviation	Date	Origin/place of registration	Discovery site	Group
1	*P.dem. Chic. Haw.* 6	Sept. 10, 259	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
2	*P.Petr.*² I 30	second half of the 3rd c.	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
3	*P.Petr.*² I 31	second half of the 3rd c.	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
4	*SB* XXIV 16149	Mar. 9, 239	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
5	*UPZ* I p. 603, n. 3a	July 7, 238	Arsinoe	Ghoran	C
6	*P.Petr.*² I 1	238/237	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
7	*P.Petr.*² I 2	238/237	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
8	*P.Petr.*² I 3	238/237	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
9	*P.Petr.*² I 4	238/237	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
10	*P.Petr.*² I 5	238/237	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
11	*P.Petr.*² I 6	238/237	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
12	*P.Petr.*² I 7	238/237	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
13	*P.Petr.*² I 8	238/237	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
14	*P.Petr.*² I 9	238/237	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
15	*P.Petr.*² I 11	238/237	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
16	*P.Petr.*² I 12	238/237	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
17	*P.Petr.*² I 13	238/237	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
18	*P.Petr.*² I 14	238/237	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
19	*P.Petr.*² I 15	238/237	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
20	*P.Petr.*² I 16	236/235	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D

No.	Abbreviation	Date	Origin/place of registration	Discovery site	Group
21	*P.Petr.*² I 17	236/235	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
22	*P.Petr.*² I 18	236/235	Theogonis	Gurob	D
23	*P.Petr.*² I 19	236/235	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
24	*P.Petr.*² I 20	236/235	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
25	*P.Petr.*² I 21	236/235	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
26	*SB* XXIV 16150	Nov. 19, 235	Haueris	Haueris	C
27	*P.Petr.*² I 22	235/234	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
28	*P.Petr.*² I 23	between 235/234 and 226/225	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
29	*UPZ* I p. 603, n. 2	May 7, 232	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
30	*UPZ* I p. 603, n. 3	May 13, 232 (?)	Krokodilopolis	Krokodilopolis	C
31	*SB* XXIV 16151	July 31, 232	Haueris	Haueris	C
32	*P.dem. Chic. Haw.* Appendix	Sept. 5, 232	Haueris	Haueris	C
33	*CPR* XVIII 22	a) after Oct. 21, 232 b) after Jan. 12, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
34	*CPR* XVIII 23	a) after Oct. 21, 232 b) after Jan. 12, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
35	*CPR* XVIII 24	a) after Oct. 21, 232 b) after Jan. 12, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
36	*CPR* XVIII 25	a) after Oct. 21, 232 b) after Jan. 12, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
37	*CPR* XVIII 26	a) after Oct. 21, 232 b) after Jan. 12, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
38	*CPR* XVIII 27	a) after Oct. 21, 232 b) after Jan. 12, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
39	*CPR* XVIII 28	a) after Oct. 21, 232 b) after Jan. 12, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
40	*CPR* XVIII 29	a) after Oct. 21, 232 b) after Jan. 12, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
41	*CPR* XVIII 30	a) after Oct. 21, 232 b) after Jan. 12, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
42	*CPR* XVIII p. 120	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
43	*CPR* XVIII 1	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D

No.	Abbreviation	Date	Origin/place of registration	Discovery site	Group
44	*CPR* XVIII 2	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
45	*CPR* XVIII 3	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
46	*CPR* XVIII 4	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
47	*CPR* XVIII 5	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
48	*CPR* XVIII 6	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
49	*CPR* XVIII 7	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
50	*CPR* XVIII 8	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
51	*CPR* XVIII 9	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
52	*CPR* XVIII 10	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
53	*CPR* XVIII 11	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
54	*CPR* XVIII 12	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
55	*CPR* XVIII 13	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
56	*CPR* XVIII 14	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
57	*CPR* XVIII 15	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
58	*CPR* XVIII 16	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
59	*CPR* XVIII 17	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
60	*CPR* XVIII 18	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
61	*CPR* XVIII 19	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
62	*CPR* XVIII 20	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D

No.	Abbreviation	Date	Origin/place of registration	Discovery site	Group
63	*CPR* XVIII 21	a) May 18–June 16, 232 b) May 12–June 10, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
64	*CPR* XVIII 32	a) 232–231 b) 207–206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
65	*CPR* XVIII 33	a) 232–231 b) 207–206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
66	*P.Tebt.* III.1 814	after Mar. 16, 227	Arsinoites	Tebtunis	A[8]
67	*P.Petr.*^{2} I 24	226/225	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
68	*P.Petr.*^{2} I 25	226/225	Krokodilopolis	Gurob	D
69	*P.Petr.*^{2} I 26	226/225	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
70	*P.Petr.*^{2} I 27	226/225	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
71	*P.Petr.*^{2} I 28	226/225	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
72	*P.Petr.*^{2} I 29	226/225	Krokodilopolis?	Gurob	D
73	*P.Tebt.* III.1 815[9]	223–222	Arsinoites	Tebtunis	D
74	*P.Enteux.* 15	Jan. 13, 218	Theogonis?	Magdola	F
75	*P.Petr.* II 47	Dec. 28, 210–July 15, 209	Hiera Nesos	Gurob	B
76	*SB* XXVI 16799	ca. 210–209	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	A[10]
77	*CPR* XVIII 34	207–206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
78	*CPR* XVIII 31	after Jan. 12, 206	Theogonis	Arsinoites	D
79	*BGU* VI 1213	3rd c.	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	F
80	*P.Genova* III 119	late 3rd c.	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	D
81	P.B.U.G. inv. 122A	early 2nd c.	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
82	*P.Tebt.* III.2 970	early 2nd c.	Krokodilopolis	Tebtunis	D
83	*P.Hamb.* I 28	first half of the 2nd c.	Philadelphia	Arsinoites	D
84	*P.Sijp.* 45	Jan. 7, 197	Arsinoites or Herakleopolites	Arsinoites or Herakleopolites	F
85	P.Col. 1 inv. 480	ca. 198–197	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	F
86	*P.Freib.* III 38	Sept. 26, 181	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	F
87	*P.Stras.* II 110	ca. 181–180	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	F
88	*P.Stras.* IX 803	ca. 180	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
89	*P.Stras.* IX 882	ca. 180	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D

8 See n. 20.

9 See n. 7.

10 The connection of this text with an agoranomic context, though not explicit given the fragmentary state of the papyrus, has been convincingly proposed by Armoni 2000 (see esp. 227).

No.	Abbreviation	Date	Origin/place of registration	Discovery site	Group
90	*P.Freib.* III 13	179–178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
91	*P.Freib.* III 15	179–178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
92	*P.Freib.* III 17	179–178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
93	*P.Freib.* III 27	179–178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
94	*P.Freib.* III 28 col. 1 II	179–178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
95	*P.Freib.* III 30	179–178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
96	*P.Freib.* III 32	179–178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
97	*P.Freib.* III 36+37	179–178?	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	G
98	*P.Freib.* III 12	Sept. 15, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
99	*P.Freib.* III 20 a	Sept. 15, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
100	*P.Freib.* III 29 a	Sept. 15, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
101	*P.Freib.* III 31	Sept. 15, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
102	*P.Freib.* III 21	Sept. 19, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
103	*P.Freib.* III 20 a	Sept. 15, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
104	*P.Freib.* III 29 a	Sept. 15, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
105	*P.Freib.* III 31	Sept. 15, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
106	*P.Freib.* III 21	Sept. 19, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
107	*P.Freib.* III 22	Sept. 20, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
108	*P.Freib.* III 23	Sept. 2–Oct. 1, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
109	*P.Freib.* III 24	Sept. 2–Oct. 1, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
110	*P.Freib.* III 25	Sept. 2–Oct. 1, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
111	*P.Freib.* III 26	Sept. 2–Oct. 1, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
112	*P.Freib.* III 29	Sept. 2–Oct. 1, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
113	*P.Freib.* III 33	Sept. 2–Oct. 1, 178	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	D
114	*P.Tebt.* III.2 887	173–128	Arsinoites	Tebtunis	F
115	*SB* XX 14470	July 29–28, 160	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
116	*SB* XX 14471	July 29, 160	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
117	*SB* XX 14472	July 29, 160	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
118	*SB* XX 14491	Aug. 18, 160	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
119	*SB* XX 14490	Aug. 24, 160	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
120	*SB* XX 14489	160–159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
121	*SB* XX 14473	after Mar. 8, 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
122	*SB* XX 14474	Mar. 27, 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
123	*SB* XX 14477	July 29–Aug. 27, 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
124	*SB* XX 14476	Aug. 9, 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E

No.	Abbreviation	Date	Origin/place of registration	Discovery site	Group
125	*SB* XX 14491	Aug. 18, 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
126	*SB* XX 14490	Aug. 24, 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
127	*SB* XX 14478	Aug. 28, 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
128	*SB* XX 14479	Sept. 16–25, 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
129	*SB* XX 14488	160–159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	A
130	*SB* XX 14492 a	ca. 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
131	*SB* XX 14492 c	ca. 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
132	*SB* XX 14492 d	ca. 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
133	*SB* XX 14492 e	ca. 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
134	*SB* XX 14492 g	ca. 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
135	*SB* XX 14492 h	ca. 159	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
136	*SB* XX 14492 f	159–158	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
137	*SB* XX 14480	Febr. 3, 158	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
138	*SB* XX 14481	Aug. 158?	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
139	*SB* XX 14482	Aug. 9, 158	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
140	*SB* XX 14483	Aug. 12, 158	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
141	*SB* XX 14484	Aug. 18, 158	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
142	*SB* XX 14487	Aug. 28–Sept. 26, 158	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
143	*SB* XX 14485	Sept. 4, 158	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
144	*SB* XX 14486	Sept. 23, 158	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
145	*SB* XX 14492 b	Sept. 24, 158	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	E
146	*SB* XVI 12519	mid-2nd c.[11]	Arsinoites	Arsinoites	F
147	*P.Oxyrhyncha* 5	after 147	Oxyrhyncha	Arsinoites	F
148	*PSI* XIII 1310	a) 146–145? b) 135–134?	Krokodilopolis	Tebtunis	F
149	*P.Köln* IX 366	after 132	Arsinoites?	Arsinoites?	F
150	*SB* I 4459	Febr. 26, 128	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
151	*SB* I 4467	Jan. 21, 119	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
152	*SB* XIV 11998	116–100	Krokodilopolis	Krokodilopolis?	A
153	*SB* XIV 11404	Apr. 21, 115	Haueris	Haueris	C
154	*SB* XXIV 16152	Mar. 11, 114	Arsinoites	Haueris	C
155	*P.Tebt.* III.1, 740	Sept. 16, 113	Krokodilopolis	Tebtunis	F

11 The papyrus preserves two royal decrees that can be dated back to the early years of the reign of Ptolemy I Soter, cf. Hagedorn 1986, 65–70.

No.	Abbreviation	Date	Origin/place of registration	Discovery site	Group
156	*P.Oslo* III 140	Oct. 10, 112	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	B
157	*P.Tebt.* I 166	Mar. 17–Apr. 15, 105	Krokodilopolis	Tebtunis	G
158	*SB* I 4473	Sept. 7, 105	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
159	*SB* I 4479	Sept. 7, 105	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
160	*SB* I 4476	106[12]	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
161	*P.Tebt.* I 105	Nov. 10, 103	Kerkeosiris	Tebtunis	B
162	*SB* XIV 11405	a) Aug. 25, 101 b) Aug. 25, 98	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
163	*SB* XIV 11406	a) Aug. 25, 101 b) Aug. 25, 98	Arsinoites	Haueris	C
164	*SB* XXIV 16153	Sept. 13, 100	Arsinoites	Haueris	C
165	*SB* I 4466	Oct. 1, 100	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
166	*P.Tebt.* II 571 R	late 2nd c.	Arsinoites	Tebtunis	C
167	*P.Tebt.* III.2 972	late 2nd c.	Arsinoites	Tebtunis	D
168	*P.Tebt.* III.2 981	late 2nd c.	Arsinoites	Tebtunis	C
169	*SB* XXIV 16154	Apr. 20, 99	Syron Kome	Haueris	C
170	*SB* XIV 11407	Aug. 15, 98	Arsinoites	Haueris	C
171	*SB* XXIV 16155	Oct. 15, 98	Haueris?	Haueris	C
172	*SB* I 4464	Dec. 2, 98	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
173	*SB* I 4465	Dec. 9, 98	Arsinoites	Tebtunis	C
174	*SB* I 4462	Dec. 10, 98	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
175	*SB* I 4460	Sept. 27, 97	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
176	*SB* I 4461	Febr. 13–Mar. 13, 93	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
177	*SB* XXIV 16156	Apr. 11, 93	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
178	*SB* XXIV 16157	Febr. 15, 92	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
179	*SB* XXIV 16158	Febr, 15, 92	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
180	*SB* XXIV 16159	Febr. 15, 92	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
181	*SB* XXIV 16160	Febr. 15, 92	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
182	*P.Tebt.* I 104	Febr. 22, 92	Kerkeosiris	Tebtunis	B
183	*P.Tebt.* I 201	Nov. 22, 90	Kerkeosiris?	Tebtunis	C
184	*SB* I 4468	July 22, 89	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
185	*SB* VI 9612	88–87	Theogonis	Arsinoites	F
186	*SB* VI 9297	Aug. 30, 86	Mouchis	Haueris	C

12 The date first proposed by the editors for this document (173–172) is incorrect, cf. BL V 92.

No.	Abbreviation	Date	Origin/place of registration	Discovery site	Group
187	*SB* XXIV 16161	Nov. 3, 85	Mouchis	Haueris	C
188	*SB* XXIV 16162	Apr. 9, 83	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
189	*SB* I 4463	Mar. 25, 78	Tebtunis	Tebtunis	C
190	*P.Ryl.* IV 588	Sept. 19, 78	Krokodilopolis	Arsinoites	G
191	*SB* V 7532	July 12, 74	Nilopolis	Soknopaiou Nesos	B
192	*P.Fay*. 240 descr. (= Claytor 2014, no. 1)[13]	Aug. 30, 74	Euhemeria	Euhemeria	B
193	*P.Tebt.* I 140	Oct. 7, 72	Kerkethoeris?	Tebtunis	F
194	*SB* XIV 11408	Sept. 3, 71	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
195	P.Mich. inv. 3380 (= Claytor 2014, no. 2)[14]	Dec. 22, 71	Theadelphia	Theadelphia	B
196	*SB* XIV 11409	Nov. 1, 69	Haueris	Haueris	C
197	*SB* XXIV 16163	Nov. 10, 67	Krokodilopolis	Haueris	C
198	*SB* VIII 9764	49	Bakchias	Bakchias	G

13 I am including this document and no. 195, but I am not fully convinced of their proposed dating: even though the editor considers them to be Ptolemaic (basing his estimation on palaeographical grounds), I would not rule out the possibility that they might actually belong to the early years of Augustus' reign. Many hints point in that direction: certainly, as the editor observes, their handwriting shows similarities with numerous scripts of the 1st c. BC, but no exact match with any strictly Ptolemaic hand could be found — which means that, more generally, they share characteristics which were typical of the *whole* century, and did not abruptly cease to exist after the Roman takeover. Besides, in terms of models, content and terminology, they represent a *unicum* within the Ptolemaic documentation, since all the most direct parallels for them can be identified among the Roman material — this is also acknowledged by the editor, who interprets the fact as an anticipation of trends which became more common in later times. This (apparent?) uniqueness, however, would cease to be such if we assumed that the papyri were actually written, say, in the 7th and 11th year of Augustus' reign (i.e. 23 and 20 BC). If that were the case, the two documents should not be considered part of this dossier.

14 See the previous note.

4 Analysis of the Data

4.1 Distribution

The first interesting observation concerns the chronological and geographical distribution of the data.

As far as continuity is concerned, our documentation covers the whole Ptolemaic period: from the earliest attestations (late 3rd c.) to the latest ones (Cleopatra's reign), there is no major gap worth mentioning — which seems to suggest a rather busy and unbroken activity on the part of the Arsinoitic ἀγορανόμοι across the centuries.

The same uniformity emerges on the geographical level (Fig. 39). Even though the exact provenance of a rather large number of documents in the dossier remains unknown, and while many others stem from Krokodilopolis — which is fairly reasonable, since it was the metropolis and, most probably, the main seat of the ἀγορανόμος —,[15] if we take into account all of the places where the presence of these officials is attested (whether directly or indirectly), we find a widespread distribution. The resulting map shows that Greek notaries were active not only in the main centres, but also in smaller villages throughout the region.

It is true, however, that our documentation is not equally distributed in terms of *quantity*: from this point of view, it is possible to identify three main clusters, namely the villages of Philadelphia, Theogonis, Tebtunis and Haueris, from which the overwhelming majority of the surviving texts come.[16] It is nonetheless important to point out that this situation is due to the randomness of our findings: in order to avoid misinterpretations, we must bear in mind that most of our Arsinoitic documentation was recovered not via direct excavations, but via the dismantling of *cartonnages*. Therefore, the fact that a great number of documents come from these four villages can be deemed a mere coincidence: it does not imply that these villages played some kind of preeminent role, or that their notaries produced more deeds.

15 At least, this is the opinion shared by most scholars thus far.

16 Not 'archaeologically' speaking, of course: I am here referring to the places where the documents were originally written and/or registered.

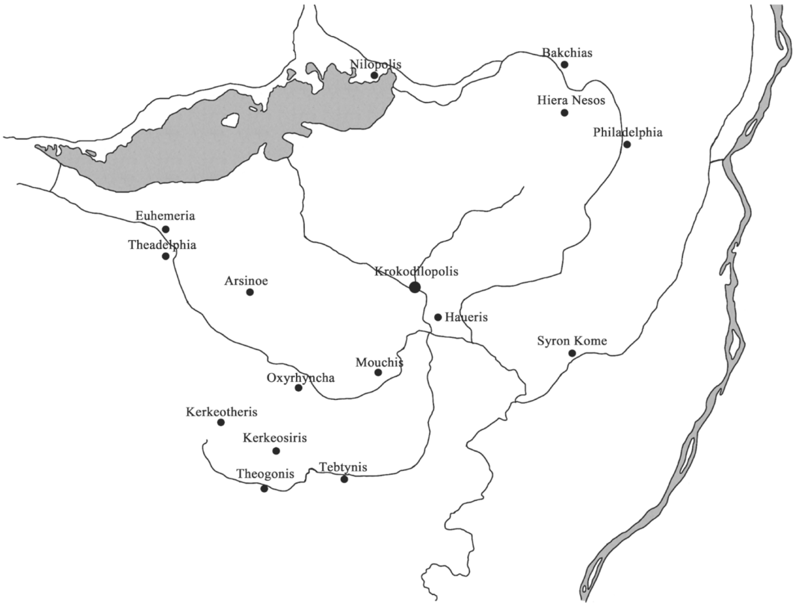

Fig. 39: Geographical distribution of the attestations of *agoranomoi*.

4.2 Types of Deeds

Turning to the types of documents attested in the dossier (Fig. 40), since the standard duties of a Greek notary essentially consisted in drawing up, validating and registering contracts,[17] one would expect to find specimens that fall into the following categories:

a. agoranomic contracts;
b. ἀπογραφαί, i.e. official declarations concerning the nature and price of specific goods (for which the payment of a state fee was mandatory), which had to be transmitted to the tax farmers beforehand;[18]
c. καταγραφαί, i.e. documents attesting the verbalization of the transfer of ownership of those same goods;[19]

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17 See Marmai 2021, 93–112.

18 See Marmai 2021, 98–99.

19 Here I essentially follow Shönbauer's proposal (1936, 440–451); see also Marmai 2021, 93–98. I would like to point out that the term καταγραφή itself is *not* attested in the papyri — only the procedure of καταγράφειν is actually referred to, while the document produced is rather called ὠνή

d. registration/validation notes on Greek contracts;
e. registration/validation notes on Demotic contracts;
f. registers of Greek contracts;
g. Greek registers of Demotic contracts.

Here below is a graphic representation of the data:

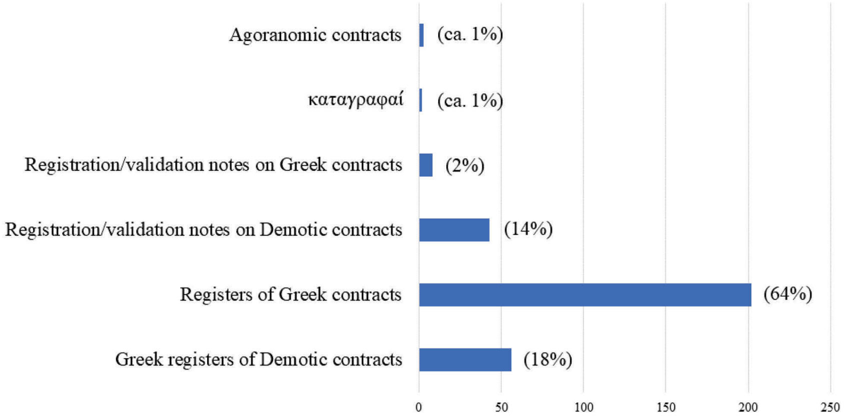

Fig. 40: Types of deeds: graphic representation.

The first thing that really stands out is the complete absence of any direct attestation of ἀπογραφαί and the partial preservation of only two καταγραφαί (no. 66),[20] which is particularly puzzling, given the fact that these procedures were mandatory steps in order to pay the tax on sales and, therefore, to complete the transaction (or, at least, to make it legally valid).[21]

(see below, n. 21). However, since the term ὠνή might sound quite confusing, for the sake of clarity I prefer to use here a less ambiguous word as a label.

20 The papyrus is actually a register, where various copies of documents relating to sales are collected: among them, portions of two καταγραφαί are quoted *verbatim*.

21 See e.g. *SB* XIV 11375, ll. 12–17 (Tholthis, Oxyrynchites; 212–211), where it is stated that failure to produce the deed (here called ὠνή) would make the contract void: δότω δὲ Νι̣[κί-]|[ας Τ]ρ̣ο̣χ̣[ῶι ὠ]ν̣ὴ̣ν̣ το̣ῦ̣ ἡ̣μίϲο̣υ̣ϲ̣ τῆϲ αὐλῆϲ τοῦ αὐτοῦ μέρουϲ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἐν Ὀξυρύ̣[γ]χ̣ω̣[ν] | [πόλει ἀγορ]α̣ν[ο]μίου ἀφ' ἧ̣ϲ ἂν ἡμέραϲ Τροχὸϲ Νικία̣ι̣ προείπ̣η̣ι ἐ̣ν̣ ἡ̣μ̣έρα̣ι̣ϲ̣ δ̣έκα τ̣α̣[ϲϲο]μ̣έ̣ν̣ο̣[υ] | [Τροχοῦ] τ̣ὰ̣ γε̣[ινό]μενα τ̣έ̣λ̣[η]. ἐὰν δὲ̣ Ν̣ι̣κ̣ί̣α̣ϲ̣ μὴ δῶ̣ι̣ Τ̣ρ̣ο̣χ̣ῷ̣[ι] ὠ̣ν̣[ὴ]ν̣ κ̣α̣τ̣ὰ̣ τ̣ὰ γ̣εγραμ̣μ̣έ̣ν̣α̣, | [ἀποτει]ϲ̣ά̣τ̣ω̣ Νικί[αϲ] Τ̣ρ̣[ο]χ̣ῶι τὰ̣ϲ̣ [πεν]τακο[ϲ]ί̣[αϲ δρα]χ̣μ̣ὰ̣ϲ̣ τὴν τ̣ι̣[μ]ὴ̣[ν ἡ]μ̣ι̣ό̣λ̣ι̣ο̣ν̣, [καὶ ἡ πρᾶ-]|ξ̣ι[ϲ] ἔ̣ϲ̣[τω] Τ̣ροχῶι παρὰ Ν̣ι̣κ̣ί̣ο̣υ̣ πράϲϲον̣τ̣ι̣ κ̣ατὰ τὸ διά̣γρ̣α̣μ̣μ̣α̣.

Equally striking is the extremely low number of agoranomic contracts: despite the spread of γραφεῖα throughout the region, for the whole Ptolemaic period only three Greek notarial contracts are attested. Strange as this may seem, one must be cautious in drawing conclusions exclusively based on such premises: it seems far more likely that the lack of such testimonies is to be ascribed to the fact that — up until now — no surviving *cartonnage* has been found containing these particular types of documents, and that no Arsinoitic notarial archive has yet been discovered and excavated.

The lion's share, however, is definitely represented here by the registration activity, which resulted in adding a docket at the end of both Greek (2%) and Demotic contracts (14%), and entering either full texts or abstracts of Greek (64%) and Demotic contracts (18%) in special registers.

It is very tempting to label this operation as ἀναγραφή — indeed, this is a technical term which was used to describe precisely this procedure, but only as early as 146, when Ptolemy VI Philometor issued a decree that made it compulsory for all Demotic deeds, if they were to be regarded as valid in court.[22] Of course, the practice existed well before this ordinance, but a) it was entirely optional, b) the terminology used was apparently different. However, the analysis of this dossier reveals that while Philometor's reform did introduce a new terminology, it did not result in a complete standardization of the technical vocabulary, since inconsistencies in the words and formulas used are still attested down to the late 2nd and early 1st centuries.

4.2.1 Registration/validation notes on Greek contracts

Greek contracts bearing the registration docket are not very numerous[23] — with regard to the Arsinoites, only 7 survive,[24] and only 1 (no. 75 in the dossier) predates

22 Cf. *UPZ* I, p. 596 (Arsinoites; Febr. 8, 145). On the compulsory nature of the ordinance for Demotic contracts, cf. *UPZ* II 162, col. IV ll. 13–15 (Thebes; Dec. 11, 117): ὡςαύτως δὲ καὶ προςτάγματος | ἀντίγραφον περὶ τοῦ τὰ μὴ ἀναγεγραμμένα Αἰγύπτια | ςυναλλάγματα ἄκυρα εἶναι.

23 It is debatable whether a similar decree was ever issued to enforce registration also for Greek contracts. Although no reference to such an ordinance has survived in the papyri, some scholars are persuaded that it may have been issued some time around the end of the 2nd c., as would be proven by the fact that the registration note becomes a regular feature of all Greek deeds produced from that date onwards: see. Kramer, *CPR* XVIII, p. 25; Yiftach-Firanko 2008, 214–215.

24 Two of which (nos. 192 and 195) might be actually Roman, see n. 13.

Philometor's reign.[25] In this particular case no actual formula was used: a short note was added below the main text, stating the reason why the document was delivered to the office and specifying the registration date. The verb used by the clerk in his brief remark was not yet ἀναγράφειν, but rather χρηματίζειν — a very general term that was commonly used by Greek notaries to describe their practices. Significantly, however, all other testimonies present a more standardised version of the note: in nos. 156, 161, 182 and 191 it occurs with the following structure:

a. date (year, month, day)
b. πέπτωκεν/τέτακται εἰϲ ἀναγραφήν
c. διά + name of the official involved (optional)

Nos. 192 and 195 represent a partial exception, in that the registration is expressed directly through the verb ἀναγράφειν (ἀναγέγραπται) and the location of the γραφεῖον is also specified. Nonetheless, this is only a minor terminological shift, which does not significantly alter what appears to be the reference model.

The only real deviation from the norm described above is represented by no. 190. This document does not provide a direct registration note but offers an indirect reference to the registration procedure (ll. 14–15 and 39–41), where a ϲυγγραφή is said to have been 'handed in' (ἀνενεχθεῖϲα)[26] to the γραφεῖον. It must be noted, however, that this expression is not used from the notary's perspective, but rather from that of the parties involved; therefore, it cannot be ruled out that both terms were indeed technical — ἀναγράφειν describing the notary's registration activity, ἀναφέρειν the submission of the deed by the parties involved.[27]

4.2.2 Registration/validation notes on Demotic contracts

The group of Arsinoitic Demotic contracts bearing a registration note in Greek amounts to 43, but only 8[28] were actually written before the caesura of the year 146. This proves, again, that the procedure itself was already in existence prior to Philometor's reform, but people were allowed to resort to it on a voluntary basis,

25 His decree did not concern Greek contracts; nonetheless, it can be viewed as a watershed, since it probably introduced the new official terminology, which ended up being used also for the registration of Greek deeds.

26 Definitely not ἀναγεγραμμήνη, as proposed in the *ed. pr.*, l. 15 — see Lewis 1954, 296. Lewis' reading is also confirmed by the repetition of the verb ἀναφέρω in the final declaration of Sochotes (ll. 39–40).

27 See below, n. 36.

28 Nos. 1, 4, 5, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32.

whereas afterwards they were forced to apply it in order to present their papers as admissible evidence in court.

Philometor's measure affected not only the amount of Demotic deeds being regularly registered, but probably also the terminology used, by introducing the technical term ἀναγραφή — which, as far as the Arsinoitic documentation is concerned, never occurs in the earliest versions of the dockets. In all 8 documents dating from the 3rd century, successful registration is stated with the same words: πέπτωκεν εἰϲ κιβωτόν, '(the deed) has been deposited in the archives'.[29] Significantly, these early attestations come from different offices (Arsinoe, Tebtunis, Krokodilopolis, and Haueris) and were therefore most likely written by different scribes, who followed what appears to be the standardised formula at that time. On the contrary, most of the registration notes added after the year 146 consistently refer to the new terminology introduced, either by changing the former wording to πέπτωκεν εἰϲ ἀναγραφήν[30] or by employing the verb ἀναγράφειν[31] to describe the whole procedure.

Despite this terminological tendency, the actual phrasing of the dockets varies significantly — which suggests that while the scribes received instructions as to what key information to disclose, no official model had been established for them to follow. In their most concise form, the dockets merely consist of the following elements:

a. date (year, month, day);
b. the registration formula (πέπτωκεν εἰϲ ἀναγραφήν).

This short version sometimes also recorded the clerk involved,[32] but in the majority of cases it remained very basic.

29 The κιβωτόϲ (literally "box") is normally taken to mean the archives of an Egyptian temple. It is unclear, however, why a Demotic scribe working for an Egyptian institution should add a Greek registration note, instead of a Demotic one. Moreover, all the officials performing the registration carry Greek names, and present themselves as working for higher officials again with Greek names: this does not tell us much about their ethnicity, but it is absolutely relevant in terms of their administrative background. By presenting themselves with Greek names they are in fact stating that they belong to the Greek-speaking administration — otherwise they would have used their Egyptian aliases (see esp. Pestman 1978, 203–210; Clarysse 1985, 64–65). This is the reason why I believe that, even though such contracts may have been kept in the temple archives once the procedure had been completed, it was a Greek scribe working for a γραφεῖον who had to add the subscription note, in all probability after some kind of registration.

30 Nos. 150, 151, 154, 158, 159, 160, 165, 166, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 183, 184, 186, 187, 189.

31 Nos. 162, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 188, 194, 196, 197.

32 This happens in no. 154.

Other scribes opted for more detailed versions, which allow us to identify the styles of specific offices. For example, in the documents processed in Ptolemais Euergetis between the years 101 (or 98) and 67[33] we find the most detailed form:

a. date (year, month, day);
b. ἀναγέγραπται;
c. mention of the office where the registration was made (διὰ τοῦ ἐν + place γραφείου);
d. short description of the content of the agreement and the parties involved;
e. mention of the Demotic scribe;
f. date (year, month, day) of the deposition in the so-called βιβλιοθήκη.[34]

The version preferred by the agents of the γραφεῖον of Mouchis[35] appears to be slightly different, in that it lacks the final deposition date. Yet another variant is attested by no. 164, where no information is given regarding the place of registration. However, despite this variability, the common thread in all these notes is their reference to the new terminology introduced — whether through the noun ἀναγραφή or the verb ἀναγράφειν.

Even though the use of those terms is predominant in the post-Philometor scenario, there are a few exceptions. In two cases (nos. 153 and 164) the registration procedure is described from the point of view of the contracting parties, who are explicitly mentioned and declare to have handed in the document through the expression ἀνενήκται + year, month and day.[36] Nos. 169, 170, and 171, all written in Syron Kome[37] in the years 99–98, carry the date, the abbreviation κεχρη( ) — either for κεχρημάτισται or κεχρημάτικε[38] — followed by the specification of the clerk involved, the location of the office, and a brief description of the contents of the deed. Lastly, no. 168 is somewhat peculiar, in that its docket reads ἐνετάγη εἰς χρηματισμόν.

33 Nos. 169, 170, 171.

34 The date of registration and that of deposition usually coincide, with the sole exception of no. 177, where the deed reached the βιβλιοθήκη the day after its formal registration. On the βιβλιοθήκη see Vandorpe 2004, 164.

35 Nos. 186 and 187.

36 Again we find the verb ἀναφέρω in this context; see also above, n. 27.

37 I have checked the printed photo and the reading ἐν ϲυρ[for ἐν Cύρ[ων κώμ̣η̣] at the end of l. 11 (i.e. the first one of the Greek text) seems quite clear to me.

38 This latter interpretation seems less convincing: it was proposed for no. 170, where the abbreviation is followed by a gap that has caused a small text loss. Before the gap a δ can still be read, which the editor interpreted as the initial letter of the scribe's name; however, it could also be the first letter of the preposition διά, usually introducing the registering official (in the genitive), and in this case the passive perfect would be a more fitting solution. This possibility is strengthened by a comparison with nos. 169 and 171, also stemming from the same office.

Such phrasing is not otherwise attested in the Arsinoitic registration notes, but very closely recalls the words used by Paniskos, the clerk of a γραφεῖον, in the letter he sent to his subordinate Ptolemaios, to describe the contents of the new reform introduced by Philometor (*UPZ* I p. 596 [Memphis, Febr. 8, 145], see n. 23). He says, literally (ll. 15–18, my emphasis):

> καὶ ὑπογράφειν ἡμὰc *ἐντεταχέναι εἰc χρηματιcμὸν*
> δηλώcαντεc (*l.* δηλώcανταc) τόν τε χρόνον, ἐν ὧι ὑπογεγρ[ά]φαμεν
> ἐπενεχθείcηc τῆc cυγγραφῆc, καὶ τὸν δι' αὐτῆc
> τῆc cυγγραφῆc χρόνον.
>
> "And we ought to write a subscription stating that *we have entered (the contract) in the register*, specifying the date in which we have subscribed the contract submitted to us, and the date of the contract itself."

The expression that Paniskos resorts to in order to clarify the procedure to the puzzled Ptolemaios may well reflect the jargon in use among the γραφεῖον workers, at least *before* Philometor's πρόcταγμα — or, possibly, in the immediately following years, when terms such as ἀναγραφή and ἀναγράφειν were still in the process of becoming established. Unfortunately, it is impossible to date no. 168 with precision: on palaeographical grounds, it was estimated to date from the late 2nd century, but I would not rule out a slightly earlier date (the 150s or, possibly, the immediately following decades).

4.2.3 Registers of Greek and Demotic contracts

Another piece of the puzzle, when it comes to official transactions and business practices in the Arsinoites, is offered by the registers of notary offices — by far the largest group of documents in our dossier.

Many different types of registers are known — again, it is unclear whether this variety depended on the diverse functional needs of these extensive archives, on the development of new general guidelines over time, or on the fact that each office was allowed to follow its own rules, as long as accuracy and efficiency were ensured. Thus, we find registers that are organised thematically — such as the group known as *P.Trophitis*, a collection of Greek abstracts of Demotic alimentary contracts,[39] and possibly the wills published in *P.Petr.* I² — alongside registers whose

39 Within the group, which was recovered from a *cartonnage*, there are also 5 sales contracts; however, it is entirely possible that these 5 πράcειc originally constituted a second thematic register, which ended up being reused in the same *cartonnage*.

entries are arranged chronologically (like no. 73), registers containing either short abstracts of deeds or full texts (nos. 80, 82, 88, 89, 167), and registers created by physically joining together either original documents or their copies (nos. 33–65, 77, 78, 90–113).

Regardless of the language used for the contracts, it might be interesting to investigate which types of deed were most commonly registered within the region (Fig. 41). By collecting all the data, we get the following graph:

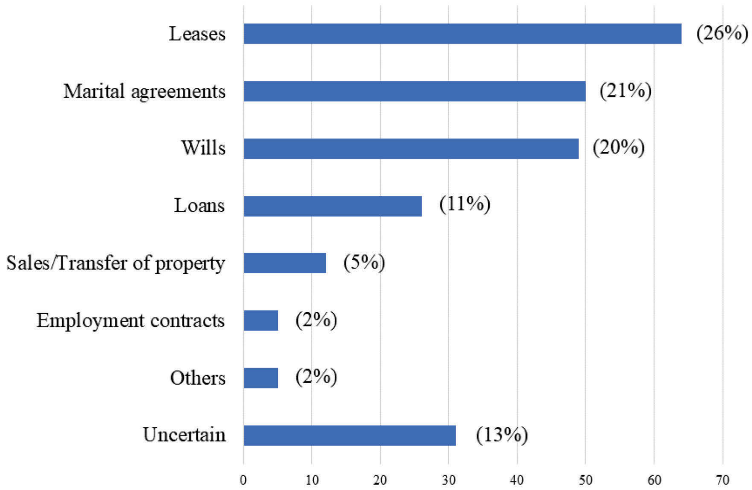

Fig. 41: Types of deeds registered in the Arsinoitic γραφεῖα.

Leases, marital agreements and wills alone account for over half our documentation. While the high number of wills and marital contracts can again be attributed to the unpredictable nature of *cartonnage* findings (that have yielded consistent portions of possibly thematic registers),[40] it is interesting to note that leases are the most widely attested category of contracts in all surviving non-thematic registers, followed by loans. Sales and other types of transfers of property, on the contrary, are relatively rarer. Employment contracts and other types of legal documents are attested, but constitute a very small percentage of the total.

It comes as no surprise that the vast majority of the registered leases concern landed properties, namely κλῆροι (and, to a lesser extent, gardens), nor it is surprising that, as a rule, both the lessors and the lessees were κληροῦχοι: indeed, even

40 See *P.Trophitis* and *P.Petr.*[2] I.

though it is difficult to give precise figures with regard to the population in the Arsinoites and its composition,[41] there is some consensus as to the fact that it included a significant number of Greek (or at least Hellenised) soldiers. It is also hardly surprising that people may have felt the need to further secure such deals: most likely the ἀγορανόμοι were not competent to draw up contracts of this kind;[42] therefore, registration in a γραφεῖον may have been the only way to offer both parties some kind of guarantee.

Loan records, on the contrary, offer interesting elements for reflection: first of all, a loan could also be produced by a Greek notary; secondly, there was no legal requirement to have them officially registered. By looking into these registers, we may gain a better understanding of the factors that may have influenced people's choices with regard to contractual procedures. Unfortunately, in addition to the randomness of our reference sample, we must take into account the fact that not all the figures are preserved — which limits our study material even further. However, based on the available data, it is possible to put together a rather varied picture, where contracts dealing with huge amounts of money[43] were registered along with agreements concerning only a few dozen bronze drachmae.[44] This might seem puzzling at first: it is indeed common sense to believe that, given the choice between equivalent alternatives, one would opt for the most convenient (i.e. less expensive) solution.[45] The lack of uniformity in the amounts of the private loans registered in Arsinoitic γραφεῖα suggests that, ultimately, the issue of personal preference was actually significantly more complicated: saving money, of course, may have been a very strong motivating factor, but equally decisive may have been the desire to save time, cautiousness, and trust in the authorities (and/or in one's counterparty).

41 Cf. *P.Count*, II, pp. 152–153; Fisher-Bovet 2014, 207.

42 Cf. Pestman 1985, 28–33. But the issue is not yet fully clear: no. 129 may well be a μίcθωcιc, even though, due to its fragmentary state, nothing can be said for sure; moreover, among the Greek notarial papers found in Upper Egypt there are actually two leases — *PSI* IX 1020 (Ta Memnoneia, Thebes; Dec. 4, 110) and *P.Batav.* 3 (Ta Memnoneia, Thebes; Oct. 20, 109). Both were written by a certain Ἀπολλώνιοc, who does not qualify himself as an ἀγορανόμοc, but rather uses the peculiar periphrasis ὁ πρὸc τῆι ἀγορανομίαι. The reasons behind this singular choice of words remains obscure, but it may imply that his office did not really coincide with that of a standard Greek notary: see *P.Batav.*, p. 21. A more thorough investigation of the agoranomic deeds produced in the whole kingdom would hopefully shed light on the matter.

43 Like mortgages: cf. nos. 82 and 97.

44 A few examples of these contracts can be found in no. 73.

45 Cf. e.g. Vandorpe (2002, 330, n. 12), who proposed this fairly reasonable interpretation for the dealings of a businesswoman like Apollonia/Senmonthis. We should bear in mind that a fee could be charged for registration in the notarial archives.

5 Conclusions

The available data represent a fairly balanced distribution of agoranomic offices within the Arsinoites. This scenario is in striking contrast with what we find in Southern Egypt, where agoranomic offices apparently grew in number only after the quashing of the Great Revolt — and (significantly, I believe) the installation of garrisons in this territory.[46] It seems that previously the population of Upper Egypt felt no need to resort to the services of Greek notaries for their private dealings (apart from their legal obligations,[47] for which, however, the ἀγορανομεῖον in Krokodilopolis and its branch in Diospolis Magna were evidently more than enough). On the contrary, ἀγορανόμοι were deeply rooted in the Arsinoites right from the start, which suggests that the inhabitants were more open to the possibility of resorting to their services.

Unfortunately, this broad geographical distribution is not matched by chronological uniformity: on the whole, by collecting all the papers produced throughout this region, we end up with rich documentation that covers the entire Ptolemaic period, but we cannot take any one office as a case study in order to follow its development over time; therefore, we lack a precise diachronic perspective on how things evolved in the long term.

This is also due to the fact that, despite the substantial number of papyri that make up the dossier, not all types of documents are equally represented: agoranomic contracts and deeds are severely under-represented, whereas there are plenty of fragments belonging to registers compiled in γραφεῖα. We should be very careful in interpreting this element: as I have often repeated, our evidence mainly comes from the dismantling of *cartonnages*, a valuable yet very random type of source; thus the abundance of notarial registers does not necessarily indicate a peculiar behavioural trend among people in the Arsinoites. It is nonetheless very interesting to investigate such registers, especially since Upper Egypt offers no parallels in this regard:[48] who resorted to this solution? And to what end? Based on the available data, it seems that the overwhelming majority of clients were Greek or Hellenised soldiers, mostly involved in land leases, loans, wills and various marital agreements. This picture is perfectly compatible with the demographics that — with all due caution — can be proposed for the νομός in question, which was

46 On the connection between Greek notaries and Hellenised social categories — particularly the military — see Marmai 2021, 116–118.

47 As already explained, some transactions required the involvement of an ἀγορανόμος: see Marmai 2021, 93–98.

48 While a register of contracts has indeed been identified, it did not contain private συγγραφαί, but rather notarial deeds: see Vandorpe 2004, 161–186.

apparently the one with the largest number of Greek-speaking settlers. It is a real pity that almost all our surviving registers only depict the state of affairs between the late 3rd and the early 2nd century, so that it is impossible to see whether and how the situation developed down to the late Ptolemaic period, especially with respect to the reforms promoted in the mid- and late 2nd century. As far as people's aims are concerned, it is harder to define general tendencies, but it would be interesting to collect more data on this, in order to evaluate the issue on a larger scale.

The analysis of registers and — even more so — of registration/validation notes may offer some insight into the practices of the people involved in running notarial offices and, perhaps, of the Ptolemaic administration more generally. Even though there is undoubtedly a strong consistency in terms of intentions and goals, the variability regarding many aspects of the work — such as archiving practices and the wording of the formulas — seems to imply that no rigorous regulations were enforced from above: it seems more likely that the central administration released only general guidelines, illustrating the key steps to be taken and the key information to be collected in order to successfully complete a procedure, without imposing any strict models or standards. In the end, as long as order and efficiency were ensured, clerks were apparently quite free to perform their duties in their own personal way, which would explain the coexistence of different 'styles' that can be associated with specific offices in specific periods of time.

There are still many open issues when it comes to Ptolemaic ἀγορανομία, some of which concern our basic understanding of the phenomenon. Just to mention a few unanswered questions: how exactly were Greek notaries organised in the χώρα? Was there a 'head notary', in charge of the management of the νομός, or are we to imagine a less hierarchical situation? What factors contributed to the success and spread (or to the defaulting and termination) of agoranomic offices? What was the exact meaning of terms such as ἀγορανομεῖα, ἀρχεῖα, μνημονεῖα, γραφεῖα and δημόσια, institutions that were all surely associated with Greek notaries but whose distinctive functions still appear blurred to our eyes? What contribution can the constantly updated collection of prosopographical data[49] offer for the reconstruction of chronological sequences, as well as for the identification of individuals (notaries or clients) and the definition of their social role and cultural background, especially given the possibilities disclosed by the most recent digital tools? And how do the Ptolemaic and Roman ἀγορανόμοι relate to each other (if at all)? Hopefully, this brief report may help us pick up the thread of this very intricate story. To sort out all the pieces in our puzzle, however, much broader and more intensive research must be performed.

49 The potential of prosopography in this respect was already acknowledged by Messeri Savorelli 1980, 186–188, who carried out some initial investigations in this direction.

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Part III: **The Literary Experience**

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Books, Authors, and the Public in the Hellenistic Arsinoite Nome: Some Considerations

Abstract: The paper investigates the circulation of Greek literature in Graeco-Roman Egypt during the Hellenistic period, with a focus on papyrological evidence from Fayum. The palaeographic, 'bibliological' and textual features of extant material are examined in order to identify the most popular literary genres and understand the dynamics of circulation of literary texts in Ptolemaic Egypt.

Keywords: Greek literature, literary papyri, Fayum, literary genres.

1 Introduction

As is widely known, the many thousands of papyri, which were found in the city of Oxyrhynchus, especially thanks to B.P. Grenfell and A.S. Hunt, made it possible to add new chapters to history of Greek literature, and to enrich those that were already available. An important contribution in this sense was also made by the villages of the Arsinoite nome, which yielded texts that were entirely new, as well as other versions of texts which were already familiar to us. In this regard, it is perhaps worth setting out a few observations of a general nature:

1. The circulation and reception of Greek literature in the small settlements of the Arsinoite nome highlight a significant presence of Greek literary culture there, albeit obviously more limited than in the large cities of both the Arsinoite nome and elsewhere, such as Alexandria, Naucratis, Ptolemais, and Krokodilopolis.
2. To some degree, the discovery of papyri in an archaeological excavation is undoubtedly a fortuitous event, but the number of papyri containing texts by a certain author is in any case indicative of his (or her) popularity, although not in absolute terms. This means that the number of extant papyri by individual authors is plausibly representative of the actual diffusion of their works.

After submitting his paper, Mario Capasso was not able to follow the editorial process and revise it. We decided to leave the text as close as possible to the author's intention, adding a few bibliographic references and making some minor adjustments, with the help of Natascia Pellé.

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3. Compared to papyri from the Roman epoch, the Hellenistic papyri are obviously found in the lower layers of archaeological areas; however, this has not always protected them from destruction, due to the massive and continuous presence of human beings. Moreover, in many sites the disorderly searches conducted by unauthorised excavators have disturbed the original stratigraphy, with the result that the Hellenistic layers may be found above the Roman ones and are now heavily spoiled.
4. When a papyrus is recovered from a *cartonnage*, it is reasonable to assume that as a written product it circulated near the necropolis in which the *cartonnage* itself was found, and in any case probably within the nome. Indeed, worthy of mention in this regard is the case of the *cartonnage* of Abusir el Melek, which had yielded numerous administrative documents of the Augustan period from Alexandria (published in the *BGU* IV).
5. If a papyrus is generically said to come from the Arsinoite nome or Fayum, then it was most probably purchased on the antiquarian market, and probably it was found in unauthorised excavations conducted in some village of the pseudo-oasis.
6. This is also the case with papyri from Medinet el-Fayum or Arsinoe, even if they come from excavations conducted in the capital of the nome.

2 Literary Culture in the Hellenistic Arsinoite Nome: General Remarks

In this paper I would like to present some reflections on the Greek literary culture of the Arsinoite nome in the Hellenistic epoch, based on discoveries of papyri dated to the period from the 3rd to the 1st c. BC, by comparing it with the more general scenario that emerges from the discoveries in the rest of Egypt.

From a quantitative point of view, the largest cluster of papyri from the Hellenistic epoch is made up of finds for which a generic provenance from the Arsinoite nome or Fayum is indicated (24 of certain and 22 of uncertain provenance).[1] To these we may add four other papyri: one was recovered in Arsinoe, another either in Arsinoe or elsewhere in the Arsinoite nome, and finally two were bought in Medinet el-Fayum. In this way, we have 28 papyri for which a generic provenance from Fayum can be safely assumed. These numbers reflect

1 Such assumptions are based on the evidence resulting from queries on MP³, last consulted on March 1st, 2022.

the highly disruptive effect of unauthorised excavations in the late 19th and early 20th c., which resulted (often deliberately) in the loss of information regarding the exact provenance of a large amount of material. As regards the group of certain finds, a considerable number of papyri were recovered from *cartonnage* found in necropoleis: 9 of the 28 certain cases and 6 of the 22 uncertain cases of generic attribution to the Arsinoite nome; 22 (out of 22) of the papyri from Gurob; two (out of 2) from el-Lahun (plus one uncertain); 21 (out of 22) from Ghoran; 2 (out of 2) from Kerkeosiris; 1 from Hawara (the only one found there); 1 (out of 2) from Magdola; 1 (out of 16) from Philadelphia (plus two uncertain ones); 15 (out of 22) from Tebtunis; zero (out of 2) from Bakchias; zero from Karanis (where only one was found). Overall, more than one half of the papyri known to come from the region (74 out of 124), were recovered from *cartonnage*, prompting us to conclude that *cartonnage* has ensured the conservation of many texts that would otherwise have been lost.

Very few Hellenistic literary ostraca have survived. Extant findings include just eight of them, almost all linked to educational contexts: one from Bakchias;[2] one from Karanis;[3] five (plus one uncertain) from Philadelphia;[4] and, finally, one from Tebtunis.[5] The small number is also due to the fact that this type of material is hard to spot, and is thus likely to be missed by unauthorised excavators, who have to work in great haste.

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2 O.Bacchias inv. B05/F-305/130, MP[3] 2667.94, late 2nd/early 1st c. BC; two exercises written by the same pupil: letters and a complete alphabet

3 *P.Mich.* VIII 1099, MP[3] 2745, assigned to the Ptolemaic period; writing exercise: alphabet.

4 O.Berol. inv. 12310, MP[3] 1498 + 1697 (3rd c. BC; Theognis, *El.* 434–438 and verses from an unknown comedy); O.Berol. inv. 12311, MP[3] 1575 (3rd BC, palimpsest: lower text, partly washed away, perhaps a bill, and upper text, Euripides, *Aegeus* fr. 11 Nauck, a sentence by Socrates and two verses from an unknown comedy, probably a school text); O.Berol. inv. 12438, MP[3] 2463.52 (first quarter of the 3rd c. BC, on the concave side two mythological fragments linked to an ancient name for Ephesus and the history of Korykos, with a quote from *Iliad* 2.857, on the convex side an unidentified text); O.Berol. inv. 12318, MP[3] 2603 (late 3rd c. BC, precepts); O.Berol. inv. 12309, MP[3] 1771 (3rd c. BC, on the concave side a humorous epitaph in verse, on the convex side a prose comment on the epitaph, texts probably copied by a student). A possible finding from Philadelphia is also O.Berol. inv. 12319, MP[3] 1567 (3rd c. BC; anthology of various texts, including Ps.-Epich., *PCG* I 248 and VIII 1030–1031, Eur., *Electr.* 388–389, Theogn. 25–26, *Od.* 18.79–80, Hes., *Op*. 287, and Eur., *Hec.* 254–257), probably a school text; ostraca MP[3] 1498 + 1697, 1567, 1575, 2603, and perhaps 1771, are probably by the same hand

5 O.Tebt. inv. 6736, MP[3] 2704.001, perhaps dating to the 1st c. BC; Greek alphabet and drawing of a bird.

3 Homeric Papyri

If we look at the content, as we might expect, we find a clear preponderance of Homeric papyri, which is consistent with evidence from Greek and Roman Egypt in general. Considering the surviving evidence, the following, general reflections can be made:

1. Extant papyri from Egypt include 1.689 texts by Homer: 1.430 contain the *Iliad*, and 259 the *Odyssey*; to these we have to add 202 *Homerica*, i.e. texts connected in various ways to the two poems (scholia, *hypotheseis*, dictionaries, commentaries, etc.).
2. Homer was read in Egypt (at least) from the 3rd c. BC to the 7th c. AD.
3. His poems circulated in elegant books for cultivated readers, and were also used in educational and erudite circles. Regarding the Hellenistic Arsinoite nome, 21 out of 124 extant papyri are Homeric (just over 15%). Fifteen of these contain verses of the *Iliad*, and six verses of the *Odyssey*. They include *Iliad* Book 1 (three papyri: *P.Sorb.* I 1, MP^3 615, 2nd c. BC, from el-Lahun; *P.Tebt.* III.2 898, MP^3 619, late 3rd/early 2nd c. BC, from Tebtunis; *P.Giessen Kuhlmann* II 2, MP^3 583, ca. 100 BC, from Arsinoe), Book 2 (P.Mich. inv. 6055, MP^3 642.2, late 1st c. BC/early 1st c. AD, from Soknopaiou Nesos; *P.Tebt.* I 4, MP^3 632, mid 2nd c. BC, from Tebtunis), Book 5 (*BKT* V.1, p. 4, MP^3 735, 1st c. BC/1st c. AD, from Fayum), Book 6 (three papyri: *P.Giessen Kuhlmann* II 4, MP^3 782, 1st c. BC, from Medinet el-Fayum; *P.Tebt.* III.2 899, MP^3 773, late 2nd c. BC, from Tebtunis; Inv.Sorb. 2302, MP^3 786.1, second half of the 3rd c. BC, from Ghoran), Book 8 (*P.Fay.* 4, MP^3 830, second half of the 2nd c. BC/early 1st c. BC, from Bakchias; *P.Mil.Vogl.* II 36, MP^3 815, 1st c. BC, from Narmouthis), Book 11 (*P.Petr.* I 3 (4), MP^3 879, 3rd c. BC, from Gurob), Book 12 (*P.Sorb.* I 4, MP^3 895.2, 3rd c. BC, from Magdola), Book 17 (Inv.Sorb. 2303, MP^3 948.2, second half of the 3rd c. BC, from Ghoran), Book 21 (*P.Fay.* 6, MP^3 976, 1st c. BC, from Euhemeria), and Book 22 (*P.Tebt.* III.2 900, MP^3 991, 2nd c. BC, from Tebtunis). Of these, the following are 'elegant' copies for libraries: *P.Sorb.* I 1, with clear writing, not without a certain elegance and a fairly regular textual layout of the text; *BKT* V.1, p. 4, with clear and regular writing and ornamental *apices* at the extremities of the vertical and oblique strokes; *P.Giessen Kuhlmann* II 4, with a regular arrangement of the text and rounded writing; *P.Fay.* 6, whose writing is neat and clear, with minimal *apices* at the ends of the vertical and horizontal strokes and a fairly regular arrangement of the text; Inv.Sorb. 2303, written in small but well spaced letters.

The following are probably copies for cultivated readers: *P.Tebt.* I 4, which contains a text that differs from the vulgate and presents diacritics believed to be of an extremely early date and derived from Aristarchus; *P.Tebt.* III.2 899, written by an inelegant, semi-cursive handwriting, which transmits a text quite different from the vulgate, with one variant attributed to Aristarchus. Possibly from an educational context is *P.Sorb.* I 4, with its clear writing executed with a broad-nibbed pen, perhaps for a teacher's handbook.

The six papyri bearing text from the *Odyssey* contain parts of Book 1 (*P.Tebt.* III.1 696, MP^3 1022, 2nd c. BC, from Ghoran), Book 4 (*P.Sorb.* I 5, MP^3 1045, first half of the 2nd c. BC, from el-Lahun), Books 4 and 5 (*P.Tebt.* III.1 697, MP^3 1056, perhaps 2nd c. BC, from Tebtunis), Book 6 (*P.Fay.* 7, MP^3 1064, late 1st c. BC, from Euhemeria), Books 9 and 10 (Inv.Sorb. 2245, MP^3 1081, late 3rd c. BC, from Ghoran), and Book 11 (*P.Mil.Vogl.* II 37, MP^3 1103, early 1st c. BC, from Medinet Madi). Two of them are elegant copies, which were possibly kept in libraries: *P.Sorb.* I 5, MP^3 1045, written by an elegant and lightly decorated bookhand; and perhaps *P.Fay.* 7, MP^3 1064, whose script is clear and well spaced.

4 Drama

A good number of the papyri from Egypt contains theatrical texts. Sixty of them include fragments that are possibly or definitely from tragedies, but have no title. The best attested author is Euripides. Regarding the papyri which contain his works, we can make the following observations:

1. He was undoubtedly the most popular Greek playwright in Egypt, as demonstrated by the 17 surviving copies of his works.
2. His popularity spans a long period, that stretches without interruption from the 3rd c. BC to the 8th c. AD.
3. Euripides is said to have written 92 plays, but Alexandrian grammarians had copies of 78 of them only: 70 tragedies (of which only 67 are deemed authentic) and eight satirical dramas (one spurious). Graeco-Egyptian papyri records at least 54 of such works At least 54 of the Greek-Egyptian papyri recording these works contain parts or references that are certain.
4. In general, the most popular plays in Egypt would appear to have been *Phoinissai*, *Orestes*, *Medea*, and *Andromache*.

5. Most of the texts are written on papyrus rolls, and a fair number is on papyrus or parchment codices. Moreover, Euripides' verses are given back by two ostraca,[6] one wooden tablet,[7] and one wax tablet.[8]
6. The interest in Euripides' works unfolded on various levels: simple reading driven by the desire to discover the content of his works; use in erudite contexts (commented texts or accompanying scholia); school use; and stage performances.
7. Most of the texts are from Oxyrhynchus, but some are from the Arsinoite nome.[9]
8. The papyri containing works by Euripides provide a significant contribution to the study of the tradition of his texts, with valuable information on their pre-Alexandrine and subsequent phases. This "makes it possible in many cases to verify the degree to which the vulgate of the medieval manuscript tradition, which derives from the Alexandrine philologists' work, is confirmed and supported by sources that are much earlier than all the manuscripts in our possession."[10] More specifically, from the Hellenistic Arsinoite nome we have seven papyri with works by Euripides. Of these, two contain verses of *Hippolytus* (Inv.Sorb. 2252, MP^3 393, 3rd/2nd c. BC, Ghoran, and *P.Lond.Lit.* 73, MP^3 397, mid 3rd c. BC, Philadelphia); two of *Hypsipyle* (*P.Petr.* II 49 c, MP^3 439, mid 3rd c. BC,[11] and possibly *P.Petr.* II 49 d (DX), MP^3 440, 3rd c. BC, both from Gurob);[12] one of *Antiope* (*P.Petr.* I 1–2, MP^3 433, 3rd c. BC, Gurob); one of *Erechtheus* (Inv.Sorb. 2328, MP^3 437.2, mid 3rd c. BC, Ghoran); and one of *Phoinissai* (P.Tebt. inv. Suppl. 1245, fr. a, MP^3 417.12, 2nd c. BC, Tebtunis). Some of these texts (i.e. Inv.Sorb. 2252, *P.Petr.* II 49 c, *P.Petr.* I 1–2, and Inv.Sorb. 2328) exhibit irregular scripts, with cursive elements and letters of different size and leaning on each other. They are editions of little aesthetic value, likely intended for common readers.[13] For the number and variety of the plays, the picture which is offered by Euripides' Hellenistic papyri from Fayum is consistent

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6 *BKT* V.2, pp. 96–97, MP^3 396 (*Hippolytus* 616–624, 2nd c. BC; school exercise); *P.Lond.Lit.* 75, MP^3 416 (*Phoinissai* 106–118, 128–140, 2nd c. BC; perhaps a school exercise).

7 *MPER* V, pp. 74–77, MP^3 425 (*Phoinissai* 1097–1107, 1126–1137, 4th/5th c. AD).

8 *BKT* V.2, p. 98, MP^3 430 (*Troades* 876–879, 1st c. AD; school exercise).

9 On papyri with works by Euripides, see esp. Bastianini/Casanova 2005.

10 Casanova 2005, 5–6 (my translation).

11 Carrara 2008, 40–43.

12 *TrGF* V.2, 965; Carrara 2008, 131.

13 The expression 'common reader' has been introduced by Virginia Woolf in a famous essay; for its 'sociological' value in the Graeco-Roman world see Cavallo 2007.

with what we can infer from papyrus evidence coming also from other parts of Graeco-Roman Egypt.

Less numerous are the papyri which contain works by the two other great tragedians. The circulation of the text of Aeschylus is attested by a total of 33 papyri from Egypt, which allow us to draw the following reflections:

1. Interest in his plays, which began in the Hellenistic period and lasted until the 6th or even 7th c. AD, reached its peak in the 2nd c. AD.
2. The Greek-Egyptian papyri contain parts of, or references to, at least 14 of the 90 tragedies traditionally attributed to him.
3. It does not seem that Egyptian readers had one "favourite" tragedy.
4. *P.Oxy.* LVI 3838 (MP[3] 20.01, late 2nd/3rd c. AD), containing a few verses from *Prometheus Bound*, whose colometry is the same as that transmitted by Byzantine manuscripts,[14] shows that the text was read in erudite circles.
5. *P.Didot*, pp. 18–24 (P.Louvre inv. 7171 + 7172, MP[3] 31, 2nd c. BC), which is part of a composite opisthographic scroll from the Serapeum of Memphis, comes from a school context: it contains various literary texts, possibly including a fragment of Aeschylus' *Europa* or *Kares*.
6. In almost all cases, the material containing works by Aeschylus comes from Oxyrhynchus, with two only from the Arsinoite nome. According to Taufer,[15] regardless of their limited number, the papyri preserving fragments of Aeschylus' four surviving tragedies (*Seven Against Thebes*, *The Suppliants*, *Agamemnon*, and *Prometheus Bound*) should carefully be studied and assessed for the purpose of recovering the text

   > "both when they contain probably genuine variants (whether already known or unknown) or a plausible colometry, and when they contain *lectiones deteriores* (whether already known or unknown). Indeed, since these finds are mostly dated to the 2nd c. AD (and probably the 3rd and 4th c. AD in the case of *P.Oxy.* XXII 2334), they suggest, to a limited but not negligible degree, that Aeschylus' *Textgeschichte* should be reconsidered, questioning common assumptions concerning the archetype and its possible date (assuming that, in an open recension and given the pervasive contamination of many codices, the concept of an archetype for the text of Aeschylus is still worth pursuing). It should always be remembered that the papyrus fragments are separated by many centuries from the poet's oldest codex (M, Laur. 32.9), an indirect copy of a manuscript written in majuscule script in the Early Middle Ages that was for a long time held (probably wrongly) to be the archetype of the seven tragedies by Aeschylus that have survived intact".

14 Cf. Bravi 1996, 61–65.

15 Taufer 2013, 19–31, esp. 19 (my translation).

More specifically, from the Arsinoite nome we have only one Hellenistic papyrus, containing verses from *The Children of Heracles* (P.Alex. inv. 193, MP³ 29, 1st c. BC, from Fayum). To this we may add a brief quotation, perhaps from *The Myrmidons*, on the verso of *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59651 (MP³ 35, 3rd c. BC), from Philadelphia, containing a *memorandum* addressed to Nicarchus by Zenon.[16] These modest Hellenistic finds seem to confirm that Aeschylus became popular in Egypt above all in the Roman period.

For Sophocles we have a total of 39 papyri, which suggest us the following reflections:

1. Interest in his plays seems to have continued for a long period, stretching from the Hellenistic Age to the 7th c. AD, and to have reached its peak in the 2nd and 3rd c. AD.
2. The Alexandrian grammarians were familiar with 130 plays by Sophocles, seven of which are considered spurious; the Egyptian papyri contain parts of, or references to, at least 16 plays.
3. No play seems more “popular” than the others.
4. During the last phase of its circulation, the text was transcribed on papyrus codices.
5. Almost all the texts are from Oxyrhynchus.
6. Sophocles’ works seem to have been used not just for private reading and performances, but also within erudite circles (as it is shown by *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2180 + *PSI* XI 1192, MP³ 1466, 2nd c. AD; *Oed. Rex* 102–974, with scholia) and in schools. This is suggested especially by *P.Oxy.* XLII 3013 (MP³ 1480.2), which bears a *hypothesis* of Sophocles’ *Tereus*, perhaps the subject of an exercise. The value of these papyri as genuine replications of Sophocles’ works was clearly shown by Finglass,[17] according to whom they contain “many valuable lessons” that

> “help us in the individual steps, but also remind us that medieval manuscripts of Sophocles’ works are unreliable guides to the text of the poet. By studying papyri, we can find traces of texts by Sophocles that are much more accurate […], being a few centuries older than the oldest medieval manuscript: an effective reminder of the importance of textual criticism. We will never have a self-penned copy of Sophocles’ plays, but thanks to these ancient manuscripts we can at least take a few steps towards this ultimate if unreachable goal”.

Sophocles’ limited popularity in Egypt is reflected by the data on the Hellenistic Arsinoite nome, which has only yielded two papyri with works by him (one with

16 See also in this volume the contribution by L. Del Corso (351–386, esp. 369–372).
17 Finglass 2013, 46 (my translation).

text from *Inachos*, *P.Tebt.* III.1 692, MP[3] 1475, first half of the 2nd c. BC, Tebtunis, and another attributed to either *Iphigenia* or *Ajax*, *P.Petr.* I 3 (2), MP[3] 1702, 3rd/2nd c. BC, Gurob). The papyrus containing the *Inachos* text is written in a small handwriting, traced with a broad-nibbed pen; the letters are square and clearly detached from each other, with tiny *apices* at the base of the vertical strokes: it was probably a library copy. It is worth mentioning also P.Ashm. inv. 29 B/29.33, (MP[3] 1471.21, 3rd/2nd c. BC), from *cartonnage*, which contains parts of a tragedy identified as *Achilles* by Sophocles the Younger.

A papyrus found in Soknopaiou Nesos has some verses believed to come from Astydamas the Younger's *Hector* (*P.Amh.* II 10, MP[3] 169, 2nd c. BC). It is written in a semi-cursive, irregular script: it was an inelegant book, which could have belonged to a common reader. According to the *Suda* (*TrGF* I 60 T 1 = *Suid.* α 4265), this Athenian tragedian, a descendent of Aeschylus, wrote 240 plays and was considered a major figure among Greek playwriters of the 4th c. BC. The probable presence in the village of a text by this author demonstrates that even two centuries later his popularity had not waned. We should add here three more papyri which possibly bear some remains of *Hector*: two from El-Hibeh (P.Strasb. inv. WG 304–307, MP[3] 170, 3rd/2nd c. BC, an anthology of passages from tragedies; *P.Hib.* II 174, MP[3] 171, 2nd c. BC), and one from Oxyrhynchus (*P.Oxy.* XXXVI 2746, MP[3] 171.1, late 1st/early 2nd c. AD).[18]

The picture of the circulation of Greek tragedies in the Arsinoite nome during the Hellenistic period is completed by *P.Tebt.* III.1 695, MP[3] 2071 (late 3rd c. BC), where it is possible to read a fragmentary list of tragedians written in a cursive script. Amymone of Sicyon (*TGrF* I 123), Democrates of Sicyon (*TGrF* I 124), and Mosco of Lampsacus (*TGrF* I 125) are mentioned, along with the number of their plays. The number of plays by Amymone has not been preserved, whereas Democrates and Mosco are claimed to have written 20 and 30 tragedies respectively. Amymone and Mosco are entirely unknown; Democrates is mentioned in a scholium to v. 445 of Euripides' *Andromache*, according to which Callimachus (fr. 451 Pfeiffer) claimed that this tragedy was not performed in Athens and that the author was Democrates, rather than Euripides.[19] The text should probably be regarded as a list of tragedians' works "in the specialist library of a scholar, who carefully catalogues the books in their collection", as "a 'literary manual' that records ancient erudition in the style of Callimachus", or an *index tragicorum* drawn up for someone who could then check what works they did not possess.[20]

18 On this tragedian, see esp. Pacelli 2020.

19 See Otranto 2000, 6–7.

20 Otranto 2000, 7–8 (my translation).

Greek comedies were also appreciated in Egypt, as is shown by 60 finds (59 papyri and one ostracon) containing parts of comedies by Aristophanes, 104 finds (103 papyri and 1 ostracon) with the text of plays by Menander, and 126 finds with the texts of comedies (Old, Middle and New Comedy) of uncertain authorship or uncertain classification as comedy.[21] On Aristophanes, the following considerations can be made:

1. He was read in Egypt from the 1st c. BC to the 5th c. AD, or even as late as the 7th.
2. The Alexandrian grammarians knew the titles of 44 comedies by him, four of which are dubious; the papyri contain parts of at least 13 of his works.
3. Most of the material comes from Oxyrhynchus; other texts are from Hermoupolis and Antinoopolis, but only some dubious cases come from the Arsinoite nome.
4. The later finds are written on papyrus and parchment codices.
5. Of considerable interest is *O.Bodl.* I 46 (= MP^3 148.01, perhaps 1st c. BC), an ostracon that contains *Clouds* 974–975, perhaps a school exercise.
6. Some papyri, containing scholia and commentaries on Aristophanes' comedies, indicate that in Egypt Aristophanes' works were read in erudite circles. This is clear if we consider the difficulty to understand the references to Athenian history which are a crucial component in his works.[22]

During the Hellenistic age, the theatre of Menander was much more popular, because of the new sensibility of the readers, which were more interested to the everyday characters, situations, and sentiments described by the comedian. His popularity suggests the following remarks:

1. The surviving papyri contain parts of, or references to, at least 28 comedies and are dated to the period from the 3rd c. BC to the 6th or 7th c. AD.
2. A large part of the material comes from Oxyrhynchus, although some papyri originate from the Arsinoite nome, Antinoe, and Hermoupolis.
3. The most popular comedies would appear to have been *Epitrepontes* and *Misoumenos*; the presence of *Dyskolos* is also considerable.

It is hardly a coincidence that no papyrus of certain provenance with works by Aristophanes has yet been recovered from the Hellenistic Arsinoite nome, whereas several have been found bearing texts by Menander. Ghoran has yielded

21 See also in this volume the contributions of S. Perrone (205–226, on Old Comedy) and R. Carlesimo (227–261, on Menander).

22 On the circulation of Aristophanes in Egypt see Del Corso 2017 (with previous bibliography).

Inv.Sorb. 72 + 2272 + 2273, MP³ 1308.1 (late 3rd c. BC), containing parts of his *Sikyonioi* on the recto. The script is clear, yet not elegant, with some cursive elements, and written with a broad-nibbed pen. It is an edition of no particular aesthetic value, perhaps intended for a library or a common reader; it was produced using a papyrus that originally had another text on the recto, which later was washed away. The verses given back by *P.Petr.* I 4 (1) (MP³ 1662; 3rd c. BC, Gurob), have been attributed to Menander's *Hydria* (or to Philemon);[23] they are written in a semi-cursive script with letters of different size: it was another inelegant book, whose readership is difficult to ascertain (a library or just a common reader?). Inv.Sorb. 72 ('groupe B'), MP³ 1657 (3rd/2nd c. BC, from Ghoran), has been tentatively assigned to Menander's *Dis Exapaton*, but this attribution has been questioned.[24] Once again, this is an edition of little formal value, as indicated by the semi-cursive script and the heterogeneity of the size and shape of the letters, which often violate the bilinear system and tend to be inclined to the right. This is perhaps a copy for a common reader. It is also worth mentioning the comic anthology attributed to Menander that is preserved in *P.Giessen Kuhlmann* IV 1 R (MP³ 1580, 2nd/1st c. BC, from Fayum): it is written on both sides in a clear and sinuous, yet inelegant, script. If the fragment was part of a bookroll, it is reasonable to suppose that it was a library copy.

Harvard Univ., Houghton Libr. inv. Ms. Gr. 24[25] bears verses from a text of the New Comedy. On the contrary, the text of P.Duk. inv. 313 R,[26] belongs to Middle Comedy. It is written in a clear yet inelegant script, not without cursive elements, which gives the impression to be quite "compressed". It is clearly an edition of little formal value, written over a documentary text (P.Duk. inv. 313 R a), perhaps a copy for a common reader. The picture of the diffusion of Greek comedies in the Hellenistic Arsinoite nome is completed by the following two finds: P.Univ.Coll. inv. 31915,[27] and *P.Tebt.* III.1 693.[28] The verses were written in a semi-cursive script using a broad-nibbed pen, on the verso of a roll which contains three columns of a petition to the king, two on the recto and one on the same verso, just before the

23 *CGFP* 243.

24 See *CLGP* II.4, 137.

25 MP³ 1671.3; 2nd c. BC, from Fayum: a palimpsest papyrus, the comic text being the upper one (*CGFP* 285; *PCG* VIII 1108).

26 MP³ 1638.21; *The Fishes* by Archippus or an unidentified comedy by Cratinus the Younger; late 3rd/early 2nd c. BC, from the Arsinoite nome (*PCG* VIII 1146, the so-called 'Comoedia Dukiana').

27 MP³ 1665.01; mid or late 3rd c. BC, from Gurob; fragment of New or Middle Comedy (*PCG* VIII 1138).

28 MP³ 1695; 3rd c. BC; 28 trochaic tetrameters from a comedy of the Middle or New type, perhaps composed by a poet from Alexandria (*CGFP* 292).

tetrameters (*P.Tebt.* III.1 769). Lastly, there are three of the above mentioned Berlin ostraca from Philadelphia: O.Berol. inv. 12310, 12311, and 12319.[29]

It is widely known that the Hellenization of Egypt began with its conquest by Alexander the Great, and then intensified under the Ptolemies, whose policies included the establishment of a large number of small and medium-sized settlements. Hellenization was thus a pervasive process, which affected even small villages. However, Greek culture did not replace indigenous culture, but rather existed alongside it. Moreover, the ability to read and write in Greek (the official language of the kingdom) was limited to a small percentage of the population, mainly male. In this regard, the dissemination and consumption of Greek literary texts, including tragedies, comedies, and mimes, played an important role. These texts were not only read, but also performed on stage.[30]

The space in which dramatic texts were performed was obviously the theatre, a structure found in many cities and lesser settlements in Greek and Roman Egypt, where it represented an urban, social, cultural, and economic landmark. The capital, Alexandria, was soon provided with its theatre, as mentioned by literary sources: archaeological excavations show that it was located near the Museum and Library, not far from the sea.[31] One inscription (*OGIS* I 49–51, 3rd c. BC) shows that another theatre was in Ptolemais, the capital of the Thebaid,[32] but also smaller towns could have similar buildings, including Philadelphia in the Arsinoite nome, according to the information provided by two papyri from the Zenon archive: *P.Cair.Zen.* V 59823 V (TM 1447; June 253 BC) and *P.Lond.* VII 2140, 2–3 (TM 1700; mid 3rd c. BC). The former contains the text of a letter sent to Zenon, on the verso of which we find a phrase that was added in a different hand from that of the sender, apparently as a reminder: τὸ θέατρον οἰκ[οδο]μῆϲαι, i.e. "(to) build the theatre". The letter is believed to have been sent by Apollonios the *dioiketes* and the decision to build the theatre was thus his, a "clear attempt to reproduce in a microcosm the image of Alexandria".[33] Since the latter papyrus — containing a list of expenses, probably drawn up by Zenon himself — bears the expression ὕδωρ ὥϲτε εἰϲ τὸ θέατρον, i.e. "water for the theatre", the theatre ordered by Apollonios would appear to have been actually built, and, according to Daris, this is consistent with other architectural works which were commissioned by the *dioiketes*,

29 See above, 185.

30 Survey in Capasso 2021.

31 Cf. Calderini 1935, 114–115; Fraser 1972, 11ff.

32 Cf. Plaumann 1910, 59.

33 Daris 1988, 80 (my translation).

as especially a Serapaion with relative *dromos*.[34] Today, very little survives of the ancient Philadelphia, so it is practically impossible to identify the remains of this theatre.[35] Considering that both the houses and the temple of this village were built of mud-bricks, it is fair to assume that the theatre was also at least partly composed of the same material.

5 Other Poetical Genres: from Hesiod to Hellenistic Poetry

Besides Homer and theatrical texts, during the Hellenistic period it is attested the circulation of a wide array of poetical genres in a large number of towns and villages of the Arsinoite nome.

It is striking to find a good number of papyri which attest the reading of some of the most important Greek Archaic poets. It is not surprising to find papyrological evidence for Hesiod: the poet enjoyed a certain degree of popularity in Egypt, as indicated by the 137 surviving papyri, dated to a period from the 3rd c. BC to the late 6th/early 7th c. AD. So, in the Arsinoite nome we have the fragments of at least two rolls assigned to an early date: *P.Petr.* I 3 (3), MP^3 519.4 (*Cat.*, fr. 73, 1–7; 3rd c. BC, from a *cartonnage* discovered in Gurob), and *P.Tebt.* III.1 690, MP^3 524 (*Cat.*, fr. 145; 2nd c. BC, Tebtunis).

But other authors were appreciated as well. Archilochus' poems were also circulating in the region. His verses are found in *P.Lond.Lit.* 54, MP^3 130 (3rd c. BC, from Philadelphia), on the verso of a papyrus whose recto was used for accounts (*Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XX, 14 R) and in *P.Petr.* I 4 (2), MP^3 131 (3rd c. BC, from a *cartonnage* discovered in Gurob). This latter is written in a clear yet inelegant script, with rounded letters of different size and shape. In general, Archilochus enjoyed a certain degree of popularity in Greek and Roman Egypt, as is suggested by 19 surviving papyri dated to the period from the 3rd c. BC to the 3rd c. AD. In addition to the two papyri mentioned above, we have 15 from Oxyrhynchus, one from Hibeh, and one perhaps from Abusir el-Melek.

Another significant papyrus, for reconstructing the reception of Greek literature in Hellenistic Egypt, is P.Lille inv. 73 + 76 abc + inv. 111 c (MP^3 1486.1, 1st half of the 2nd c. BC), recovered from a *cartonnage* found by Pierre Jouguet in Ghoran or

34 Cf. Daris 1988, 78. On such documents see also, in this volume, the contributions by S. Perrone (esp. 206–207), and L. Del Corso (esp. 358–359).
35 Cf. Davoli 1998, 139–148.

Magdola. It contains a fragment of the so-called *Thebaid* by Stesichorus.[36] Its writing is slightly clumsy, yet regular, and was executed by an inexpert hand: some letters are slightly detached, while others are closely attached, so as to compress the line of writing. The text is organised into metric cola, with *paragraphoi* that mark the end of strophes and antistrophes. We cannot establish if this book, of little formal value, belonged to a library, but the lectional signs show that it could be also used by 'common readers' without the full erudition of learned scholars.

Stesichorus was rarely read in Graeco-Roman Egypt: we have only ten papyri with his verses, mostly from Oxyrhynchus (9 out of 10), and all much later, as they can be assigned to the late 2nd or early 3rd c. AD. It seems therefore that Stesichorus' works were not widely distributed. In any case, interest in lyric poetry in the Hellenistic Arsinoite nome is attested by the above mentioned O.Berol. inv. 12310, from Philadelphia, containing verses of Theognis' *Elegies*,[37] as well as by a few papyri:

– *MPER* I 22 (MP^3 1948, 1st c. BC/1st c. AD), from Soknopaiou Nesos, containing a commentary on a dithyramb or a choral ode, written in bookhand, not without a certain elegance: unimodular letters regularly distanced from each other and neatly arranged on the base line, *apices* at the upper and lower extremities of the vertical strokes and in some cases at the final extremities of the oblique strokes, and uniform interlinear spaces — a library copy;
– *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59533 (MP^3 1916, 3rd c. BC), from Philadelphia, containing a lyric or tragic fragment, with musical annotation — probably a school exercise;
– Inv.Sorb. s.n., MP^3 1984.7, early 3rd c. BC, from Ghoran, containing perhaps a lyric fragment, unpublished;
– *P.Tebt.* I 1, MP^3 1606, 2nd/1st c. BC, from Kerkeosiris, a four-part anthology, written on the recto, consisting of a monody on the lament of Helen of Troy, a short lyric composition describing a woodland solitude, couplets on love, and an obscene text in prose, along with decrees by Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (col. I) and other short documentary texts, as a list of names;
– *P.Tebt.* I 2, MP^3 1607, 2nd/1st c. BC, which contains the first three parts of *P.Tebt.* I 1 (frr. a-c) in a more complete form, in addition to a *paraklausithyron*, perhaps of a mime (fr. d);
– *P.Tebt.* III.1 691, MP^3 1942, 3rd c. BC, a lyric fragment of six lines written with a wide-nibbed pen in a crude and irregular script, not very clear, in thick and heavy strokes, with little attention to form — perhaps a transcription made by a common reader.

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36 On the provenance and palaeography of the papyrus see now Del Corso 2023, 344–348.
37 See above, 185.

A circulation of anthologies of poetic texts is also attested in the Arsinoite nome, for all the Hellenistic period.[38] Papyrological evidence includes: *P.Petr.* inv. F 134 (MP^3 1618.1, first half of the 3rd c. BC, Fayum), containing an anacreontic epigram or a *scholion* from an anthology; P.Ashm. inv. s.n. (MP^3 1574, 1st c. BC, purchased in Medinet el-Fayum), possibly a school text, containing prose and verse maxims on the *Tyche*; *P.Petr.* I 3 (1) (MP^3 1572, 3rd c. BC, Gurob), a thematically arranged anthology with verses by Pseudo-Epicharmus and Euripides; *P.Petr.* II 49 a (MP^3 1593, mid 3rd c. BC, Gurob), containing epigrams by Posidippus of Pella,[39] written by a quick hand, perhaps for 'common readers'; *P.Petr.* II 49 b (MP^3 1594, second half of the 3rd c. BC, Gurob), which includes verses by Astydamas and perhaps Aristarchus of Tegea, and a collection of epigrams; *P.Tebt.* I 3 (MP^3 1601, 1st c. BC, Tebtunis or Kerkeosiris), containing epigrams by Alcaeus of Messene and other authors, written by a careless, albeit clearly legible, handwriting, which points to an informal copy for 'common readers'; *P.Petr.* inv. O (2) (MP^3 1603, 2nd c. BC, Hawara), an anthology of epigrams, including one in honour of a dog and another for Artemis, written in a poorly executed script; and the two ostraca O.Berol. inv. 12311, MP^3 1575 and O.Berol inv. 12319, MP^3 1567.

Hellenistic poetry is less attested. We have only two papyri with works that can be surely assigned to Callimachus. The first is the famous roll of *Aetia*, with scholia written in *eisthesis*, found by P. Jouguet in Ghoran or Magdola, P.Lille inv. 76d + 78abc +79 + 82 + 89 (MP^3 207.3, first half of the 2nd c. BC).[40] The second papyrus with Callimachus' verses is *P.Mil.Vogl.* II 42 (MP^3 188, 1st c. BC/1st c. AD), found in Tebtunis, which contains *Hymn.* 3 (*In Dianam*) 1–6, 16, 22–54, perhaps from a complete roll of the *Hymns*. Besides them, PSI inv. 436 (MP^3 236, 2nd c. BC), found in Tebtunis as well, has been attributed to Callimachus by the *editor princeps*, N. Terzaghi: it contains an encomium of a Ptolemaic king in elegiac couplets, but strong stylistic arguments make unlikely a Callimachean authorship.[41]

Interest in poetry in the Hellenistic Arsinoite nome is attested more in general by several other papyri, which contain *adespota*. One is *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XX 16 (MP^3 2460, middle 3rd c. BC, Philadelphia):[42] in the first column it is possible to read some hexameters of mythological content (the description of the metamorphoses of a god), followed by phrases in prose, which continue in the next column.

38 For a full discussion see Pordomingo 2013.

39 On this papyrus, see esp. Caroli 2007, 133–141.

40 Del Corso 2023, 347–348.

41 *SH* 969; see Barbantani 2001, 73–116.

42 It is possible that the papyrus belonged to the Zenon archive: see in this volume the contribution by L. Del Corso, esp. 373.

The nature of this text is not clear, but probably it was a commentary to an unknown epic poem. Its script is quite regular, but quick and careless, with medium-sized letters: the informal characteristics of copies for common readers. Another notable papyrus is P.Mich. inv. 6946 (MP^3 2652.2, 2nd/1st c. BC, Fayum):[43] on the recto it bears some verses from a mock epic poem on the battle between weasels and mice, while on the verso we find a list of persons and payments grouped under the names of villages belonging to the *meris* of Themistos in the Arsinoite nome. The literary text was written over a previous one, using a square script, with letters decorated by *apices* or slight thickenings at the extremities of the strokes. Though the traits are not always homogeneous, we can consider this roll as a library copy. Finally, I shall also mention here *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59532 (MP^3 1761, 256/246 BC, Philadelphia), with two verse epitaphs for the death of Tauron, Zenon's hunting dog: it is written by a 'bureaucratic' hand, which seems hand more used to the transcription of documents, than of literary texts.

6 Papyrological Evidence for the Circulation of Prose Texts

In the Arsinoite nome, Greek prose was also read. As far as philosophical works are concerned, we find two papyri with texts by Plato, both from Gurob: *P.Petr.* I 5–8 (MP^3 1388, 3rd c. BC; *Phaedo* 67b–84b), and *P.Petr.* II 50 (MP^3 1409, 3rd c. BC; *Laches* 189d2–e2, 190a1–192a8). Both of these were executed by steady hands, using fairly similar scripts: regular, with small letters and a strong difference between large and narrow letters. While some of the letters in the *Laches* have traditional features, those in the *Phaedo* show more fluid forms. It should be pointed out, however, that the philosopher's texts were quite known in Egypt, as is shown by the 105 papyri available to us, over a period from the early 3rd c. BC to the 6th c. AD. Among these, the *Phaedo* seems to have enjoyed some popularity, given that eleven papyri with passages from it have survived. The *Laches* would appear to have been less widely read: it is attested only by five surviving papyri. The most widely read work was the *Republic*, of which 14 papyri remain.

Interest in philosophical texts in the Hellenistic Arsinoite nome, while generally not widespread, is also witnessed by other papyri, three of which were recovered from *cartonnage* in Gurob: *P.Gur.* 1 (MP^3 2464, mid 3rd c. BC), which contained an Orphic text, probably in hexameters and prose, consisting of a series of invocations

43 Perale 2021, no. 145, 20–24.

and prayers in the context of a ritual centred on the death and (perhaps) rebirth of the child Dionysus; *P.Petr.* I 10 (MP^3 2523, 3rd c. BC), which records a protreptic discourse; *P.Petr.* II 49 e (MP^3 2593, second half or last decades of the 3rd c. BC), written on both sides by the same hands, which copy a philosophical dialogue on the relationships between human beings (recto), and a philosophical text attributed to Theophrastus (verso). Finally, a philosophical text from an unknown author is given back by *P.Tebt.* III.2 896 (MP^3 2613, 2nd c. BC), written in a hand "of the same type as that of *P.Tebt.* III.1 697", as suggested by the first editors.[44]

There would appear to have been few historical texts in the region during the Hellenistic period. We can rely on *P.Ryl.* III 491 (MP^3 2212, 2nd c. BC, Fayum), a history of the Second Punic War, attributed to Polybius or Quintus Fabius Pictor; *P.Ryl.* III 501 (MP^3 2265, 2nd c. BC), a historical text attributed to Polybius; and *P.Petr.* II 45 (MP^3 2206, 3rd c. BC, Gurob), a history of the Third Syrian War, attributed to Lysimachus or Ptolemy III Euergetes. Also worthy of mention are: *P.Petr.* I 9 (MP^3 2183, second half of the 3rd c. BC, Gurob), which contains what is perhaps a treatise on the *Nomima barbarika* attributed by some scholars to Aristotle, and written in a clear, yet inelegant script; *P.Schub.* 34 (MP^3 2469, 1st c. BC/1st c. AD, Philadelphia), a mythographic text on ancient cult statues, written by a regular bookhand, with a neat layout, and probably destined to be kept in a library; and perhaps a slightly later text, *P.Köln* I 10 + *P.Köln* VI 249 (MP^3 2531.1, Augustan period, Fayum), where we can read a Greek translation of the funerary eulogy of Agrippa recited by Augustus, written by a skilful and steady hand in a thin and sinuous script with cursive elements: probably an 'informal' copy for common readers.[45]

If we turn our attention to Egyptian evidence as a whole, we find 49 papyri of Herodotus (over the period from the 2nd/1st c. BC to the 6th c. AD); 96 of Thucydides (from the mid 3rd c. BC to the early 6th c. AD); and 16 of Xenophon (seven containing the *Anabasis* and nine the *Hellenica*, from the 1st/2nd c. AD to the 4th c. AD). Moreover, we have also papyri of less famous historians, as Hecataeus, Hellanicus, and Theopompus (one papyrus for each of them, all assigned to the 2nd c. AD), as well as two witnesses of Ephorus, even if for one (*P.Lond.Lit.* 114, MP^3 358, first half of the 1st c. AD) the attribution is uncertain. But the bulk of our evidence is anonymous: 159 anepigraphic papyri with historical or geographical content, ranging from the 3rd c. BC to the 6th c. AD.[46]

Similarly, the circulation of medical texts is attested only by a few witnesses. Apart from the P.IFAO grec inv. 520 (MP^3 2357.101) whose provenance remains

44 *P.Tebt.* III.1, p. 187.

45 A definition of 'informal' books is given in Del Corso 2022, 209–211.

46 On historiography in Hellenistic Egypt see the contribution of N. Pellé in this volume, 263–294.

unknown,[47] we have only seven papyri from the Arsinoites: P.Ashm. inv. s.n., MP³ 2344 (late 2nd c. BC, Fayum), which contains a treatise on ophthalmology, written by a professional bookhand; P.Ashm. inv. s.n. (MP³ 2370, 2nd c. BC, Fayum), a quickly written opisthographic papyrus with a fragment on apoplexy perhaps in 'catechistic' form, followed by the remains of epic verses; *SB* VIII 9860 (MP³ 2391.6, late 3rd c. BC, Fayum), containing medical prescriptions;[48] *P.Giss.Univ.* IV 44 (MP³ 2375, 2nd/1st c. BC, Fayum), with a description of a coloboma operation written by a skilled and steady, cursive hand, probably for a professional use; P.Haun. inv. 326c + *P.Giss.Univ.* IV 45 (MP³ 2395, late 1st c. BC, purchased in Fayum), with medical prescriptions for poultices aiding the cicatrisation of wounds, written in a medium-sized, sinuous script; *P.Fay.Coles* 3 (MP³ 2356.2, late 3rd c. BC/early 2nd c. BC, Bakchias), probably a medical text, in an elegant script, perhaps a library copy; and, finally, *P.Bingen* 1 (MP³ 539.21, late 3rd c. BC, Tebtunis), where it is possible to read a commentary to Hipp. *De diaeta*, 2.49 (or an alternative version of the Hippocratic text?). The number of Hellenistic medical papyri from Arsinoites is anyway rather small, if we consider that medical texts had a fairly extensive readership in Egypt, as far as now 352 papyri related to the field of medicine have been published, for period ranging from the 3rd c. BC to the 8th c. AD.

Finally, we have to discuss texts related to science, erudition and instruction. An interest in astronomy is suggested by two early Hellenistic papyri, P.Vindob inv. G 1 (MP³ 2036, 3rd c. BC, Fayum), a treatise which discussed also meteorological signs, and *P.Petr.* III 134 (MP³ 2025, 3rd c. BC, Gurob), an astronomical fragment with an Egyptian calendar. Other 'technical' texts can be read on *P.Tebt.* III.1 694 (MP³ 2443, early 3rd c. BC), a musical treatise, and *PSI* VI 624 (MP³ 1986, Philadelphia), a viticulture manual.[49]

Other papyri point to literary erudition. A curious example is offered by *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59534 (MP³ 2137, 3rd c. BC, Philadelphia), which contains a list of literary words and phrases, some of which are rare, while at least one is entirely new, alongside what are perhaps reading notes, written on both sides in a steady, cursive handwriting.[50] On a less erudite level, we find texts used for school practices, from the first rudiments of Greek language and grammar to higher levels. Hellenistic writing exercises can be read on the ostracon *P.Mich.* VIII 1099 (MP³ 2745, Ptolemaic period, Karanis) and on papyrus fragments as P.Lille inv. 66v (MP³ 2704.1, 3rd c. BC, Ghoran or Magdola) and P.Lille inv. 110A–Bv (MP³ 2704.2,

47 See the contribution by A. Ricciardetto and N. Carlig, in this volume, 311–335.
48 The text is now studied by N. Reggiani, in this volume, 337–349.
49 Foraboschi 1985, 213–219; Del Corso 2016, 276–277.
50 See the contribution by L. Del Corso in this volume, 373–381.

Ptolemaic period, Ghoran or Magdola); other papyri contain mathematical exercises, as *P.Mich. Schwendner* 10 (MP^3 2307.09, 2nd c. BC, el-Lahun; multiplication table), *MPER* I 1, (on the recto MP^3 2322, 1st c. BC, Soknopaiou Nesos, solid geometry problems; on the verso MP^3 2315.02, additions); finally we have a 'grammatical' papyrus as *MPER* I 19 (MP^3 2150, 1st c. BC/1st c. AD, Fayum), written in a clear bookhand. Further Ptolemaic school material include: *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59754 col. II (MP^3 2332.1, 3rd c. BC, Philadelphia; list of the Egyptian months written in Greek by a cursive hand); *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59535 (MP^3 1794, mid 3rd c. BC, Philadelphia; a hexameter arranged on two lines, written in a clear and regular script); P.Ashm. inv. s.n. (MP^3 2655, 2nd c. BC, Fayum; paraphrase of an epic poem on Heracles or *diegesis* of a play, written in an informal, slightly sloping, small-sized script); and *P.Petr.* II 49 f, (MP^3 2448, 3rd c. BC, Gurob; narration of Heracles' feats in Arcadia, written by a steady hand in a small script of the 'epigraphical type').

7 Conclusions

After this survey, we can offer some final remarks.

1. From as early as the 3rd c. BC, Greek writing, language, and literary culture were widespread in the Arsinoite nome, both in large cities, such as the capital Krokodilopolis, and in towns, as Tebtunis or even smaller villages, albeit to a lesser degree.
2. This dissemination was initially driven by a group of people

> composed of veterans who had become landowners on leaving the army, merchants, functionaries who had retired from the royal administration, all striving to introduce lifestyles, customs and cultural practices that were entirely Hellenic in a region in which the Greek element was beginning to take root.[51]

One effect of this effort was the introduction of a rich textual heritage and a number of technical manuals in an area that laid in the periphery of the Hellenized world, i.e. the Fayum region, which up until that time had remained untouched by Greek culture. This process can thus be understood as the transposition of culture via its adaptation to a new geographical and social context.

3. With the progressive dissemination of Greek culture in Egypt, it became essential for the indigenous inhabitants to learn the language and writing system of the new rulers, in order to be able to navigate the countless written texts

51 Del Corso/Lulli 2016, 131 (my translation).

with which they would regularly come into contact, for many different purposes (as adding a signature with their name, reading oracular responses from the gods, and in general managing their relationship with political and administrative authorities).

4. Within a few generations, an elite arose in Egypt, and particularly in the Fayum area, which was composed of the descendants of the veterans and other Greeks who had arrived with the Ptolemies. This elite sought to play an important social, political, and economic role, and a key condition to achieve this goal was their knowledge of Greek language and literature. This knowledge served to justify their supremacy with respect to the other sectors of Egyptian society; this is a further explanation for the presence of Greek literary texts in the region.
5. To be appointed to an administrative post, especially in small villages, it was sufficient to be able to write one's own name. Often, however, administrators working within the bureaucratic apparatus sought to enhance their knowledge of Greek by undergoing the various levels of school education, where available; and in this context they would have come into contact with the great names of Hellenic literature, such as Homer, Demosthenes, and Euripides.
6. The data arising from the discoveries of papyri of the Ptolemaic period in the Arsinoite nome are broadly consistent with the general picture that can be drawn for Graeco-Roman Egypt as a whole. Initially, however, it seems that poetry was more read than prose, within the region. It is especially striking the absence of texts by Demosthenes (for whom we have a total of 210 papyri from Egypt) and oratory in general,[52] as well as the paucity of philosophical and historical texts.
7. It seems that anthologies of poetic texts were particularly popular. They were used especially in educational contexts, where they mostly circulated via ostraca. The variety of anthologised texts, in terms of both genre and date, is explained by the fact that teachers would compile them on the basis of larger anthologies.[53] Those children or adults who studied Greek under a teacher would necessarily come into contact with Greek literature and its masterpieces, "and this too must have been one of the factors that contributed to a growth in the transcription of literary texts".[54] However, it is very likely that the artistic value of such texts was not understood, especially by beginners.
8. In general, the editions of Greek texts circulating in the Arsinoite nome during the Hellenistic period were not characterised by great craftsmanship: they

52 But see now the reflections by Fernández Delgado/Pordomingo 2010.
53 Del Corso 2005, 19–20 (my translation).
54 Del Corso 2005, 20 (my translation).

were produced using unsophisticated styles of writing, albeit by professional scribes, and they were intended for common readers or educational contexts. In some cases, they were written on the verso of papyri that had already been used on the recto, or on the recto of such papyri after the previous text had been erased.

9. The presence of only two texts with signs of erudite readings (both associated with fragments of the *Iliad*: *P.Tebt.* I 4 and *P.Tebt.* III.2 899) indicates that in the region, during the Hellenistic period, people rarely took an interest in Greek literature for reasons other than practical necessity, curiosity, or reading pleasure.
10. Despite being a peripheral region, the Arsinoite nome in the Hellenistic period was not excluded from the progressive growth in literacy seen in the rest of Egypt and more generally in the Middle East, from the 3rd c. BC onwards. In this region, as in others, the spread of the ability to read and write was chiefly due to the middle and lower-middle classes, made up of merchants, public functionaries, craftsmen, and professionals, who sought to learn Greek for reasons related to their professions or a desire for social advancement.[55]

This is the picture that has emerged so far from the Hellenistic papyri discovered in the Arsinoite nome. Clearly, it is not yet a definitive picture: further discoveries of written texts in the region may modify and enrich it.

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Serena Perrone

Laughs from the Mummies: Old Comedy in Ptolemaic Papyri

Abstract: After providing an overview of the spreading of Greek theater in Ptolemaic Egypt, the paper conducts a critical analysis of the papyrological evidence pertaining to Old Comedy and datable to the Hellenistic period. The analysis involves the examination of fragments that have been considered to belong to Old Comedy, sourced from both anthologies (P.Berol. inv. 9772, *P.Schub.* 28) and potential copies of the dramatic text (P.Duk. inv. 313 R, *P.Heid.* I 182, P.Strasb. inv. gr. 2345 R, P.CtYBR inv. 5019, *P.Lond.Lit.* 254).

Keywords: Greek theater, Old Comedy, Ptolemaic Egypt.

1 Theater in Ptolemaic Egypt

In recent decades, the problem of the expansion of the Greek theater far beyond Attica has attracted much attention.[1] In all the Hellenistic kingdoms theater was an important part of the tenacious preservation and self-affirmation of Hellenic culture and a unifying activity for the Greeks of the new territories, where they were a dispersed minority. Indeed, theater was also a powerful vehicle of Hellenization, an ideological tool with a significant impact not only on culture and literature but also on the very topography of cities and on their social dimension. Every self-respecting city throughout the Hellenized East had to have a theater and celebrate dramatic festivals.[2] That is certainly true also of the early stages of the Greek domination of Egypt.

Even though the earliest archaeological remains of theatrical buildings in Egypt dates to the Roman period, we can fairly assume their presence already in the Ptolemaic age.[3] Of course, Alexandria already had at least one of its theaters in that period: second- and first-century BC literary sources speak of the theater above the harbor (Polybius, 15.30.4; Strabo, 17.1.9, 794; Caesar, *BC* 3.112.8).[4] Yet, even away

1 E.g. Bosher 2012; Lamari 2017; Braund/Hall/Wyles 2019; Csapo/Wilson 2020.

2 Csapo 2015, 4.

3 See Le Bian 2012 and www.theatrum.de/aegypten.html (last visit March 2024).

4 Cf. also Jason FGrH 632, of uncertain date; see Fraser 1972 vol. 1, 23, vol. 2, 149 n.1, and McKenzie 2007, 48, recalling also the Dionysian agones at Theocr. *Id.* 17, 112–114.

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from the intellectual brilliance of the capital, there were theaters from Lower to Upper Egypt. There is a well-known reference to the construction of a theater in the Arsinoites in a document of the Zenon archive, *P.Cair.Zen.* V 59823 (253 BC), where a note on the verso reads τὸ θέατρον οἰκ[οδο]μῆϲαι. And an account of daily expenses from the same archive, *P.Lond.* VII 2140.2–3 (246/240 BC?), lists ὕδωρ ὥϲτε εἰϲ τὸ θέατρον.[5] These may well refer to a theater in the nome capital Arsinoe, rather than to a building in the smaller Philadelphia. The presence of a theatrical building in Arsinoe by the 2nd c. BC is attested on an inscribed stone still *in situ*, commemorating some stone additions by the Ptolemaic kings.[6] Among the much richer documentation of the Roman period, we have early second-century AD documents related to the restoration of theatrical buildings, the one in Arsinoe[7] and another in Upper Egypt (perhaps Apollonopolites), whose original construction must therefore have been somewhat earlier, if it was by then in need of restoration work, though we cannot say how much earlier.[8] Even Ptolemaïs Hermiou in the Thebaid had its theater by the 3rd c. BC, as an inscription suggests (*OGIS* I 49, l. 8, 246–221 BC).[9]

Theatrical contests were also part and parcel of official festivals that the Ptolemies seem to have sponsored in imitation of the great Panhellenic events.[10] This is confirmed in a recent papyrological discovery from Deir el-Banat (Arsinoites),

5 Cf. Daris 1988, 78. The interpretation of this reference is quite puzzling, since the subsequent amount is just a ἡμιωβέλιον, too low for the water supply of a theater. On the evidence for theatrical buildings in Hellenistic Egypt see also, in this volume, the contributions by M. Capasso (esp. 194–195), and L. Del Corso (esp. 358–359).

6 Rathbone/Pintaudi 2020. The inscription, palaeographically datable within the 2nd c. BC, mentions a queen Kleopatra and a Ptolemy, and so could date either to 180–176 or to 107–101 BC. For further bibliography on the Arsinoe theater see Le Bian 2012 and www.theatrum.de/183.html (last visit May 2024).

7 *P.Fam.Tebt.* 15.66–70 = *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* VI 15 (114/115 AD) refers to the reconstruction (ἀνοικοδομ-) of the theater at Arsinoe in a petition among the annexed documents in a report sent to the *strategos* of the meris of Herakleides by the former gymnasiarch, concerning some missing or damaged rolls of the public archives. The papyrus is part of the archive of Philosarapis.

8 *P.Alex.Giss.* 43 = *P.Giss.Apoll.* 30 (Apollonopolites, 113/120 AD), ll. 3–5 οἱ θ̣εμέλ̣[ιοι τ]ῶ̣ν τοιχῶν καὶ̣ | τῶν ϲτύλ̣ω̣ν τοῦ ἐνθάδε θεά̣τ̣|ρο̣[υ] πολλοὶ ὄντεϲ χ̣ρείαν. It is an incoming letter in Apollonios' archive, so the precise place of origin remains unknown. On these documents see Daris 1988, 79, Capasso 2021, 288.

9 www.theatrum.de/187.html (last visit May 2024).

10 The grand Dionysiac procession and festival organized in Alexandria by Ptolemy II (Callix. *FGrHist* 627 F 2) could possibly have involved theatrical performances. For other Hellenistic festivals including dramatic contests outside Egypt, cf. e.g. the Mouseia in Thespiai founded in the late 3rd c. BC and see Le Guen 1995, esp. 65.

which gives us a unique glimpse of a festival program in third-century BC Egypt.[11] The papyrus, extracted from *cartonnage* along with petitions to the king and other third-century BC documents, is on the verso of a much damaged document and preserves a day-by-day program of the Theadelphia, possibly datable to 242 BC. The 55-day schedule includes, along with musical and athletic contests, on Day 8 the *proagon* of tragedies, the roll-call of comedians, and the draw for the *skenikoi agones* both old (*palaioi*) and new (*kainoi*) (ll. 12–16), to be held over several days: four days for ancient comedies (ll. 28–30), five days for ancient tragedies (ll. 31–32), and one day each for new comedies (the day after ithyphallic performances and *satyroi*) and new tragedies (l. 37), revealing a clear preponderance of revivals of 'classical' plays over new productions.[12] The call for participation in such a large event must clearly have spread through the *chora*.

We have much epigraphic and some papyrological evidence of the associations of Dionysiac artists (*peri ton Dionyson technitai*), which had its bases at Ptolemais and perhaps at Alexandria.[13] We may mention, on the papyrological side, *P.Hal.* 1, attesting the exemption from salt tax for the artists of Dionysos under Ptolemy II Philadelphos — a good example of the privileges granted to the actors' guild and the patronage of the theater by the Ptolemaic dynasty.[14]

As is well known, under Ptolemy II and his successors Alexandria was the hub of intense activity collecting, cataloguing, editing, and studying the classics, in which dramatic texts (both tragedy and comedy) received much attention.[15] These philological enterprises on the theatrical productions of the past went hand in hand

11 Chepel 2022, also presented at the XXXI Congress of Papyrology held in Paris on July 2022.

12 Re-performances of *palaia dramata* are attested in epigraphic festival records in the Greek East from the 3rd c. BC (see Graf 2016), and from the mid-4th c. BC in Athens (Nervegna 2007, esp. 18ff.). Restaging of classics was introduced in Athens by decree in 387/386 for tragedy. From 340/339 festival programs also included revivals of old comedies (cf. *IG* II^2 2318 col. XII ll. 316–318), but such an inclusion is well attested only from 312/311 and it is usually considered to be confined to New Comedy (not involving 5th-century comic authors), though the labels *palaia*/*kaina* have no clear association with the distinction Old/Middle/New Comedy (see Csapo 2000, esp. 271–272). Specific contests for 'old' dramas were probably instituted after 279/278 (see Summa 2008). Cf. Le Guen 2014, 361–362.

13 Le Guen 2001; Le Guen 2014, 363; Aneziri 2003, esp. 109–120 for Egyptian evidence. See also, in this volume, the contribution by L. Del Corso, p. 353.

14 Tedeschi 2011, 12 n. 61 for another example from the Ptolemaic period: *SB* I 4224 (33/32 BC). On privileges and benefits cf. *P.Count*, II, p. 88 (fiscal status, with reference to *P.Hal.* 1) and more in general pp. 135–138, and Le Guen 2014, 364.

15 On the wide theme of Alexandrian scholarship see at least Montana 2020, with further bibliography.

with new literary and artistic output.[16] Not by chance do we find among the names of the tragedians of the Pleiad two grammarians who, according to the tradition (Tz. *Prol.Com.* 1), were tasked with studying dramatic texts, Alexander Aetolus (for tragedy) and Lycophron (for comedy), at the time when Zenodotus was head of the Library.

Yet interest in theater was not merely a matter of royal court entertainment, institutional agenda, or aspiration to culture by the ruling classes. Clear evidence of the popularity of Greek theater in Ptolemaic Egypt and of its well-established presence in the common imagination is also provided by a substantial amount of theater-related artifacts found in Egypt.[17] We have luxury objects — it is not always clear whether they are imported products, as is probably the case of some Gnathia vases with theatrical motifs found in Alexandria,[18] or of local manufacture such as the mosaic glass plaques showing theatrical masks (typically from New Comedy), possibly datable to the late Ptolemaic period.[19] But we also have clay figures of actors and clay theater masks:[20] these are cheap terracottas that are usually considered to be products for the masses and associated with the poorest stratum of society.[21] These of course could have been widespread among the upper classes too, but the penetration into the lower classes is of particular interest since it attests a popular interest in such a typically Greek activity as the theater[22] (and particularly comedy, it seems).

Itinerant theatrical companies presented their repertoire in the main towns throughout Egypt. Epigraphic[23] and papyrological[24] documents involving performers

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16 Suffice to mention here Lowe 2013 for comedy and Hanink 2019 for tragedy.

17 For examples possibly related to Old Comedy see Webster 1978[3], EV1, ET1 and ET2.

18 Cf. e.g. Green 2019/2020, esp. 196.

19 On which see Auth 1999. The date is uncertain, possibly from 50 BC to 50 AD. Similar artifacts, whose date is discussed and probably later, have been found also in Antinoupolis: see Silvano 2014 and Del Corso 2017, 231–233.

20 Green 1994, 105–107; Török 1995, 143–167. See also Dunand 1990, nos. 598–607, Bailey 2008, 136.

21 Rightly, a more nuanced vision is proposed by Sandri 2012, 644: "Contrary to the opinion of previous scholarship, the possession of terracottas was not restricted to the poorest part of the population but was also widespread in more affluent classes". For our argument what matters is that *also* poor people possessed these terracottas.

22 For possible performative traditions of literary texts in Ancient Egypt before the Greeks see e.g. Verhoeven 1996, but the very applicability of the category of 'drama' is questionable (cf. Mikhail 1984).

23 Le Guen 2001, and cf. *supra* n. 13.

24 From Hellenistic times there are documents mentioning mimes, *BGU* XIV 2428, II 29 (Herakleopolis, 1st c. BC), citharodists, *P.Lond.* VII 2017 (Philadelphia, 241/240 BC), and other players: cf. Tedeschi 2011, esp. 6.

and musicians of various types give us a glimpse of the variety of entertainments offered, in theater buildings or elsewhere, in both institutional and private contexts.

The bulk of evidence from papyri dates to Roman times, as regards both documents related to theaters and copies of dramatic texts. Yet we have some 130 fragments of dramatic papyri from the Ptolemaic period (76 of tragedy; 1 satyr play; 47 of comedy; 3 mimes),[25] almost three-fifths of which are from tragedy (Euripides chiefly: 46 items). Of the 47 comic papyri (including 10 anthologies) unsurprisingly the largest part is New Comedy (32). Many of these fragments have been attributed, more or less justifiably, to Menander (cf. Carlesimo in this volume).

2 What about Old Comedy? The Evidence from Ptolemaic Papyri

This in a nutshell is the general framework, against which I would like to focus specifically on Old Comedy, the products of fifth-century Athens, with the aim of figuring out the role that Old Comedy could have played in this framework.

There is barely a handful of papyri of Old Comedy from Ptolemaic Egypt.

As a preliminary, we need to note that the corpus is hard to define. There is a good number of uncertain fragments — uncertain in chronological attribution or even in genre. And the fragments are all of course of unknown authorship. We do not have any papyrus that can be assigned with certainty to an Old Comedy author until the 1st c. BC. Del Corso 2017, 234, called Aristophanes the great absentee from Ptolemaic papyri. A verse from Aristophanes' *Frogs* (1217) is quoted in a philosophical work that was read in Memphis in the first half of the 2nd c. BC: *P.Paris* pp. 77–109 no. 2, a papyrus belonging to the archive of the *katochoi* of the Sarapeion.[26] But, apart from this indirect attestation, we have to wait until the 1st c. BC for the earliest testimony: *O.Bodl.* I 279, an ostracon with a phrase from Aristophanes' *Clouds* 974–975 written over an effaced bank receipt.[27] The other early direct attestation is a copy

25 Data from TM LDAB search for genre + Date: Ptolemaic (March 2024). The single satyr play is *P.Tebt.* III.1 692 (Sophocles, *Inachus*, whose genre is debated).

26 Cf. at least Thompson 2012, 240–242.

27 Litinas 2002. Perhaps from Thebes. Cf. Del Corso 2017, 242–243.

of the *Knights* from Oxyrhynchus that can be dated to the end of the 1st c. BC on palaeographical grounds.[28]

In the absence of any match with other direct or indirect tradition, in order to assess that a papyrus fragment belongs to Old Comedy, we must rely only on circumstantial evidence: elements of metre, language, or content that we can compare to our existing knowledge of the genre. The real issue is that our knowledge of what was an extremely wide and various output in the comic genre in fifth-century BC Attica is extremely poor. We can today read eleven complete comedies by one single author, out of some six hundred comedies that must have been staged in the main Athenian dramatic festivals during the 5th and early 4th c. BC by at least fifty comic poets (cf. Mensching 1964). The Library of Alexandria may still have held texts of more than half of these comic productions: 365 plays (a suspiciously neat figure), according to an anonymous treatise on comedy preserved in some Byzantine manuscripts of Aristophanes (sch. Aristoph., Prol. 3, 10–11 K.).

We know for a fact that Old Comedy had a prominent place in the scholarly activities of the Alexandrian grammarians, who catalogued, edited, and studied the old comedies still preserved at that time (44 by Aristophanes, as well as many others), and created the very periodization that defined Old Comedy as such. Yet while in the erudite circles of Alexandria there was certainly a strong interest in Old Comedy, we have no evidence of a penetration of such interest into the *chora*, or at least not until the imperial period, when the attention to the linguistic (and cultural) model of fifth-century Athens spread widely and informed educational practices. We also know little about the use made of these texts outside the scholarly circles in Alexandria (education, performances, readings for personal interest, or something else?).

Old Comedy is usually considered not to have been suitable for later theatrical revivals,[29] and certainly less so than New Comedy, due to its language, which was difficult for the audience of the Hellenistic period to understand, and its frequent topical references to the specific contemporary world of fifth-century Athens. Yet the assumption that Old Comedy was excluded from the category of *palaia dramata*,

28 For its *epsilon-theta* style see Cavallo/Maehler 2008, no. 79. The attribution to Aristophanes' *incertae fabulae* of *P.Oxy.* II 212 + *P.Oxy.* XXXVII 2808 is speculative; the dating is debated but not earlier than the second half of the 1st c. BC (thus Ronconi 2005; end of 1st c. BC, according to Cavallo/Maehler 2008, no. 69; later for the edd. pr.). For the papyri of Aristophanes cf. Montana 2006, Litinas 2014, and Del Corso 2017.

29 Cf. Revermann 2006, 66–87. Cases of old comedies restaged in the classical period seem quite exceptional and related to a decree honoring the poet. We know from Dicaearchus that Aristophanes' *Frogs* was restaged (cf. Hypoth. I.39–40 Wilson = Dicaearc. fr. 104 Mirhady), but the date of restaging is unknown (cf. Sommerstein 2009, Rosen 2015).

the 'old plays' restaged in the official festivals, is an inference *e silentio* from the lack of documentation (our idea of which plays were presented derives only from the fragmentary Athenian Didascalic inscription *IG* II^2 2319–2324, where the authors mentioned are from Middle or New Comedy,[30] but we have no documentation outside Athens). If we look at Ptolemaic papyri with possible hints of a performative origin (such as musical notations, actors' sigla, or stage directions), they are mainly of tragedy. There are a few possible cases of New Comedy, but all are fairly speculative: *P.Hib.* II 180 (verses of uncertain genre, tragedy or New Comedy, with actors' sigla); *MPER* N.S. III 22 (New Comedy with marginal notes and an alleged actor's siglum, more probably a stichometric notation); and *P.Hamb.* II 120 (New Comedy with a mysterious siglum XNX after a dicolon at the end of col. I 1, considered a possible stage direction).[31]

2.1 Old Comedy in Anthology Papyri?

The numerous anthologies among Ptolemaic papyri quite often include comic verses (10 cases at least), usually from Menander or more generally from New Comedy, and sometimes Doric comedy (Pseudo-Epicharmean *Sententiae*,[32] Sophron[33]).

The second-century BC palimpsest roll P.Berol. inv. 9772[34] preserves a gnomic anthology of comic and tragic passages (some unusually long) about marriage and the typical theme of "women spell trouble". The quoted authors, besides Epicharmus, Middle and New Comedy authors (Antiphanes, Menander and Apollodorus), may have included Aristophanes' rivals Plato (ll. 3–5 = fr. adesp. 1020 K.-A.) and Pherecrates (ll. 6–8 = fr. 286 K.-A. among the *dubia*), but both names are quite dubious

30 Middle — Anaxandrides — or New Comedy — Diphilus, Menander, Philemon, Simylos, Posidippos, Philippides (4th/3rd c. BC?): see Le Guen 2014, 369.

31 Cf. Gammacurta 2006, no. 2, 3, 11, with further bibliography. Other dramatic papyri with actors' sigla are all from the Roman period. For the script of *P.Hib.* II 180 see Del Corso 2004, 40.

32 E.g. *P.Hib.* I 7 (225–215 BC), gnomological anthology with Epicharmus, Euripides, Menander, and Lysias on the verso; *P.Hib.* I 1 and I 2 (280–240 BC), Ps.-Epicharmus, *Sententiae*; O.Berol. inv. 12319 (3rd c. BC), anthology with Ps.-Epicharmus along with other epic, elegiac and tragic poets.

33 *P.Hamb.* II 121 (= *SH* 902, 2nd c. BC) includes verses attributed to Sophron along with bucolic hexameters and an Aratean passage.

34 *BKT* V.2, pp. 123–128. The most recent edition is by Piccione 2017 in *CPF* II.3 GNOM 3. Cf. also Pordomingo 2013, no. 34. The roll is opisthographic, having an extensive extract from a comedy by Apollodorus (Apollod. fr. 14 K.-A.) copied on the verso by another hand.

restorations by Wilamowitz.[35] As for the two trimeters at ll. 4–5 of this papyrus (γυναῖκα] κρεῖϲϲόν ἐϲτ’ ἐν οἰκίαι | ἢ φαρμακίτα]ϲ̣ τῶν παρ’ Εὐδήμου τρέφειν “better maintain a woman at home than [amulets] from Eudemos”), an element in favor of an attribution to Old Comedy could be the presence of a probable *onomasti komodein* against Eudemos: the name is not rare but this could be the *komodoumenos* mentioned for his lucky rings in Aristophanes’ *Wealth* 884, a *pharmakopoles* who according to the scholia ad loc. was mocked also by Eupolis (fr. 96 K.-A. from *Baptai*) and Ameipsias (fr. 26 K.-A.).[36] The restoration *pharmakitas* is clearly based on this point, and remains speculative.[37]

The few other cases of Ptolemaic anthologies that have been argued to include lines from Old Comedy are even more disputable.[38]

For example the fragment ***P.Schub.* 28** (Fig. 42), from a second-century BC gnomological anthology with passages from dramatic authors on the theme of slaves and masters,[39] which is quite similar to a selection by Stobaeus,[40] may include, along with Philemon (ll. 9–11 = fr. cfr. Eur., fr. 529 K.), Antiphanes (ll. 12–14 = fr. 263), and perhaps Euripides (rr. 5–6 = Eur. fr. 799.1–2), also the more unusual fifth-century comic poet Diocles. Since at l. 7 we have an author name ending in *-cleous*, the ed. pr. Schäfer proposed Diocles, Euthycles, or Timocles. Kassel-Austin dubiously accepted Diocles (*test. 3 K.-A.; *80 *CGFP* = fr. dub. 19 Orth). The quotation is almost illegible and has been variously transcribed. The most recent edition has:

7]κλεου[ϲ
8]. των . . . ο̣ν̣ . [. .]. [. .]. ο̣φω̣ ἔπ̣ει

35 At l. 6 Wilamowitz considered Pherecrates to be the only comic author whose name ends in -crates who would be likely to be included in a florilegium. Other hypotheses are *Epikratous* (Edmonds), *Sosikratous* (Guida).

36 The same name, but not necessarily the same person also in Cratin. fr. 302 K.-A. Cf. also Thphr., *HP* 9.17.2.

37 Olson 2017, 283 notes that *pharmakitas* “seems an unlikely object for the verb *trephein*”.

38 The supposed presence of Cratinus and Plato Comicus (*CGFP* 71 and 216) in the epigrammatic anthology *P.Petr.* II 49 b (Gurob, 3rd c. BC) has been convincingly ruled out in the new edition by Maltomini 2001.

39 A more recent edition by Ozbek 2017 in *CPF* II.3, 349–353 [Gnom. 50]. Cf. also Pordomingo 2013, no. 16. — Pernigotti 2007, no. 5. The fragments come from a Busiris *cartonnage* and preserve the end of 14 lines in an informal hand. It was reused on the verso for a prose text (only descr., hardly legible).

40 Stob. 4.19, about masters and servants, quotes the same verses by Antiphanes as the papyrus, and those here attributed to Philemon, but as from Euripides’ *Meleager*. Furthermore, the Euripidean passage at ll. 5–6 of the papyrus is quoted in another section of Stobaeus’ *Florilegium* (see below).

Fig. 42: *P.Schub*. 28 © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Scan: Berliner Papyrusdatenbank, P 13680.

Admittedly Diocles may be a likely option on the ground of space, when compared with the position of the other two author names preserved below it. But the possible names are many,[41] and it could well be a tragedian too. According to Orth 2014, 246, Timocles or Sophocles are more probable, given that these authors are cited by Stobaeus. If at ll. 5–6 we can actually read two lines from Euripides' *Philoctetes* cited by Stobaeus in the section *Peri orges* (3.20.17), as Maehler 1967 proposed and the more recent edition supports (despite the fact that there is no lemma indicating a change of theme), in my view Sophocles becomes the best candidate. I would very

41 Other possible names of known comic authors with this ending are Philocles, Athenocles, Archicles, Aristocles, Mnasicles, Onesicles.

much like to see in these hardly readable traces the line from the *Antigone* (l. 1028 αὐθαδία τοι cκαιότητ᾽ ὀφλιcκάνει "stubbornness brands you for stupidity") quoted by Stobaeus in the same section *Peri orges* (III 20.14), close to the Euripidean lines that may have been included here just before this passage, but the reading is difficult.[42]

To sum up, Diocles' presence here is just one of the many speculative possibilities and Ptolemaic papyri do not provide any firm evidence of reception of lines from Old Comedy in anthological collections.

2.2 Copies of Old Comedy on Ptolemaic Papyri

The evidence is no clearer when we consider the possible fragments of copies of old comedies. They are:

- P.Duk. inv. 313 R (= fr. adesp. 1146 K.-A.)
- *P.Heid.* I 182 (= fr. adesp. *1094 K.-A.)
- P.Strasb. inv. gr. 2345 R (fr. adesp. 1035 K.-A.)
- P.CtYBR inv. 5019 (ed. Johnson 2016b)
- *P.Lond.Lit.* 254 (fr. adesp. 1058 K.-A.).[43]

Of course, in many cases the fragmentary state does not allow us to say whether they are from a roll that included the whole play or from an isolated passage or even from an anthology.

An isolated passage is one of the most famous candidates for this category: the so-called *Comoedia Dukiana*, P.Duk. inv. 313 R (= fr. adesp. 1146 K.-A.). It provides a good illustration of the difficulties we face in labeling a fragment as from Old Comedy rather than Middle or New Comedy.

42 A reading αὐθαδεί]ạ τọị (or τọṿ as in Stobaeus' codex M[d]) c̣κ̣ạịọ́τ̣ηṭạ ὀφλ̣ịc̣κ̣ά̣ṿει at l. 8 seems not impossible but poses difficulties in a couple of points, and the first word, even in the itacistic spelling αὐθαδεί-, is perhaps quite short for the space (of 10 to 12 missing letters, to judge from the following lines).

43 I would leave out of the list the very doubtful case of *P.Schub.* 9 (3rd/2nd c. BC, two fragments from *cartonnage*, of unknown provenance, erroneously considered Alcman). The hypotheses cautiously advanced by Ucciardello 2007 also include Old Comedy, due to the presence of Doric and Ionic elements, but it is not even certain that the two fragments exhibiting these elements belong together.

Extracted from an Arsinoitic mummy *cartonnage*,[44] this piece was cut from a larger roll containing a Greek document that had been washed out (after it had already been reused on the verso for an account; it has merely been described but not edited so far) in order to copy an extensive passage of a comedy (three complete columns: 50 trochaic tetrameters). It is a dialogue between two characters (one perhaps is a cook, a *mageiros*) concerning a fish, which is going to be prepared for dinner in a giant pan. One speaker praises the fish cίλουροc, considered to be the king of all fishes. This encomium is compared to that of Isocrates' *Helen* (ll. 17–18). There are allusions to the mysteries (ll. 20ff.). On the basis of content, language, and style, the first editor (Willis 1991) suggested Old Comedy, though noting that the presence of the reference to Isocrates' *Helen* (of uncertain date: 390–380?) implies a date not earlier than the beginning of the 4th century. Willis proposed an attribution to the play *Fishes* by Archippus (a sort of zoocracy in the spirit of Aristophanes' *Birds*, as far as we can tell on the basis of some twenty fragments of indirect tradition, and probably staged after 403/402).[45] Csapo 1994 supported this idea, maintaining that the *Comoedia Dukiana* should date to the first decade of the 4th c. BC: "theme, language, content and form reveal characteristics typical of Old Comedy. It is a fantasy piece which describes a social hierarchy of anthropomorphized fish. The language is colourful and often highly poetic. It has a literary *komodoumenos* (17, Isocrates). Its trochaic tetrameters show an irregularity of median diaeresis (84%) which would place the composition closer to Old than Middle or New Comedy". The hypothesis is fascinating but there are no firm elements that would support either an identification as Archippus' play or the attribution to Old Comedy. Austin considered it a later composition, and advanced as alternative hypothesis the *Gigantes* by Cratinus junior (Austin *apud* Willis 1991, cf. Cratin. Jun., fr. 1 K.-A.). Austin also highlighted a possible Egyptian context: at l. 38 there is a reference to the office of *dioiketes*, at l. 44 there is a mention of Harpocrates, the son of Horus (καὶ ποίηcον Ἁρποχράτου θηλάcαc τὸν δάκτυλον), and all the species of fish mentioned are classified by Athenaeus, VII 312a as Nilotic. The possibility that this is an unknown Alexandrian poet has met some consensus.[46] Certainly, more recent analyses are far more cautious in including the *Comoedia Dukiana* within Old Comedy. Yet, even if

44 This was the only literary papyrus in a group of 11 papyri from *cartonnage* (including letters, petitions, in different hands, datable to the first half of the 2nd c., up to the late 3rd, with mentions of Oxyrhyncha and the *strategos* Hippalos 185–169 BC). According to Willis 1991, 331 (ed. pr.) the papyri of the group are not connected.

45 See Miccolis 2017, 100ff. The *terminus post quem* is deduced from the presence of a mention of the archon Euclides.

46 Besides Austin himself, Luppe, Storey (who suggested a comparison with Edilius fr. 8 Gow-Page) and Stama. See Stama 2015, for the *status quaestionis* with the relevant bibliography.

it is a comic piece newly composed in Hellenistic Egypt (from a whole play?), the text seems to show a clear influence of Old Comedy as model, and so provides at least indirect evidence of its reception.

Another putative Old Comedy papyrus extracted from mummy *cartonnage* comes from El-Hibeh, the ancient Ankyropolis: *P.Heid.* I 182 (= *CGFP* 362; fr. adesp. *1094 K.-A.), of the 3rd c. BC. The two fragments are from a work of uncertain genre, characterized by words concerning politics (*pistis*, the sea, *demagogos*, *demos*, *polis* and *politai*, *eunoia*, an opposition between *kreissones* and *poneroi*, the laws). The first editor (Siegmann 1956) assumed they were lines from an Attic old comedy, while Gigante 1957 thought rather of post-Herodotean political prose. After the authoritative opinion of Gigante, the papyrus was counted among the *dubia* in comic fragments (fr. adesp. *1094 K.-A.), but a recent analysis by Cuniberti and Pitotto 2011 has again argued strongly in favor of comedy, confirming the poetic nature of the text and its possible metrical structure, namely trochaic tetrameters (as already noted by Siegmann 1956). Thus, the possible attribution to Old Comedy rests on meter and political content, two elements that are significant but not decisive for chronology: trochaic tetrameters are well attested in New Comedy as well,[47] and generic political issues were not totally alien to fourth- and third-century BC comedy.

A remarkable aspect of this copy is its reuse: on the verso we can read a fragment from a metrological text. The chronological span seems quite narrow. This may lead us to suppose a use of these copies in the higher levels of education. As is well known, the *cartonnage* from El-Hibeh has yielded a significant number of literary papyri (almost 100),[48] in which comedy has some 10 attestations. Interestingly, they include two comic fragments with marginal notes. One of these two is *P.Heid.* I 181 (on the verso of an unpublished document), a fragment of Doric comedy (3rd–2nd c. BC) with a supralinear gloss, perhaps the only case known so far of a Ptolemaic papyrus with a possible trace of exegetic interest in comedy.[49] The other is *P.Hib.* II 181 (MP^3 1645; LDAB 2734; *CGFP* 262; fr. adesp. 1092 K.-A.; 3rd c. BC), perhaps a fragment of New Comedy with a marginal note or addition. The others are fragments attributed to New Comedy. In another case, too, the comic text is on the verso:

47 For a list see Webster 1974, 1–2, 10–11, who speculatively takes as a chronological criterion the presence or absence of trochaic scenes; cf. Ingrosso 2010, 50–51 (with further bibliography).

48 Cf. Maltomini 2019. An LDAB search for Provenance: El-Hibeh yields 94 results (March 2024). Del Corso 2004, 35, counted 86, which include both bookrolls of good quality by professional scribes (sometimes even luxury products), and cheaper book products (on reused materials or with more cursive hands), and observes “poco attestati sono invece i comici” (p. 51). Cuniberti/Pitotto 2011, 270 and n. 6 mention other papyri from the same context (*P.Grenf.* II 1–8, *P.Hib.* I 1–171, *P.Bad.* VI 178–180, *P.Heid.* II 181–182).

49 Perrone 2009 (*CLGP* II.4), no. 1.

the new comedy *P.Heid.* I 184 (fr. adesp. 1093 K.-A., assigned hypothetically to Menander's *Hydria*) was copied reusing a roll containing a lexicon, chiefly Homeric (*P.Heid.* I 200).

Perhaps also from El-Hibeh, though the exact provenance is unknown, is the Strasbourg papyrus P.Strasb. inv. G 2345.[50] The dozen fragments of this papyrus indeed preserve comic verses. Where we can read enough to tell, the theme interestingly seems to be language and metalinguistic jokes: in fr. 1 the ed. pr. (Crönert 1922) hypothesized that the discussion is about synonyms. In the more extensive fragment 2 (Fig. 43), we can read part of a dialogue between at least two characters about the meaning of some anthroponyms (the telling names Εὐαρχίδας, Εὐέμπολος, Παρμένων, Λυcανδρίδας). Present in this fragment are non-Attic words, specifically Doric elements: e.g. l. 2 πήποκα, 11 μέμναμαι; or non-Attic l. 4 adv. ἀλλεῖ and ξεῖνε (though the papyrus has the unmetrical ξενε), l. 12 τοὔνομα. This prompts consideration of it as possibly from Old Comedy (from Plato comicus' *Lacones* according to Croenert, from Philyllius' *Poleis* according to Wilamowitz). Austin included it within the *adespota veteris comoediae* (*CGFP* 236). The ed. pr. envisaged a dialogue between an Athenian and a Spartan about the most appropriate anthroponym for each one, and associated the name Lysandridas (l. 14) with the Spartan leader Lysander, thus supposing a date after the Athenian capitulation (in 404) but before Lysander's death (in 395). His extensive reconstruction was met with skepticism by the subsequent editors. The use of dialect elements for comic characterization is well attested from the first generation of Attic comic poets (for the use of Doric see already Crates fr. 46 K.-A.) and in Aristophanes of course (suffice to mention *Acharnians*, *Lysistrata*),[51] but it occurred also in New Comedy: the best-known example is the Doric of the supposed physician in Menander's *Aspis*.[52] A dialectological analysis of the fragment by Bettarini 1998 shows that the text gives a generic impression of Doricism on an Attic base, in what seems to be a spoof Doric lingo, more similar to that of the Menandrean fake doctor than to the more realistic Doric of the Spartan women in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*.

50 *CGFP* 236; fr. adesp. 1035 K.-A. (TM 65763). Strasbourg has papyri from El-Hibeh (on the history of this collection see Martin/Heilporn 2000).

51 Colvin 1999 and Colvin 2000; Willi 2002.

52 Ingrosso 2010, 344–346 and Ingrosso 2016.

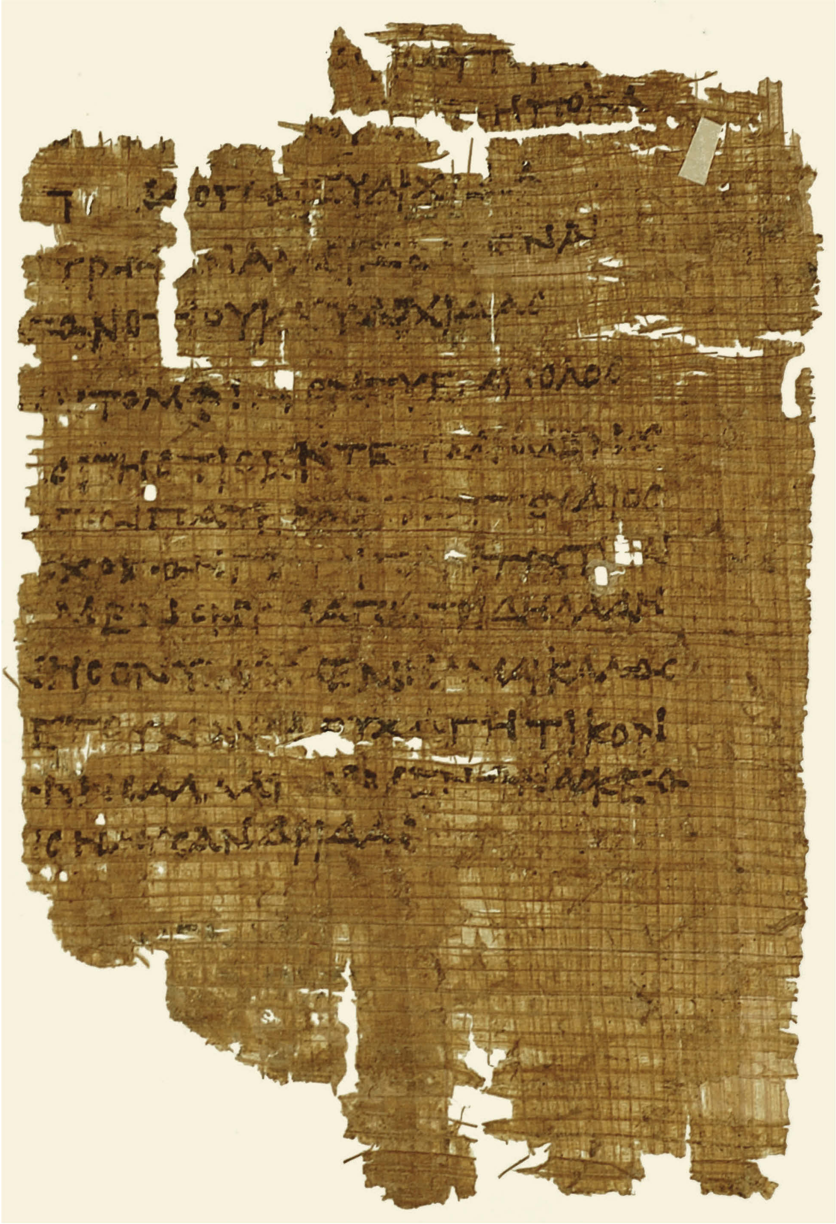

Fig. 43: P.Strasb. inv. G 2345r, fr. 2 © BNU Strasbourg. Photo Ruey-Lin Chang & Pascal Disdier (MISHA).

Worthy of note is also the reuse of the verso for another literary text, possibly a comedy as well, according to ed. pr., or perhaps from a satyr play (so K.-A., who include it among the dubious comic fragments as fr. adesp. *1070).

A more recent entry to the possible Old Comedy papyri (post Kassel-Austin edition) is P.CtYBR inv. 5019 (Fig. 44). The fragment, now in Yale, was one of the papyri extracted from three wads purchased in 1998 and presented by the dealer as the stuffing from a mummified animal. The group includes documents both in Greek and in Demotic, with internal elements and toponyms that point to the Herakleopolite and in one case to the Arsinoite nome in the late 3rd or early 2nd c. BC.[53] There are also two paraliterary texts: a grammatical work;[54] and a puzzling text consisting of numbered lemmata from an unknown prose text (perhaps a treatise on poetics or poetic composition?), followed by examples (*loci paralleli*?) from Homer and unknown tragedies, reused on the back for a nearly illegible list in Demotic and another text in Greek (of which only a few letters of the left edge of a column are preserved).[55] The hand of the comic fragment is described as an "ungainly majuscule, clearly attempting a book hand [… by a writer who] is not a beginner, but also not a well-trained professional". Thus Johnson 2016, who assumes "a writing exercise for pedagogical or scribal training". The column height is apparently complete and very short. There are remains of another column, with what in my view may be signs of textual division rather than letters. One may wonder whether what followed was the same comedy. In col. I we can read 12 line ends of iambic tetrameters catalectic, possibly from a contest scene according to Johnson, who observes that iambic tetrameters are common in Old Comedy, but are apparently rare in New Comedy (he recalls as the only case the end of Men. *Dyskolos* 880–958). Iambic tetrameters catalectic are a meter with a dragging gait and a playful tone. In Aristophanes' extant plays we find it used by the chorus (both in entries and exit scenes), and by the actors in the *agon*. In fact, we also have examples in some Middle Comedy (e.g. Antiphan. fr. 293 K.-A.; Anaxandrides fr. 35 K.-A.; fr. adesp. 149 K.-A.) and New Comedy fragments (e.g. Diphil. fr. 1 K.-A.; fr. adesp. 1126 K.-A.).[56]

53 Johnson 2016a.

54 Inv. 5043, ed. Johnson 2016b.

55 Inv. 5018, ed. Johnson 2016a.

56 Perusino 1968; West 1982, 92; Martinelli 2002, 143–151. Cfr. also Hunter 1985, 45 and 160 n. 47; Millis 2015 on Anax. fr. 35 K.-A. In the case of Men. *Dysk.* the manuscript signals an aulos accompaniment.

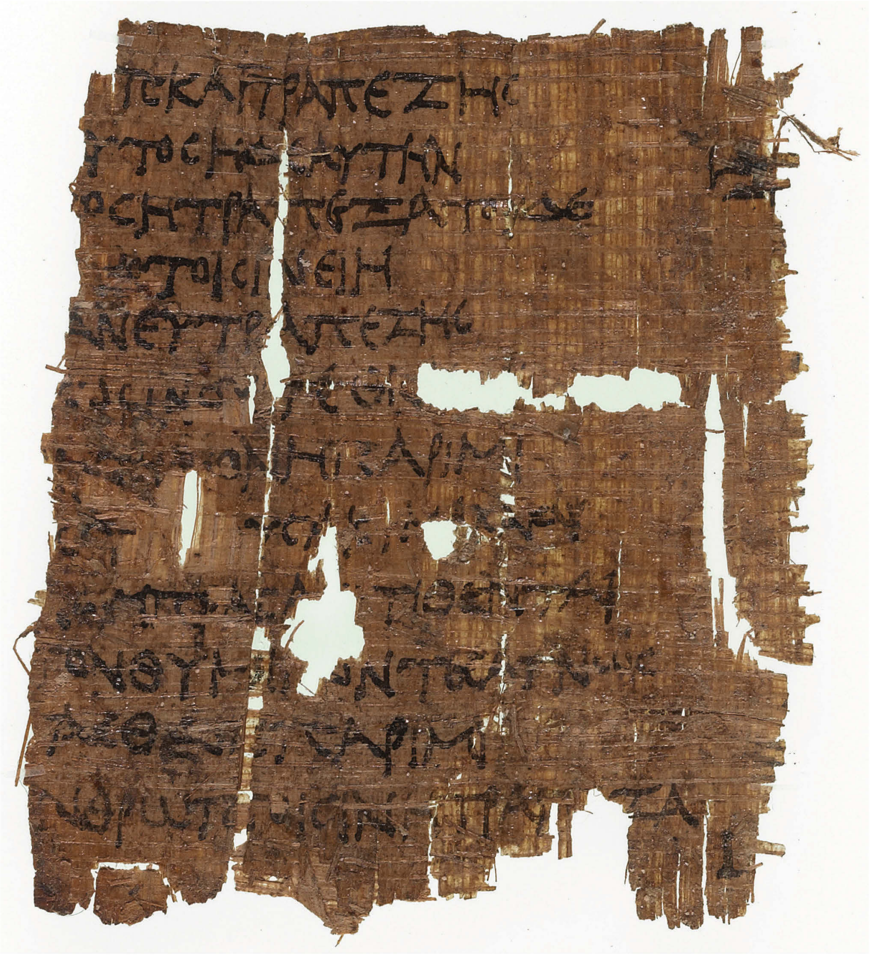

Fig. 44: P.CtYBR inv. 5019. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Public domain.

Here apparently we have a dialogue.[57]

<margin>
]τε καὶ τραπέζης
] αὐτὸς ἥδ’ ἑαυτὴν
] ̣ος ἡ τράπε<ζ>α τοῦδε
β]ρ̣ο̣τοῖσιν εἴη
] ἄνευ τραπέζης
]ω̣σιν ουτεθν̣ ̣ ̣[̣] ̣
] ̣τ ̣ ̣ ̣ονη πάρ<ε>ιμι
]ϲ̣τ ̣ ̣ ̣ ̣υϲα̣ι̣ ϲ̣υμ ̣ ̣α̣ι̣ω̣ι̣
] λ̣α̣μ̣πρὰς ἃς τίθενται
]τον θυμιῶντες ἁγνῶς
] τὰς θεοῖς πάρ<ε>ιμι
] ἀ̣νθρώποισιν ἡ τράπεζα
<margin>

We may note the presence of deictics (ll. 2 and 3) and what is immediately noticeable is that in these few lines the word *trapeza* occurs four times (at ll. 1, 3, 5 and 12), a repetition that may suggest a verbal joke. The table may of course be associated with a banquet in a culinary scene (and Johnson considers the possibility that this is one of the many dining preparation scenes) and/or a sacrifice. The table is part of the standard equipment in scenes of preparing sacrificial offering to the gods,[58] and here we have at l. 11 θεοῖς, perhaps in opposition to humans (ἀνθρώποισιν at l. 12 and possibly β]ρ̣ο̣τοῖσιν at l. 4). Furthermore, at l. 10 θυμιῶντες ἁγνῶς, "burning the incense in holy fashion" would be consistent with the hypothesis of a sacrifice scene. Πάρ<ε>ιμι twice (ll. 7 and 11) could be said by a character who comes and goes to bring the necessary items. A comparison can be made with the scene of sacrifice in Aristophanes' *Peace,* the dialogue between Trygeus and the slave, which offers some lexical coincidences (l. 1024 τιθέναι, 1026 τίθεσθαι, 1039 τίθεσο cfr. l. 9; 1033 τράπεζαν; 1042 πάρειμι).

57 I was unable to inspect the original, but on the basis of the high-resolution image kindly provided by the Beinecke Library, I propose here some possible improvements to the edition by Johnson. At l. 2] αὐτὸς (which Johnson proposes in the comment) seems quite secure to me. At the beginning of l. 3 before *omicron* there is a further trace, not registered by Johnson, the right part of a horizontal stroke, compatible with *tau* (possibly αὐ]τ̣ὸς again?). At l. 6 Johnson transcribes]π̣α̣̃σιν οὔτε θι̣ ̣[̣ ̣ ̣ ̣]; the reading is very uncertain and admittedly θν (οὐ τέθνη̣[κ]- or οὔτε θνη̣[τ]-?) is metrically difficult, but it fits better the traces than θι. At l. 9 Johnson transcribes] ̣ ̣πρας̣ and proposes λ]α̣μ̣πρὰς in the comment. At l. 11 the papyrus has θεοῖς not θεὰς as in Johnson's edition.
58 Van Straten 1995, 164ff.

As for the possible verbal joke with *trapeza*, a fragment of Aristophanes comes to mind. It is transmitted by Athenaeus (2.49b) in a discussion concerning tables and how many feet they have, with many citations from Hesiod (fr. 266 M.-W.),[59] Xenophon, and comic authors: Cratinus (fr. 334 K.-A. *trapezai triskeleis*), Antiphanes (fr. 280 K.-A.), Eubulus (fr. 119 K.-A.), Epicharmus (fr. 147 K.-A.), and Aristophanes (fr. 545 K.-A.), all playing on the verbal incongruences between the etymological meaning of *trapeza* (from *tetrapeza* 'four-footed') and the use of this word of tables with three legs (such as were normally used for rituals or also banquets), and vice versa for the word tripod, in a short-circuit of words and numerals. Epicharmus' joke is about a tripod that is actually a tetrapod, because it has four and not three legs as its name means;[60] in Aristophanes' fragment from the play *Telmesses* (399 BC?) someone asks, "bring us out a *trapeza* with three feet; I don't want it to have four!" and another responds, "And where am I going to get a three-footed table (*tripous trapeza*)?".[61] This leads me to wonder if the τραπεξα at l. 3 is really a "distracted use of ksi for zeta" which "suggests a writer who is still very much in training" (as Johnson takes it), or if it might not rather be a wordplay on the numeral six. But I fear that here I am venturing too far into speculation.

Even more uncertain than the others is *P.Lond.Lit.* 254,[62] a 3rd c. BC scrap with just five line beginnings. The ed. pr. (Milne) cautiously hypothesized Old Comedy and the fragment is included in the edition of comic fragments by Austin and Kassel-Austin (= *CGFP* 276; fr. adesp. 1058 K.-A.). All we have to go on is a mention of Heracles and a possible consistency with iambic meter, which is really not much to secure it as comedy, let alone Old Comedy (ὦ Ἡράκλειϲ at the start of an iambic trimeter is well attested both in Aristophanes and Menander).[63]

And that's all we have. The attribution to Old Comedy or not is often a matter of speculation. But, I suspect, that is also true of the attribution to later comedy too. Comic scraps may have often been attributed to New Comedy rather than Old Comedy on the basis of the assumption that New Comedy was more likely to have been

59 Symposial riddles on *trapezai* and *tripodes* are attested since Hesiod, *The wedding of Ceyx* fr. 266 Merkelbach-West = 204 Most (see Pellegrino 2015, 311–312).

60 (A) τί δὲ τόδ' ἐϲτί; (B) δηλαδὴ τρίπουϲ. (A) τί μὰν ἔχει πόδαϲ | τέτοραϲ; οὔκ ἐϲτιν τρίπουϲ, ἀλλ' <ἐϲτὶν> οἶμαι τετράπουϲ. | (B) ἔϲτιν δ' ὄνυμ' αὐτῶι τρίπουϲ, τέτοράϲ γα μὰν ἔχει πόδαϲ. | (A) εἰ δίπουϲ τοίνυν ποκ' ἦϲ, αἴνιγμάτ' Οἰ<δίπου> νοεῖϲ.

61 (A) τράπεζαν ἡμῖν <ἔκ>φερε | τρεῖϲ πόδαϲ ἔχουϲαν, τέτταραϲ δὲ μὴ 'χέτω. | (B) καὶ πόθεν ἐγὼ τρίπουν τράπεζαν λήψομαι;. On the joke see Novokatzko 2020.

62 We have no information on its origin (the papyrus was purchased in 1895).

63 E.g. Men. *Mis.* 302, *Sic.* 158.

performed, read, and excerpted in Ptolemaic times.[64] The fragments we have surveyed here seem a kind of exception to the rule. They are few and uncertain, but they serve as an important reminder to be cautious.

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64 A parallel for this kind of ‘frequency-dependent’ bias in attributions may be provided for example by the many papyrus fragments speculatively assigned to novel (cf. Morgan 1998, 3293–3339).

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Roberta Carlesimo

Menander in the Papyri of the Ptolemaic Period from the Arsinoites

Abstract: Most of Menander's papyri date to the Roman age, while only a few of them can be assigned to the Ptolemaic period, when it is attested anyway the circulation of a large number of comic *adespota*. In the following pages I intend to provide an overview of the Ptolemaic papyri found in the Arsinoite nome that have been assigned to Menander, including some dubious attributions and passages in anthologies, with the aim of providing a better reconstruction of the circulation of the poet's works during the first centuries after his death.

Keywords: Menander, New Comedy, Ptolemaic Papyri, Hellenistic Egypt, Arsinoite nome.

1 Introduction

Papyrus discoveries for Menander, and for New Comedy more in general, have been particularly plentiful.[1] Under the playwright's name, 105 papyri are recorded in MP^3 and 193 in LDAB and TM.[2] These numbers cover quite a wide variety of items for what concerns contents and typologies, including anthologies, *sillyboi*, exemplars

I would like to thank Lucio Del Corso, Francesca Maltomini and Felice Stama, with whom I discussed these pages, and Florent Jacques, who kindly gave me useful information on the items found by Pierre Jouguet in Fayum and currently stored at the Institut de Papyrologie de la Sorbonne.

1 The papyri examined in this paper are accompanied by the numbers assigned to them in Tables 1–3, which provide some essential information, as well as references to the main papyrological databases. For the text and numbering of the lines of Menander's comedies, I have followed the recent edition by Rudolf Kassel and Stephan Schröder in *PCG* VI.1; for the text and numbering of Menander's fragments of indirect tradition, and of the *fragmenta comica adespota*, I have followed the editions by Kassel and Colin Austin in *PCG*, respectively vols. VI.2 and VIII. Digital images of all the Sorbonne papyri discussed in the article are available online, through the website of the Institut de papyrologie de la Sorbonne, https://papyrologie.sorbonne-universite.fr.

2 Last query: March 2024. P.Lips. inv. 402, a page of a papyrus codex from the 4th c. AD currently being edited by Daniela Colomo, is not yet included in the databases.

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bearing *hypotheseis*[3] and lists of play titles, as well as numerous comic *adespota* attributed to Menander during the last century, albeit not always on the basis of probative arguments.

From a careful examination of these items, I have concluded that at least 64 papyri bear presumably *in extenso* copies of comedies which can certainly be attributed to Menander.[4] Most of them date from the Roman period. For the Ptolemaic era, only 4 papyri survive (see Table 5), while at least 12 fragments preserving New Comedy have been doubtfully assigned to our author (see Table 6).[5] First it should be noted that the items included in the latter number are very heterogeneous from a textual point of view, so much so that alongside fragments that can definitely be attributed to New Comedy, there are others whose attribution to the comic genre itself is doubted.[6]

This is also the case of numerous passages suspected to be by Menander and found in anthologies on papyrus since the very early Ptolemaic age (see Table 7).[7]

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3 As is well known, in the age of bookrolls, it was usual for dramatic *hypotheseis* to circulate in autonomous collections, separate from the related literary texts. On the dramatic *hypotheseis* on papyrus, see van Rossum-Steenbeek 1998 and Meccariello 2014.

4 For a first cataloguing of these items (with a methodological introduction on the criteria followed to identify the authorship of the texts), see Carlesimo 2019 (PhD diss., forthcoming).

5 The limited number of Menandrian papyri from the Hellenistic period should not come as a surprise. In general, the number of Ptolemaic literary papyri is rather meagre if compared with evidence from the Roman era. Nevertheless, there are some exceptions. Leaving aside Homer, who is obviously on a different scale, Euripides certainly deserves a mention: excluding anthologies and papyri bearing passages of uncertain attribution, at least 25 items bearing copies of this author's tragedies survive for the period comprised from the 3rd to the 1st c. BC (see Carrara 2009, 19–209, with bibliography). But if we look at Demosthenes for example, who would become one of the most popular authors in Roman Egypt, only 1 Ptolemaic papyrus survives, i.e., *P.Mil.Vogl.* I 12 (TM 59511, MP^3 282), whose dating is also debated; for the dating to the 1st c. BC, see Sardone 2021, 158, to whom I also refer for the other dating hypotheses; more generally, for the chronological distribution of the Demosthenes papyri, see Sardone 2021, 24–29, with bibliography.

6 Such is the case of *P.Hib.* II 180 **[*7]**, assigned to Menander by the *ed. pr.* because of the possible correspondence of l. 20 to *PCG* VI.2, 705 (here cited as fr. 482 K./Th.), but whose style and metre seemed to Arnott 1970, 63 "more akin to tragedy than to comedy". Assigned to Menander's *Hydria* by Gaiser 1977, the fragment is edited among the *tragica adespota* in *TrGF* II 631. It does not appear in *PCG* VIII (*Adespota*).

7 In this regard, suffice it to think of the first extract of *P.Giss.Lit.* 4.1 **[A5]** (= *PCG* VIII 1051), which also figures among the *adespota tragica* in *TrGF* (II 727); see below.

Tab. 5: Copies of Menander's comedies.[8]

Nº	Papyrus	References	Provenance	Content	Century
[1]	Inv.Sorb. 72 + 2272 + 2273	TM 61589 MP³ 1308.1	Ghôran	*Sik*. 1–423, with colophon	3rd BC
[2]	*P.Oslo* III 168	TM 61588 MP³ 1300.2	Hermopolis	*Dysk*. 766–773	3rd BC
[3]	*BKT* V.2, pp. 115–122, no. XIXB	TM 61577 MP³ 1297.4	unknown	*Kith*. (?) 1–101	2nd/1st BC
[4]	*BKT* IX 6	TM 61575 MP³ 1302.3	Arsinoites (?)	*Georg*. 68–74	1st BC

Tab. 6: Papyri attributed to Menander.

Nº	Papyrus	References	Provenance	Content	Century
[*1]	Inv.Sorb. 72 ("groupe B")	TM 61591 MP³ 1657	Ghôran	*PCG* VIII 1017 (recto)	3rd BC
[*2]	*MPER* N.S. III 22	TM 65766 MP³ 1668	unknown	*PCG* VIII 1081	3rd BC
[*3]	P.Berol. inv. 11771	TM 59101 MP³ 1641	unknown	*PCG* VIII 1032	3rd BC
[*4]	*P.Grenf.* II 8(b)	TM 65750 MP³ 1661	Ankyropolis (?)	*PCG* VIII 1004	3rd BC
[*5]	*P.Hamb*. II 120	TM 61582 MP³ 1643	unknown	*PCG* VIII 1089	3rd BC
[*6]	*P.Hib*. I 6	TM 65728 MP³ 1666	Ankyropolis	*PCG* VIII 1014	3rd BC
[*7]	*P.Hib*. II 180	TM 61584 MP³ 1320.5	Ankyropolis	*CGFP* *247	3rd BC

8 The papyri are arranged in chronological order, then alphabetically by edition and progressively by number. I have considered all the papyri assigned with certainty (Table 1) or doubtfully (Table 2) to Menander, as well as anthologies with passages by Menander or attributed to him (Table 3). I have compiled the lists starting from queries on the main papyrological databases (Trismegistos and MP³; last query February 2024) and an analysis of the papyri in *PCG* VI.1 (*Menander*) and VIII (*Adespota*). The research is restricted to those specimens datable up to the 1st c. BC; therefore, papyri from the 1st c. BC to the 1st c. AD are not included, i.e., the items of certain attribution to Menander *P.Oxy.* XXXVIII 2825 (TM 61578, MP³ 1306.3) and *P.Oxy.* XLIX 3433 (TM 61579, MP³ 1320.2), and the items of doubtful attribution *PSI* XV 1480 (TM 61576, MP³ 1309.1) and *P.Oxy.* XXXVIII 2826 (TM 61482, MP³ 1320.1), the latter being dated by the *ed. pr.* to the 1st/2nd c. AD, but probably dating from earlier.

N°	Papyrus	References	Provenance	Content	Century
[*8]	*P.Hib.* II 181	TM 61585 MP³ 1645	Ankyropolis	*PCG* VIII 1092	3rd BC
[*9]	*P.Köln* V 203 + *P.Köln* VI 243 + P.Mich. inv. 6950	TM 61583 MP³ 1645.01	unknown	*PCG* VIII 1147	3rd BC
[*10]	*P.Petr.* I 4 (1)	TM 61586 MP³ 1662	Gurob	*PCG* VIII 1093B	3rd BC
[*11]	*P.Ryl.* I 16(a) + *P.Heid.* I 184 + *P.Hib.* I 5	TM 61587 MP³ 1660	Ankyropolis	*PCG* VIII 1093A	3rd BC
[*12]	*P.Lund* I 4 + P.Carlsb. inv. 50[9]	TM 61480 + 61590 MP³ 1655 + 1306.2	Tebtunis (?)	*PCG* VIII 1066 + 1124	3rd/2nd BC

Tab. 7: Menander's passages in anthologies.

N°	Papyrus	References	Provenance	Passages	Century
[A1]	P.Cair. JE inv. 65445	TM 59942 MP³ 2642	Arsinoites (?)	*PCG* VIII 1072, 1073	3rd BC
[A2]	*BKT* V.2, pp. 123–128, no. XXA	TM 62570 MP³ 1568	unknown	*PCG* VIII 1019, 1020	2nd BC
[A3]	*P.Didot*, pp. 2–34	TM 59936 MP³ 31 + 401 + 1319 + 1320 + 1435	Memphis (Serapeum)	*PCG* VIII 1000, 1001	2nd BC
[A4]	*P.Freib.* I 1	TM 61580 MP³ 1577	unknown	*PCG* VIII 1027	2nd/1st BC
[A5]	*P.Giss.Lit.* 4.1	TM 61581 MP³ 1580 + 1984 (verso)	Arsinoites	*PCG* VI.2, *Nomoth.* 253, *PCG* VIII 1051 and *CGFP* 293c	2nd/1st BC

In the following pages I intend to provide an overview of the Ptolemaic papyri from the Arsinoites by or assigned to Menander, in an attempt to reconstruct the characteristics of the circulation of the author in the *nomos* in the Ptolemaic age.

9 On joining the two fragments, see below; see also Carlesimo 2024.

Considering the peculiar prominence of the Arsinoites in Egypt and the overall incidence of findings in this district dating from the Ptolemaic period, the papyri found there may provide an illustrative sample of the characteristics and trends of the circulation of the author's comedies in this period.

On the other hand, an in-depth examination of the *adespota* collected in Table 6, focused particularly on the (more or less definitive) reasons for their attribution to the author, may help clarify the real role played by Menander in the centuries immediately following his death in the broader panorama of New Comedy and contextually provide some elements concerning the use of New Comedy in Hellenistic Egypt more in general. In this respect, I can here anticipate that this would seem to have been much more varied and diversified than we have often been willing to believe in the past.

Finally, a review of the comic passages by or suspected to be by Menander included in the two anthologies from the *nomos*, namely P.Cairo JE inv. 65445 **[A1]** and *P.Giss.Lit.* 4.1 **[A5]**, may afford further elements on the circulation of Menander and New Comedy in Ptolemaic Fayum.

2 Menander in the Ptolemaic Papyri from the Arsinoites

There are only two Hellenistic papyri from the Arsinoites that can be attributed to Menander with certainty: Inv.Sorb. 72 + 2272 + 2273 **[1]** and *BKT* IX 6 **[4]**.

2.1 Inv.Sorb. 72 + 2272 + 2273: A Copy of Menander's *Sikyonioi*

Until 1901, only nine fragments of Menander's *Sikyonioi* were known, thanks to the indirect tradition (frr. 371–379 K./Th.). This situation changed radically following an excavation campaign along the southwestern border of the Fayum Oasis, headed by Pierre Jouguet for the Ministère de l'Instruction publique and the École française d'Athènes, which started between January and March of that year. A few kilometres west of Médinet-Mâ'di (ancient Narmouthis), Jouguet found a Ptolemaic-age village, known only by the indigenous name of Médinet-Ghôran. Near there was a cemetery, desecrated by clandestine excavations, but that still contained hundreds of mummies covered with *cartonnages*.[10] Several literary papyri emerged from the disassembly of these *cartonnages*, including Inv.Sorb. 72 (“groupe A”).[11] Edited by Jouguet with the help of Friedrich W. Blass and Ulrich Wilcken in 1906, it contained seven fragments from a play whose author and title remained unknown. Jouguet identified a “recognition scene” in fr. 1, hence he doubtfully suggested attributing the discovered fragments to Menander’s *Hypobolimaios*.[12] Blass did not agree with this hypothesis, since in his opinion the scant surviving remains were not in line with the simplicity proper of Menander’s poetry and would have been rather more suited to an author of Middle Comedy.[13] The debate continued until 1962, when the surviving text was definitively recognised as part of Menander’s *Sikyonioi*.[14] Alain Blanchard and André Bataille went on to dismantle the *cartonnages* found in Ghôran and taken to the Institut de Papyrologie de la Sorbonne; in mummies 24 and 202 they recovered ten fragments that they attributed to the same bookroll as Inv.Sorb. 72 (“groupe A”), one of which containing the colophon of the play.[15]

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10 According to the reports published so far, during the excavation campaigns headed by Jouguet at the site, the scholar brought *cartonnages* from 363 mummies from Médinet-Ghôran to France. On the excavations at Médinet-Ghôran, see Jouguet 1901 and 1902; on Jouguet’s archaeological activity at that site and in Magdola, see also Jacques 2022; for the life and works of Jouguet more in general, see Husson 2007.

11 Alongside the papyrus under examination here and Inv.Sorb. 72 (“groupe B”) **[*1]**, a bookroll bearing a comedy of uncertain authorship on the front and two comic prologues on the back (see below), the *cartonnages* found in Ghôran have given us: 4 Homeric papyri (*P.Sorb*. I 4 [TM 61239; MP³ 895.2]; Inv.Sorb. 2245 [TM 61238, MP³ 1081]; Inv.Sorb. 2302 [TM 61240, MP³ 786.1]; and Inv.Sorb. 2303 [TM 61117, MP³ 948.2]), copies of Euripides’ *Erechteus* (Inv. Sorb. 2328 [TM 59930, MP³ 437.2]) and *Hippolytus* (Inv.Sorb. 2252 [TM 59917, MP³ 393]) and, according to the indication provided by Blanchard/Bataille 1964, 106, an as yet unpublished fragment preserving poetry (Inv.Sorb. s.n. [MP³ 1984.7]). For these papyri, see most recently Del Corso 2023, 330–344, with bibliography.

12 Jouguet 1906, 116–123.

13 *Ap.* Jouguet 1906, 123 n. 3.

14 After Blass, Körte 1913, 229–230, no. 438 and Demiańczuk 1912, 99–102 denied Menandrian authorship of the text; according to Demiańczuk 1912, 102 “*id solum probabile esse videtur non Menandrum, sed aliquem eius imitatorem hanc fabulam composuisse*”. Schröder 1915, 20–29, no. 3 advocated a generic attribution of the fragments to New Comedy, while Bodin/Mazon 1908, 270, Capovilla 1919, 193–205 and Webster 1953, 187–189 supported an attribution to Menander. The fragments figure among the *adespota* in Page 1950², 306–313, no. 66 and Edmonds 1961, III A, 320–331, no. 103D.

15 After indicating the title of the play and the number of lines copied, the second scribe invited readers not to laugh at his writing: μὴ καταγελᾶτε τῆς γραφῆς [/_τοῦ κα[τ]ạγελῶντος τὸ cκέλọ[c / [ὡc ἡδέ]ωç ἀνέπαυcα τοὺc τρε[ῖc δακτύλουc (as indicated above, for the text I follow *PCG* VI.1). For a possible interpretation of this colophon, which is quite exceptional for the Ptolemaic period, see Parassoglou 1979, 17–18 with nn. 38 and 39. For the few other examples of subscriptions before late antiquity, such as those preserved in *P.Lond.Lit.* 11 (TM 60829, MP³ 697) and *P.Mil.Vogl.* I 19

In 1964, the two scholars provided a first complete edition of the text.[16] The Sorbonne Papyrus contains 423 lines of the *Sikyonioi*; around 100 are fully legible, while the others are compromised by gaps of varying width. The bookroll could be a palimpsest;[17] the writing runs on the recto, along the fibres; the verso is blank. There are stichometric indications and the aforementioned colophon with a tally of the copied lines. The *volumen* appears to be a modest quality product: the writing is clearly legible, but unpretentious and quite informal; the number of lines per column is not constant and the alignment of the columns is irregular both at the bottom and the top; the size of the *kollemata* varies in width; there are several spelling mistakes and, despite the large number of corrections, some major errors remain.[18]

It is worth noting that Lucio Del Corso recently suggested identifying two scribes in the Ghôran fragments of Menander's *Sikyonioi*: as he sees it, the first, more skilled scribe wrote frr. III and IV (inv. 2273a and b; Figs. 45 and 46), which

(TM 59147, MP³ 1197), see Del Corso 2017, 3–4 and nn. 13–15 and Del Corso 2022a, 158–159, with further bibliography. It is worth noting that the colophon contains the first attestation of the title of the play in the plural form, against the masculine singular handed down by the indirect tradition (excepting frr. 2 and 6, where the title appears respectively in the abbreviated form and in the feminine singular (?), Cικυωνίαι (sic); see Favi 2019, 335). The plural was originally considered a scribe's error, until the discovery in Ephesus of a 2nd c. AD fresco showing a scene from the play accompanied by the inscription CIKYΩNIOI (see Webster 1995³, 472, 6DP 1; Strocka 1977, 48, 54–55) and the identification in P.Lond. inv. 2562 (TM 64312, MP³ 2759) of numerous Menandrian titles, including precisely that of the *Sikyonioi*, there in the corrupted form Cικυωλιοι (tetr. 510; see *PCG* VI.2, Test. 42, 25). For a detailed discussion of this issue, see Belardinelli 1994, 56–59 and Blanchard 2009, XXIV–XXXIII. Because of the agreement between the older pieces of evidence, the title appears in the plural form in some of the more recent editions of the play (see Belardinelli 1994 and Blanchard 2009), but not in Arnott 2000 (*Sikyonioi* or *Sikyonios*) or in *PCG* VI.1 (Cικυώνιος vel Cικυώνιοι). The quite recent discovery of a 2nd/3rd c. AD mosaic in Kastelli Kissamos, which depicts a scene from the play with an indication of the title in the singular form, should also be pointed out (see Markoulaki 2016, 282–285). This testament to the longevity of the two variants (singular and plural) is not surprising, in view of the numerous "double titles" (many of which are singular and plural forms of the same word) in the author's tradition; see Blanchard 2014, 243–247. In the following pages, I will adopt the plural form.

16 Blanchard/Bataille 1964.

17 In the first edition of the text, Blanchard/Bataille 1964, 107 had no doubts that the roll was a palimpsest; this hypothesis has since been taken back by Blanchard 2009, CXVI–CXVII, followed by Schmidt 2007, 979 and Schmidt 2009, 93. Nevertheless, based on an inspection of the papyrus, Del Corso 2023, 339–340 affirms the presence of faint traces of letters which, according to the scholar, could hardly be considered offsets: thus, "the possibility that they might come from an underlying text should seriously be taken into account" (p. 340).

18 For a more in-depth description of the material and palaeographical characteristics of the bookroll, see Blanchard 2009, CX–CXXII.

preserve lines from the first act in a more careful script; the second copied the remaining fragments in a more disorderly handwriting.[19] The second scribe remedies and corrects the text on his own in several points, while the first does not seem to have revised the pericopes that he had copied. The palaeographical differences between the fragments, that Del Corso assigns to the two scribes, are quite evident at a glance. It should be further noted that the two groups of fragments also present significant dissimilarities in the *mise en page*: due to the difference in the dimension of the letters, it is possible to reconstruct a noticeably narrower width for the columns preserved in frr. III and IV (ca. 7.5 cm versus min. 10 cm in the other fragments); the line spacing is narrower as well.[20]

Fig. 45: Inv.Sorb. 2272a + 72 III (second hand). © Sorbonne Université — Institut de Papyrologie, Inv.Sorb. 2272b.

19 Del Corso 2023, 333–335.

20 Due to the incompleteness of the columns preserved in frr. III and IV, it is impossible to compare the height and the number of lines per column in the two groups of fragments.

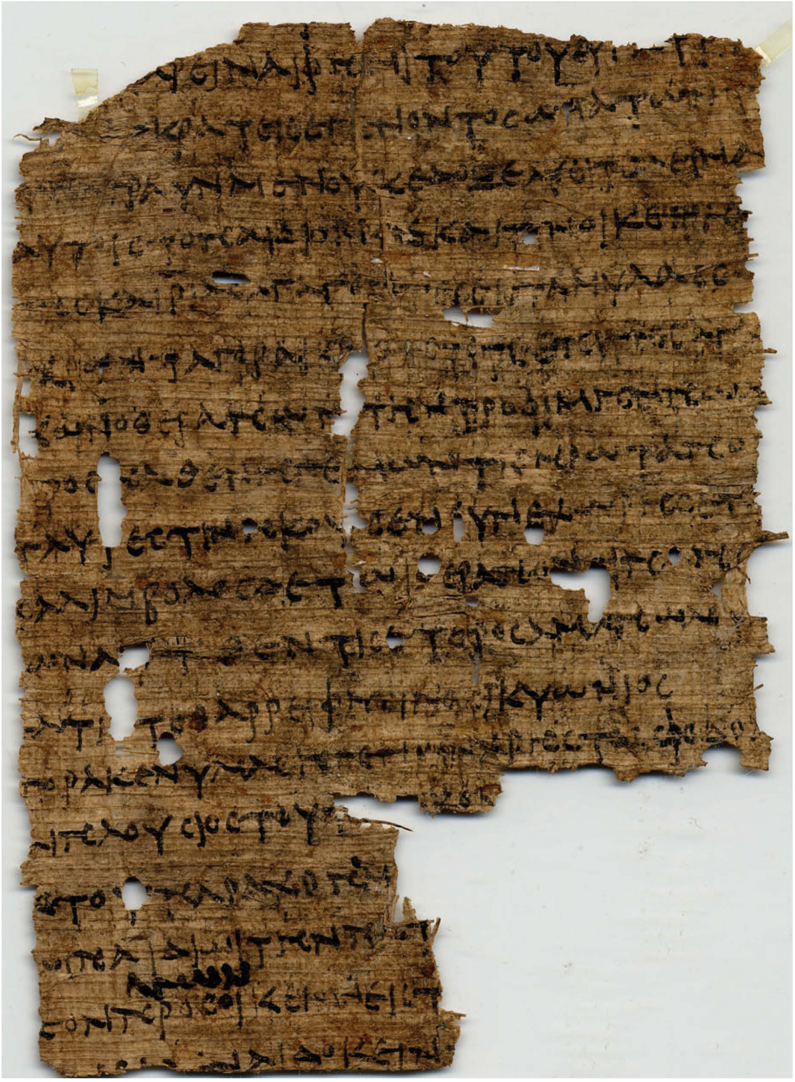

Fig. 46: Inv.Sorb. 2273a (first hand). © Sorbonne Université — Institut de Papyrologie.

If these considerations are correct, one has to consider the theoretical possibility that the Ghôran fragments belong to two different copies of the *Sikyonioi*, which would preserve different pericopes of the same comedy;[21] nonetheless, this hypothesis would imply the presence of two exemplars of Menander's *Sikyonioi* in Ghôran in the 3rd c. BC, which seems frankly unlikely.

Therefore, the most plausible hypothesis is that all the fragments belong to the same copy of Menander's *Sikyonioi* and that this copy was made by two different scribes, using different calami and with significant variations in the layout, features which may have been tolerable in a low-quality written copy such as the one under consideration here.

In this respect, it is finally worth noting the presence of an interlinear note, written in fr. III l. 18 (= l. 18) using a thicker pen compatible with the one used by the second hand, but showing some differences in the forms of the letters compared to those written by the second scribe; some *dicola* are moreover not placed *in scribendo*.[22] It is therefore not possible to exclude that a different, third scribe (that of a reader?) is responsible for these insertions and corrections, as has been suspected. Nevertheless, there is no key evidence pointing in this direction.

As Del Corso aptly noted, the identification of two (or more) hands involved in copying and correcting the Ghôran Menander appears of interest both in itself — considering that collaboration among scribes writing the same manuscript, widely documented in the Byzantine era, was rather a sporadic phenomenon in ancient times (at least until the advent of the codex)[23] — and in relation to the other bookrolls found in Ghôran.

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21 That frr. III and IV belong to Menander's *Sikyonioi* is assured by the mention of Stratophanes in fr. III 13–15 (= *Sik.* 13–15) ὁ Cικυώνιοϲ | […] ἡγεμὼν χρηϲτὸϲ ϲφόδρα | κ]α̣ὶ πλούϲιοϲ (on the absence of proper names in Menander's prologues, see Questa 1982, 21–25, Raffaelli 1982, 76–77 n. 21 and Raffaelli 2009, 99–100 n. 33) as well as by other correspondences with the comedy plot; see in particular fr. III 1–8 (= *Sik.* 1–8) where there is clearly a reference to the kidnapping of Philumena and her servant Dromon, mentioned also later in ll. 354–358.

22 See Blanchard/Bataille 1964, 121 and Bingen 1965, 112 and n. 2.

23 According to Del Corso 2023, 334–335, the detected collaboration between two scribes in writing this copy is a further indication of its informal nature, as already emphasised by the scholar on the basis of the palaeographical features. In Del Corso's opinion, the extraordinary subscription, with the scribe's unusual appeal not to mock his handwriting, should also be interpreted in this sense: similar subscriptions were very rare in Hellenistic and Roman books (see n. 15) and, where present, they would mostly seem to derive from the need to justify some editorial particularities, such as the collaboration of more than one scribe in the copy under examination, that is a very uncommon phenomenon in Ptolemaic copies (especially in professionally written ones). On the few traces of collaboration between scribes in writing Graeco-Roman bookrolls, see Del Corso 2008, Del Corso 2010, Del Corso 2018, Del Mastro 2010 and Del Mastro 2011, 52–55; on the later centuries, see Canart 1998 and Canart 2007, Cavallo 2001, 606–609, 616–622 and Cavallo 2004, Bianconi 2003 and Orsini 2005.

Indeed, the scholar recently made some interesting considerations on some of the literary bookrolls found in the Ghôran *cartonnages*, namely Inv.Sorb. 72 + 2272 + 2273 **[1]**, Inv.Sorb. 2328[24] and Inv.Sorb. 2245,[25] the last two containing respectively Euripides' *Erechtheus* and Homer's *Odyssey* IX and X. Del Corso observes that, despite some differences in the paratextual aspects, these items show strong material, bibliological and palaeographical affinities,[26] namely the handwriting "swinging between formality and informality", the height of the columns and the number of lines per column, the size of the letters, and the quality of the bookrolls used, palimpsests in at least two cases.[27]

All the fragments considered by Del Corso share minor orthographical errors and display unsystematic corrections, which are traces of philological interest in the transcribed texts.[28]

As stated above, more than one scribe is probably involved in writing Inv.Sorb. 72 + 2272 + 2273 **[1]**; the same goes for Inv.Sorb. 2245. In the papyrus under examination here, what we observe seems to have been the successive activity of (at least) two scribes, the first of whom probably copied the beginning of the comedy (we are not able to know how many lines, but presumably less than half of the play) and the second the remaining portion of the text, using a thicker calamus and in a more careless script.[29] The text of Inv.Sorb. 2245 was instead revised by the principal scribe, who inserted variants and corrections on the basis of a second antigraph, and by a further hand on the basis of yet another different copy.[30]

Owing to the material, palaeographical and textual characteristics of these items, alongside the consistency among the locations where they were found,[31] Del

24 TM 59930, MP³ 437.2.

25 TM 61238, MP³ 1081.

26 See Del Corso 2017, 4–6 and Del Corso 2023, 333–344.

27 There are doubts as to the case of Inv.Sorb. 72 + 2272 + 2273 **[1]**; see n. 17.

28 For an in-depth discussion of this aspect, see Del Corso 2023, 340–341.

29 I have already mentioned the possible presence of a third hand responsible for an interlinear correction in fr. III l. 18 and for the *dicola* not placed *in scribendo* (see above, 236).

30 See Maltomini/Pernigotti 1999, 301 with n. 6.

31 The evidence in this regard is limited: the inventory numbers of the mummies recovered in Ghôran are only recorded in the most recent editions. Nevertheless, on the basis of the data in our possession, usefully summarised by Del Corso 2023, 332–333, the literary texts would seem to come from a small number of mummies. Therefore, one might agree with the hypothesis that coherent groups of documents (the Tesenouphis letters) and literary texts (bookrolls containing dramas), circulating in the same social milieu, at some point would have been collectively discarded, stored in the same place and finally reused together to produce the *cartonnages* in which they were found (see Del Corso 2023, 350). It is worth noting that similar considerations were proposed by Falivene

Corso has suggested the possibility that they belong to and circulated within the same social milieu, namely "the Greek elite established in Fayum in the wake of the triumphant colonization process initiated by Ptolemy II: clerks, officials, former soldiers and small landowners".[32] These people, accustomed to reading and writing in their daily and professional activities, would have been directly responsible for the copies of these inelegant bookrolls.

Moreover, according to the scholar, the striking palaeographical and bibliological similarities of the considered items, alongside the plurality of the hands involved in copying and correcting each of them, and sometimes the nature of the corrections (here Del Corso refers in particular to the *variae lectiones* in the aforementioned Inv.Sorb. 2245, very probably resulting from a process of collation from different antigraphs) place the making and reading of the rolls in a 'collective' framework.[33]

In mummy 24, which contained most of the Menandrian fragments, there were documents dated to 222–217 BC. On these grounds and according to the palaeographical features, Blanchard and Bataille convincingly dated the papyrus to the last third of the 3rd c. BC. This hypothesis was later generally accepted.[34] The papyrus was reused not long after for the *cartonnages* in which it was found.[35] According to Blanchard, the early reuse of the bookroll is due to the fact that it was worn out, since it is unlikely that otherwise a comedy written by Menander, "un des symboles de la culture grecque, surtout en Égypte",[36] had lost its interest so quickly. In actual fact, as mentioned above and as we will see more in detail, the circulation of Menander's comedies in the Ptolemaic period still appears quite limited. Hence, it cannot be ruled out that this bookroll may have had an ephemeral fate, similar to that of other literary papyri recovered in Ghôran, as will be discussed later.

1997 for the papyri from the *cartonnages* of El-Hibeh (see esp. 279–280). On this aspect, see also Salmenkivi 2020, esp. 96–99.

32 See Del Corso 2023, 350.

33 See Del Corso 2023, 351.

34 See Blanchard/Bataille 1964, 105–107. In this regard, Del Corso 2017, 2 n. 5 proposed a convincing palaeographical comparison with *P.Enteux.* 59 (TM 3334), a petition found in Magdola written in 222 BC.

35 According to Blanchard 2009, CXII, "les cartonnages ont été fabriqués au plus tôt quand ces vieux papiers ont été mis au rebut, c'est-à-dire quand le fonctionnaire qui les gardait est mort". Nevertheless, on the controversial issue of document storage times in the ancient era, see Lama 1991, 87–92, with bibliography.

36 Blanchard 2009, CXII–CXIII.

2.2 *BKT* IX 6: A Fragment of Menander's *Georgos*

BKT IX 6 **[4]** (Fig. 47) was bought on the antiquarian market; thus, its provenance is not certain. Nonetheless, in the same purchase lot as *BKT* IX 6 **[4]**, there were Roman documents, all coming, where verifiable, from Fayum and showing similar material conditions to *BKT* IX 6 **[4]** at the time of the *ed. pr.* For these reasons, Herwig Maehler supposed that Menander's fragment came from this area as well, as was later generally accepted.[37]

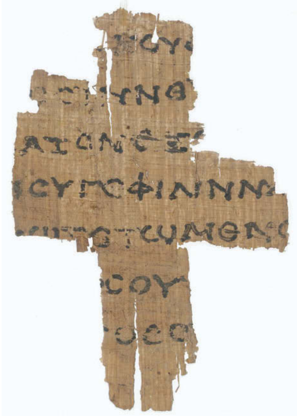

Fig. 47: *BKT* IX 6: Menander, *Georgos*.
© Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung — Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Scan: Berliner Papyrusdatenbank, P 21106.

The small fragment (ca. 3.6 × 5.3 cm) can be palaeographically dated to the 1st c. BC.[38] On the recto, along the fibres, it preserves a few letters of 7 lines from Menander's *Georgos* (= ll. 68–74), already known from P.Gen. inv. 155.[39] Despite its small size, *BKT* IX 6 **[4]** confirmed some supplements previously proposed on the basis of P.Gen. inv. 155; the agreement of *BKT* IX 6 **[4]** (l. 7] τ̣οcου̣[) and P.Gen. inv. 155 (l. 31

37 Maehler 1967, 77: "Das Bruchstück lag zusammen mit Urkunden, überwiegend aus römischer Zeit, die, soweit feststellbar, ausnahmslos aus dem Fayûm stammen; allerdings wurden sie aus dem Handel erworben, so daß sich die Herkunft nicht immer sicher ermitteln läßt; doch da das Menanderfragment ebenso wie die Urkunden noch in unrestauriertem Zustand war, ist gleiche Provenienz hier wahrscheinlich."

38 In this regard, Maehler 1967, 77 suggested good palaeographical comparisons with *SB* VI 9255 + *P.Ryl.* IV 586 (TM 5736; loan contract, 99 BC) and with another papyrus by Menander, *BKT* V.2, pp. 115–122, no. XIXB **[3]**, the latter probably dating from a little bit earlier (see Cavallo 1991, 20 and Cavallo 2008, 47–49).

39 TM 61569, MP^3 1302.2.

]ṭοcουτουc κτλ.) concerning *Georg.* 74 also made it possible to reject several conjectures that had previously been put forward for this line.[40]

3 Comic Papyri from the Arsinoites Dubiously Attributed to Menander

I will reserve the following pages for some considerations on Inv.Sorb. 72 ("groupe B") **[*1]**, *P.Petr.* I 4 (1) **[*10]** and *P.Lund* I 4 + P.Carlsb. inv. 50 **[*12]**, which preserve copies of anonymous comedies assigned to Menander and coming from the Arsinoites (see Table 6). As we shall see, for these papyri, the attribution to Menander rests more on the leading role of the author among the New Comedy dramatists acknowledged by modern scholars than on really probative textual and dramaturgical arguments.

3.1 Inv.Sorb. 72 ("groupe B"): Remains of a Comedy of Uncertain Authorship and Two Other Comic Texts

Inv.Sorb. 72 **[*1]** ("groupe B") comes from the aforementioned *cartonnages* found in Ghôran — in particular from mummy 9 — and was first published by Jouguet in 1906.[41] Due to some similarities with the Alexandrian chancery script, the papyrus has been convincingly dated to the middle or second half of the 3rd c. BC.[42] On the recto it preserves 109 comic lines assigned to Menander by the *ed. pr.*, with the agreement of Blass, who specifically suggested Menander's *Apistos*.[43]

That Menander was the author of the comedy preserved in Inv.Sorb. 72 ("groupe B") **[*1]** has been argued, albeit with some hesitation, by several scholars.[44] Giovanni Capovilla, following a suggestion from Pierre Waltz, proposed identifying the play as Menander's *Dis Exapaton*, a hypothesis later proved to be wrong.[45]

40 See, e.g., Sudhaus 1914,]τοιούτουc; for a more detailed discussion of the contribution of *BKT* IX 6 **[4]** to the reconstruction of the text of the comedy, see Maehler 1967, 77–78.
41 Jouguet 1906, 123–149.
42 For a recent palaeographical re-examination of the papyrus, see Del Corso 2023, 335–338.
43 *Ap.* Jouguet 1906, 146–147.
44 Among others, see Capovilla 1919, 205–229, Jacques 1968, 221, and Sandbach 1990^2, 331–335.
45 See respectively Waltz 1911, 6 n. 5 and Capovilla 1919, 205–229, esp. 207–214. Some similarities between Menander's *Dis Exapaton* and the passage in question here have also been usefully pointed out by Gomme/Sandbach 1973, 730–731.

Instead, Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff denied Menandrean authorship and cautiously suggested Macon as the author at least of the prologues.[46] Later, for stylistic and metrical reasons Alfred Körte supported the view that the surviving text was more suitable for some anonymous epigone of Menander,[47] whereas Webster suggested an attribution to Apollodorus, known to be strongly influenced by Menander.[48]

More recently, Arnott considered the lines preserved in the fragment suitable for "some inferior comic dramatist of Menander's time or the succeeding generation".[49] Finally, in Nesselrath's opinion, the "almost baroque" style of the text, in contrast with Menander's usual elegance and simplicity, instead played in favour of one of the author's rivals.[50]

The fragment is edited among the *adespota novae comoediae* in *CGFP* as fr. 257 and in *PCG* VIII as fr. 1017.

It is worth pointing out that the verso of Inv.Sorb. 72 ("groupe B") **[*1]** (Fig. 48) was reused by two different hands (TM 65785, MP^3 1657), contemporary with (or not much later than) the one that copied the recto.[51] After a large blank space, the second scribe wrote 7 pairs of anacyclic iambic trimetres, in which Eros, the young son of Aphrodite, speaks of an event that happened a long time ago in Ionia: a rich man fell in love with a Trezenian maiden who had been put up for sale, bought and married her and lived as a Trezenian with her. Immediately on the right, a third hand copied a column of text that is broken at the bottom. Around 16 lines survive: Aphrodite speaks for herself and starting on l. 13 introduces the plot of a play κατ' ἀλφάβητον, in which each line begins with a letter of the alphabet, starting from *alpha*.

These passages are edited among the *argumenta comica* in *CGFP* as frr. 339*a*, *b* and in *PCG* VIII as frr. 52, 53; nevertheless, their literary genre is quite ambiguous: they show some stylistic features of *hypotheseis* but seem more likely to be prologues extracted from New Comedy plays or independently written as *divertissements*.[52] It is likewise impossible to establish whether they belong to some kind of comic anthology or whether they were copied in isolation, perhaps due to their peculiar literary typology.

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46 Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1908, 35.

47 Körte 1908, esp. 54–57. Among others, Schröder 1915, 29–38, no. 4 and Page 1950^2, 296–306, no. 65 claimed that Menander could not be the author of this text.

48 Webster 1970^2, 240–242.

49 Arnott 2000, 418–419.

50 Nesselrath 2011, 127–134.

51 On this, see, most recently, Del Corso 2023, 337–338.

52 In this regard, see Perrone 2009, 138. According to Bartol 2013, the first passage is "an example of a riddle which was intended for use in a school context" (p. 317).

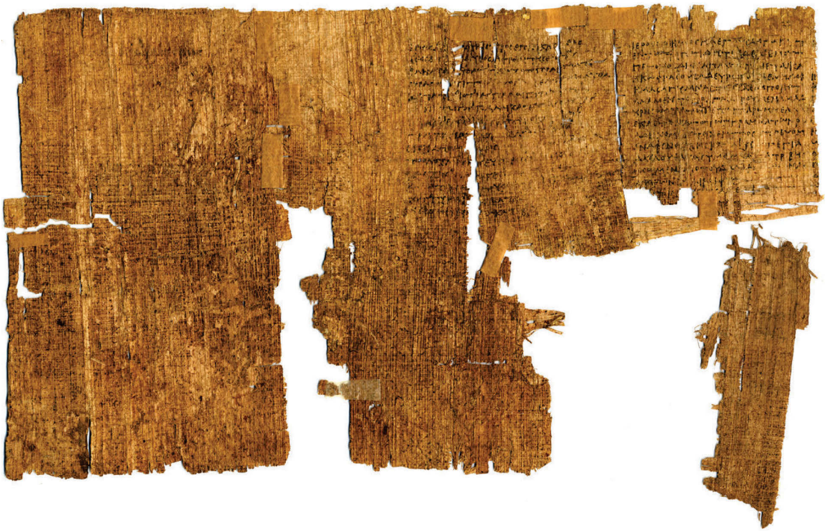

Fig. 48: Inv.Sorb. 72 (“groupe B”) verso: *PCG* VIII 52 and 53. © Sorbonne Université — Institut de Papyrologie.

With regard to the content of the verso, the material features of the bookroll deserve some consideration. It has been conveniently observed that the lines on the recto seem to come from a rather advanced point in the comedy.[53] I have moreover said that the two comic texts on the verso are preceded by a wide blank space and that the hands that copied these texts are approximately contemporary to each other and to the hand that copied the text on the recto.

Based on these data, it could be hypothesised that, either because the papyrus had been seriously damaged shortly after it was written on the recto, or because of a loss of interest in the comedy on the recto, the copy of the comedy quickly fell out of use. Thus, a piece of the original bookroll was cut off shortly after the comedy was written on the recto and reused to copy two or more ‘prologues’ on the verso. In that case, the blank space that precedes the two ‘prologues’ would be an *agraphon* (presumably not much wider than the surviving space), put at the beginning of a new literary copy; if part of an anthology, the ‘prologues’ would have been at the very start of this.

Nonetheless, it cannot be excluded that the texts on the back were transcribed at a point when the original roll was still intact and the text on the recto still in use.

53 See Gomme/Sandbach 1973, 731–732.

In this case, what we see before the two 'prologues' on the back would have not been an initial *agraphon*, but part of an empty space as large as the entire length of the original bookroll, possibly also occupied by other texts; similarly, there would have been a wide blank portion of papyrus on the right.[54]

In neither of these cases does the history of the texts transcribed in this remarkable bookroll change. Not unlike what I observed earlier regarding Inv.Sorb. 72 + 2272 + 2273 **[1]**, preserving Menander's *Sikyonioi*, both the texts on the front and on the back of Inv.Sorb. 72 ("groupe B") **[*1]** seem to have fallen into disuse shortly after they were written: in mummy 9, papyri were found dating from the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, or palaeographically datable to the same period as the literary texts here discussed.[55]

It is finally worth noting that Inv.Sorb. 72 ("groupe B") **[*1]** is in line with the other papyri from Ghôran considered by Del Corso: the handwriting is clear but not elegant; no particular care is taken over the general appearance of the papyrus; moreover, three different hands are involved in writing the texts. Despite some idiosyncratic characteristics, these hands share the same graphical features; here, however, each of the three scribes dealt with a different text. In this regard, it is worth noting that the two comic passages on the verso could have been copied precisely because of their literary form: as mentioned above, the first is written in anacyclic verse and the second in alphabetically ordered iambic trimetres.[56]

Therefore if, in line with the acceptable hypothesis suggested by Del Corso and extensively presented above, we consider the literary bookrolls from Ghôran as belonging to some sort of homogeneous cultural context, we can immediately observe (and we will have the opportunity to discuss this more fully later) the circulation in this milieu of bookrolls containing works by writers destined to become cult authors in Egypt in the following centuries, that is, Homer, Euripides and Menander, as well as comedies by authors today considered "minors", and text typologies (the

54 An analogous situation has been supposed for the as yet unpublished mythographical text on the back of *P.Mil.Vogl.* VIII 309, the famous bookroll whose verso preserves epigrams by Posidippus; for the recto see TM 62665, MP^3 1435.01, for the verso see TM 67938, MP^3 2462.01. According to the preliminary indications provided by Guido Bastianini and Claudio Gallazzi (see *P.Mil.Vogl.* VIII, 13), the mythographical text on the back occupied four columns (for a total length of ca. 72.5 cm), the first of which started at 54 cm from the left margin of the *protokollon*, whereas the last ended 26 cm from the right edge of the bookroll.

55 See Jouguet 1906, 125 and Del Corso 2023, 337–338. Interestingly, Del Corso 2023, 338 points out that, despite the systematic tendency to consider the literary bookrolls as predating the documents found in the same *cartonnages* by several decades, chronological coherence between literary and documentary texts coming from the same *cartonnages* is not uncommon.

56 On the few pieces of evidence of the collaboration of scribes in Graeco-Roman papyri, see n. 23.

two “prologues” on the back of Inv.Sorb. 72 [“groupe B”] **[*1]**) that disappeared from the Greek literature available thereafter. Hence, it is difficult for modern scholars even to precisely identify their genre.

3.2 *P.Petr.* I 4 (1): Lines from the so-called “Strobilos-Komödie”

P.Petr. I 4 (1) **[*10]** comes from the *cartonnages* found in Gurob by William M.F. Petrie in 1889–1890 and was first published in 1891 (Fig. 49). The papyrus is datable to the 3rd c. BC and preserves scant traces of the lower part of two consecutive columns.

Otto Schröder first recognised the correspondence of the few surviving letters of the second column with *P.Hib.* I 5 col. II 18–26,[57] part of a bookroll found in El-Hibeh, which also includes *P.Ryl.* I 16 (a) + *P.Heid.* I 184 **[*11]** and contains the so-called “Strobilos-Komödie” (from the name of one of the characters, the parasite Strobilos).

Believed to be a model for Plautus’ *Aulularia*, the “Strobilos-Komödie” was first assigned to Philemon by Blass. This identification rests upon the occurrence of Κροιϲ[in *P.Hib.* I 5, col. III 28 (= *PCG* VIII 1093, l. 363) in the same position of the line as in *PCG* VII 159 by Philemon: Κροίϲωι λαλῶ ϲοι καὶ Μίδαι καὶ Ταντάλωι.[58] Jean-Marie Jacques instead suggested identifying the play as Menander’s *Thesauros*.[59] Colin Austin included the papyri preserving the “Strobilos-Komödie”, namely *P.Petr.* I 4 (1) **[*10]**, and *P.Ryl.* I 16 (a) + *P.Heid.* I 184 + *P.Hib.* I 5 **[*11]**, among the *adespota novae comoediae* (*CGFP* as frr. 243–244), but suggested an attribution to Menander’s *Hydria*: l. 188 contains the name of the cook Libys, only attested in the surviving comic tradition in *PCG* VI.2 fr. 359, l. 1 (cited by Austin as fr. 404 K./Th.), belonging precisely to *Hydria*.[60]

Both of the papyri preserving the “Strobilos-Komödie” are published as fr. 1093 in *PCG* VIII (*Adespota*); *P.Petr.* I 4 (1) **[*10]** preserves ll. 322–335, 353–361 (*init.*) of the comedy.

57 Schröder 1915, 12.
58 See *P.Hib.* I, 25.
59 Jacques 1963, 55–56 n. 3.
60 See *CGFP*, fr. 244 intr. and app. *ad* l. 188; Gaiser 1977.

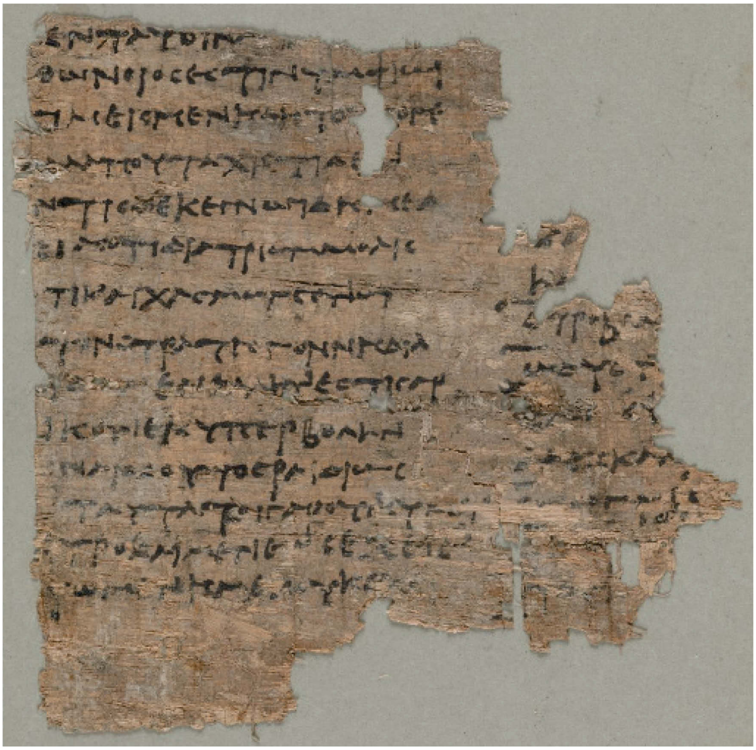

Fig. 49: *P.Petr.* I 4 (1). © British Library Board, P. 487 (A).

3.3 *P.Lund* I 4 + P.Carlsb. inv. 50 Joined: Menander, *Phanion*?

P.Lund I 4 comes from Tebtunis and was first published in 1935 by Albert Wifstrand (Fig. 50).[61] Dated to the 1st to 2nd c. AD by the *ed. pr.*, it preserves lines from a comic dialogue. Upon Körte's suggestion, in the first edition Wifstrand attributed the fragment to Menander.[62] This supposition has not been discussed since. The fragment figures among the *adespota novae comoediae* in *CGFP* as fr. 263 and in *PCG* VIII as fr. 1066.

61 TM 61480, MP[3] 1655; on the provenance, see Carlesimo 2024 (forthcoming).
62 See also Körte 1939, 103–104, no. 878.

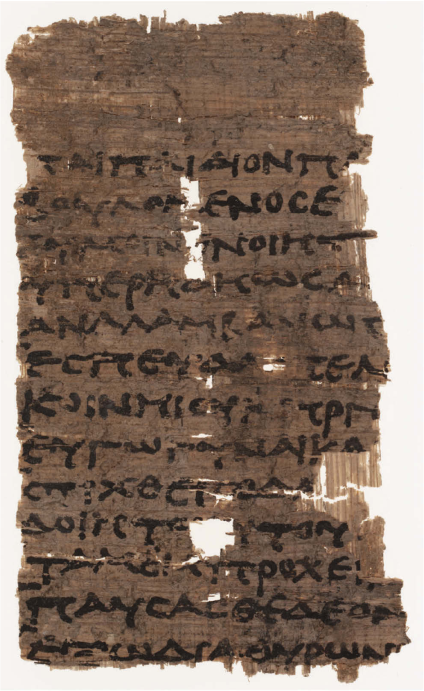

Fig. 50: *P.Lund* I 4 (part.).
© Lund University Library.

In 1977, Adam Bülow-Jacobsen published P.Carlsb. inv. 50 (Fig. 51), a fragment of uncertain provenance,[63] which preserves the end of nine comic lines preceded by a portion of the upper margin. On palaeographic grounds, the papyrus was dated by the *ed. pr.* to the late 3rd or early 2nd c. BC. Moreover, in l. 5 Bülow-Jacobsen identified the mention of a character: Φάνιον (or Φανίον). In the comic tradition, characters with this name are known only to appear in two plays, both of which are lost: Phanion is the name of the *hetaira* who gives Menander's comedy its title, as well as a girl in Apollodorus of Carystus' *Epidikazomenos*, the model of Terence's *Phormio*.[64] According to Bülow-Jacobsen, the number of certain or probable Menander papyri found in Egypt would be an argument in favour of Menandrian authorship. This hypothesis was later doubtfully endorsed by several scholars.[65] The fragment is more prudently edited among the *adespota comica* in *PCG* VIII as fr. 1124.

63 TM 61590, MP³ 1306.2; see Bülow-Jacobsen 1977.

64 See Bülow-Jacobsen 1977, 64 and 66 (comm. l. 5). On the occurrences of the name in comedy, see also Breitenbach 1908, 141 and Gatzert 1913, 30, 59.

65 See Luppe 1980, 237; Carlini 1984, 545; Bathrellou 2014, 819–820, no. 5.

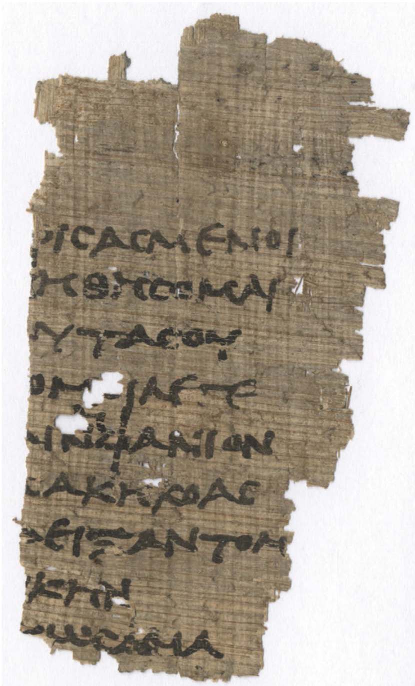

Fig. 51: P.Carlsb. inv. 50 recto.
© The Papyrus Carlsberg Collection,
University of Copenhagen.

As I have discussed at length elsewhere, these two fragments show identical palaeographical and bibliological features, hence it could be assumed that they belong to the same bookroll, probably coming from Tebtunis and datable to the end of the 3rd or the beginning of the 2nd c. BC.

I have proposed two new readings of the papyrus, and, based on a different interpretation of l. 1, a different reconstruction of the scene preserved by *P.Lund* I 4.[66] But the question remains as to whether the papyrus in question preserves lines from Menander's *Phanion*, Apollodorus's *Epidikazomenos* or another unknown New Comedy play. In this respect, the lines preserved by *P.Lund* I 4 deserve some consideration:

a. l. 1 (= *PCG* VIII 1066, l. 1) contains a variant of a rather frequent formula in Ancient Comedy, "παῖ παῖ" (see e.g. Ar. *Av*. 57), used by visitors to ask servants to open the door of a house. This formula is repeatedly testified in Menander (see, e.g., *Dysk*. 911 <παῖ>, παιδίον, παῖδες <καλοί>, παῖ, παῖδες, *Epit*. 1076s. παῖδες. παιδίον. / ἀνοιξάτω τις. παῖδες, οὐχ ὑμῖν λέγω; and *Mis*. 607–608 π̣αῖ. παῖδε[c]. ἐ̣[π]α̣νάξω̣·

66 For an in-depth discussion on joining *P.Lund* I 4 + P.Carlsb. inv. 50 **[*12]** and for a re-edition of the text, see Carlesimo 2024.

ψ[οφεῖ / αὐτῶν προϊών τις εἰς τὸ πρ̣[όςθ]ε̣ν τὴ[ν θύραν).[67] Nonetheless, it cannot be ruled out, and indeed is likely to be the case, that other New Comedy dramatists also used this formula with the same function, even if no examples survive among the scanty remains of their comedies.

b. in l. 4 (= *PCG* VIII 1066, l. 4) Wifstrand read the *hapax* ὑπερκάκως. To this end, he referred to other compounds starting with ὑπερ-, amply used by Menander.[68] In the papyrus, it is surely to be read as υπερηδεως, that is, ὑπερηδέως.[69] Besides the prefix ὑπερ-, the adverb finds a good parallel in *Dysk*. 270 μάλ' ἡδέως, but it should be noted that ὑπερηδέως also occurs, in the same position in the line, in Macho fr. 16, l. 279 Gow.[70] Moreover, compounds starting with ὑπερ- are amply testified in fragments by other New Comedy dramatists: see, e.g., *PCG* V Diph. 67, l. 5 ὑπερηκοντικώς, *PCG* VIII 1017, l. 39 ὑπερεπιτηδείως, etc.

c. for l. 8 (= *PCG* VIII 1066, l. 8) ε̣ὖ γ', ὦ γύναι, Kassel/Austin point to *Her.* 72 εὖ γ' ὦ Μυρρίνη, but see also, e.g., *PCG* IV Bat. 4, l. 1 εὖ γ', ὦ Ϲιβύνη and *PCG* V Hegesip. 2, l. 4 εὖ γ', ὦ κράτιςτ' ἄνθρωπε καὶ ςοφώτατε.

d. ςτιχθεὶς ὁ Δᾶ[ος is clearly legible in l. 9 (= *PCG* VIII 1066, l. 9). Branding was the punishment generally inflicted on fugitive slaves so as to make them easily recognisable in the event of a new escape. The verb occurs twice in Men., *Sam.* 323, 655, but it is attested to several times in comedy more in general: see, e.g., Ar. *V*. 1296, where it is used metaphorically, and *PCG* V Eup. 277.

All in all, the occurrence of the name Phanion, together with the other arguments presented here, could tempt the hypothesis of an attribution to Menander. Nonetheless, in the same way as the name Phanion on its own is insufficient to prove Menandrian authorship, in the end all the textual elements apparently pointing to Menander appear inconclusive when put to more thorough consideration.

67 For a new reconstruction of the scene preserved in the following lines, based on a different interpretation of the formula in l. 1, see Carlesimo 2024.

68 *P.Lund* I, 59; see also Körte 1939, 103–104, no. 878. For these compounds in Menander, see Durham 1913, 98 and, more recently, Martina 2000, comm. *Epit*. 525.

69 For this new reading, see Carlesimo 2024.

70 It should be noted that this and other passages by Macho, preserved by Athenaeus, are not included among the fragments of the author in *PCG* V: "Χρειῶν quas praeter comoedias scripsit Macho nonnullas servavit Athenaeus [...]. nos ut diversi generis poemata insulsas plerumque et male narratas fabellas haud gravate exclusimus" (see 623).

4 Passages in Anthologies

In the following pages I will consider two anthologies coming from the Arsinoites, namely P.Cairo JE inv. 65445 **[A1]** and *P.Giss.Lit.* 4.1 **[A5]**: the first is a scholastic anthology and bears two comic passages of uncertain authorship attributed to Menander; the second preserves a passage certainly by Menander, along with others whose attribution to the author seems quite improbable.

4.1 P.Cairo JE inv. 65445: Speeches by Two Anonymous Cooks in the So-called *Livre d'écolier*

P.Cairo JE inv. 65445 **[A1]** was acquired in Cairo in 1935; according to the information provided by the antiquities dealer who sold the papyrus, Maurice Nahman, it had been found in the Arsinoites.[71] Datable to the end of the 3rd c. BC, it was first published in 1938 and preserves large sections of a scholastic anthology, the well-known *Livre d'écolier*.[72] There are exercises to teach novice students to read and write and a selection of poetic passages: excerpts of Euripides' tragedies (*Ph.* 529–534; *Ino*, fr. 420 K.), a passage from Homer (*Od.* V 116–124), epigrams (*SH* 978–979), one possibly by Posidippus (no. 113 Austin/Bastianini), and three comic passages, one by Strato (*PCG* VII Strato Com. 1) and two by unidentified authors, edited among the *adespota novae comoediae* in *CGFP* as frr. 289*a*, *b* and in *PCG* VIII as frr. 1072, 1073.

The first of the two comic *adespota* (ll. 162–169 = *PCG* VIII 1072) preserves a cook's monologue; according to the *edd. pr.*, having left the house where he is working, the cook complains because certain characters, perhaps the ones who have hired him, arrive late. Octave Guéraud and Pierre Jouguet traced this scene to ll. 357–359 (cited as ll. 142–143 by the scholars) of Menander's *Samia*, where the cook comes out of Demea's house looking for the servant Parmenon and realises that Demea has run away without helping him. Unfortunately, more than one aspect of the surviving lines is unclear. The passage has been dubiously assigned by Thomas B.L. Webster to Menander's *Paidion*, because in l. 3 it is possible to read the name of a Cίμων, a character also mentioned in *P.Oxy.* I 11, whom the scholar attributed

71 See Guéraud/Jouguet 1938, XI.

72 See Guéraud/Jouguet 1938 (with full reproductions). On the papyrus see also the contribution by C. Meccariello in this volume, esp. 295–310, with further bibliography.

to that play, along with P.Vindob. inv. G 29811; but many consider the reasons for the attribution to be arbitrary.[73]

The second comic excerpt consists of 15 iambic trimetres (ll. 170–184 = *PCG* VIII 1073), in which a cook proudly describes the expedients he uses to steal food in the kitchen. In a paper published in 1958, Max Treu noted similarities between these lines and those preserved in *P.Heid.* I 184,[74] which is part of the above mentioned bookroll from El-Hibeh containing the so-called "Strobilos-Komödie" **[*11]**.

Treu underlined that the exploits narrated in the passage coincide with the activities that Libys, the cook in the play, lists as typical occurrences for the characters of a comedy (*PCG* VIII 1093, ll. 221–230). According to the scholar, it is striking that both texts make a reference to the expedient of stealing liquids using a sponge (see respectively *PCG* VIII 1073, ll. 13–15 and 1093, ll. 228–229). For this reason, Treu suggested that the lines preserved in this excerpt of P.Cairo JE inv. 65445 **[A1]** also belong to the "Strobilos-Komödie". This assumption was accepted by several scholars, as Gaiser, but opposed by David Bain, who supposed a parody between the two comic passages.[75]

Treu's considerations are beguiling. Nevertheless, the caution shown by William G. Arnott regarding the authorship of both excerpts preserved in P.Cairo JE inv. 65445 **[A1]** seems well founded: as Arnott points out,

> cook speeches of this kind are so common a feature of Greek comedy […], with a wide range of authors repeatedly reusing the same motifs and clichés, that it is impossible to say who composed frs. 1072 and 1073, but their presence in this schoolbook alongside a speech written by a relative nonentity such as Strato should be a warning against any assumption that links them necessarily with one of the leading dramatists of New Comedy.[76]

73 See Webster 1974, 168 with n. 80. According to Webster, Simon is the father of the boy who declined the wedding prepared for him, because he had fallen in love with the *hetaira* Paidion, hence the title of the play. On the controversial authorship of *P.Oxy.* I 11 (TM 61479, MP³ 1646), see Stama 2022, 223 with bibliography; for P.Vindob. inv. G 29811, see TM 65766, MP³ 1668.

74 Treu 1958, exp. 233–239.

75 See respectively Gaiser 1977 (with previous bibliography) and 1982, 31, and Bain 1977, 223–226.

76 Arnott 2000, 420–421.

4.2 *P.Giss.Lit.* 4.1: A Comic Anthology Including a Passage from Menander's *Nomothetes*

P.Giss.Lit. 4.1 **[A5]** is a small fragment (ca. 7 × 13.8 cm) that was purchased by the Deutsche Papyruskartell in Fayum in 1912 (Fig. 52). On the recto it preserves two consecutive columns from a comic anthology, datable to the end of the second or the very beginning of the 1st c. BC.[77]

The first column contains the final part of 18 lines; l. 11 contains the title of a new passage,]ν̣ομοθετη, preceded and followed by a wider interlinear space (ca. 0.5 cm) and probably placed in *eisthesis*. Since Menander is the only comic author known to have written a *Nomothetes*, the *ed. pr.* assigned col. I 12–18 to the playwright.[78] This supposition was later unanimously accepted. Hence the passage is now edited in *CGFP* fr. 169 and in *PCG* VI.2 fr. 253 as a fragment of Menander's *Nomothetes*.

On the other hand, the author of the lines preceding the title (col. I 1–9) is unknown. This is the only passage preserved by the papyrus whose content can be roughly reconstructed: a tragic poet, going to compose a new tragedy, delivers a monologue and complains about the economic difficulties resulting from his work. Kalbfleisch did not doubt the comic nature of the excerpt. In view of the content, when considering which play the extract could have come from, he suggested thinking one whose title is indicative of a metatheatrical topic, such as Plato, Phoenicides or Biottus's *Poietes*, Alexis's *Poietai* (and/or *Poietria*), Aristophanes or Antiphanes' *Poiesis*, Phrynicus' *Tragoidoi* or *Apeleutheroi*, or, owing to the Menandrian authorship of the following extract, a play by Menander, despite no similar titles being known for the author.[79]

Because of their "streng tragischen Bau", Körte deemed these lines more suitable for an author of Middle Comedy;[80] the passage is edited in *CGFP* as fr. 293a and in *PCG* VIII as fr. 1051.

Finally, according to Helmut Hoffmann, "der verspottete Tragiker dürfte eine historische Person sein",[81] hence the passage also figures among the *adespota tragica* in *TrGF* (II 727).

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77 In this regard, Kalbfleisch 1925, 29 proposed a good comparison with *P.Tebt.* I 1 (TM 65642, MP[3] 1606; anthology, 2nd/1st c. BC; an image is available in Roberts 1956, no. 7c), assigned to "group G" by Turner 1980, 34, no. 44 ("rounded capital writing assignable to c. 2nd BC").

78 Kalbfleisch 1925, 34.

79 Kalbfleisch 1925, 34.

80 Körte 1927, 258–259, no. 684.

81 Hoffmann 1951, 296, no. 254.

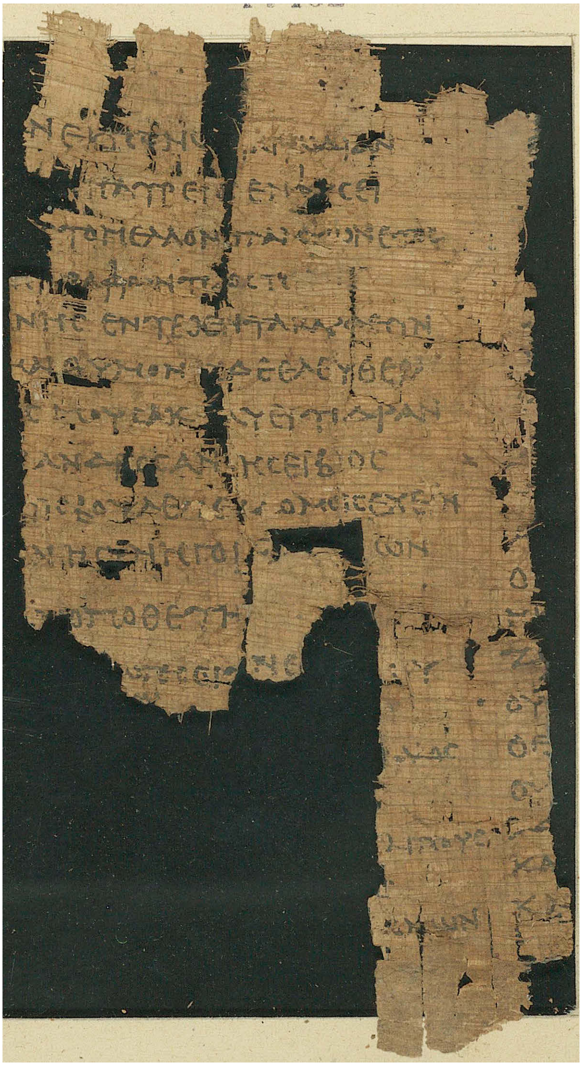

Fig. 52: *P.Giss.Lit*. 4.1 recto. © Gießen, Universitätsbibliothek, P.B.U.G. inv. 152.

It is equally difficult to say if the few letters of the second column on the recto, edited as *CGFP* 293c, belong to the Menandrian excerpt: the length of the passages in the anthology is unknown; moreover, since the first lines of the second column are lost, it is not possible to check the presence of a new title, if indeed there is one.

Two columns survive on the verso, upside down compared to the recto (Fig. 53). The first contains scant traces of approximately 8 almost illegible and still unpublished lines; the second, edited by Karl Kalbfleisch, preserves the meagre remains of 16 lines in iambic rhythm, which figure in *CGFP* as fr. 293d and in *PCG* VIII as fr. *1052.

Fig. 53: *P.Giss.Lit.* 4.1 verso. © Gießen, Universitätsbibliothek, P.B.U.G. inv. 152.

The two columns on the verso are written in a larger script, by a different hand from the one of the recto.[82] For this reason, it is possible to reject the hypothesis, dubiously proposed by Kassel and Austin and accepted by Francisca Pordomingo, that the passage on the verso belongs to the second column of the recto. Consequently, the papyrus cannot be considered an opisthograph *stricto sensu*, as Pordomingo deemed it and as indicated in TM.[83]

It remains to be stressed that *P.Giss.Lit.* 4.1 **[A5]** is the earliest certain evidence of the circulation of Menander's comedies in an anthology (Fig. 53). The organisation and purposes of this repertory are unclear: John Barns thought of a gnomic anthology on wealth and poverty;[84] Peter A. Kuhlmann underlined the use of similar collections of exemplary passages in scholastic practice;[85] Pordomingo, who included the papyrus among the theatre anthologies, did not exclude a scholastic purpose for the passages preserved herein, but deems the parodic character of the first extract on the recto (= *PCG* VIII 1051) to point to another type of audience, such as that of a symposium or an unpretentious street performance ("espectáculo teatral callejero de montaje simple").[86]

5 Some Final Remarks

With the limited available evidence, it is difficult to trace the circulation of Menander's comedies in the Arsinoites after the author's death. All the same, some interesting elements emerge from the data at our disposal.

First of all, looking at the surviving papyri, one can assume that, at least in some culturally flourishing areas of Egypt, the author's comedies started to circulate very early. Nonetheless, the papyrological evidence discussed so far clearly testifies that

82 On the basis of the small surviving portion of text, we can agree with Kalbfleisch 1925, 29–30, who maintained that the verso was written not much later than the recto.

83 See respectively *PCG* VIII, *ad* fr. *1052 "in pagina recta (col. II) supersunt heac versuum initia […] (= *CGFP* 293c), quae utrum ad Men. fr. 293 Koe. [= *PCG* VI.2 fr. 253] an huc pertineant non constat" and Pordomingo 2013, 103 and n. 341. On the ancients' use of the term ὀπιcθόγραφοc, see Manfredi 1983; for the distinction between opisthographs in the strict sense and bookrolls used both on the recto and the verso, see Turner 1994, 3 and Messeri Savorelli/Pintaudi 1994, 233–234 n. 1.

84 Barns 1951, 1; this hypothesis is also registered in TM. It is not accepted by Carlo Pernigotti; see *CPF* II.3 (*Gnomica*), 424–425, where the papyrus is listed among the items not included in the volume.

85 *P.Giss.Lit.*, 86.

86 Pordomingo 2013, 106.

the circulation of Menander was still far from the prominent position gained by the author in the subsequent Roman era.[87]

The Ghôran fragments, presumably hailing from a homogeneous context, as extensively discussed before, provide an illustrative sample in this regard: here Menander figured alongside authors who would later enjoy considerable popularity in Graeco-Roman Egypt, such as Homer and Euripides, as well as other comic texts of New Comedy, probably by playwrights other than Menander.

The outline emerging from the Arsinoites papyri finds immediate confirmation if one is to look at the comic papyri of the Ptolemaic age as a whole: for this period, we have at least 35 papyri bearing comic lines (anthologies are excluded from this count); of these, at least 20 items belong to New Comedy, and only 4 certainly to Menander, that is, just over 11% of the total number of papyri and more or less 20% of the New Comedy ones.[88]

These observations allow for a first methodological consideration: in general, it is necessary to exercise caution in assigning fragmentary papyri to Menander, in view of our limited knowledge of the plays of his contemporaries. Moreover, such caution is all the more necessary for papyri datable to the early Ptolemaic period, when nothing points in the direction of a preference for Menander in the broader panorama of New Comedy or enables us to exclude that Menander's rivals enjoyed similar popularity to that of our playwright. In this respect, besides the data provided for the Egyptian Ptolemaic papyri, it is right to think that outside Egypt, among his models, Terence favoured Menander and Apollodorus of Carystus, who was in turn closely influenced by Menander, while, as far as we can reconstruct, in his comedies Plautus continued to draw equally on the plays of Diphilus and Philemon too.[89]

This framework is endorsed by what emerges from looking at the anthologies. As far as the anthologies coming from the Arsinoites are concerned, *P.Giss.Lit.* 4.1 **[A5]** testified an early use of Menander in this type of text, but here the author figures alongside at least one other passage by an unidentified (presumably comic) author. What is more, it is worth noting that among the passages to be used by students in the so-called *Livre d'écolier* (P.Cairo JE inv. 65445 **[A1]**), besides a short

87 On the circulation of Menander in the following century see, among others, Canfora 1995, 137–164, esp. 155–158 and Cavallo 2002, 99–102.
88 This census is based on the items collected in the main papyrological databases and was carried out solely for statistical purposes. Thus, it does not claim to be complete or to substitute a more detailed examination of the comic papyri from the Ptolemaic period.
89 For some remarks on this aspect, see Nesselrath 2011, esp. 120–127.

section of *Odyssey*, Book V, together with lines by Euripides, there is also by a minor comedian such as Strato, and, presumably, other unknown comic authors too.

Another fact can now be brought to our attention: with the sole exception of the *Georgos*,[90] the plays surviving in the Ptolemaic papyri considered in this paper seem to have disappeared from the direct tradition early on: besides Inv.Sorb. 72 + 2272 + 2273 **[1]**, Menander's *Sikyonioi* only counts two papyri dating from earlier than the 2nd c. AD, namely *P.Oxy.* X 1238 + XLV 3217 (1st c. AD)[91] and P.Oxy. inv. 33 4B 83E (8–11) (1st/2nd c. AD);[92] the so-called "Strobilos-Komödie" is only preserved in the two aforementioned Ptolemaic papyri, *P.Petr.* I 4 (1) **[*10]** and *P.Ryl.* I 16(a) + *P.Heid.* I 184 + *P.Hib.* I 5 **[*11]**. In addition, we have no subsequent traces of the presumably non-Menandrian comedy contained in Inv.Sorb. 72 ("groupe B") **[*1]**, which nonetheless had a place in the readings of those Greeks who had newly arrived in the Ptolemaic Fayum, alongside Homer, Euripides and Menander. Finally, *P.Giss.Lit.* 4.1 **[A5]** contains the only attestation in the direct tradition of lines from the *Nomothetes*.

The observations conducted so far invite a final consideration, this time of a historical-literary nature: not unlike what has been seen for other literary genres,[93] in the Ptolemaic age the knowledge and readings of New Comedy would still seem to have been 'fluid'. This situation was very different from the selective mechanisms that would come to be in the following centuries, which presumably significantly steered the variety of authors and texts available during the Roman era and later.

Conscious of this later trend, it is regrettable that so few papyri from the Ptolemaic age have come down to us. Yet precisely for this reason, we must look at these pieces with renewed interest, not only in terms of the *constitutio* of the texts that they transmit, frequently different from the following *vulgata*,[94] but also in terms

90 Lines from Menander's *Georgos* are preserved in *BKT* IX 6 **[4]**, described above, and in four codices: P.Lond. inv. 2823A (TM 61561, MP^3 1302.5; 4th c. AD), *PSI* I 100 (TM 61560, MP^3 1302.4; 4th c. AD), P.Gen. inv. 155 (TM 61569, MP^3 1302.2; 5th? c. AD) and the aforementioned, as yet unpublished P.Lips. inv. 402. Moreover, the texts preserved in *P.Oxy.* XXII 2329 + LXXIX 5186 (TM 61520, MP^3 1650; 2nd/3rd c. AD) and *P.Oxy.* LXXIII 4937 (TM 117817, MP^3 1650.001; 6th/7th c. AD) are doubtfully ascribed to the same comedy.

91 TM 61466, MP^3 1308.2.

92 TM 61484, MP^3 1308.4.

93 See, for example, the consideration reserved by Del Corso 2022b, esp. 137–138 to the role played by Homer in the broader panorama of the epic texts used in the education system during the Ptolemaic period.

94 Concerning this well-known aspect, suffice it to refer to the considerations of West 1967 on the Homeric Ptolemaic papyri.

of the history of the texts and the modes of their circulation. In this direction, the investigations recent PRIN project *Greek and Latin Literary Papyri from Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Fayum (4th BC–7th AD): Texts, Contexts, Readers* have shed light on the circulation of some authors and genres in this area during this period. All the same, much still remains to be done.

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Natascia Pellé

Greek Historiography in Hellenistic Egypt

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to analyse the reception and perception of Greek historiography in Egypt during the Ptolemaic period, through a study of the textual, palaeographic and bibliological characteristics of fragments containing passages which can be (more or less confidently) attributed to Greek historical works.

Keywords: Greek historiography, literary papyri, Ptolemaic Egypt.

1 Introduction

Ancient Greek historiography is a discipline with shifting boundaries for which it is hard to find a single definition. Indeed, it appears to be made up of multiple "threads", naturally connected, but at times differing sharply from each other.[1] According to A. Momigliano,[2] historical narratives are organised in terms of content and form in such a way as to suit the audience at which they are aimed. Applying this insightful observation to ancient historiography, it may be observed that the common definition of the term encompasses a range of contrasting experiences. These include Herodotean "national" history, founded on the "unifying" event represented by the Persian wars and aimed at a curious yet non-specialist readership, as well as the erudite "local" histories that flourished above all in the Hellenistic epoch ("partly as a revival of traditions of liberty and independence in the face of ethnic and political homogeneity resulting from monarchical powers").[3] Then there is Thucydidean history, which provides reflections on contemporary events but is founded on the assumption of the immutability of human nature. It thus serves a markedly paradigmatic purpose, being aimed at political leaders, for whom the narrated events represent the *exemplum* to follow in their endeavours. Even more explicitly aimed at rulers is the pragmatic historiography of Polybius, who quite deliberately neglects all other types of reader and for this reason tackles a much narrower range of themes, focusing on political and military events.

1 See Gabba 2001, 13.

2 Momigliano 1978.

3 Gabba 2001, 14.

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2 The Recovery of Texts not Handed Down by the Medieval Tradition

As regards ancient historians, the medieval manuscript tradition only preserved works by those authors who had been considered exemplary since Antiquity, as they belonged to a canon already familiar to Cicero and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and consisting of works that dealt with a succession of very long periods, so as to "constitute an uninterrupted account of all past history".[4] It is to papyri that we must attribute the recovery of fragments and other testimonies regarding the large quantity of historiography that was not deemed to serve this purpose. This essentially consists of monographs in the form of annals, dedicated to the history of an individual city, generally the author's home town, rich in erudite observations, filled with more or less mythological accounts of origins, eponymous heroes, divine progenitors, and epic battles to establish supremacy over neighbouring regions. References to the existence of such works, labelled as Atthidography, can be found in quotations by lexicographers, scholiasts, and compilers of anthologies.

On the basis of the available papyri, it is currently impossible to establish who invented this genre, given that *P.Oxy.* VIII 1084 (2nd c. AD) (Fig. 54),[5] the only papyrus attributed to Hellanicus of Lesbos,[6] the inventor of the genre according to Felix Jacoby,[7] contains an *excerptum* of the *Atlantis*,[8] a mythographical and cosmological work,[9] and that there are no known papyri by Androtion, who C. Joyce identifies as the originator.[10]

However, the abundance of fragments shows that local histories also circulated in Graeco-Roman Egypt to some extent: we are dealing with works written in Greek but whose subject varies from Classical Greece to the Mediterranean lands steeped in Greek culture (such as Sicily), and the Hellenistic reigns that sprung up after Alexander's death.

4 Canfora 1999, 320–321.

5 MP^3 459; LDAB 1086; TM 59974.

6 About 470 to 406 BC. Twenty-six fragments of his Ἀτθίϲ survive, published in Jacoby 1954, 1–21. Hereinafter this work is abbreviated as *FGrHist*.

7 Jacoby 1949, chap. I.

8 Identified on the basis of a citation in the *scholia* to Venetus A (VIII 486 = *FGrHist* 4 F 19 a) about the liaisons between Atlas' daughters and various gods.

9 See the Corpus of Paraliterary Papyri (= CPP), no. 0002, at https://relicta.org/cpp/detail.php?CPP=0002 (last visit March 2024).

10 Joyce 1999.

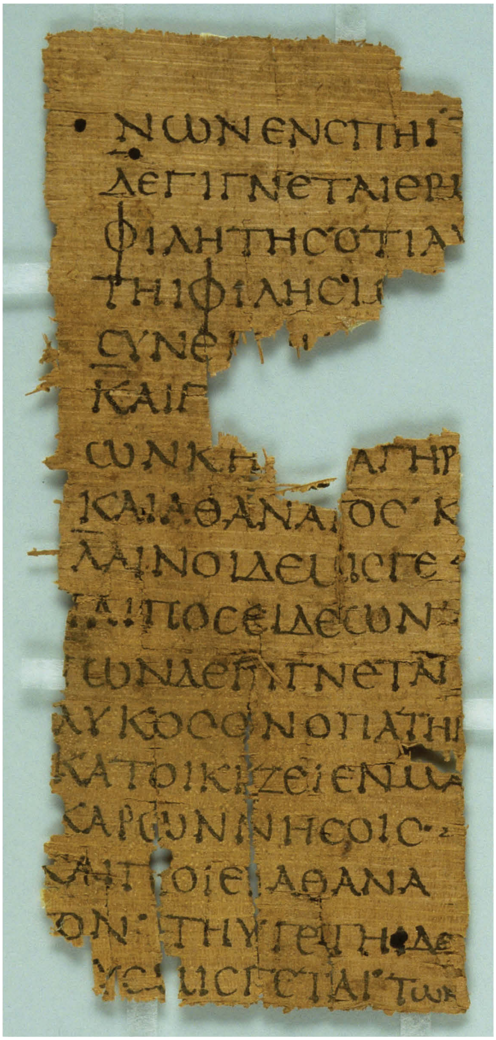

Fig. 54: *P.Oxy.* VIII 1084.
Courtesy of Princeton University.

With reference to the historiography circulating in Egypt in the Ptolemaic epoch, the MP[3] database contains 21 entries pertaining to fragments variously connected to the history of the ancient Mediterranean, attesting to an abiding interest in this literary topic.

All of them will be mentioned in this paper, but the focus will be on those containing episodes of Greek historiography and passages about its rulers and commanders.

As for fragments from local histories, we can recall three papyri.

The most ancient is *P.Köln* VI 248, which is datable to the 3rd c. BC,[11] and has been tentatively assigned to the *Persika* by Ctesias of Cnidus[12] or to a work by Dinon of Colophon.[13] It is a fragment from a historical composition; the few extant lines concern a peculiar scene: a letter is reported and the addressee bursts out laughing. The editor's hypothesis is that we are dealing with Semiramis, who on another similar occasion reacts in the same way after reading a letter by Stabrobates, king of the Indians: "Semiramis, however, on reading his letter dismissed his statements with laughter and remarked, 'It will be in deeds that the Indian will make trial of my valour'".[14] This fragment comes from a *cartonnage*, along with the ten closing lines of a column. It is difficult even to tell whether this material comes from a roll or whether we are dealing with a fragmentary sheet preserving an *excerptum*. We just can observe that the writing is a clear, bilinear upright majuscule that alternates large and small letters, characterized by small serifs at the top of some letters (*iota*, *pi*, *tau*, and *chi*). The column is more than 8 cm wide, with a large interlinear space. The punctuation consists of two *vacua* respectively indicating a stop (ll. 4 and 8) and a *paragraphos* associated with a *vacuum* at l. 8. The baseline runs horizontal and the letters are regularly spaced on it. All the examinations carried out until now suggest that the copy is a professional one.[15]

A second fragment contains some references to the expulsion of tyrants from Sicyon and Athens by the Spartans: it is *P.Ryl.* I 18,[16] 2nd c. BC, coming from a papyrus roll (ca. 10.2 × 8.8 cm), which preserves parts of the top of two consecutive columns of writing, with an upper margin of 0.8 cm (Fig. 55).

It contains minimal parts of the right ends of 11 lines of a column followed by 12 lines from the following one. The text has been written by a round-pointed pen in black ink and arranged on horizontal and regularly spaced lines. The intercolumnium is 0.9–1.5 cm wide. No breathings or accents are preserved. The punctuation consists of a simple *paragraphos*, one letter wide (col. II 4–5 and 10–11), that is used alone (ll. 4–5) or with a *vacuum* (ll. 10–11). Maas' law only slightly seems to affect the column.

The writing is a medium rounded majuscule, with cursive elements, slightly inclined to the right, generally bilinear, clear even if not elegant; letters have the

11 MP³ 2252.01; LDAB 6969; TM 65715.

12 *FGrHist* IIIC 1, frr. 416–517. A translation of all these texts (with a short commentary) can be found in Auberger 1991. For partial editions with translations see Henry 1947 and König 1972.

13 *FGrHist* IIIC 1, frr. 1–3.

14 Diod. Sic., 1.18.2–4.

15 On the criteria I rely on to define bibliological categories see Pellé 2010, 25–32. A very useful study on the book standards can be found in Del Corso 2022, 132–138; 196–212.

16 MP³ 2177; LDAB 6873; TM 65622.

same size and show some small serifs at the top and bottom of the vertical strokes (e.g. *iota*, *ny*, *pi*, and *tau*).

It is a professional standard copy by the same scribe as *P.Rein.* I 5 + *BKT* II 55 (perhaps a treatise on music or a philosophical dialogue) and probably also *BKT* V.2, pp. 123–128 (an anthology on the topic of marriage, with passages from tragedies and comedies, as well as one in trochaic tetrameters).[17] Until now it has been impossible to establish whether we are dealing with a collection of *excerpta* taken from one or more historio graphical works or with the epitome of a work on a historical topic.

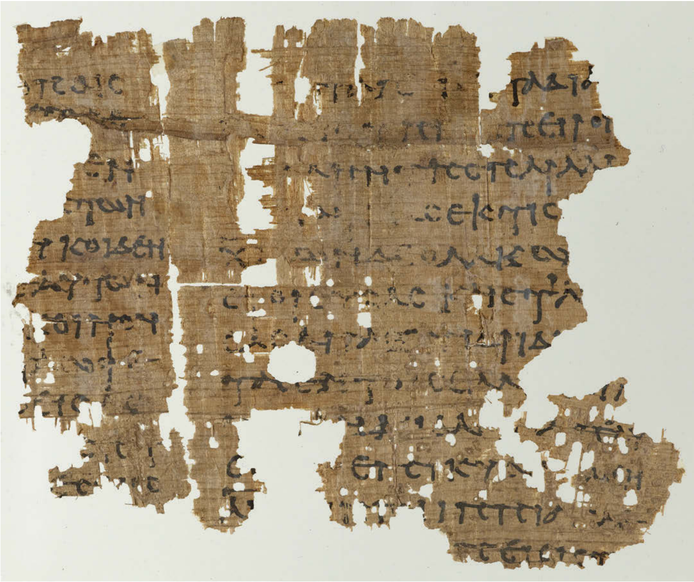

Fig. 55: *P.Ryl.* I 18. Courtesy of The John Rylands Library.

Finally we have *P.Oxy.* XXXIV 2399, 1st c. BC (16.5 × 23.5 cm, and five smaller fragments),[18] which preserves, in four consecutive columns, parts of an anonymous text on the history of Sicily during the reign of Agathocles (Fig. 56).

17 It includes quotations from Plato the comedian, Pherecrates, Menander, Theodectas (?), Pseudo-Epicharmus, Antiphanes, Euripides' *Melanippe*, Protesilaos, and Hippolytos. A related text was later added on the verso by another scribe. See Della Corte 1936.

18 MP[3] 2194; LDAB 823; TM 59719.

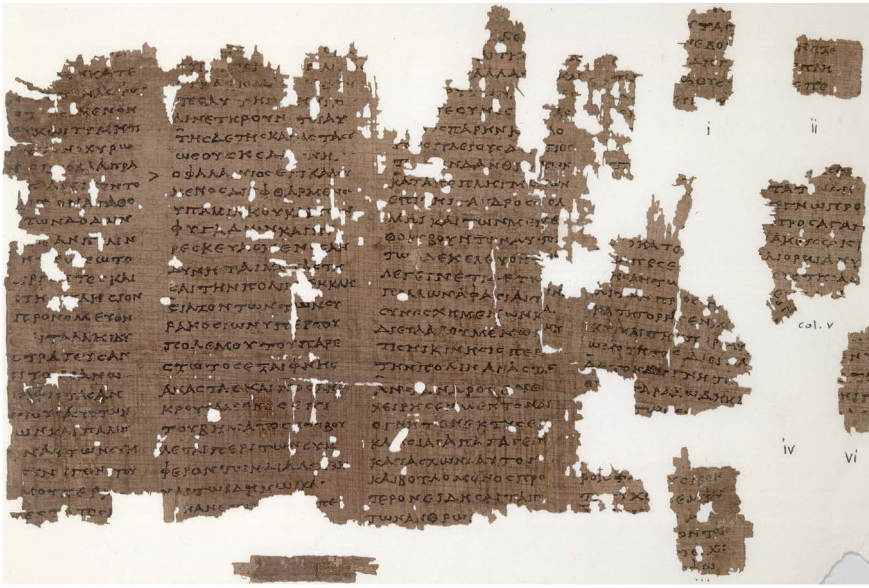

Fig. 56: *P.Oxy.* XXXIV 2399. Courtesy of Egypt Exploration Society – University of Oxford Imaging Papyri Project.

In particular it concerns Agathocles' campaign against Carthage and the political situation in Syracuse in the autumn of 310 BC. Coll. I–II 5 describe a Carthaginian assault on Leukos Tynes, also mentioning some other raids and an imminent war; coll. II 6–III 8 summarize a harangue delivered in Syracuse by Diognetos, who was bribed by Amilcar and sought to spark a revolt. In col. III 9–20, after the astonished reaction by the assembly, Antandros — the tyrant's older brother, who has been left in Syracuse as a guardian of the city during Agathocles' African expedition — expels Diognetos from the Assembly.

The text is written in a clear hand, similar to the so-called *epsilon-theta* style. It is mostly bilinear (with the exception of *phi*, whose vertical stroke protrudes slightly above and below); the letters have the same size, even if they are not always regularly distributed on the horizontal baselines, and are provided with small *apices* at the top of vertical strokes. Punctuation is obtained by using *paragraphoi* that are one letter wide and associated with a *vacuum*, to identify sentences (II 5–6, III 8–9, III 19–20, IV 17–18) — although they sometimes stand alone (II 14–15). A *diple* appears in the intercolumnium (col. II 8), probably connected to the summarized speech (II 7–III 18) or to the speaker's identification.

As for the author of this historical work probably focusing on Agathocles and his Campaigns against the Carthaginians,[19] different hypotheses have been formulated: Duris of Samos,[20] Callias,[21] and Antandros of Syracuse[22] seem to be the most probable candidates, but the question of the work's authorship remains open. As for the intended readership of the copy, the writing is undoubtedly the work of a professional, although it is not calligraphic. But it is difficult to say anything else: the indication of the subdivision into cola in a single case (col. II 41–42) and the *diple* to mark the beginning of an indirect speech do not seem enough to suggest that the roll was used by someone interested to the study of rhetoric.

Six fragments refer to episodes related to the official history of Hellenistic Egypt and the Near East. They are:

– *P.Petr.* II 45, 3rd c. BC,[23] a report on the Third Syriac War, probably a literary reworking of a war bulletin addressed by Ptolemy III to his court;
– *P.Ryl.* III 491, 2nd c. BC,[24] an episode from the Second Punic War, the ephemeral peace of 203 BC. We are probably dealing with an epitome of Quintus Fabius Pictor's work.[25] According to the most probable hypothesis it was "compiled to serve readers whose interest in Roman history did not stretch quite as far as reading him complete";[26]
– *BKT* II 192, 1st c. BC,[27] a fragment from a history of the Seleucid Empire;
– *P.Ryl.* I 20, 1st c. BC,[28] a fragment about the fiscal policies of Persia;
– *P.Köln* VI 247, 2nd/1st c. BC,[29] an account of Antigonos Monophtalmos' assumption of kingship, with Ptolemy's and the Rhodians' reactions to the event. The account is probably by a Rhodian historian;
– P.Duk. inv. 4 V, 1st c. BC,[30] a fragment from a chronological list of numerous Ptolemies.

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19 On these campaigns see at least Trundle 2017.
20 *P.Oxy.* XXIV, pp. 101–102.
21 Cavallaro 1977.
22 Manni 1966.
23 MP[3] 2206; LDAB 2602; TM 61457.
24 MP[3] 2212; LDAB 3845; TM 62659.
25 On this historian, a predecessor of Polybius who wrote in Greek and sided against those historians who accused Rome of imperialism, see Cornell/Bispham 2013, 168–169.
26 Hoyos 2001, 79.
27 MP[3] 2207.1; LDAB 6767; TM 65517.
28 MP[3] 2262; LDAB 6784; TM 65533.
29 MP[3] 2202.01; LDAB 6908; TM 65656.
30 MP[3] 2209.01; LDAB 6771; TM 65521.

One fragment, *P.Lond.Lit.* 112 (second half of the 3rd c. BC)[31] contains a more explicitly ethnographic work: a treatise on *Nomima barbarika*, recently attributed to Nymphodorus of Amphipolis.

In some cases it is impossible to establish the content of highly damaged or very short fragments, which can only be assigned to historiography by analogy, on the basis of the presence of certain terms or expressions frequently occurring in this genre (*P.Ryl.* III 501, 2nd c. BC;[32] *P.Bour.* 6, 2nd/1st c. BC;[33] *P.Ryl.* I 31, 1st c. BC[34]).

Another theme frequently attested in Hellenistic papyri is the deeds of Alexander the Great, a subject of extraordinary interest in the historiography of all epochs, and one which has been made the focus of numerous works across a wide range of fields:

> political history, military history, the history of cultures, the construction of ethnic identities, literature of a moral or moralising nature, satire and, last but not least in terms of success and dissemination, the fictional reinterpretation and expansion of the character and his encounters with the *oecumene* that is the *Alexander Romance*.[35]

The ten papyri analysed by Luisa Prandi in 2009 in the *Corpus dei Papiri Storici Greci e Latini* contain fragments of 'narrative' texts dated to the period from the 2nd c. BC to the 4th c. AD, which show the immense, varied, and widespread interest in Alexander and in anything more or less closely associated with his character and deeds. Three of these papyri are Ptolemaic.

The first contains parts of a commentary on Alexander's *Ephemerides* by the historian Strattis of Olynthus, specifically focusing on a series of military initiatives he took in the Balkans in 335 BC (P.Brit.Libr. 3085v;[36] 2nd c. BC). The text is written on the verso of a document and consists of ten fragments, not all of which are contiguous. The columniation is not respected on the right-hand side, and the lines tend to move upwards slightly, with the modules of the letters narrowing in some places. The artefact, which L. Prandi "intuitively" considers to be a private copy,[37] was probably commissioned by a client with a specific interest in the deeds of the Macedonian conqueror. Arranged with regular spaces between lines and letters, it is written in an upright bookhand with a slight modular contrast — alternating

31 MP³ 2183; LDAB 403; TM 59306.
32 MP³ 2265; LDAB 3846; TM 62660.
33 MP³ 2246; LDAB 6916; TM 65663.
34 MP³ 2264; LDAB 6786; TM 65535.
35 Prandi 2009, 85.
36 MP³ 2197.01; LDAB 6866; TM 65615.
37 Prandi 2009, 95.

between rigid and softer forms, as is often the case in literary *volumina* from the 3rd c. BC — and non-systematic thickening at the extremities of the vertical strokes[38] (a parallel is provided by *P.Hamb.* II 163, Thuc. 1.2–3.28, mid 3rd c. BC,[39] which however exhibits greater regularity in the distribution of the letters and is written with greater care). Two revisions by m_1 and two *paragraphoi* (fr. 7, l. 1 and fr. 8, l. 10) of contested interpretation can be seen: for the first editors, who saw in the fragment a section of a prose text about Alexander, these served to delimit two separate narrative sections,[40] for N.G.L. Hammond they marked sections of the text that were summarised but not annotated,[41] while For L. Prandi they should be seen "from the perspective of diversification and as a way of facilitating the search for information in the text".[42] In the absence of any cogent proof, it seems appropriate to limit ourselves to recalling that in contemporary commentaries the *paragraphos* is mostly linked to the end of a lemma.[43] It would thus be perfectly reasonable to propose that they also have this function here. The characteristics identified thus far suggest that the copy may have belonged to a private individual, perhaps a common reader interested in Alexander's campaigns, but was created by a professional scribe despite being of modest quality and written on reused material.

The second Hellenistic papyrus among those dealing with Alexander dates from a later period, compared to the one discussed above, namely the 1st c. BC. It contains a selection of references to the Battle of the Granicus (*P.Hamb.* II 130; 1st c. BC)[44] and consists of the central part of 19 lines, with a lower margin of ca. 2 cm. In 1954 the first editor, R. Merkelbach, who reconstructed up to 20 letters per line, argued that this was an account of the Battle of the Granicus, with a particular reference to Cleitus' intervention — that saved Alexander's life — followed by an assessment of losses in the battle.[45] This hypothesis, further discussed by Merkelbach in 1954[46] and accepted by later scholars who re-assessed the fragment,[47] was called into question by L. Prandi, who argued that rather than a short summary of the battle (May 334 BC), it is in fact a concise list of memorable moments of the clash, including Cleitus' intervention, which is mentioned twice within a few lines (ll. 5 and 11). The fragment's

38 On this type of writing, see Cavallo 2008, 34–37.
39 On *P.Hamb.* II 163, see Pellé 2022, 15 and 93–94.
40 Clarysse/Schepens 1985, 43 and 45.
41 Hammond 1987, 338–339.
42 Prandi 2009, 25.
43 Del Fabbro 1979, 87.
44 MP[3] 2196; LDAB; 6781; TM 65530.
45 Merkelbach 1954, 74.
46 Merkelbach 1956, 110.
47 Mette 1979, 19–20; Denuzzo 2003, 78–79.

state of conservation and the lack of 'diagnostic' data prevent us from formulating hypotheses concerning the milieu of production and context of circulation. However, the fragment's general appearance, the fact that it is written only on the recto in broadly horizontal lines with a regular interlinear space (ca. 0.4 cm) and a distance between the letters, in an upright bookhand with thickening at the lower and upper extremities of the vertical strokes, swashes (e.g. in *delta*, although not systematically), and the presence of three *vacua* — possibly used as punctuation (ll. 2, 5, and 8) — all suggest that what we have is an artefact of reasonable, and in any case professional, craftsmanship.

The third and final fragment (*P.Oxy.* IV 679),[48] lost during the Second World War, contains small parts of an account of Alexander's Asian expedition, which, according to the editors B.P. Grenfell and A.S. Hunt,[49] may have been composed by Ptolemy I Soter. L. Prandi agrees, adding new elements to their hypothesis. Based on palaeographic data, the fragment has been assigned to the 1st c. BC by the editors.[50]

In its published form, the fragment (ca. 12.5 × 6.1 cm) comprises parts of the right-hand side of the first 21 lines of one column and minimal remains of the first 27 lines of the next column. Of the latter, ll. 4–9 have been completely lost, while as regards ll. 1–3 and 10–27 we only have minimal traces of the initial parts, with a single word preserved intact in l. 21: βασιλεια (interpreted as βασιλεία by L. Prandi).[51] Regarding the *paragraphoi* identified by the editors below ll. 1, 16, and 21, it is obviously impossible to establish their function, just as it is impossible to infer anything from the fact that ll. 14–24 show letters with a smaller module than the others.[52]

In the surviving parts of the first column, local terms (ll. 1; 2–3), proper nouns (l. 2), and military terms (ll. 12–13; 20) were recognised, enabling the original editors to assign the action described in the papyrus to an operation in Cilicia. Through a comparison with Arrian (*Anabasis* 3.16,9–10), L. Prandi was able to identify this operation as the task which Alexander entrusted to Menetes in 331 BC, supporting the editors' suggestion that the passage may derive from the writings of Ptolemy I Soter. Specifically, she stresses that "the palaeographic dating of the writing to the 1st c. BC indicates a period in which the survival and the circulation of Ptolemy were assured".[53]

48 MP^3 2198; LDAB 6769; TM 65519.

49 Grenfell/Hunt 1904, 127.

50 Grenfell/Hunt 1904, 127.

51 Prandi 2009, 32.

52 Grenfell/Hunt 1904, 127.

53 Prandi 2009, 87.

Among the Hellenistic papyri, it is these three that contain references to Alexander and/or figures associated with him and are thus open to historical interpretations regarding their content and historiographical observations about the genre or arrangement of the text. Among these we may include another Ptolemaic fragment on the Macedonian conqueror,[54] *P.Rain.* I 7 (1st c. BC/1st c. AD),[55] the so-called *Liber de morte testamentoque Alexandri*, associated above all with the "sensational" literature on Alexander.[56] Lastly, to this cluster we may add a fragment of Hellenistic historiography datable to the 3rd c. BC and coming from *cartonnage* (*P.Monts.Roca* IV 39).[57] It can perhaps be ascribed to the historiography on Alexander based on some references to a Eurydice and perhaps a Ptolemy. These copies are from the Ptolemaic period, confirming not just the typological variety of Greek historiography, but also the widespread interest in the multiform manifestations of this genre in Egypt, which continued in the Roman and Byzantine epochs.

There is no lack of fragments that resist classification but have been attributed to known authors, owing to certain characteristics in terms of content or the presence of references to recognisable events from Greek history, even though they have not been handed down by the medieval *paradosis*. One example is Theopompus, one of the six historians of the first canon that arose in the Alexandrian period according to R. Nicolai,[58] together with Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Philistus, and Ephorus: the eight fragments attributed to him were newly published by Claudio Biagetti in 2019 in a volume of the *Corpus dei Papiri Storici Greci e Latini*.[59] Three fragments believed to be by him are datable to the Ptolemaic period (*P.Hib.* I 15,[60] 280–250 BC; *P.Ryl.* III 490,[61] 3rd c. BC and PSI Laur. inv. 22013,[62] 2nd/1st c. BC), but only one of these, *P.Ryl.* III 490, perhaps part of his *Philippika*, is likely to be genuine. This actually consists of two non-contiguous fragments (a: 10.5 × 15.8 cm; b: 11 × 28.6 cm) which contain part of three consecutive columns (31 lines per column, with 13–31 letters per line, interlinear space constant and intercolumnium varying from ca. 1.5 to 2 cm), an upper margin of ca. 2.2 cm and a lower margin of ca. 2.8 cm;

54 For *P.Mil.Vogl.* I 21 (MP[3] 2199; LDAB 6789; TM 65538), a specimen in a mature, severe style, I adopt the dating of Funghi/Messeri 1992, 83–86, to the 2nd or 3rd c. AD.

55 MP[3] 2201; LDAB 6832; TM 65581.

56 On the relationship between the papyri and the Alexander Romance, see especially Heckel 1988, 1–18, and Stoneman 2007, LXXVII–LXXVIII.

57 MP[3] 2201.02; LDAB 219235; TM 219235.

58 Nicolai 1992, 249–339.

59 Biagetti 2019.

60 MP[3] 2496; LDAB 6983; TM 65729.

61 MP[3] 2192; LDAB 7007; TM 65753.

62 MP[3] 2558; LDAB 6773; TM 65523.

according to such measures, it is possible to infer that the *volumen* was originally at least 28.6 cm tall. The column is only slightly affected by Maas's law. No diacritics, accents, or punctuation marks are preserved. The two simple *paragraphoi* in col. III, each of one letter width and jutting slightly into the intercolumnium (see coll. III 5 and 12), identify a section of the account and suggest an analogous form of organisation in the rest of the copy.

The text, written in black ink with a round-nibbed pen, is in an upright majuscule, bilinear (except for *phi*), with a slight modular contrast and mixing of square and more sinuous forms. In some places there is a thickening of the extremities of some letters, especially in the horizontal stroke of the *tau*. The characteristic letters include *alpha* in two movements with a triangular eye; *epsilon* in two movements, in some cases with a jutting intermediate stroke; *omega* positioned in the upper part of the line, angular, and with the central element visible. C. Biagetti sees a correspondence between this fragment and P.Berol. inv. 13270[63] (a poetic anthology from Elephantine, roughly 300–284 BC), "a form of ω in a phase of transition from the more ancient type 'with a convex curve' to the version 'with a double bowl'",[64] but there is also a parallel with Aristander's letter to Zenon in *PSI* IV 383 (248/247 BC, from Philadelphia),[65] written in a sinuous bookhand, with a slight modular contrast. The proposed parallels date the writing of *P.Ryl.* III 490 to the first half of the 3rd c. BC. The papyrus contains a prose text in a concise style, which condenses the events into three columns, prompting its most recent editor to suggest that the roll contained the epitome of a more extended historiographical work regarding both the deeds of Philip and events affecting the Persian empire.[66]

In 1921,[67] when describing the batch of papyri destined for the John Rylands Library, B.P. Grenfell attributed the text to the Φιλιππικά of Theopompus. Subsequent attribution attempts were divided between those according to whom the papyrus contained the work of an Atthidographer, based on the use of chronographical annotations, and those who stressed the role of Philip II in the events described, considering the papyrus to be the summary of a work on his life and "career" and thus looking to the works of Anaximenes of Lampsacus and Theopompus of Chios. These two positions were respectively supported by H.T. Wade-Gery and C.H. Roberts, who worked together on the *editio princeps*.[68]

63 MP[3] 1924; LDAB 6927; TM 65674.
64 Biagetti 2019, 32.
65 TM 2067.
66 Biagetti 2019, 45.
67 Grenfell 1921, 151.
68 Roberts 1938, 110 and 112.

The annotations of the *editio princeps* represented a solid starting point for the subsequent work of M. Gigante, who upheld the idea of the text as a summary, which the author called “an epitome of Φιλιππικά [PRyl 490]”.[69]

Biagetti explored the question further, considering Roberts’ interpretation of *P.Ryl.* III 490. He also recognised a summary of the episodes of 339–337 BC (in most of which Philip II was the main figure), discussed by means of a simple and succinct presentation of the arguments in question. The most probable source seems to be Anaximenes’ or Theopompus’ Φιλιππικά,[70] but the admittedly unlikely possibility that this papyrus-based epitome was assembled from composite literary documentation — that is, documentation involving the simultaneous recourse to multiple sources — should not be ruled out.[71]

As for the intended readership of the papyrus, Roberts hypothesized that the text is likely to have circulated among the second generation of Philip’s veterans,[72] while Biagetti — on the basis of the formal correctness of the text and the use of diacritic notations — regards as plausible the idea of its “use within erudite circles interested in the study of the Attic oratory of the 4th century”.[73] These views appear to be little more than speculation, however, since neither is supported by actual evidence. Unfortunately, together with the impossibility of deriving from this specimen any information on its use, we must acknowledge — as the most recent editor rightly stresses — the extreme difficulty of establishing whether the text is a copy of a model epitome or a summary of the historical work written by the author for his own personal use.

Clearly not by Theopompus but just as relevant to the study of fragmentary historiography are the two other fragments mentioned above, which appear to have circulated in two completely different environments and suggest a varied use of this literary genre, foreshadowing the vast and varied historiography of the Roman epoch:

P.Hib. I 15 is composed of a group of ten fragments, the largest three of which (A: 20.6 × 15.4 cm; B: 19.1 × 18.5 cm; C: 15.3 × 8 cm) have six columns of text, to which may be added some much more limited parts from the other seven fragments. The average height of the columns, with 23 to 26 lines, is believed to have been ca. 17 cm, the width varying from ca. 5.7 to 6.7 cm: a fairly frequent size for the period of

69 Gigante 1946, 134.

70 Biagetti 2019, 60, that relies on Körte 1941, 129 and Parker 1995.

71 Biagetti also mentions the hypothesis that the papyrus was linked to less probable sources, such as the Ἀθτίϲ by Philochorus, the ϲύνταξιϲ by Di(i)llo, and the Ἱϲτορίαι by Duris.

72 Roberts 1938, 110.

73 Biagetti 2019, 45.

reference. The number of letters per line varies from 14 to 25. The upper margin is preserved to a depth of 1.7–1.8 cm, and the lower margin of 1.7 cm. The interlinear space is consistently 0.4–0.5 cm, while the intercolumnium is highly variable, ranging between 0.4 and 3.4 cm. Maas's law only minimally applies to these columns.

The text of *P.Hib.* I 15 is written in an upright bookhand, with the mixing of archaic square forms (*alpha* in three movements and *zeta* with a vertical median stroke), *theta* with a punctiform central element, and more sinuous forms (*beta* with rounded bowls, *eta* and *pi* with slightly curved external strokes, *my* with a curved central element, *rho* with a round eye, and *xi* with a central element reduced to a point and an undulating lower stroke). As a consequence, the letters have different size; the most characteristic include *omega*, with a rounded left bowl and a very small right bowl; *ny* with a slightly raised right stroke; and *phi* with an almost triangular central eye. A parallel among documents not from El-Hibeh is provided by L. Del Corso, who stresses the analogies between *P.Hib.* I 15 and some documents from the Zenon archive, as *PSI* IV 444 = *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59019, a letter to Zenon perhaps written in Alexandria around 258 BC.[74]

Punctuation consists in the use of the simple *paragraphos*, in some cases associated with hyphens in the body of the text. A *diorthotes*, who — as Biagetti rightly observes — may be the scribe of the main text, has written the corrections in the interlinear space, showing a certain grammatical sensitivity in rectifying the iotacistic forms ὑμεῖν (col. III 4; col. IV 4; col. V 6) and μειμεῖcθαι (col. III 5) and the repeated word παρακαλῶ by means of a strikethrough (col. III 24–25).

P.Hib. I 15 contains the remains of a speech in which a figure identified only as a *persona loquens* exhorts the public to decide on questions that for Biagetti concern "national security". The exhortation is conducted with reference to conventional themes such as the education of the young (col. IV 2–14) and the battles of Marathon and Salamis (col. V 9–10), and it might contain an appeal to follow the example of one's ancestors (col. III 1–5).

According to Blass, who was the first to examine the text, and then to Grenfell and Hunt, the background to the *oratio* is the political upheaval in Athens following the death of Alexander the Great,[75] and the anonymous orator might be the Athenian commander Leosthenes, a key figure in the initial phase of the Lamian War.[76] However, as Biagetti rightly points out, the lack of a clear context and the uncertainty surrounding some textual readings, the presence of which is decisive, make the hypothesis unreliable and suggests the need for prudence, although it is possible to date

74 Del Corso 2004, 46.

75 Blass *ap*. Grenfell/Hunt 1906, 55.

76 See Diod. Sic. 17.111.1–4; 189.1–13, esp. 6.

the composition of the discourse to between 480 BC (Battle of Salamis: col. V 10) and the mid 3rd c. BC, when the text was transcribed.

The hypothesis that the speech (or speeches) of *P.Hib.* I 15 are merely a rhetorical exercise was proposed by Blass and accepted by K. Jander.[77]

The most recent editor also appears to be open to his idea, affirming that the artefact may contain a historical μελετή with careful writing and a precise arrangement of the text in the non-written space.[78] As is known above all from recent research into educational practices in the ancient world,[79] it is not always possible to distinguish a school writing exercise from a passage in a textbook or a fragment of a literary work, when the textual tradition of the passage is uncertain. Moreover, a study by Del Corso[80] further focuses on the physical and palaeographic features of the written items linked to 'school' environments, insisting on their peculiar, extreme variability, encompassing as they do both texts written by unskilled hands and products created by individuals accustomed to writing. They also include manuscripts of apparently modest craftsmanship and specimens of greater value. Moreover, in terms of content, the impossibility of making a distinction between a 'scholastic' declamation of historical subject-matter and a speech from a historiographical work was stressed in a study by R. Nicolai, who, examining the case of *P.Hib.* I 15, highlighted its affinity with the deliberative genre, without excluding an original historiographical purpose.[81] A recent study by Del Corso convincingly includes our papyrus in a set of "rhetorical material, which can be compared to later collections of progymnasmata",[82] relying on three relevant aspects: 1. The occurrence of some stylistic changes added by the scribe; 2. The palaeographic features of *P.Hib.* I 15 and their relation to the so called "scritture di rispetto"; 3. The fact that "*P. Hib.* I 15 is not too dissimilar from *P.Hib.* I 26: a rhetorical text useful for whoever wished to learn or practice rhetoric, and written by someone with a bureaucratic training or at least familiar with bureaucratic scripts".

However, even assuming that speech of *P.Hib.* I 15 may well be part of a historical work, it should be noted that it would be impossible to identify its author. Out of the various hypotheses suggested by scholars, the most plausible perhaps is

77 Blass *apud* Grenfell/Hunt 1906, 55; Fuhr 1906, 14; Jander 1913, 33; Edwards 1929, 117; Russell 1983, 4 n. 6.

78 Cribiore 1996, 97–102.

79 Cribiore 1996, 51–52; Stramaglia 2015, 162–164.

80 Del Corso 2010.

81 Nicolai 2008, 154–158.

82 Del Corso 2020, 49–50.

therefore the attribution to Anaximenes (as suggested by Mathieu)[83] or Duris (as suggested by Biagetti).[84]

PSI Laur. inv. 22013 is a fragment of a papyrus roll (7 × 20.5 cm) containing what remains of two columns of text, about 16 cm high and composed of 27 and 29 lines, with an upper margin of ca. 2.2 cm and a lower margin of ca. 3 cm, the roll having an estimated height of ca. 23–24 cm.[85] The lines are separated by an intercolumnium that progressively narrows from ca. 1.8 the top to 0.7 cm at the bottom and is rendered oblique by Maas's law. Striking to the observer is the change of dimensions starting from col. II 12, a variation that R. Pintaudi attributes to a change of pen.[86] In contrast, on the basis of the results of L. Del Corso's influential 2010 study of 'collective' writing practices,[87] Biagetti argues that although the letters of the two parts are written in a similar way, there may have been a change of scribe:

> it cannot be excluded however that the text was written by two different hands, the one (col. I 1 – II 11) characterized by a very dense rounded writing, in a small module with slightly cursive elements (α, κ, υ, μ; cf. Pintaudi[-Canfora], 81) and ligatures (col. I 1: προcδεχ**όμ**εθα; col. I 2: χει**μῶ**νοc), the other (col. II 12–29) thinner, in a larger module, with greater spacing between the individual letters and narrower interlinear spaces.

This hypothesis should definitely be taken into consideration.

Regardless of the reasons for the change in the writing, the fragments show some palaeographic characteristics that are also seen in documentary papyri dated to the end of the 2nd c. BC: some strokes are markedly curved; letters are leaning on each other and may be joined in ligatures; there is no real ornamentation, but there can be thickenings at the top of some letters (see e.g. *eta*, *iota*, *ny*, *pi*, *rho*, *tau*, and *ypsilon*). Other elements worth noting are: *alpha*, drawn in two movements with the curve of the eye in some cases sinuous, in others rigid; *epsilon*, also drawn in two movements with protruding median line; *my*, with oblique strokes joined in a single curved line, in some cases almost flat; and *omega*, with a pronounced double bowl. The last editor suggests as a parallel *PSI* III 166, a petition from Panopolis, written in 118 BC.[88]

In addition to *vacua* and *paragraphoi*, marking the progression of the sentences and the change of speaker in *oratio recta*, there are two diacritics in the

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83 Mathieu 1929, 160–161.

84 Biagetti 2019, 41–43.

85 Pintaudi/Canfora 2010, 83–84.

86 Pintaudi/Canfora 2010, 85.

87 Del Corso 2010b.

88 Biagetti 2019, 62.

intercolumnium, in correspondence with col. II 19 and 21: in the first case, its shape recalls that of the Arabic number six, while in the second case, near to the *paragraphos* between lines 21 and 22, "a curved mark, almost a parenthesis" is observed. The text was clearly modified by a corrector, who rectified the text in several cases, without however eliminating all the errors.[89]

The historic background of PSI Laur. inv. 22013 was recognised by L. Canfora, who in a recent study of the fragment[90] identified its content as the trial of the Athenian strategists immediately after the Battle of Arginusae (406 BC).

The probable presence of a narrative interlude, sandwiched between two speeches (ll. 18–21), suggests that PSI Laur. inv. 22013 was derived from a work of historical prose. Considering the topic discussed, Canfora put forward the names of Theopompus, Ephorus, and Duris as the potential authors of the passage, without excluding "other candidates, who however are beyond our powers of identification".[91] Biagetti, however, emphasising the impossibility of verifying Theopompus' authorship due to the lack of evidence concerning Books II and III, to which Canfora tentatively assigned the passage, as well as the weakness of the clues pointing to Ephorus or Duris, prudently leaves the question open:

> there does not seem to be sufficient evidence to establish the authorship of the passage transmitted by PSI Laur. inv. 22013, not only because generic thematic and stylistic considerations are not enough in themselves to assign the content to a specific author, but also because — more generally — neither the claim that it belongs to a historic work nor its admittedly plausible connection to the trial arising from the Battle of Arginusae have been demonstrated.

A few brief observations can perhaps be made about the fragment's material aspects: the "irregular" nature of the copy, the variation of the intercolumnar and interlinear spaces and the alternation of two different hands (or two different pens) all somewhat limit the copy's editorial value. At the same time, in our specimen, the presence of an elaborate system of punctuation, the signs of revision, and the use of diacritics whose meaning is not immediately clear, all point to a field of use related to study, although we cannot say precisely in what way.

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89 Gallavotti 1939, 260; Pintaudi/Canfora 2010, 85.

90 Pintaudi/Canfora 2010, 88–92.

91 Pintaudi/Canfora 2010, 93.

3 Texts also Known from Medieval Manuscripts

We should not neglect the direct and indirect evidence provided by texts that have been handed down via medieval codices. Those of the Ptolemaic epoch are currently limited to three fragments: one by Herodotus and two by Thucydides. There are no Xenophon fragments from the Hellenistic period.

3.1 Herodotus

The only Herodotean papyrus assigned to the Hellenistic period is P.Duk. inv. 756 + P.Mil.Vogl. inv. 756.[92] The two fragments were published at different times: in 2002 by R. Hatzilambrou (P.Duk. inv. 756, ca. 6 × 12.7 cm),[93] and in 2005 by A. Soldati (P.Mil.Vogl. inv. 756, ca. 6.7 × 6 cm),[94] who established a connection between them and correctly dated them to the 2nd or 1st c. BC. The two fragments belonged to a papyrus roll with the text written parallel to the fibres, with columns ca. 6.5 cm wide, an average of 17–18 letters per line, and an intercolumnium of ca. 2 cm — a significant width for the Ptolemaic period.[95] The lower margin, preserved only in the case of P.Duk. inv. 756, measures at least 4 cm. The interlinear space, broadly constant and double the height of the writing, is ca. 0.4 cm. The letters maintain a constant distance from each other, except for a few cases in which they touch. The text runs parallel to the fibres and was written using a thin, round-nibbed pen. The other side is blank. No diacritics or accents are preserved; the only certain punctuation mark is a simple *paragraphos* with the same width as a letter between lines 6 and 7, corresponding to a logical pause. The script is a majuscule in a small-to-medium-sized bilinear upright bookhand (ca. 0.35 cm × ca. 0.2 cm), in which angular shapes (e.g. *alpha* with a highly pointed eye) alternate with more sinuous ones (e.g. *epsilon*, *sigma*, *omega*). The script is characterized by a tendency for oblique strokes (e.g. *kappa*, *ny*) and horizontal strokes (e.g. *eta*, *pi*) to be slightly convex. Characteristic letters include a slightly oval *epsilon*, with the intermediate stroke in some cases detached from the body of the letter and slightly descending; *eta*, with the horizontal stroke slightly descending; *tau* with a 'split' crossbar and a very small foot pointing to the left at the base of the vertical stem; *omega* raised significantly

92 *Hist*. IV 144, 2–145,1; 147, 4–5; MP[3] 474.11; LDAB 1119; TM 60005.
93 Hatzilambrou 2002, 41–45.
94 Soldati 2005, 101–106.
95 Johnson 2004, 113–114 and Blanchard 1993. Blanchard records an intercolumnium of 1 to 2 cm in *P.Hib.* I 15.

above the baseline, with rounded bowls, of which the right-hand one descends further than the left.

The two fragments do not show any particular "diagnostic" characteristics. Thus, without even knowing their provenance, it is impossible to propose a context of circulation. It would appear, however, to be a professional copy of Book IV, of average quality, written with care and rich in Ionic forms, as highlighted by the editor of P.Mil.Vogl. inv. 756.

3.2 Thucydides

Although the Thucydidean documentation as a whole is rather abundant, for the Hellenistic period the corpus is numerically minimal but highly significant, for the reconstruction of the circulation of Thucydides' writings in the ancient world.[96] It comprises only two papyri: *P.Hamb.* II 163 and P.CtYBR inv. 4601.

P.Hamb. II 163 (3rd c. BC; *Hist*. 1.2.2–3; 2.6–3.1; 28.3–5; 29.3)

The papyrus was published by B. Snell in 1954 in a very concise edition that rightly focused on the significant textual details, but neglected its more strictly bibliological and palaeographic aspects.[97] It was first assigned to the 1st c. AD, but only two years later E.G. Turner proposed to date it to the 3rd c. BC, stressing its importance for the Thucydidean tradition. It is composed of a pair of fragments (A = P.Hamb.Graec. 646: ca. 7 × 9 cm; B = P.Hamb.Graec. 666: ca. 4.7 × 11 cm) from *cartonnage*. Fr. A has 13 lines of writing from the central part of a column of which the beginning is missing, followed by the first one or two letters of 12 lines from the next column, while fr. B has the central portion of 17 lines of writing. The text was written in black ink using a round-nibbed pen. The column, ca. 6 cm wide, is believed to have contained 33–34 lines of perfectly horizontal writing; each line had an average of 19 letters, well distributed at a constant distance from each other without ligatures. The interlinear space is constant and measures ca. 0.4 cm and the letters are ca. 2.8 cm high on average. The intercolumnium is narrow, as is typical

96 I discuss the two specimens in Pellé 2022, 15, 49, 95–96. See also Pellé 2023, 248–262.
97 MP^3 1504, LDAB 4117; TM 62925.

for Ptolemaic-era papyri,[98] but not constant, varying between ca. 0.5 and 1.0 cm. The column is slightly affected by Maas's law, as can be seen from the position of the initial letters of the lines of fr. A col. II. The height of the column, reconstructed on the basis of the preserved portion, is believed to have been ca. 22.5 cm. Since the margins have all been lost, the height of the roll cannot be determined. We shall limit ourselves here to recalling that the data on the number of lines and the height of the column prompted Blanchard, in his 1993 bibliological study of literary papyri extracted from *cartonnages*, to classify it among the larger rolls, those 26 cm or higher.[99] The estimated number of letters per column and a comparison with the modern editors' printed text rule out the possibility that before our fragment there were originally two columns of writing, as the first editor argued: the text of the papyrus begins about 990 letters after the beginning of Book I, which suggests that the portion of text that was lost was slightly less than what would be contained in a column and a half. The original roll plausibly contained the whole of Book I. In that case, given that the estimated number of lines per column varied from 33 to 34, and the average number of letters per column thus varied from 627 to 646,[100] the roll was made up of about 189 columns and was about 13 m long, considering the variability of the width of the intercolumnium.[101] It is written in an elegant, small-to-medium-sized upright bookhand with ornamental *apices*, characterized by the presence of both square and rounded elements, with a modular contrast between wide letters (*eta*, *kappa*, *my*, *ny*, *tau*) and narrow letters (*epsilon*, *theta*, *omicron*, *sigma*); *my* traced in 4 movements; *theta* rounded, very small with a central dot; *upsilon* with a wide and deep cup; and *omega* written in the upper part of the line, with an evident central element and deep rounded bowls, of which the right-hand one is narrower than the left. The writing is typical of the second half of the 3rd c. BC, with modular contrast.[102] A good parallel might be *P.Hib.* I 1 (Ps.-Epich., *Sententiae*, 280–240 BC),[103] which, like our fragment, is from *cartonnage*. There are no diacritics

98 Our fragment is no. 20 of group E in Blanchard 1993, 28. Johnson 2004, 113 points out that the available sample of Ptolemaic papyri from Oxyrhynchus is too small to be able to make any universally applicable remarks. However, he observes that whereas in the Roman period rolls characterized by good craftsmanship typically had wide intercolumnia, for the Ptolemaic papyri the pattern seems to be inverted: for high-quality editions, narrow intercolumnia were preferred. In any case, he records a tendency to use narrow intercolumnia for Ptolemaic-era rolls.

99 Blanchard 1993, 33.

100 Blanchard 1993, 36 and 39.

101 The length ranges from ca. 12.9 to 13.2 m, applying to the length of Book I the numerical values given in Johnson 2004, 223. This is slightly less than what was calculated by Blanchard 1993, 39.

102 Cavallo 2008, 35–36; Del Corso 2004, 39–53.

103 MP^3 363; LDAB 3856; TM 62668.

or accents, and the punctuation involves the use of a *vacuum* one letter wide. On the basis of the considerations set out thus far, *P.Hamb.* II 163 should be seen as a high-quality copy, intended to be kept in a library.

The verso of fr. B, published as *P.Hamb.* II 124,[104] preserves "fifteen verses of a highly fragmentary poem in couplets",[105] plausibly from the *Aetia Romana*,[106] and was dated by Snell, its first editor,[107] to the 3rd or 2nd c. BC. The Thucydidean roll, having become unusable as the result of damage or wear or for some other reason that we are unable to determine, was partly recycled to contain another literary work, plausibly shorter than Book I of the Peloponnesian War. This would be consistent with the hypothesis that the Thucydidean roll was rendered unusable by material damage affecting only a certain part of it, or perhaps by the splitting of the *volumen* into two parts, which made it possible to transcribe another literary work on the verso of part of the roll.[108] The writing on the recto suggests that this is a professional copy. The copy on the verso probably was less expensive than the elegant Thucydidean copy, but given the more "specialist" nature of its content, it may have circulated in an academic context.

Although the literary papyrus catalogues record the provenance of the *cartonnage* as unknown, in 2010 M.R. Falivene convincingly proposed to include it among the documents of the so-called 'Al-Hibah series',[109] a group of papyri whose provenance from Hibeh is indicated by internal elements, i.e. a combination of places, persons, and the business with which they were connected. Confirmation of the provenance of our *cartonnage* is provided by the close resemblance of the text of *P.Hamb.* II 163 to the formal writing of papyri recognised as coming from that site,[110] especially *P.Hib.* I 1, cited above, but also, according to L. Del Corso, *P.Hib.* I 88 (perhaps originally from Herakleopolis), a papyrus regarding a cash loan dated to the period between August 4 and September 5, 263 BC.[111] This is consistent with the assignment of *P.Hamb.* II 163 to Group C of the Ptolemaic papyri analysed by Turner

104 MP^3 1770; LDAB 7029; TM 65775.

105 Barbantani 2000, 77.

106 Barbantani 2000, 78–99.

107 *P.Hamb.* II, p. 32. *Ed. alt. SH* 957, 458–459.

108 On the frequency of material damage to literary rolls, in addition to Blanchard 1993, 17 and n. 10, with further bibliography, see at least Puglia 1995 and Puglia 1997.

109 Falivene 2010, 210 3 n. 18, 211 and the tables on p. 215.

110 A resemblance already highlighted in Del Corso 2004, 43.

111 TM 2819.

in his fundamental study *Ptolemaic Bookhands and the Lille Stesichorus*,[112] where several papyri from Al Hibah are discussed.[113]

Fr. A keeps part of *Hist.* 1.2–3, in which Thucydides describes the nomadic lifestyle of the populations that originally inhabited Greece, affirming that the various groups that occupied the area were not farmers and were preyed upon by rival groups partly because of their lack of defensive walls; furthermore, expecting to be able to find what was necessary for survival wherever they went, they moved frequently and thus had no large cities or other defensive resources.

As has been already well discussed, in 1.2.2 the text of the fragment presents διανοίᾳ instead of παρασκευῇ, seen in medieval manuscripts and the indirect tradition. It is recorded as a variant by H^2 on the basis of a comparison between H (Cod. Graec. 1734, Parisinus, 14th c.) and a lost manuscript, ξ, derived from the most ancient Thucydidean manuscript in a majuscule script, Ξ. A. Kleinlogel[114] and G.B. Alberti[115] regarded this mistake seen in two versions as proof of the existence of a tradition, i.e. Ξ, of the pre-Alexandrian or proto-Alexandrian era. The continued circulation of this tradition in the post-Alexandrian era is confirmed by multiple cases of agreement between the papyri of the Roman period and the *recentiores* representatives of ξ. The most frequently cited case is *P.Pisa.Lit.* 5 (= *P.Bodmer* XXVII), a miscellaneous codex of the 3rd and 4th c. AD from a Christian monastery in Upper Egypt, which, in addition to passages from the New Testament, also contains 6.1.1–2,6, with various cases of agreement with that tradition, in particular with the correctors of H (H^2). This confirms that even in a peripheral area far from Alexandria, alongside the "canonical" tradition, which existed and circulated in Roman Egypt, the ancient proto-Alexandrian tradition continued to survive.

The Greek passage is printed by G.B. Alberti as follows:[116]

> [...] τῆϲ τε καθ' ἡμέραν ἀναγκαίου τροφῆϲ πανταχοῦ ἂν ἡγούμενοι ἐπικρατεῖν, οὐ χαλεπῶϲ ἀπανίϲταντο, καὶ δι' αὐτὸ οὔτε μεγέθει πόλεων ἴϲχυον οὔτε τῇ ἄλλῃ παραϲκευῇ.

Almost all modern critics, including editors of Thucydides's texts, such as Luschnat[117] and Kleinlogel,[118] and other scholars working on his writings, such as

112 Turner 1980, 19–40.
113 Turner 1980, 27–30. From Hibeh are nos. 11, 15, 17 (*P.Hamb.* II 163), 20, 21.
114 Kleinlogel 1965, 39–40.
115 Alberti 1972; Alberti 1992.
116 Alberti 1972, 26–27.
117 Luschnat 1954.
118 Kleinlogel 1965, 7.

A. Carlini,[119] agree on this reconstruction of the passage, with a few exceptions, discussed below. In the *Addendum* to his landmark paper of 1956, E.G. Turner[120] believed it noteworthy that this was a *lectio difficilior*, and he returned to the topic in his 1968 handbook,[121] translating the passage as "they were not strong in size of their cities, or in mental attitude". Turner stressed that παρασκευῆ and διανοίᾳ were both respectable ancient variants, the former of which — for unknown reasons — was chosen for "the ruling ancient edition", while the other was preserved in "another edition".

In 1995, in his study on interpolation in Thucydides, K. Maurer[122] expressed a preference for διανοίᾳ, interpreting it as "nor, either, in their plans". He based his choice on the occurrence of διάνοια with that meaning in three other passages of the *Historiae,* in which the sense of "intention" is extended to mean something more concrete, i.e. the plan of action.[123] In this regard, he deemed it highly significant that in another passage of the work, 6.65.1, the infinitive παρασκευάϲθαι had in his view been incorporated into the text despite having originally been a gloss (written in the margin) on the expression εἶναι ἐν διανοίᾳ. The verb, expunged by Duker in 1731,[124] continued to be considered spurious in Marchant's *editio maior*[125] but was accepted as part of the text by Powell.[126] De Romilly[127] and Alberti[128] keep it while mentioning its removal in the notes.

In 1998, H. Maehler confirmed the value of the variant, which had survived in a tradition independent from the medieval *paradosis* and translated διανοίᾳ as "thanks to their *character*".[129]

In 2012, B. Bravo revisited the issue,[130] accepting διάνοια and translating the whole sentence as follows: "[…] they abandoned their lands without difficulty and thus were strong neither in terms of the size of the *poleis* nor in terms of their corresponding capacity to conceive projects". He argued that over time διανοίᾳ was replaced by παρασκευῆ (already not implausibly in *P.Oxy.* LVII 3877, 2nd c. AD),

119 Carlini 1975, 36.
120 Turner 1956, 98.
121 Turner 1968, 112.
122 Maurer 1995, 100–101.
123 2.43.1; 2.61.2; 6.15.4.
124 Duker 1731, 419.
125 Marchant 1897, 67.
126 Jones/Powell 1942, 114.
127 De Romilly 1963, 48.
128 Alberti 2000, 63.
129 Maehler 1998, 32.
130 Bravo 2012, 48–51.

perhaps by the hand of a corrector or an editor, possibly under the influence of 6.31.1: here the two nouns are used side by side with somewhat similar meanings, which may have led a corrector or an editor to consider them synonyms and to introduce παραcκευῇ as a gloss in the margin; over time, the latter would appear to have been incorporated into the text, replacing διανοίᾳ.

The question has most recently been examined by M. Capasso, who, like Bravo, prefers διανοίᾳ but interprets it, "as is often the case in Thucydides, as 'plan, purpose, programme'".[131]

None of the proposed translations appear to be fully satisfactory with respect to the context in question, in which the term παραcκευῇ, which already appears in 1.1 παραcκευῇ τῇ πάcῃ (which, following Canfora, may be interpreted as "in each sector of the war machine"),[132] better renders the causal relationship between the tendency to nomadism and the lack of any means of defence.

The clearest interpretation of the passage seems to be that of L. Canfora, who in the edition of the work he edited states: "and precisely as a result of this disposition towards nomadism they had neither large cities nor other substantial defensive resources".[133]

For the next passage, Bravo again prefers the text of the papyrus, but the only modern scholar to defend this position is Maddalena,[134] who argues that the expression Πελοπόννηcόc τε πλὴν Ἀρκαδίαc was corrupted into Πελοποννήcου τε τὰ πολλὰ πλὴν Ἀρκαδίαc under the influence of the genitive τῆc ἄλληc, which in this view prompted the scribe to amend Πελοπόννηcόc τε into Πελοποννήcου τε τὰ πολλὰ.

The third significant *lectio* of the fragment is the imperfect of 1.2.6 ἐξέπεμπον, which in the papyrus is represented only by an uncertain *pi*, which Snell expands, based on Hude's edition, into an aorist. The verb is also deemed aorist in Jones-Powell and Luschnat, the first editor of Thucydides to use the papyrus, while Maddalena[135] and Alberti[136] choose the imperfect, which they compare to the form ἀνεχώρουν, which expresses the causal relationship between the continuous enrichment of the population and the creation of colonies in Ionia.

The second fragment of *P.Hamb.* II 163, which contains parts of *Hist.* 1.28–29, with the passage in which the Korkyrans propose a truce with the Corinthians, is badly damaged: following Turner,[137] we shall only mention here the possibility of

131 Capasso 2022, 363.
132 Canfora 1996, 5.
133 Canfora 1996, 7.
134 Maddalena1955, 422.
135 Maddalena 1955, 422.
136 Alberti 1972, 27.
137 Turner 1956, 97 n. 24.

adopting ἀπα|[γάγωcι] in ll. 7–8 rather than ἀπά|[γωcι], given that the number of missing letters (10–15) and the effects of Maas's law clearly make ἀπα|[γάγωcι] preferable.

P.CtYBR inv. 4601 (3rd/2nd c. BC; *Hist*. 8.93.3; 94.3; 95.2–3)

This papyrus[138] was recovered from a *cartonnage* that the University of Yale purchased in 1997 from the Nefer Gallery in Zurich.[139] From the same *cartonnage* are 15 documentary fragments,[140] all belonging to the Euphranor archive, named after the *strategos* of the Herakleopolites.[141] These are mostly petitions dated to June and July 137 BC, addressed to the *epistrategos* Boethos[142] and forwarded to Euphranor. With all due caution, it appears plausible that the Thucydidean *volumen* also comes from the same office. Concerning literary papyri from *cartonnage*, the observations made by A. Blanchard in his bibliological study *Les papyrus littéraires grecques extraits de cartonnage* remain valid:[143] they are clearly not specimens taken from the prestigious library of Alexandria, but much more modest books, used by the Greek conquerors (officials and perhaps even simple soldiers) in the *chora*, whose administrative archives found in the *cartonnages* also illustrate their activities. These books, true symbols of Greek culture, were read repeatedly until they fell apart, which explains their "disposal" (*mise au rebut*, says Blanchard) and their reuse in *cartonnages*.[144] The palaeographic characteristics of our *volumen* suggest an earlier dating than the documentary materials, to the 3rd or 2nd c. BC. But, as Turner explains with reference to literary papyri recovered from *cartonnages* and the Lille Stesichorus, this is not unusual in materials of this type.[145]

The papyrus was published by K.W. Wilkinson in 2005 and consists of a pair of fragments (fr. 1: ca. 6.5 × 5.25 cm, fr. 2: ca. 9.5 × 5.0 cm) and a third smaller fragment (fr. 3: ca. 0.3 x 0.25 cm) of uncertain collocation, all from the same roll. The Thucydidean text is written parallel to the fibres on the side that is plausibly the recto. The

138 MP^3 1534.001; LDAB 10615; TM 69677.

139 See https://beinecke.library.yale.edu/research-teaching/doing-research-beinecke/introduction-yale-papyrus-collection/guide-yale-papyrus (last visit March 2024).

140 *P.Yale* IV 138–152, edited by R. Duttenhöfer, forthcoming.

141 TM Arch. Id. 658.

142 On the *strategos* Boethos, see Kramer 1997; Heinen 1997; Quenouille 2002.

143 Blanchard 1993, 15–40.

144 Blanchard 1993, 24. A similar concept is developed in Del Corso 2023, esp. 339–352.

145 On the relationship between the dating of the documents and that of the books recovered from the same *cartonnage*, see Turner 1980, 19–40, esp. 22–25 and the postscript to the same study, 39–40.

other side is blank. Fr. 1 contains part of the upper margin (about 3 cm of which are preserved), the right-hand extremity of the first four lines of a column and, after an intercolumnium between ca. 0.4 and 0.8 cm wide, the initial part of the first six lines of the next column. Fr. 2 contains the last 14 lines of this latter column and part of the lower margin (about 2 cm of which is preserved). The two columns, whose length was calculated by the editor to be 35 lines, with an average of 19 letters per line, are strongly affected by Maas's law (5–6 for column I, 6–7 for column II).[146] The average width, based on column II, is ca. 5.2 cm and the reconstructed height is ca. 18.5 cm, which would give a height for the roll of at least 23.5 cm. A comparison between the text of the papyrus and that of the modern critical editions shows that the roll was probably made up of 153 columns and had a length of 9 m. The text was written in black ink using a pen with a thin round nib. There are no diacritics or accents. In two cases, to mark the end of a sentence, a *vacuum* one letter in width (col. II 6 and 29) is used. The letters were arranged in an orderly fashion by an expert hand on perfectly horizontal lines with a constant interlinear space (ca. 0.3 cm).

The text is written in an upright bookhand decorated with small *apices*, clear but not elegant, bilinear, characterized by the alternation of rounded shapes (especially *beta*, *epsilon*, *my*, *omicron*, and *sigma*) with more angular ones (*alpha*, *kappa*, and *upsilon*) and by a slight modular contrast. The most characteristic letters include: *alpha* with a triangular eye and slightly curved descending oblique stroke; *beta* with two carefully drawn bowls, of which the lower is wider than the upper one; *my* drawn in three movements, in some cases with a deep curve; *xi* written in the epigraphical form; and *phi* with a broad oval ring.

Given its physical and bibliological characteristics, the artefact can be considered a *volumen* of no particular value, although it is professional and crafted with care. The few surviving lines contain a considerable number of textual variants, a characteristic shared with the previously examined *P.Hamb.* II 163.

Due to its publication date, the papyrus could not be considered in G.B. Alberti's edition, nor in the study by S. Poli — who in 2001 further analysed the relationships between the Thucydidean papyri and the source Ξ —[147] or in the above-mentioned works by B. Bravo. The Yale papyrus shows a text that differs in some cases from that of the medieval *paradosis*. In other cases, although it does not systematically agree with any particular branch of the tradition, it always provides the correct reading, as stressed by the editor in the notes.[148]

146 Wilkinson 2005, 69 and n. 4.

147 Poli 2001.

148 For a comparison see *P.Petr.* II 50 (MP^3 1409; LDAB 3836; TM 62650) in Pontani 1995.

It should be pointed out straight away that in col. I 1–3 the papyrus could not have contained the *textus receptus* of 8.93–94 (γιγνο]μένων | [ἠπιώτερον ἦν ἢ πρότερον] καὶ ἐ|[φοβεῖτο μάλιστα] π̣ερὶ τοῦ | [παντὸς πολιτικοῦ), which would have required a line five letters longer than the average length of 19. Faced with a compact tradition, the editor argues that this is a case of haplography, which is fairly plausible considering the succession of similar sounds in the phrase ἠπιώτερον ἦν ἢ πρότερον.

Fr. 2 contains the following *lectiones singulares*: the correct form of the accusative Θυμοχάρη in 8.95.2 (preferred by modern editors but not seen in the codices, which instead have Θυμοχάρην or Θυμοχάριν), the parenthesis immediately before the name of the *strategos* and the clause that begins with an absolute genitive in 95.3. The parenthesis contains the corrupted Εὐβοίας γὰρ αὐτοῖϲ ἀποκεκλ̣η̣μένηϲ τὰ τῆϲ Ἀττικῆϲ πάντα ἦμ in place of the correct Εὐβοία γὰρ αὐτοῖϲ ἀποκεκλ̣η̣μένηϲ τῆϲ Ἀττικῆϲ πάντα ἦν of 8.95.2–3. Immediately after this, the papyrus has ἀφικομένων οὖν ϲὺμ πάϲαιϲ ταῖϲ πρότερον ἐν Εὐβοίᾳ οὔϲαιϲ ἓξ καὶ τριάκοντα ἐγένοντο in place of ὧν ἀφικομένων ξὺν ταῖϲ πρότερον ἐν Εὐβοίᾳ οὔϲαιϲ ἓξ καὶ τριάκοντα ἐγένοντο. Grammatically, this is admissible, given that the *vacuum* in the papyrus suggests an emphatic logical pause and that in Thucydides a similar construction at the beginning of a sentence occurs in 6.75.4.1 (ἀφικομένων οὖν ἐκ μὲν ϲυρακουϲῶν Ἑρμοκράτουϲ καὶ ἄλλων ἐϲ τὴν Καμάριναν ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν Ἀθηναίων Εὐφήμου μεθ' ἑτέρων, ὁ Ἑρμοκράτηϲ ξυλλόγου γενομένου τῶν Καμαριναίων βουλόμενοϲ προδιαβάλλειν τοὺϲ Ἀθηναίουϲ ἔλεγε τοιάδε). However, this would require a genitive plural as the subject to complete the parallel. It is tempting to interpret the traces of the last two surviving letters in l. 30 differently and to read ἀφικομένων οὖν ϲυμπαϲῶν, which however would give us a line that is too short. It would also be impossible to correlate with the dative of the next line, unless we assume ϲυμπαϲῶν ϲύν ταῖϲ, which is extremely rare: only five cases are recorded by the *TLG*, of which only two are from Antiquity (Aristot., *Athen. Pol.* 19.6.8 and Diod. Sic. 19.27.1.2).

Similar considerations can be made for ϲὺμ πάϲαιϲ in l. 30, which however is also a very rare expression (just 21 occurrences). It first appears in Greek literature in Philochorus in the 4th or 3rd c. BC and then, apart from one occurrence in Dio Chrysostom and another in Sextus Empiricus, is not seen again until Byzantine literature.[149]

In any case, the version in the papyrus is not found in the medieval manuscript tradition, nor can it be established whether it is the text of source Ξ, since in this case not even the *recentiores* are of any help. Indeed, H stops at 8.50 and concerning this passage there are no recorded interventions by Nf[2] (Neapolitanus III-B-10, 1320–1340),

149 According to a query made on TLG there are no more occurrences for this reference.

Pi[2], Pi[3] (Par. gr. 1638, 15th c.), Pl[3] (Par. suppl. gr. 256, 11th c.), Va[2] (Vat. gr. 127, a. 1372) or Ot[3] (Vat. Ott. gr. 211, early 14th c.), i.e. the correctors who availed themselves of specimen ξ to amend the text handed down in their respective manuscripts. Even Lorenzo Valla's Latin translation gives the text of the medieval codices.

The text handed down by the Yale fragments contains distinctive orthographic features linked to the specific scribe or the particular writing habits of that time (such as the assimilation of the nasal before the labial and the non-adoption of the form ξυν for cυν). However, as Turner supposed for the Hamburg fragments, the text may also have been manipulated by the scribe in order to simplify it and thus may be the result of an erroneous interpretation of the antigraph rather than any discrepancy between the antigraph's text and that of the main tradition.[150] It is not currently possible to establish the relationship between that tradition and the tradition deriving from Ξ, which circulated in a plausibly contiguous geographical context.

4 Some Final Remarks

For the Herodotean and Thucydidean papyri of the Ptolemaic epoch, the observations made thus far have yielded information that can schematically be summarised as follows:

1. The two Thucydidean fragments come from professional copies of the *Historiae*, plausibly intended to be kept in a library, maybe in a district capital or in an even more peripheral town or city maybe in a district capital or in an even more peripheral town or city. These were permeated with the Greek culture of the conquerors, which was disseminated for essentially celebratory purposes, above all by the local ruling classes. The two Herodotean fragments also seem to come from a professional copy made for conservation purposes, even if it is impossible to determine its provenance.
2. On the bibliological level, the two Thucydides' copies show differing degrees of craftsmanship: one is a specimen of a certain value (*P.Hamb.* II 163); as regards the other (P.CtYBR inv. 4601), the layout and the overall aspect of the columns make it appear more "ordinary". The Herodotean copy is also a standard one, as suggested by its bibliological and palaeographical features. It is not implausible that it is linked in some way to the socio-economic position of the client who commissioned the work.

150 Turner 1956, 97.

Concerning those fragments that contain texts not transmitted by medieval manuscripts, they help us to understand the topics of Greek historiography apparently most appreciated by readers in Ptolemaic Egypt, and more in general the way in which Greek history was read and taught:

1. Alexander and his father seem to have been popular topics: Ptolemaic papyri often preserve passages of works on their campaigns and political careers.
2. Readers seem to have been interested in some specific episodes of Greek history, especially those events which took place in the fourth century BC, at the beginning of Greek domination over Egypt, often connected to relevant battles and charismatic leaders.
3. Apparently Greek history was often read in an abridged form, such as *epitomai* of longer works or *excerpta* from them.
4. It may not be accidental that more than one papyrus preserves parts of historical works containing speeches given in public: on the one hand this confirms the close link existing in Antiquity between historiography and rhetoric as literary genres, on the other hand it suggests that those materials may originate from exercises carried out in educational contexts for rhetorical purposes.

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Chiara Meccariello

Teaching Propaganda: Water, Food, and Power in the *Livre d'Écolier*

Abstract: This paper focuses on P.Cairo JE 65445, a Greek textbook from the Fayum dating to the late 3rd c. BC, and argues that its literary anthology conveys a carefully curated narrative of Ptolemaic power for classroom use. Through the themes of control over water and food opulence, the textbook reflects Ptolemaic strategies of self-presentation which could be particularly appealing to third-century BC Fayumite users. Thus, the textbook serves as an illustration of the permeability of the ancient classroom to time- and place-specific political symbolism.

Keywords: Greek literary papyri, school practices, Hellenistic epigrams, Ptolemaic political strategies.

1 Introduction

The study of ancient Greek education in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds is fraught with difficulties. The fragmentary survival and uneven distribution of first-hand evidence of classroom activities often limits our possibilities to capture specificities, peculiarities and variations over time and across geographical boundaries. Quantitatively substantial data only survive from Graeco-Roman Egypt, but their quality is at times disappointing: information on date, provenance and context of production and use of single witnesses is often lacking, and the fragmentariness of several artefacts can be frustrating.[1] And yet, among a wealth of papyrological frustrations, P.Cairo JE 65445 stands out as an exceptional case: a well-preserved roll (by papyrologists' standards, that is), datable with good approximation to the late 3rd c. BC, and accompanied by vague but unsuspicious information on its Fayumite provenance. The aim of this paper is to explore this extraordinary school textbook as a witness to the ways in which Greek education was shaped by political propaganda in Ptolemaic Egypt. Focusing on themes that could be particularly appealing to third-century BC Fayumite users — water and, more briefly, food opulence — I will show that this textbook incorporates key aspects of Ptolemaic policies and

1 Papyrological evidence that can be traced to a school context is collected in Cribiore 1996a and discussed in Cribiore 2001 and Morgan 1998. Literary sources are of course an essential complement, but generally offer a less detailed and rather idealised perspective (Cribiore 2001, 6–7).

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ultimately conveys a carefully curated narrative of Ptolemaic power for classroom use. Thus, the textbook illustrates the permeability of the ancient classroom to time- and place-specific political symbolism, an aspect of ancient Greek education that has been significantly neglected or underplayed thus far.[2]

2 The Ptolemaic Epigrams in P.Cairo JE 65445

P.Cairo JE 65445 was purchased in 1935 by the Société Royale de Papyrologie and the Egyptian Museum from the Cairo-based antiquarian Maurice Nahman, and published in 1938 by Octave Guéraud and Pierre Jouguet.[3] According to Nahman, the papyrus hailed from the Fayum.[4] It can be assigned to the late 3rd c. BC on palaeographical grounds, and the fact that one of the epigrams it contains mentions Ptolemy IV Philopator's military prowess suggests that it postdates the king's success at the Battle of Raphia in 217 BC.[5]

The label "Livre d'Écolier", which the artefact received in the first edition, aptly captures, albeit with some potential ambiguity, its nature of schoolbook. The text has not been penned by a student, but its attractive decoration, careful layout and handwriting of variable size and spacing are clearly tailored to the diverse needs and progresses of learners of Greek literacy and literature.[6] The artefact indeed

2 For the dominant idea that Greek education had a substantially "frozen" quality see Cribiore 2001, 8–9; Morgan 1998, 22–25 and 44–46. Recurrence of texts and methodologies cannot be denied, but discounting local elements as exceptions is unhelpful (see Cribiore 1996b for an analysis of explicit Egyptian features in what she perceives as a negligible number of school texts).

3 Guéraud/Jouguet 1938. This edition also includes images of the papyrus in its entirety. The line numbers used in this paper follow the numbering of the first edition. No other complete edition exists. The literary portion has been reedited in its entirety in Pordomingo 2013, 191–204; for editions of the single literary passages see the bibliography listed in Pordomingo 2013, 191.

4 Guéraud/Jouguet 1938, XI.

5 The reference to Ptolemy IV Philopator appears at ll. 160–161 of the papyrus (= *SH* 979.6–7). For the identification of Ptolemy and the further restriction of the date, see Guéraud/Jouguet 1938, 25. A good palaeographical parallel is *P.Rain.Cent.* 49, a letter from the Fayum dated 27 June 212 BC; see Meccariello 2020, 1, n. 1.

6 See especially Pordomingo 2010, 43: "la escritura corresponde a una mano ejercitada, no una mano del nivel de los ejercicios que contiene en su primera parte, pero la presentación en ésta con recuadros coloreados y con presencia del dicolon separador de las sílabas creo que se comprende mejor si el libro era realmente 'utilizado' por un escolar del nivel de los ejercicios que contiene". Cribiore 1996a, 269 describes the artefact as a "book of school exercises that served a schoolmaster teaching different levels", and Del Corso 2010, 86, considers it one of the few extant "raccolte di modelli di esercizi utilizzate direttamente da insegnanti per le proprie lezioni". The latter also contains heterogeneous items pointing to different levels of education, including syllabaries, word lists, a multiplication table and an anthology of literary passages. The latter includes two syllabified passages of Euripides, a Homeric passage, two epigrams and three comic extracts.[7] Thus, the textbook covers some of the teachings that are conventionally ascribed to the elementary teacher (syllables, and probably the alphabet, in the now lost beginning of the roll), and some of those of the secondary teacher (the literary anthology). The syllabified passages of Euripides provide a bridge between the two — and this, together with the very coexistence of both types of materials on the same roll, problematises any clear-cut division between the two stages.[8]

The 'Ptolemaicism' of the Livre is particularly evident in its two epigrams (Fig. 57). The first epigram (*SH* 978) records the lavish dedication of a fountain featuring a statue of Arsinoe, and it probably mentioned a Ptolemy in its lacunose first portion (Πτολεμ[at l. 2 [141]). Depending on whether this Ptolemy was the dedicator or the dedicatee, the description of the fountain with its complex architecture and rich materials is a witness either to a grandiose initiative of the ruler or to a generous dedication to the royal family by a wealthy benefactor.[9] In the second epigram (*SH* 979), the dedicator is Ptolemy IV Philopator, and the dedicatee is Homer: the poem is about a shrine of Homer set up by Ptolemy himself, likely coinciding with the Alexandrian *Homereion* whose foundation Aelian (*VH* 13.22) ascribes to this king. The epigram notably ends with an invocation of the Euergetes couple embedding a praise of their poetically and militarily excellent son:[10]

ὄλβιοι ὦ θνατῶν εὐεργέται, [οἳ] τὸν ἄριστον
    ἐν δορὶ καὶ Μούϲαιϲ κοίρανον ἠρόϲατε.

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convincingly argues that the papyrus was penned by a teacher rather than a professional scribe (Del Corso 2010, 87; Cribiore 1996a, 269 is open to both options).

7 Eur., *Phoe.* 529–534; Eur., fr. 420 Kannicht; Hom., *Od.* 5.116–124; *SH* 978 and 979; *PCG* VIII 1072–1073, VII Strato 1. Not much of the artefact is lost. The extant roll comprises a first portion about 66 cm long and a further fragment of 176 cm, and content allowed the first editors to establish that not much has been lost between the two fragments and before the first fragment. The upper portion of the roll was torn away while the roll was still rolled; as a result, no upper margin is preserved and an undetermined amount of text has been lost from the top of the columns.

8 On the terminology and practice of primary and secondary education see Morgan 1998, 28 and Cribiore 2001, 50–56, with previous bibliography.

9 The dedicating subject is conveyed by the relative pronoun ὅϲ, but the noun to which the pronoun refers is in lacuna. This individual could be a Ptolemaic king (Ptolemy II or IV, see Lloyd-Jones/Parsons 1983, 492) or someone else (cf. the supplement Βα[λάκρου] proposed in the ed. pr.).

10 *SH* 979.6–7, with my translation.

> O blessed benefactors of mortals, you who raised a ruler who proved the best in war and poetry!

The epigrams' 'Ptolemaicism' is overt enough to warrant an association with the cultural policies of the Ptolemies, and in particular a decree of Ptolemy II that exempted several professional categories from the salt-tax, including teachers of *grammata*.[11] The exemption was still in force during the reign of Ptolemy III and Ptolemy IV, although the extension of the exempted categories started a progressive erosion of its significance.[12] Since the Livre was likely penned during the last decade of Philopator's rule, we should picture the individual in charge of the teaching to which the Livre bears witness as someone who personally benefited from the exemption. We will probably never know whether the textual selection for this artefact was *directly* shaped by a central authority, but the relatively lavish artefact itself presupposes a well-equipped and resourceful *scriptorium*, which at this chronological stage is perhaps more likely to have been located in a city like Alexandria than in the Fayum.

Dorothy Thompson has explored how these and other Hellenistic epigrams export the monumentalisation of Ptolemaic power from the capital to more peripheral areas of Egypt.[13] Her study argues that these epigrams perform a function similar to photography by providing a verbal surrogate to readers who may never have seen these monuments.[14] In the next section, I will move beyond the 'pictorial' to

11 Cf. Thompson 2007, 128.

12 The decree, probably issued around 256 BC, is preserved in *P.Hal.* 1.260–265. Ptolemy III extended the exempted categories (see *P.Count*. 8, ll. 6–13, *P.Count*. 16, ll. 3–7), but the salt-tax (*halike*) was still levied in the 2nd c. BC: see *P.Tebt.* III.2 880 = *P.Count.* 51 R, dating to 181/180 or 157/156. For a concise history of the salt-tax in Ptolemaic Egypt see Clarysse/Thompson 2006, 86–88.

13 Thompson 2007, 134–135.

14 The Alexandrian location of the *Homereion* built by Ptolemy IV is confirmed by external evidence (see above, p. 297). Conversely, we have no conclusive evidence — and no external evidence — for a similar location in the case of the nymphaeum. οἴκωι at l. 4 (143) is the only word in the poem that could be used to argue for an Alexandrian location, if it is taken to indicate that the fountain was built for the royal palace, but this interpretation is uncertain, given the lacunose state of the poem, and it requires one to identify a royal couple as the poem's initial addressee. That this is not the only possibility is shown by Meccariello 2020, 10–13 (with n. 41 on οἴκωι). Failing the identification of this *oikos* with the Alexandrian royal palace, there remains no evidence to connect the fountain to Alexandria or even to Egypt, and if we are dealing with a perennial spring, an Alexandrian location might be problematic (cf. Lloyd-Jones/Parsons 1983, *ad loc.*: "*Alexandriae fontem naturalem frustra requires*"). A location on Ptolemaic Cyprus would be conceivable both on hydrogeological and cultic grounds: see below, p. 300, on the cult of Arsinoe II Philadelphos as nymph in Cyprus. In addition, a dedication of a *nymphaeum* and *hydreuma* to Ptolemy IV and Arsinoe III by the Roman commander Lucius survives from Itanos on Crete (*I.Cret.* III IV 18, 244–209 BC).

examine aspects of these and other texts of the Livre that act more subtly as conveyors not of monumentality, but of Ptolemaic projects that had a more practical impact on the daily life of the roll's users.

3 Power over Water: *SH* 978

The first of the two epigrams allows us to explore a facet of Ptolemaic propaganda that, I argue, is particularly relevant to the Fayumite context, namely the Ptolemies' control and enhancement of water resources. The epigram is acephalous, but it is still preserved to a significant extent: 15 lines, more than half of which complete, largely devoted to the description — painstakingly, and at times excruciatingly, detailed — of a fountain featuring a statue or a relief of an unspecified Arsinoe. I report the text with my translation:[15]

θοινα[c.17]τ̣εφλεγετ[
σιγηλου[c.13] ̣ ρια καὶ Πτολεμ[αι
ἀσπάσιοι βα̣[c.10] δ̣έχοισθε γέρας,
ὃς καὶ λάϊνον [c.6] ̣ [c.1]ήκατο δαψιλὲς οἴκωι
κτίσμα πα ̣ [c.2 λ]ευκὴν ἐκποδίσας σταγόνα
εἰς ἡμίσφαιρο̣ν̣ [τ]εύξας θέσιν· ἡ δὲ λυχνῖτις
ζώνη στυλοῦται πέζαν ἴωνι τύπωι
ῥάβδου κοίλης ἐντός, ἀποστίλβει δὲ Συηνὶς
στικτὴ πρὸς πτέρναις· κίονος ἥδε θέσις.
ἡ δ' ἀφ' Ὑμηττοῦ πέτρος ἐρευγομένη πόμα κρήνης
ἐκδέχεται σπιλάδων ὑγρὰ διαινομένη.
εἰκόνα δ' ὑμετέρην ἐτυπώσατο πίονι λύγδωι
πρηΰνας, μέσσην δ' ἥρμοσ[ε]ν Ἀρσινόην
σύγκληρον Νύμφαις κατὰ πᾶν ἔτος. ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πηγὴν
τήνδε μετ' εὐνομίης βαίνετε, Κρηνιάδες.

Banquet [...] burn(s) [...] silence [...] baths? [...] and gladly accept this gift of Ptolemy (?) [...] who indeed dedicated (?) a stone [...], a huge building for your house, having extricated the white drop [...] and placed it into a hemisphere. The frieze of Parian marble is supported at its lower edge by the Ionic relief of the concavely fluted shaft, and the speckled Syenite sparkles at the feet: this is the arrangement of the column. And the stone from Hymettos rumbles as it receives the water of the spring and is drenched with the liquid from the rocks. And he moulded your image by softening it in sleek marble, and in the middle he fitted Arsinoe, who

15 For this text and translation, see Meccariello 2020, with an extensive apparatus and discussion of the main textual problems.

> shares the lot with the nymphs all year around. Come to this spring in good order, water nymphs!

At l. 14 Arsinoe is said to be σύγκληρον Νύμφαις, a phrase that indicates her sharing in the space, and hence in the spatial competence, of the nymphs: water. While the sharing of an apportioned lot could perhaps evoke settlement imagery in Ptolemaic Egypt,[16] in the case of deities the apportioned space indicates not just the place where the deity dwells, but a sphere of divine control. For example, in *Iliad* 15, when Poseidon tells about the primordial assignment of "portions" of the world to himself, Zeus, and Hades, the language blends the spatial idea of inhabitation with the idea of power domain.[17] For nymphs and shared *kleros* in particular, the best parallel is offered by a later text, Aelius Aristides' hymn to Zeus, where the word κληρουχία indicates the nymphs's spatial competence over waters, which is, in this case, "shared with Zeus".[18]

This dense meaning of σύγκληρος is confirmed by the existence of a *cult* of Arsinoe Philadelphos as a water nymph. The main piece of evidence is the inscription Ἀρσινόηι Φιλαδέλφωι Ναϊάδι / Ἀριστοκλῆς Ἀριστοκλέους / Ἀλεξανδρεύς ("Aristocles son of Aristocles from Alexandria (dedicates this) to Arsinoe Philadelphos Naiad") found on a statue base from Chytri, Cyprus, dated to the second quarter of the 3rd c. BC.[19] Another piece of evidence concerns a nymph that was venerated in a cave at Kafizin, again in Cyprus. This cave sanctuary housed a collective cultic activity which is documented by dedications and inscriptions in the last quarter of the 3rd c. BC.[20] In one instance, the nymph is called "Philadelphos".[21]

Both examples also seem to support the conclusion that the Arsinoe of the papyrus epigram is Arsinoe II Philadelphos, rather than Arsinoe III Philopator, despite the fact that the other epigram in the papyrus mentions Ptolemy IV Philopator, and despite the fact that the artefact, as we have seen, was probably penned during the reign of Philopator.[22] If this identification is correct, the two epigrams as a pair would mention at least three successive generations of Ptolemaic rulers (as *SH* 979

16 *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59001.19 (274/273 BC).

17 *Il.* 15.187–193.

18 Ael. Arist., *Or.* 43.25 Πᾶνές τε ὀρῶν ἔνοικοι καὶ Νύμφαι ναμάτων ἐπίσκοποι σὺν Διὶ τὴν κληρουχίαν ἔχουσι.

19 New York, Metropolitan Museum inv. 74.51.2378. See Caneva 2015, 103.

20 On this cultic activity see Jim 2012 and the bibliography quoted therein.

21 Mitford 1980, no. 300.

22 For a detailed doxography of the proposed identifications of this Arsinoe see Santagati 2021, 72. Santagati argues for Arsinoe II, adducing not only these epigraphic attestations, but also broader evidence for Ptolemy II's immortalisation of his wife and the powerful connections of this queen.

mentions both the Euergetes couple and Ptolemy IV Philopator), and thus potentially constitute a mini-handbook of Ptolemaic propagandistic history.

Arsinoe's sharing in the religious competence of the nymphs in these two inscriptions is of particular relevance to my argument. In the epigram, σύγκληρος is combined with the phrase κατὰ πᾶν ἔτος, which I have translated as "all year around".[23] The phrase has been described as "flat", a weak line filler, or simply as a cryptic reference now hard to understand.[24] Undoubtedly, it indicates temporal continuity, either through the year or over the years. The latter is the usual meaning of the phrase in the few extant occurrences ("every year" or "year by year");[25] however, similar phrasing in other texts on nymphs rather points towards the former meaning.[26]

The first set of relevant texts are two second-century AD epigrams written on the inside wall of the burial chamber of Isidora at Tuna-el-Gebel, once the necropolis of the Graeco-Egyptian town Hermoupolis Magna. The two epitaphs attest to the death of young Isidora and her heroization as a nymph, that is, the institution of a private cult in her honour.[27] In the first epigram we find a description of the chamber, which is said to have been built by the nymphs. It is fashioned like a grotto and is characterized as *hieros*:[28]

23 Page 1941, 453 translates "every year", suggesting a reference to "an annual ceremony in which Arsinoe was associated with the Nymphs of the spring"; but he also considers the meaning "all the year round", cf. Guéraud/Jouguet 1938, 24 "pour toute l'année", Lloyd-Jones/Parsons 1983, *ad loc.* "apud fontem perennem".

24 See for example Guéraud/Jouguet 1938, 24.

25 See in particular Philo, *De fuga et inv.* 179, *De spec. leg.* 2.86; Jos., *Ant. Jud.* 9.238, 12.93, 12.412, 18.377; Ael., *Nat. an.* 5.1; Eus., *Praep. ev.* 5.18.5. The occurrence in (Pseudo-)Aristotle's *On Plants* (1.819b13) is not ancient, but part of a Greek retroversion of a medieval Latin translation (the original Greek text does not survive), so the earliest literary attestations are the ones in Philo. The earliest of the half a dozen epigraphic attestations (*IGLS* I 1) is from the 1st c. BC (I have found no occurrences in documentary papyri).

26 With κατὰ conveying duration rather than a distributive meaning, the phrase would be parallel (and opposite in meaning) to κατὰ + season name. See e.g. κατὰ χειμῶνα, common in technical literature (e.g. Aristot., *Hist. an.* 8.617b12) and papyrus documents (e.g. *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59643; *P.Erasm.* I 1; *P.Lille* I 1). While this interpretation is preferred, and argued for, in this paper, a distributive meaning is also conceivable in an Egyptian context, where agriculture was dependent on the annual flooding of the Nile, and its interannual variability was a potentially negative occurrence: see in particular Manning/Ludlow 2016 and Manning et alii 2017. For royal intervention to minimise the negative effects of Nile failure see the Canopus decree (*OGIS* 56, 239/238 BC) with Buraselis 2013.

27 On this site see Venit 2016, 91–95.

28 *I.Égypte Métriques* 86, trans. Larson 2011.

ὄντως αἱ Νύμφαι coι ἐτεκτήναντ’, Ἰcιδώρα,
    Νύμφαι τῶν ὑδάτων θυγατέρες θάλαμον·
πρεcβυτάτη Νίλοιο θυγατρῶν ἤρξατο, Νιλώ,
    κόγχον τευξαμένη, βένθεcιν οἷον ἔχει,
πατρὸc ἐνὶ̣μ̣ μεγάροιcι, θεηδ̣ῆ̣ οἷον ἰδέcθαι·
    κρηναία δέ, Ὕλα cύνγαμοc ἁρπαγίμου,
κείοναc ἀμφοτέρωθεν, ἅτε cπέοc ἧχι καὶ αὐτὴ
    πηχύναcα̣ Ὕ̣λαν καλποφόρον κατέχει·
κρεινάμεναι δ’ ἄρα χῶρον Ὀρειάδεc ἱδρύcαντο
    ἱερόν, ὡc αὐτῶν μηδὲν ἀφαυρὸν ἔχῃ̣c.

In truth, it was the nymphs, daughters of the water, who built the chamber for you, Isidora. Nilo, the eldest of the daughters of Nile, began by fashioning a shell such as the river holds in its depths; such one might see, a marvellous thing, in her father’s palace. And Krenaia, mate of Hylas who was snatched away, built the columns on both sides, like the grotto where she herself keeps Hylas, who carried the water jar, in her arms’ embrace. And the Oreiads, having chosen the spot, founded a sanctuary, that you might have nothing less than the best.

In the second epigram, Isidora’s father addresses her as a nymph. She has become a goddess and so she deserves not regular funerary sacrifices, but libations and praises like a deity. In particular, Isidora is envisioned as the recipient of seasonal gifts:[29]

χαῖρε, τέκοc· Νύμφη ὄνομ’ ἐcτί coι, ἰδέ τε Ὧραι
    cπένδουcιν προχοαῖc ταῖc ἰδί[α]ι̣c̣ κατ’ ἔτοc·
χειμῶν μὲν γάλα λευκόν, ἀλ̣ε̣ίφατον ἄνθοc ἐλαίηc,
    ναρκίccωι δὲ cτέφει, ἄνθει ἀβροτάτωι·
εἶαρ δ’ αὐτομάτηc πέμπει γόνον ἔνθα μελίccηc,
    καὶ ῥόδον ἐκ καλύκων, ἄνθοc Ἔρωτι φίλον·
καῦμα δ’ ἄρ’ ἐκ ληνοῦ Βάκχου πόμα καὶ cτεφανόν coι
    ἐκ cταφυλῆc, δῆcαν βότρυαc ἀκρεμόνων.
ταῦτά νυ coί· τάδε πάντα ἐτήcια ἔνθα τελεῖται
    τεθμὸc ἅτ’ ἀθανάτοιc·

Greetings, child! Nymph is your name, and the Horai pour you their own libations throughout the year. Winter brings white milk, the rich flower of the olive, and crowns you with the delicate narcissus flower. Spring sends the produce of the industrious bee and the rose from its bud, flower beloved of Eros. Summer heat brings the fruit from the vat of Bakchos and a crown of grapes for you, having tied back the clusters from the branches. These things are for you. All will be performed here annually, as is the custom for the immortals.

While the phrase κατ’ ἔτοc at l. 6 could mean “every year”, Larson’s translation “throughout the year” is much preferable. Both interannual and intra-annual

29 *I.Égypte Métriques* 87.5–14, transl. Larson 2011.

continuity are present in the epigram, but the reference to the Horae in this specific turn of phrase indicates that the focus is on seasonal alternation, whereas the concept of interannuality is conveyed by ἐτήϲια at l. 13. A detail of the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* offers corroboration to the intra-annual interpretation. When Anchises expresses the suspicion that the goddess, who has visited him incognito, is a nymph, he envisions founding an altar in her honour, where he will "perform beautiful sacrifices *in all seasons*" (ὥρῃϲιν πάϲῃϲι).[30] Isidora receives similar offerings because she has been deified as a nymph, and nymphs do receive *seasonal* offerings as a way to propitiate them and ensure a constant supply of water. This is indicated by another epigram, ascribed to the third-century BC poet Leonidas of Tarentum, where water nymphs are invoked and invited to water the garden of Timocles, because Timocles "always brings them seasonal gifts" (αἰὲν … ὥρια δωροφορεῖ).[31] Offerings throughout the year aim to ensure that the nymphs provide their liquid gift in exchange. An explicit statement of reciprocity is found in another epigram, ascribed to Leonidas or Gaetulicus, where the gift of "the varied bloom of shady autumn and blood-red roses in full flower", offered to the nymphs by "old Biton of Arcadia", aims to ensure that the nymphs "bless the old man's house with abundance […] of water".[32]

References to the year or to seasons throughout the year in these texts indicate the importance of regularity and constancy of reciprocal supply. On these grounds, it appears all the more likely that the phrase κατὰ πᾶν ἔτοϲ in the Arsinoe fountain epigram indicates that the allotment of this fountain space to the nymphs and Arsinoe lasts *throughout* the year: according to the reciprocity nexus informing their cult as water deities, this means that the nymphs receive an all-year cult corresponding to a *constant* supply of water.

In fashioning Arsinoe as a nymph co-responsible for the crucial reciprocity-based dynamics of water supply, the fountain and its poetical description offer an impactful representation of a sacred connection between the Ptolemaic dynasty

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30 Hom., *Hymn. Aphr.* 97–102 ἤ τιϲ νυμφάων αἵ τ' ἄλϲεα καλὰ νέμονται, / ἢ νυμφῶν αἳ καλὸν ὄροϲ τόδε ναιετάουϲι / καὶ πηγὰϲ ποταμῶν καὶ πίϲεα ποιήεντα. / ϲοὶ δ' ἐγὼ ἐν ϲκοπιῇ, περιφαινομένῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ, / βωμὸν ποιήϲω, ῥέξω δέ τοι ἱερὰ καλὰ / ὥρῃϲιν πάϲῃϲι (Or are you one of the nymphs who inhabit these beautiful woods, / or one of the nymphs who dwell on this beautiful mountain / and by the springs of rivers and the grassy meadows? / For you, on a lookout, in a place that is visible all around, / I will build an altar, and I will perform beautiful sacrifices / in all seasons …; transl. Evelyn-White 1914).

31 *AP* 9.329.

32 *AP* 6.154, in the translation of Paton 1916. Cf. *AP* 6.158, a variation on the same theme by Sabinus Grammaticus, where the nymphs are asked to "increase" Biton's fountain (αὔξετε … Νύμφαι πίδακα) in exchange for a gift of roses.

and water. But this is not the only way the fountain and the epigram convey this connection.

At ll. 4–6, the poem refers to the dedication of a stone building, which is achieved through two distinct actions: [λ]ευκὴν ἐκποδίcαc cταγόνα (l. 5) and εἰc ἡμίcφαιρο̣ν̣ [τ]εύξαc θέcιν (l. 6).[33] Different interpretations have been proposed for these segments, but there can be little doubt that the first participial clause describes the freeing of a flux of white water. The water can be white because it is frothy, evoking a sense of abundance; or the adjective can evoke its purity.[34] The alternative interpretation — that the "white drop" would indicate quarried white marble — would introduce into the text "une image hardie",[35] and a metaphorical use of cταγών in a context focusing on actual water would be paradoxical.[36] More importantly, the metaphorical interpretation lends itself to two further objections. First, despite lacunae in the text, it is clear that the sequence [λ]ευκὴν ἐκποδίcαc cταγόνα occurs at the beginning of the general description of the fountain. In the previous two lines, the text refers to the dedication, which the speaking-I hopes the dedicatees will receive ἀcπάcιοι, and]ήκατο is probably the ending of the verb conveying the dedication; and at the beginning of l. 5 we read a generic κτίcμα, which indicates that the poem at this point is still referring to the whole structure. Therefore, if λευκὴ cταγών indicated "white marble", it would need to be taken as the material used for the entire construction. Yet in what follows, from l. 6 to 13, the epigram lists various components of the fountain, highlighting their material and chromatic variety: the lychnitis of the frieze (white Parian marble), the Syenite of the column feet (red marble), the Hymettan stone of the water basin (grey marble), the white and shiny marble (πίων λύγδοc) of the sculptural decoration. This variety is incompatible with a reference to *white quarried material* when the text is still describing the fountain in its entirety.

33 For a textual discussion of these and other controversial points of the epigram see Meccariello 2020.

34 When referring to water, λευκόc is usually taken to mean "clear" (*LSJ* A1); but ancient scholia also preserve the idea that "white" can be an attribute of sea water because of the foam (see *sch. Od.* 2.261d Pontani ἢ τῆc λευκῆc διὰ τὸν ἀφρόν; 4.580b λευκὴν διὰ τὸν ἀφρόν, explaining the collocation πολιῆc ἁλὸc and πολιὴν ἅλα respectively). Eustathius reports an alleged Callimachean fragment (fr. 546 Pfeiffer) in which a spring is said to bring forth white water, and this is used to illustrate the use of ἀναβάλλω as equivalent to ἀναπιδύω or ἀναβλύζω (*in Od.* 1.155, vol. 1, p. 40 Stallbaum: ὡc δηλοῖ παρὰ Καλλιμάχῳ τὸ κρήνη λευκὸν ὕδωρ ἀνέβαλλεν. ἀναπιδύον δηλαδὴ καὶ ἀναβλύζον). This suggests that the water in this fragment might be perceived of as white as a consequence of its being gushed forth or spouted out in great quantity.

35 Guéraud/Jouguet 1938, 22.

36 See Page 1941, 450: "cταγών is a most unnatural word to use here with reference to marble".

The second objection to the interpretation of this segment as indicating the quarrying of marble is in the second participial clause εἰc ἡμίcφαιρọṿ [τ]εύξαc θέcιν.[37] This is usually interpreted as indicating the shape of the building or of part of it (the water basin or the fountain dome). For example, the first editors (who do prefer the marble-quarrying option for the other segment), propose for this segment the meaning "l'ayant façonné (*sc.* ce marbre) en forme d'hémisphère". Page, who does not interpret cταγών as a metaphor for quarried marble, still translates this segment as "he made it (*sc.* the building) into the form of a semicircle". But θέcιc indicates 'placement' or 'setting', not 'shape'; and with τεύχειν, pretty much like it does with ποιεῖν, it is likely to simply indicate the "placing" of the cταγών, the flux of water, into an hemisphere (εἰc ἡμίcφαιρọṿ).[38] The word ἡμίcφαιρọṿ is only attested in an inventory of offerings to Apollo dated to ca. 200 BC, where it probably indicates a drinking vessel.[39] Thus, what this section of the epigram seems to convey is that a flux of water has been "set free" from a natural source and channelled into a hemisphere — a fountain basin appropriately shaped like a large drinking vessel; these two coincident actions describe the transformation of a natural source of water (πηγή) into a monumental fountain (κρήνη).[40]

The fountain is, therefore, a representation, and a symbol, of the Ptolemies' intervention on the environment and ability to fruitfully exploit natural resources. What this epigram "exports" from the fountain's original location is not just the beauty of a work of art, the richness of the different, polychromic materials on display, but also the idea of Ptolemaic control over water, which manifests itself both in the transformation of a πηγή into a κρήνη and in Arsinoe's partaking in the nymphs' control over (natural) water supply.

In its original location, this landmark immortalises a moment in history — the dedication of a fountain — and, together with the words attached to it, invests this event with mythical-religious significance. Through practical use of this space and related ritual activity, the nymph Arsinoe becomes part of the aesthetic and religious experience of anyone engaging with this space and its liquid element. The distant reader experiences the place differently, but the detailed description guides their gaze and their conceptualisation of the space with great precision. First, we are given an overview of the fountain and its underlying prodigy — water was freed and channelled. We then visualise details of the fountain from top to bottom:

37 For a fuller discussion of this point, see Meccariello 2020, 4–6.

38 Aristot., *Pol.* 7, 1327 a 3–5 τῆc δὲ πόλεωc τὴν θέcιν … ποιεῖν; Eratosth., *Cat.* 1.22 τῷ δὲ Περcεῖ τὴν εἰc τὰ ἄcτρα θέcιν ἐποίηcεν.

39 *IG* XII.4 458 (ll. 3, 4, 7), from Cos.

40 For this working distinction and an overview of ancient fountains see Glaser 2000.

the frieze first, then the columns (and of those, first the capitals; then the flutes; then the feet), and last, the water basin. Finally, our attention is directed to the sculptural display as a whole and — as the visual and functional climax of the description — to the image of Arsinoe in her nymphic role.

4 Mastering Nature and the "Poetics of Plenitude"

The idea of control over nature — and particularly over water — through architecture and engineering is traditionally entangled with rulers' self-presentation. An interesting precedent is provided by the initiatives of the Pisistratids in Athens: their building programme included the valorisation of the Callirhoe spring, which was organised as an architectural fountain, the Enneakrounos.[41] In fashioning themselves as "masters of nature", the Ptolemies certainly had Greek antecedents; but their controlling and (quite literally) channelling natural resources into usable outlets, are among the elements of their self-presentation that could appeal most to the third-century BC Fayum reader. Control over the Nile flood was an essential task for any ruler of Egypt, and the Fayum had already undergone intensive development before the Ptolemaic period; however, the region experienced a dramatic increase in cultivable and habitable land under the first Ptolemies, with a peak in the 260s.[42] The essential role of the Ptolemies in organising water through irrigation and drainage, and thus land reclamation, is encapsulated well in the change of name that the nome experienced under Philadelphus: once "The Marsh", ἡ Λίμνη, the Fayum became the Arsinoite nome, probably after the same Arsinoe as the one represented in the fountain of our epigram.[43] The prominence of human control over nature, and especially water, in Ptolemaic Fayum, can hardly be overestimated, and it is attested in several documents, in which hydrogeology, engineering and

41 Thuc., 2.15.5 τῇ κρήνῃ τῇ νῦν μὲν τῶν τυράννων οὕτω σκευασάντων Ἐννεακρούνῳ καλουμένῃ, τὸ δὲ πάλαι φανερῶν τῶν πηγῶν οὐcῶν Καλλιρρόῃ ὠνομαcμένῃ. See Tolle-Kastenbein 1986 on this passage. On other tyrants' attention to water supply see Dillon 1996, 196.
42 Römer 2017 offers a useful overview of the first period of development of the Fayum during the Middle Kingdom (173–177) and of Ptolemaic activity in the region (180–183). For the theological underpinning of Pharaonic water management as an antecedent to features of the Ptolemaic state see Manning 2003, 28–30.
43 Both the naming of the nome and toponyms within the nome display an unusual density of dynastic references: see von Reden 2011, 426 and Römer 2017, 184.

royal policies intertwine.[44] Thus, the epigram on the fountain of Arsinoe stands out as a particularly effective choice for a Fayumite school textbook, regardless of where the fountain was located.

But another point can be added: Ptolemaic control over water in the Fayum was part of a land reclamation and assignment strategy that had, of course, enormous consequences on agricultural development.[45] Ideas of opulence are very immediately conveyed by food, and "gastropolitics" can be identified as a crucial component of Ptolemaic propaganda. This can be best appreciated by looking at the "poetics of plenitude"[46] on display during the grand procession of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. In this extremely rich parade, which Athenaeus describes drawing on Callixenus of Rhodes' *On Alexandria*, we find both imitation of nature and complex machinery, which are an expression, albeit hyperbolic, of the same practice and ideology that underlies the construction of the fountain of Arsinoe.[47] Particularly relevant in this connection is the "deep cave" that stood on one of the carts in the procession, from which "two springs (κρουνοὶ) gushed forth (ἀνέβλυζον) [...], one of milk and one of wine"; the presence of nymphs with golden crowns is also reported.[48]

But the procession was also a festival occasion on which Ptolemy II Philadelphus provided food and entertainment for his subjects. Ptolemy II's "gigantosymposium",[49] which is described in the same passage, featured countless gold couches and tables and separate provisions for feasting for other attendees. While this specific parade was probably exceptional in its lavishness, feasting was a regular part of Ptolemaic festivals, and it was clearly used as an easy-to-decode display of power and political and economic efficiency.

The connection between food and power has been widely explored in a variety of contexts and fields, and in the study of antiquity, evidence for food ideology, and feasting in particular, has often been used to explore "periods of transitions", and

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44 A window on these activities is offered especially by the Zenon archive (on which see Clarysse/Vandorpe 1995, 39–52) and by the archive of the engineers Cleon and Theodorus (on which see Van Beek 2017).

45 On agricultural innovation under the Ptolemies and related technological developments see Crawford 1979; Thompson 1999; von Reden 2011.

46 Csapo 2013 applies this phrase to the Athenian Dionysian Parade.

47 Athen., 5.197c–203b = *FGrHist*/*BNJ* 627 F2.

48 Athen., 5.200c, transl. Rice 1983. Rice 1983, 82 believes that hidden bellows might have been used to produce the "bubbling" of the liquids over the cave rocks. At 198f we also read of a statue of Nysa that "stood up mechanically without anyone laying a hand on it, and it sat back down again after pouring a libation of milk from a gold phiale" — likely an *automaton* that can be paired with Ctesibius' Bes-shaped *rhyton* located in the temple of Arsinoe-Zephyritis and commemorated by Hedylus (4 Gow-Page = Floridi).

49 The term is used by Bergquist 1990, 53 for Hellenistic royal symposia.

to investigate the creation and strengthening of social structures and the solidification of communities and power dynamics, especially in colonial settings.[50] Food and feasting indeed dominate the final section of the Livre d'Écolier. The three comic passages that follow the two Ptolemaic epigrams and conclude the literary anthology are all about cooks, and they are studded with mentions of specific food items or cooking paraphernalia to be used by the *mageiros* in his typical roles of sacrificer, butcher and cook. In the first fragment we have perhaps an ox, fire, water and the knife used in the sacrificing/butchering stages.[51] In the second, we read about various cuts of meat, fish, cheese, and seasonings, which the cook ingeniously pilfers from the dishes he has prepared.[52] In the third passage, an old man complains about a cook he has hired for his use of pretentious Homeric vocabulary that he does not understand, which occasions a hilarious series of misunderstandings. Here too, as the old man reports their paradoxical dialogue, we hear about oxen and sheep and pre-feasting sacrificial tools, about barley and salt and portions of meat.[53] Notably, at the end of this last passage there is an explicit reference to Philitas of Cos' lexicographical work, which the old man claims one would need to understand the cook's vocabulary.[54] With Philitas, we are reminded once again of the cultural grandeur of Alexandria, and of Ptolemy II, his tutee; and this passage, with its explicit mention of the cook's plenitude with "Homeric words", also links back to the divine poet who, in the second epigram of the Livre, epitomises the cultural policies of Ptolemy IV. Once again, there seems to be no one specific Ptolemy in the political scenario of the Livre, but a more general idea of the Ptolemaic power as a source of cultural and economic abundance, which resonates from Alexandria to the Fayum through both explicitly filo-Ptolemaic poetry and carefully selected passages of non-propagandistic literature.

Witnesses like P.Cairo JE 65445 thus complicate the idea of Greek education as a timeless and spaceless institution. This schoolbook is a product not only of specific circumstances, but also of specific policies, and demonstrates that educational practices were shaped by the new symbolic system developed under the Ptolemies. Even against the backdrop of substantial continuity (the ever-present Homer being a case in point), ancient Greek education did not do away with the here and now.

50 See for example Dietler 2007. See von Reden 2011 on Ptolemaic profligacy as a way to structure consumption habits and on Ptolemaic attention to the symbolic value of food items.

51 *PCG* VIII 1072.

52 *PCG* VIII 1073.

53 *PCG* VII Strato 1.

54 *PCG* VII Strato 1.42–44 [ll. 207–209].

Fig. 57: P. Cairo JE 65445, ll. 140–154 (*SH* 978). © The Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

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Antonio Ricciardetto and Nathan Carlig

Fragments of a Medical Treatise on a Greek Papyrus Roll Dated to the Mid-3rd c. BC: P.IFAO grec inv. 520

Abstract: Preliminary presentation of a papyrus dated to the mid-III century BC, and kept at the French Institute for Oriental Archaeology in Cairo (P.IFAO grec inv. 520). A brief description of its material characteristics is followed by a study of its provenance and content, which is medical, and probably nosological. In appendix it is offered the first edition of the best preserved fragments (frr. 1A–B sup. + fr. 1C + fr. 3, col. II), with translation and critical notes.

Keywords: Greek medical papyrus, ancient Greek medicine, nosology, Hellenistic Egypt, *cartonnage*.

Preserved at the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale (IFAO) in Cairo, P.IFAO grec inv. 520 (MP³ 2357.101) probably contains one of the earliest Greek medical texts attested to date on papyrus (Figs. 58 and 59).[1] After examining its material characteristics — number of fragments, state of preservation, form, writing, and layout — which make it possible to propose a dating, the present paper describes its content and offers a first partial edition (frr. 1A–B sup. + fr. 1C + fr. 3), based on an autoptic examination of the papyrus during several missions in Cairo.[2]

We wish to warmly thank Prof. Amneris Roselli (Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale) for her careful reading and for providing us with useful suggestions.

1 In the text and the notes, the abbreviation MP³ (Mertens-Pack³) refers to MP³ entries in the *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires grecs et latins*, regularly updated and freely available on the website of the Centre de Documentation de Papyrologie Littéraire (CEDOPAL) of the University of Liège: https://www.cedopal.uliege.be > MP³ database (last visit June 2024). The abbreviations used in this contribution to designate the papyrological editions are those of the *Checklist of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets* (http://papyri.info/docs/checklist, last visit March 2024).

2 The papyrus was examined autoptically by N. Carlig in March 2017, as part of an IFAO post-doctoral fellowship, and by A. Ricciardetto and N. Carlig in January 2018, and then by A. Ricciardetto in January 2020 and February 2022, as part of the "Action spécifique" (now "Programme") 17439 "Papyrus grecs". A first presentation of the papyrus, aimed at a wide audience, also appeared in Carlig/Ricciardetto 2020.

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1 Description

P.IFAO grec inv. 520 comprises 27 fragments from a papyrus roll.[3] According to their size, state of conservation, and content, they can be grouped into four categories. The first includes frr. 1–4, which are the most extensive and preserve sufficient portions of text to permit an attempt to identify their content. The second includes the smaller frr. 5–14, with the remains of a few lines of writing. The third group includes frr. 15–21 and 27, where only a few letters can be deciphered. Finally, the last group contains frr. 22–26, which are blank and most probably correspond to portions of the margins or intercolumns.

The roll was reused in a mummy *cartonnage*, as shown by the traces of white or pale yellow gypsum visible on frr. 3–7, 13, and 21–25, and the superposition of compressed papyrus layers (up to four), sometimes arranged in different directions, in frr. 1, 2, and possibly 3, 7, 9, 12–14, 16, 18, 19, 21, and 23. To date, ten medical papyri have been recovered from *cartonnages*, including *P.ÄkNo* 1 (MP³ 2357.16), published by I. Andorlini and R.W. Daniel in 2016.[4] Of unknown provenance, and dated to the end of the 3rd or the first half of the 2nd c., it contains the remains of six columns of a treatise on diagnostics-therapeutics, probably from the Herophilean school of Alexandria, which shows affinities with the *Corpus Hippocraticum*.[5]

An examination of fr. 1 (12.9 × 12.7 cm), which consists of four joined pieces (frr. 1A, 1B, 1C, and fr. 3), is particularly revealing of the damage suffered by the roll when it was reused as *cartonnage*. It consists of two superimposed layers of papyrus that on the upper layer — what we would call the '*sovrapposto*' (frr. 1A–B sup. + fr. 1C + fr. 3, edited here in the Appendix) — preserve the endings of the lines of one column and the first 23 lines of the next, while the lower layer, the '*sottoposto*' (frr. 1A–B inf.), preserves the meagre remains of a column. In addition, turned 90° to the left (*transversa charta*), a fragment of the same roll (fr. 1A tr. ch.) was pasted

3 P.IFAO grec inv. 520 also includes a series of fragments of minute size that have not been catalogued, because they are unusable.

4 Andorlini/Daniel 2016. The papyrus was first presented by Andorlini 2014.

5 The nine other medical papyri that have been extracted from *cartonnages* are: P.Schoyen inv. MS 2634/3 + P.Princ. inv. AM 15960A (Hipp., *Epidemics II*, 6.7–22, MP³ 537.1, Fayum, 1st c. BC); *P.Bingen* 1 (another version of or commentary on Hipp., *De diaeta*, 2.49, MP³ 539.21, Tebtunis, end of the 3rd BC); *P.Grenf.* II 7b + *P.Ryl.* I 39 + P.Heid. inv. G 401 + *P.Hib.* II 190 (treatise on ophthalmology, MP³ 2343.1, Hibeh, 3rd c. BC); *P.Hib.* II 191 (prescriptions for women's diseases, MP³ 2348, Hibeh, ca. 260/230 BC); *P.Hamb.* II 140 (medical treatise?, MP³ 2357, unknown prov., ca. 200 BC); *P.Köln* IX 358 (fragment on bones, MP³ 2357.15, unknown prov., late 1st c. BC); *P.ÄkNo* 2 (medical fragment, MP³ 2357.161, unknown prov., 1st half of the 2nd c. BC); *P.Köln* VIII 327 (treatise on fevers, MP³ 2380.01, unknown prov., early 2nd c. BC); *P.Hib.* II 192 (medical prescriptions, MP³ 2399, Hibeh, ca. 270/250 BC).

along the upper half of the left-hand edge of fr. 1A. It contains the remains of 10 lines of writing. The thinness of the papyrus and its extreme fragility make it impossible to detach the superimposed layers and pasted fragments. Like other fragments (frr. 10, 15, 18, and 20), frr. 1 + 3 show folds, and thus compression and disruption of the fibres in many places.

In the surviving fragments, only one hand is visible. The analysis of the writing allows us to date it to the middle of the 3rd c. BC. This is an upright majuscule with a slight contrast between narrow oval letters (*epsilon*, *theta*, *omicron*, and *sigma*) and rather angular broad letters (*eta*, *mu*, *pi*, and *omega*). The bilinearity is violated upwards and downwards by *kappa*, *phi*, and *psi*, and only downwards by *beta*, *iota*, *rho*, *tau*, and *upsilon*. There are discreet *apices* at the left end of the horizontal strokes of *tau* and *upsilon*, as well as, less systematically, at the upper end of the right vertical stroke of *eta*. The *alpha* ductus varies between a three-stroke ductus with a horizontal central line and a two-strokes ductus where the belly is angular and oriented downwards. The vertical strokes of *eta* are slightly curved. The oblique strokes of *kappa* are short, which contrasts with the height of the vertical stroke. The letter *mu* has an angular central element, and the omicron is smaller in module and slightly raised compared to the other letters. The right-hand vertical stroke of *pi* is curved. Finally, *omega* has a central element that is slightly more developed than the outer curves, reflecting the ongoing evolution from epigraphic *omega* (Ω) to common *omega* (ω). This writing is similar to that of several Greek literary papyri of the mid-3rd c. BC,[6] especially *BKT* V.2, pp. 79–84 (Euripides, *Phaeton*; Hermopolis; MP^3 444)[7] and *P.Grenf.* II 8 (= *P.Lond.Lit.* 49) + *P.Bad.* VI 178 (Timotheus; El-Hibeh; MP^3 1538).[8] The copyist used two signs to structure the text. The high dot (*ano* or *teleia stigme*), which probably appears in fr. 8, marks a strong pause between two units of meaning (such as paragraphs). This kind of dot is the only one attested in Ptolemaic medical papyri; it also appears only once, or twice, in the aforementioned *P.ÄkNo* 1.[9] The *paragraphos* appears five times, in the second column of frr. 1A–B–C, and perhaps once on fr. 20. It helps to structure the text into different sections. We do not know whether it was associated with a *vacat* in the line preceding the insertion of the sign. Attested in almost all Ptolemaic medical texts (16 papyri), it takes the form of a short horizontal (sometimes slightly oblique) line, inserted in the interline, under the initial letters and projecting into the left-hand margin. In the Ptolemaic period, this sign, which sometimes ends in an *apex*

6 Cavallo/Maehler 2008, 44 (**10**–**15**) and 48–49 (**16**–**19**).

7 Palaeographical description and plate in Cavallo/Maehler 2008, 46–47 (no. **17**).

8 Palaeographical description and plate in Cavallo/Maehler 2008, 42–43 (no. **12**).

9 Ricciardetto 2019, 130, and 2022, 15–16.

on the left, measures around 3 to 5 mm. Used alone or in combination with other devices, it structures the text. It marks a slight pause, such as the end of a sentence or section, and corresponds to our comma, sometimes to our period or semicolon. In medical papyri, it separates medical prescriptions or sections of treatises.[10]

The surviving fragments show no corrections or other interventions, apart from an interlinear addition in fr. 5 by the same hand. There is at least one phonetic error (which has not been corrected) in frr. 1A–B sup. + 1C + 3, l. 5.[11]

Although a reliable bibliological study and reconstruction of the roll does not seem possible at this stage of the research, given the state of preservation of the fragments and the lack of textual parallels, some of its characteristics can nevertheless be noted. The letters are between 2 and 3 mm high and the interline is always 3 mm. The upper margin preserved in fr. 1 is 25 mm high. The intercolumn, visible in frr. 1 and 3, is 10 to 15 mm wide.

2 Provenance

With regard to the provenance of the fragments, a handwritten note on a yellowed paper slip kept in the box containing P.IFAO grec inv. 520 states: “Edfou (partage de fouilles)”. This town in Upper Egypt, called Apollonopolis Magna by the Greeks, is located 75 km south of Luxor; it is best known for the temple of Horus which was built there starting in 237 BC, and which is still almost intact, making it one of the best-preserved monuments in all of antiquity.[12] The site was the subject of French

10 Ricciardetto 2019, 126–127.

11 See *infra*, p. 329.

12 On Edfu, see the *Dizionario dei nomi geografici e topografici dell'Egitto greco-romano*, edited by A. Calderini, and continued by S. Daris, I^2, 151 (3); 157; 157–159 (1); 160 (4); 161 (1); 161–169 (1); 440; *Suppl.* 1, 48–49 (1 and 4) and 49–50 (1); *Suppl.* 2, 23 (1); *Suppl.* 3, 19 (1); *Suppl.* 4, 18 (1); *Suppl.* 5, 17 (1) and 23; see also Timm 1985; Verreth 2013, 91 (“Apollonopolis”); Bagnall/Rathbone 2017, 240–245. The conference “Tell-Edfou, soixante ans après”, which commemorated the Franco-Polish excavations conducted between 1937 and 1939, focused on the archaeological aspects of the site (*Proceedings* published in 1999: *Tell-Edfou, soixante ans après. Actes du colloque franco-polonais, Le Caire, 15 octobre 1996*, Le Caire = Fouilles franco-polonaises. Rapports, 4), while the conference held in Brussels on 3 September 2001, which resulted in the volume *Edfu, an Egyptian Provincial Capital in the Ptolemaic Period* (Brussels, 2003), focused more on the written documentation. As for the round table “Pratiques documentaires à Edfou au VIIe siècle”, which took place at the IFAO from 2 to 4 November 2019, it was mainly devoted to the end of the Byzantine period and the first decades after the Arab conquest.

scientific excavations from 1914 to 1933 (with interruptions),[13] then French-Polish excavations from 1937 to 1939.[14] After that, with the exception of a prospecting campaign by the University of Cambridge in 1976, excavations were not resumed until 2001, under the direction of Nadine Moeller and Grégory Marouard, as part of the "Tell Edfu Project" of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.[15]

However, provenance information should be treated with the utmost caution. Indeed, our papyrus was extracted from a mummy's *cartonnage*; however, not only do no other papyri found in Edfu, be they literary texts or documents, have this characteristic, but no burial from the long period between the New Kingdom (1550–1069 BC) and the Arab-Muslim conquest (AD 641/642) has yet been discovered at this site.

Moreover, although the Greek papyri discovered before the Franco-Polish excavations were transferred to the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale in Cairo, where they are kept today,[16] none of the published reports of the French missions mention the discovery of one or more literary papyri at Edfu.[17] Moreover, the

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13 The following reports have been published on the French excavations: Henne 1924; Henne 1925; Guéraud 1929; Alliot 1933; Alliot 1935. It is well established, however, that the site of Edfu had long been known to the *sebakhin*, i.e. local peasants who took *sebakh* (fertilizer for the fields, made from decomposed bricks, straw, and rubbish of all kinds, including many papyri), where they were able to discover treasures that they sold on the antiquities market: Henne 1924, 1.

14 Bruyère *et alii* 1937 and 1938; Michałowski *et al.* 1950.

15 On these excavations, see https://www.uchicagoarchaeology.com/tell-edfu (last visit 21/12/2023).

16 In his report, Manteuffel 1937, 176, stated that these papyri had not yet been deciphered.

17 It is true that political circumstances did not allow the publication of the results of the excavations of the 1914 mission: Henne 1924, 1; see also Gascou 1999, 14. Nevertheless, if we are to believe H. Henne, the excavations did not lead to the discovery of any papyri: "Les fouilles de 1914, outre des antiquités (ostraka, vaisselle, lampes, objets de terre cuite, bois, métal, cuir), avaient mis au jour, dans la partie sud-ouest du *tell*, quelques maisons coptes ou byzantines. Au sud du temple, des sondages entrepris aux flancs de la colline mentionnée ci-dessous avaient dégagé une maison d'époque romaine (?) avec fragments de peinture murale (tels sont les renseignements qui m'ont été obligeamment fournis par MM. Lacau et Collomp)." The first purpose of the 1914 excavations, and those that followed, as Henne points out, was to search for Greek papyri. The French scholar concludes (Henne 1924, 31): "Pour la couche gréco-romaine, nous ne savons encore ce qu'elle nous réserve, ni surtout si elle nous réserve des papyrus. Il faut remarquer, en effet, — si nous songeons à nouveau au but premier de cette campagne —, que nulle part nous n'avons trouvé de papyrus bien conservés, à moins qu'une enveloppe protectrice (terre cuite, ou cuir) n'ait sauvé ce dernier de la morsure du *sébakh*. Il n'y a là rien d'étonnant. Et nulle part nous n'avons relevé l'existence de ces couches d'*ajsh*, si précieuses pour la préservation du papyrus." As for the Franco-Polish excavations, they only uncovered a limited number of papyri. Indeed, by the end of three campaigns, only four Ptolemaic papyri had been unearthed, all of them documents (a contract, letters, and a draft petition), along with some fragments of Greek papyri, almost all of them charred. In addition to this documentation, there are a few tablets and, above all, an impressive number of Demotic, Greek, and even Latin and Aramaic ostraca. Depauw 1999, 38–39, gives a general assessment of the

Ptolemaic period at Edfu is documented only by a small number of papyrological testimonies, the earliest of which, in Greek, date back to the end of the 3rd c. BC. Finally, literary papyri from Edfu are rare in all periods. Apart from eleven ostraca, mainly school exercises, dating from the years between the Ptolemaic and the Byzantine periods,[18] only three Greek literary papyri are known to have come from this site. Stored in Jena,[19] they date from the Roman period and contain a fragment of Euripides' *Bacchae* (2nd c. AD) with an unpublished text of indeterminate prose on the other side,[20] a list of books (early 3rd c. AD),[21] and fragments of a roll from the 3rd c. AD with Book V of Irenaeus of Lyon's *Against the Heresies* on the one side and, on the other, in addition to other columns of the Irenean work, a mythological text relating to the myth of Horus, which is not surprising given the very ancient worship of this god at Edfu.[22]

3 Content

Identifying the content of P.IFAO grec inv. 520, which is unfortunately very incomplete, is no easy task. According to a handwritten note on a piece of paper placed in the box containing the papyrus, it may preserve the remains of a drama or a dialogue. This hypothesis could be supported by the presence of several *paragraphoi* in a short part of the text (frr. 1A–B sup. + fr. 1C + fr. 3, see the edition *infra*, pp. 328–331), since

documentary material found at Edfu and the neighboring site of Elkab, limiting himself to the discoveries made during the Franco-Polish excavations of 1937–1939.

18 *O.Edfou* III 326, lyrical hymn to Helios-Horus (or to one of the Ptolemies?), sung by a choir of schoolchildren? (2nd/1st c. BC; MP^3 1934); *O.Edfou* II 305, beginning of a student's theme, pronunciation exercise, or riddle? (Ptolemaic period; MP^3 2681); *O.Edfou* III 327, school exercise? (Ptolemaic period; MP^3 2684); *O.Edfou* II 308, apostrophe to the Erinyes (1st c.; MP^3 2683); *O.Edfou* II 307, syllabification exercise (1st c.; MP^3 2682.2); *O.Edfou* II 306, letter of Semiramis to Ninus (school composition?) (late 1st/early 2nd c.; MP^3 2647); *O.Edfou* I 228, school exercise? (syllabary?) (Byzantine period; MP^3 2679.3); *O.Edfou* I 227, (school?) writing exercise (7th c.?; MP^3 2679.2); *O.EdfouIFAO* 11, writing exercise (mid-7th c.; MP^3 2684.001); *O.EdfouIFAO* 17, Greek alphabet (mid-7th c.; MP^3 2684.002); *O.Edfou* I 229, school exercise? (date unknown, MP^3 2680).

19 On the provenance of these papyri, acquired in 1911 on behalf of the *Deutsches Papyruskartell*, see Uebel 1970, 492. The papyrological collection in Jena includes 213 papyri from Edfu, most of which are unpublished Byzantine pieces, although there are also a few Ptolemaic items (all of them documentary) and Roman ones. Other documents from this site were acquired on the antiquities market and are now kept in Halle, Copenhagen, or Strasbourg: Depauw 1999, 39.

20 P.Jena inv. 266 (for one side, MP^3 384.2; for the back, MP^3 2845.1).

21 *P.Turner* 39 (P.Jena inv. 267 = MP^3 2090.1).

22 P.Jena inv. 18 + 21 (MP^3 2482 and 9445). On this papyrus, see recently Carlig 2019, 367–368.

one of its functions is to indicate a change of speaker in dramatic texts and dialogues.[23] However, an examination of the vocabulary used suggests that we may be dealing with a medical text, probably the remains of a treatise on nosology.[24] This makes P.IFAO grec inv. 520 one of the earliest preserved Greek medical papyri known to date; not only that, but if it does indeed come from Edfu, it would be the first Greek medical papyrus found at this site. What also makes the papyrus exceptional, in addition to its dating, provenance, and content, is that it represents an addition to the relatively small number of Greek medical papyri from the Ptolemaic era: out of the 332 Greek medical papyri known and published to date,[25] only 31 papyri (i.e. less than 10%) can be assigned to this period, including 12 dated more specifically to the 3rd c. BC,[26] compared to more than 200 papyri (about two-thirds of the total number of papyri) for the Roman period and one hundred (about 30%) for the Byzantine one.

Frr. 1A–B sup. + fr. 1C + fr. 3 contain the remains of two columns. Nothing can be deduced from the first (except that it must have contained at least 22 lines), while the maximum preserved width of the second column, which is edited in appendix to this paper (see pp. 328–331), is 5.3 cm. Since the average width of the columns in the Ptolemaic rolls generally varies between 7 and 8 cm, it can be assumed that for the best-preserved lines, the two-thirds of the width of the second column probably remains.[27] Where it is possible to estimate it, the number of letters varies around

23 Turner/Parsons 1987, 8.

24 We also have another fragment of a treatise on nosology-therapeutics, on the subject of diseases of the spleen and kidneys, namely *P.Köln* IX 356 (unknown prov.), but it is much later, since it dates back to the 2nd c. AD.

25 The Mertens-Pack[3] database actually records more than 350 Greek papyri for the subgenre "Medicine and Surgery", of which about twenty are still unpublished.

26 The Greek medical papyri of the 3rd c. BC known and published to date are the following: *P.Bingen* 1 (another version of or commentary on Hippocrates, *De diaeta*, 2.49; Tebtunis; end of the 3rd c.; MP[3] 539.21); *P.Grenf.* II 7b + *P.Ryl.* I 39 + P.Heid. inv. G 401 + *P.Hib.* II 190 (treatise on ophthalmology; El-Hibeh; 1st half of the 3rd c.; MP[3] 2343.1); *P.Hib.* II 191 (prescriptions for women's diseases; El-Hibeh; ca. 260/230; MP[3] 2348); *P.Fay.Coles* 3 (medical fragment?; Bakchias; late 3rd/early 2nd c.; MP[3] 2356.2); *P.Hamb.* II 140 (medical treatise?; unknown prov.; ca. 200; MP[3] 2357); *P.ÄkNo* 1 (medical treatise; unknown prov.; ca. 220/150; MP[3] 2357.16); *P.Yale* II 123 (medical treatise; unknown prov.; 3rd c.; MP[3] 2369.01); P.Athen.Univ. inv. 2780 + 2781 (medical prescriptions; Arsinoites; end of the 3rd c.; MP[3] 2391.6); *P.Eleph.Wagner* 4 = *GMP* II, 11 (medical prescription; Elephantine; end of the 3rd c.; MP[3] 2394.04); *P.Hib.* II 192 (medical prescriptions; El-Hibeh; ca. 270/250; MP[3] 2399); P.Mich. inv. 3243 (list of pharmaceuticals or recipe; unknown prov.; 1st half of the 3rd c.; MP[3] 2407.3); *P.Ryl.* III 531 (medical prescriptions; unknown prov.; 3rd/2nd c.; MP[3] 2418). Six of them have already been mentioned above, n. 5.

27 Del Corso 2022, 133: "La larghezza della colonna (includendo lo spazio intercolunnare) è compresa di solito tra i 7 e gli 8 cm, mai di più e raramente di meno".

21/22 letters per line. Unfortunately, only a few letters of fr. 3 remain. The second column contained at least 23 lines of writing.

Leaving aside l. 1 of which only few letters remain, a **first section** (ll. 2–7) begins with a possible subordinate clause with ὅταν (perhaps followed by δέ) + subj. γένηται (vel ἐπι]|γένηται) "when... happens", then the focus turns to the "vessels in the breast region (θῶραξ)".[28] This sentence is followed by a word which is only partially preserved, probably the 3rd p. sg. of the pres. ind. of vb. ϲυμφθείρω, "destroy together or altogether", and, in a passive sense, "perish together or along with; melt or die away into each other", or, assuming an iotacism, ϲυμφθίνω, "decay along with". In neither case are we dealing with a medical term. The first verb is scarcely attested in the Classical period: anyway, it is used in active form in Eur., *Andr.* 947–948: ἡ μέν τι κερδαίνουϲα ϲυμφθείρει λέχοϲ, | ἡ δ᾽ ἀμπλακοῦϲα ϲυννοϲεῖν αὑτῇ θέλει, "One woman *corrupts* a friend's marriage with an eye to gain, while another who has slipped from virtue wants company in her vice". It should be noted that vb. ϲυννοϲέω is also attested in our fragment (see l. 10 of the text). The verb ϲυμφθείρω becomes more common in philosophical prose, since the 4th c. BC, and especially in the *Corpus Aristotelicum* (e.g. *Top*., 150a34). In medicine, it is used in a passive sense (to designate the "union" of the skin of the lips with the muscles) in Gal., *De usu partium*, 10.15 (= K. 3.746.5; cf. 11.15 = K. 3.912.12). The second verb is even rarer, but perhaps more appropriate to the context: cf. Arist., *G. A.*, 745a16, ϲυμφθίνει γὰρ τῷ ϲώματι καὶ τοῖϲ μέρεϲιν, "they (sc. bones) perish at the same time as the body and its parts"; Theophr., *H. P.*, 1.7.2, ϲυμφθίνουϲι γὰρ καὶ αἱ ῥίζαι τῷ ἀλλῷ ϲώματι, "The roots (sc. of the fig tree) perish along with the rest of the plant's body"; also Aelian, *N. A.*, 12.13, καὶ οὖν καὶ τὸ ἧπαρ αὐτοῦ ϲυναύξεται τῇ θεῷ ἢ ϲυμφθίνει, καὶ πῇ εὐτραφέϲ ἐϲτι, πῇ δὲ λεπτότερον, "It is also noteworthy that his (sc. of the Egyptian fish φῦϲα) liver increases or decreases with the star of the goddess (sc. the Moon), and that it is now fatter, now, on the contrary, thinner." In the papyrus, considering the lines for which it is possible to estimate the average number of letters, we can propose an integration [ϲ]υμφθẹ[ίνει], whose subject should be the "vessels".

The reason for this decay should be "consumption" (5: διὰ τὴμ [l. τὴν] φθόην, "because of consumption"); these words are followed by another vb. form, ὑποτετ̣[, certainly from ὑποτάττω, probably in reference to vessels (or, less likely, to consumption), and, in l. 6, after a dozen letters of which almost nothing remains, by the

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28 In this part of the body there are many small vessels: *Diseases II*, 6.3 (Jouanna CUF, p. 137 = p. 178 Potter), πάϲχει δὲ ταῦτα ὅταν αὐτῷ μέλαινα χολὴ ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ κινηθεῖϲα ῥυῇ καὶ μάλιϲτα καθ' ὃ τὰ πλεῖϲτα ἐν τῷ τραχήλῳ ἐϲτὶ φλέβια καὶ τοῖϲι ϲτήθεϲι, "He suffers these things when dark bile is set in motion in his head, and flows mainly to where most of the vessels in the neck and chest are" (transl. P. Potter).

expression "on the skin / on the (cutaneous) surface" (6–7: περὶ τὴν ἐπιφ[ά]|νεạạν: cutaneous manifestations). It seems that in these lines are described the symptoms of a disease.

The reference to φθόη is remarkable. To date, this is the first and only papyrological attestation of this noun. Like φθίϲιϲ, which has the same root, of which they represent two different degrees, φθόη indicates consumption; the two terms are etymologically related to the verb φθίνω, "to be consumed, to perish, to come to an end".[29] The word φθίϲιϲ and related terms have a more general meaning than their derivatives in modern scientific language; indeed, in ancient texts, φθίϲιϲ applies "to any kind of extinction, to any diminution of an object that will end in its disappearance"; it therefore also refers, for example, to the setting of the sun or to the atrophy of an organ.[30] But φθίϲιϲ and related terms also appear very early on in a restricted, nosological sense, being used to describe symptoms of what we would now call pulmonary tuberculosis.[31]

The earliest surviving attestations of φθόη date from the 5th c. BC, in *Diseases II*, 49 (pp. 185–186 Jouanna CUF = p. 248 Potter), one of the oldest nosological treatises of the *Corpus Hippocraticum*. It appears in a chapter entitled "another consumption" (ἄλλη φθόη), which follows another chapter relating to a different kind of consumption (c. 48 ὅταν πλευμᾷ, "when there is a disease of the lung"):

> Another consumption: there is coughing, the sputum is copious and moist, and sometimes the patient without difficulty coughs up pus that resembles hail stones which, on being rubbed between the fingers, are hard and evil-smelling. The voice is clear, the patient is free of pain, and there are no fevers, although sometimes fever heat; the patient is especially weak. You must make this patient drink hellebore and a decoction of lentils, and feed him as well as possible, while avoiding sharp vegetables, beef, pork, and mutton; have him do a few exercises, take walks, vomit after meals, and refrain from venery. This disease lasts for seven or nine years; if the patient is treated from the beginning, he recovers. (Transl. P. Potter.)

Chapters 48 and 49 deal with two different types of pulmonary disease.[32] The first (c. 48) is clinically identical, with some differences in detail, to the first of the three *phthiseis* described in c. 10 of *Internal Affections* (7.186.26–192.5 L. = pp. 92–94 Potter).

29 Chantraine, *DELG*, *s.v.* φθίνω.
30 Grmek 1983, 270.
31 On φθίϲιϲ, see Pagel 1927; Baumann 1930; Meinecke 1927; Coury 1972 and Grmek 1983, 269–282.
32 Chapters 50–52 concern other types of pulmonary diseases (called *phthisis*). In his *Vocum Hippocratis Glossarium*, π 39 (p. 248.39 Perilli), Galen mentions a kind of pulmonary phthisis called πλεῦμοϲ (which he defines as φθόη ἢ τὸ πλευμῶδεϲ πάθοϲ, "consumption or the lung disease"). This reference to the *Corpus Hippocraticum* has not yet been identified with certainty, but it may be to *Diseases II*, c. 52 (see p. 189 Jouanna, CUF and note *ad loc.*, pp. 259–260).

The “other consumption” is a disease of long duration, but which can be cured if the patient is treated from the outset. In spite of considerable divergences in the presentation of symptoms, it corresponds to the third phthisis listed in *Internal Affections* (7.192.19–198.24 L. = pp. 96–102 Potter).[33] As in the previous case, φθόη refers to the clinical description of a pulmonary disease with internal pyogenic ulcers.[34]

The other attestation of φθόη in the *Corpus Hippocraticum* is found in *Diseases I*, 3, at the head of a list of diseases whose duration is inevitably long (μακρά) — this is in agreement with what is also said in *Diseases II* — while φθίcιc, which is also attested in the same chapter, is found at the head of a list of diseases which, when they occur, inevitably lead to death.[35] Furthermore, it should be noted that φθόη is a *varia lectio* for φθορή in two contiguous aphorisms (7.79 and 80 = 4.604.8–10 L. and II, p. 475 Madgelaine, ined. PhD, Paris, 1994).[36]

An examination of the unqualified attestations of φθίcιc and φθινώδηc in the *Corpus Hippocraticum* had led M.D. Grmek to highlight a double use of these terms: on the one hand, in the broad sense of “consumptive disease” and, on the other, in a narrower and more precise sense, to indicate an intrapulmonary or intrathoracic ulceration. In *Diseases II*, it is difficult to determine the exact meaning of φθόη, especially in relation to πλευμᾷ used in the previous chapter, or to φθίcιc attested in

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33 Hipp., *Internal Affections*, 12 (7.192.19–194.13 L. = pp. 96–98 Potter): “Another consumption (*phthisis*): from this one the person suffers the following (his spinal marrow becomes filled with blood; or also he may be consumed because the hollow vessels fill with dropsical phlegm and with bile; patients suffer the same symptoms no matter which of these two is the origin of their consumption): he immediately becomes dark and somewhat swollen, the parts of his face below the eyes are pale-yellow, and the vessels through his body are pale-yellow and stretched, or some are very red; especially conspicuous are the ones in the axillae. The patient expectorates pale-yellow sputum, and when an attack occurs he chokes and sometimes cannot cough even though he wants to. Sometimes, because of his choking and eagerness to cough, he all at once vomits bile, then scum, and often even food when he has eaten; after he has vomited, his condition seems to be better; but then after a short time he is again subject to the same distress as before. The patient’s voice is shriller than when he was well, and intermittent chills and fever accompanied by sweating occur. When the case is such, treat this patient with foods, gruels, drinks, medications, and all the other things that you gave to the preceding one. Generally the disease continues for nine years, and then, being wasted away, the patient dies. Few escape, for the disease is severe” (transl. P. Potter). See also Bourgey 1953, 149–156.

34 Jouanna 1983, 254: “*phthisis* as a result of ulceration of the lung?”.

35 Hipp., *Diseases I*, 3 (6.144.4–5 and 17 L. = pp. 8–10 Wittern and 92–94 Potter): Τῶν δὲ νοcημάτων τὰ τοιάδε ἔχει ἀνάγκαc ὥcτε ὑπ᾽ αὐτῶν ἀπόλλυcθαι, ὅταν γένωνται· φθίcιc (…). Μακρὰ δὲ τάδε ἀνάγκη εἶναι· φθόην (lesson of **θ** rightly received by Wittern and Potter in their edd.; see also Littré in app.) κτλ.

36 *Index Hipp.*, p. 841, *s.v.* φθόη. In his commentary on these aphorisms (K. 18/A.193.8–11), Galen is aware of the double variant attested in the Hippocratic manuscripts.

following chapters; the context is no clearer in *Diseases I*.[37] As for the word φθόη, Grmek suggests that in the nosological lexicon of the *Corpus* it could have served to eliminate the technical drawback of this double meaning of φθίϲιϲ.

The other attestations of φθόη before Roman times are rare. In the 4th c. BC, it is used once by two orators: on the one hand, by Isocrates in *Aeginetics* (391/390 BC), § 11, concerning Thrasylochus "stricken with consumption" (φθόη ϲχόμενον αὐτὸν); on the other, by Demosthenes in *Letter* 3, 30, with reference to two mistresses who drove Pytheas "to consumption" (μέχρι φθόηϲ), that is, to exhaustion.[38] Harpocration (late 2nd c. AD) catalogued it in his *Lexicon of the Ten Orators* (Φ 14), referring to the above-mentioned passages by Demosthenes and Isocrates, who, according to him, used it to designate what is now called *phthisis* (τὴν νῦν φθίϲιν λεγομένην φθόην ἔλεγον). Around the same time that the Alexandrian grammarian, Galen, in his *Commentary on the* Aphorisms *of Hippocrates*, 7.16 (K. 18/A.116), states that Hippocrates in this aphorism calls *phthisis* what "properly (ἰδίωϲ) the Greeks, and particularly the Athenians, call φθόη".

Still in the 4th c. BC, Plato, *Leg.* 11.2 (916a5), lists consumption (φθόη), along with stone, stranguria, the sacred disease, and "any other complaint, mental or physical, which most men would fail to notice, although it be prolonged and hard to cure" among the cases in which the law authorizes the return of a slave, unless the purchaser is a doctor or a trainer, or the seller has warned the purchaser of the illness. This testimony is interesting because it offers a clue to the identification of the disease, which is invisible to the eyes of a layman and difficult to cure (cf., in the papyrus, 11: δυϲθεράπ̣ε̣υτα). To these testimonies may be added epigraphic ones, including a curse tablet from Patissia (Athens), dating back to the 4th/3rd c. BC (*IG* III, App. 98).[39]

Mention should also be made of the testimony of Plato the Comic, fr. 184.4 (quoted by Galen, when explaining the meaning of ἔμπυοι in *Aphorisms*, 7.44), where a patient of Euryphon of Cnidus (mid-5th c. BC) is represented recovering from pleurisy with numerous bedsores on his body,[40] and Ctesias of Cnidus, fr. 45l, p. 199 Lenfant CUF = Aelian., *N. A.*, 4.36: καὶ φθόη καταλαμβάνει τὸν λαβόντα, καὶ

37 Jouanna 1983, 253–254.
38 This passage is also preserved by *P.Lond.Lit.* 130 (MP[3] 337), from the 2nd/1st c. BC. It offers the reading φυλῆϲ, which is not preferable to the φθόηϲ we find in the medieval manuscripts.
39 See also *I.Thrake Aeg.* E3, 6 (fragmentary law concerning the buying and selling of slaves and draft animals; Thrace, before 350 BC), where the word is completely integrated; and *IG* XII,3 187 (Astypalaea), ὑπὲρ [φ]θό[η]ϲ | Ἀϲκλαπιῶι. In Roman times (2nd/3rd c. AD), *SEG* XLVII 1503 (dedication to Asclepius), 2–3, ἐν λυγρᾶι φθόηι | χειμῶνι.
40 Gal., *In Hipp.* Aph. *comment.*, 7.44 (K. 18/A.149.8–150.1). On this testimony on Euryphon, adduced from É. Littré onwards to prove that *Diseases II*, *Internal Affections*, and *Diseases III*, are indeed of Cnidian origin, see the comments in Jouanna 1983, 36–39.

ἐνιαυτοῦ ἀναλίcκεται τηκεδόνι, “a consumption overtakes him, and within a year he is carried off by wasting away” (sc. he who has taken a dose of the black poison from the purple snake). Finally, there are two attestations in the Aristotelian corpus, one of them in the *Problems*, I, 10 (860b7), concerning the occurrence of headache, bronchitis, cough, and consumption (καὶ τελευτῶcιν εἰc φθίcειc).[41] In our papyrus, φθόη seems to indicate a symptom of the disease that is being described, but it could also be the disease itself.

In Roman times, φθόη is used to denote a specific form of φθίcιc (the consumption of the body following a lung ulcer),[42] while φθίcιc, in a more general sense, is applied to any consumption of the body, according to the author of the *Def. med.* attributed to Galen:

> 287. Τί ἐcτι φθίcιc; Φθίcιc ἐcτὶν ἕλκωcιc πνεύμονοc ἢ θώρακοc ἢ φάρυγγοc ὥcτε βῆχα παρακολουθεῖν καὶ πυρετοὺc βληχροὺc καὶ cυντήκεcθαι τὸ cῶμα.
> 288. Ὅτι διαφέρει φθίcιc καὶ φθόη· φθίcιc μὲν γὰρ ἐcτιν ἡ λεγομένη κοινῶc πᾶcα cώματοc μείωcίc τε καὶ cύντηξιc, φθόη δὲ ἡ ἰδίωc ἐφ’ ἕλκει cύντηξίc τε καὶ μείωcιc τοῦ cώματοc. Εἴρηται δὲ φθίcιc ἀπὸ τοῦ φθίνειν, ὅπερ ἐcτὶ μειοῦcθαι.
>
> 287. What is *phthisis*? *Phthisis* is the ulceration of the lung, or chest, or throat, bringing cough and mild fever, with wasting away of the body.
> 288. That *phthisis* differs from *phthoe*, for *phthisis* is said in general to denote any emaciation and consumption of the body, while *phthoe* is properly said to denote the consumption and emaciation of the body as a result of an ulcer. *Phthisis* (consumption) takes its name from *phthinein* (waste away), which means lessen.[43]

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41 Arist., *Problems*, 1.10 (860b7), ἐὰν δὲ διὰ πλῆθοc μὴ πήξῃ, ῥεῖ εἰc τὸν ἐχόμενον τόπον, ὅθεν αἱ βῆχεc καὶ οἱ βράγχοι καὶ αἱ φθόαι γίνονται, “but if owing to the quantity it does not solidify, it flows into the neighboring place (i.e. the throat and the lungs), from which come coughs, sore throats, and consumption” (αἱ φθόαι, cf. P. Louis, CUF, “*phénomènes de consomption*”). For a discussion of this problem in relation to *On Airs, Waters, and Places* 10 and *Aphorisms* 3.13, see Jouanna 1996 (= 2024, 762–772). The other attestation in the *Corpus Aristotelicum* is found in *On Marvellous Things Heard*, 152 (846a4 = p. 55.20 Westermann), about water sacred to Zeus, the god of oaths, at Tyana: “To men who keep their oaths this water is sweet and kindly, but to perjurers judgement is close at their heels. For the water leaps at their eyes, their hands and their feet, and they are seized with dropsy and *consumption* (φθόαιc); and it is impossible for them to get away before it happens, but they are rooted to the spot lamenting by the water, and confessing their perjuries” (transl. W.S. Hett).

42 Gal., *De san. tuenda*, 6.9 (K. 6.421). The noun φθόη is appreciated by Aretaeus (1st c. AD), who uses it frequently and even devotes a small monograph to it (3.8, intitled Περὶ φθίcιοc, *CMG* 2, pp. 47–49 Hude; cf. also 3.9.1, p. 49.11).

43 Ps.-Gal., *Def. med.*, 287–288 (K. 19.419.18–420.4, no. 261 = p. 108.14–20 *CMG* 5.13.2 Kollesch); Gal., *De san. tuenda*, 6.9 (K. 6.421.13–14).

As M.D. Grmek acknowledges, “it is difficult to grasp the clinical significance of this distinction. Attested in a late text, it is not necessarily valid for the classical period”.

The **next section** (ll. 8–10) is shorter and even more fragmentary. One reads (l. 8) the words τὰϲ̣ μὲν ἀρχάϲ̣ “at the beginning, first”; an observation on the first manifestations is completely in line with the expository practice of the nosological treatises. Then, at l. 10, “those who are sick of the same disease” or “together” (οἱ ϲυν̣ν̣οϲο̣ῦ̣ν̣τ̣[εϲ; the visible traces seem to confirm that it is precisely this verb that must be deciphered). Frequent in Euripides, where it is used in a figurative sense (see *supra Andr.* 948, and also *Iph. Aul.*, 407; fr. 160.1 and fr. 909.11), the verb ϲυννοϲέω “to be sick” or “ill together”, is quite rare in medicine: in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, apart from a (metaphoric) occurrence in *Letter* 13 (9.334.2–3 L.), it is only attested in *Aphorisms*, 2.15 (4.474.4–5 L. = II, p. 389 Magdelaine), and in *Epidemics II*, 4.4 (5.126.9 L.), where it refers to the body that is affected (or a condition of the body complicated by the presence of another disease). The verb also appears in Arist., *G. A.*, 5.4 (784a30) and, in the Roman period, Anon. Lond., 17.8 (p. 22 Ricciardetto, CUF = p. 35 Manetti, Teubner), αὐτὸϲ ϲυννο[ϲεῖ], “he himself also falls ill”, and Soranus, *Diseases of Women*, 1.11 (1.32 Burguière/Gourevitch/Malinas CUF). In Galen, the word is only found in the *Commentary on the* Aphorisms (2.15 = K. 17/B.471.14 and 472.3; 5.57 = K. 17/B.855.2; the same situation is observed later for Stephan of Athens, 2.14 = *CMG* 11.1.3.1, pp. 164–166 Westerink). In our papyrus, the verb could mean that a part of the body other than the lung or the breast region is diseased.

The first decipherable word in a **third preserved section** (ll. 11–12) is δυϲθεράπε̣υτα, “difficult to cure or to heal” — we have seen that φθόη is classified by the author of *Diseases I* among those diseases whose duration is inevitably long, while in *Internal Affections* it is considered χαλεπή, “severe”. Attestations of the adjective δυϲθεράπευτοϲ before Philo of Alexandria (end of the 1st c. BC/first half of the 1st c. AD), who uses it in a figurative sense, are extremely rare. Except for one example in Sophocles (*Ajax*, 608–610: δυϲθεράπευτοϲ Αἴαϲ | (…), ὤμοι μοι, | θείᾳ μανίᾳ ξύναυλοϲ, “Ajax, difficult to tend, alas, living with a godsent madness”), it is only used, with reference to a lesion (τὸ ἕλκοϲ) that will rupture and be difficult to treat, in *Physician* (10 = 9.216.9 L. and p. 308 Potter), a treatise of the *Corpus Hippocraticum* of later date (Hellenistic or early Roman period).[44] In the next line (12), the presence of φικτα at the beginning of the line suggests ἀ] | φῖκτα[ι, pf. ind. of ἀφικνέομαι, “arrive at, come to, reach”, but also a form of ἐφικτόϲ, “easy to reach,

44 The adjective is also found in Galen, *De locis affectis* (4.8 = K. 8.264.1; 6.3 = K. 8.391.16) and, above all, in his pharmacological treatises (e.g. *De comp. med. sec. loc.* 1.2 = K. 12.393.8; etc.). It reappears among Byzantine physicians. Like δυϲίατοϲ, which is more frequent, the adjective δυϲθεράπευτοϲ is used to gloss δυϲαλθήϲ in lexicons (see Ps.-Zonaras, *Lex.*, Δ, p. 583.8).

accessible", or a compound, such as δυcέφικτοc, "hard to come at", or ἀνέφικτοc, "out of reach, unattainable".[45] As is also suggested by the presence of a second word relating to healing (12: θ̣ε̣ραπε̣[), this whole section seems to be devoted to therapeutics.

The **following section** consists of three lines (ll. 13–15). The only complete noun that can still be deciphered is ἄναψ̣ιν. In the extant literature, unlike vb. ἀνάπτω, the noun (ἡ) ἄναψιc, "lighting up, kindling", does not appear before the 1st c. BC, except for an attestation in Epicurus (see *infra* n. 46), and it is not common before the Byzantine period. Both the verb and the noun are used as metaphors related to the act of catching fire; they are attested in connection with flammable material, a lamp, or a light that turns on, and, often, in a celestial context.[46] In a medical sense, it refers to fever (which is a fire). A section on causes of the *De febribus* attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias attests both the verb and the noun, in reference to the burning of the *pneuma* which produces ephemeral fever, and to the burning of the humours.[47] Of particular interest is Aëtius, 5.67 (περὶ τῶν ἐπὶ βουβῶcι πυρετῶν), where it is said that phlebotomy serves to prevent the matter (corrupted as a result of inflammation and destined to suppurate) from producing the fire that is fever.[48] In the two passages of his *De morborum causis* (again in a section on causes, as in Alexander), Galen attributes to the *kopos* the ability to kindle fever.[49] In the papyrus, the context must concern the fever that accompanies the *phthoe*. The rest of the column (ll. 16–23) is so fragmentary that not a single complete word can be identified with certainty.

The disease described in these sections does not seem to be incompatible with a type of *phthisis* or, more generally, with a respiratory illness such as empyema. In the descriptions of the types of *phthiseis* in *Internal Affections*, the corrupted phlegm fills the veins, causing fluxion on the lungs with pain (more or less intense, depending on the type of phthisis) in the chest.[50] Consumption (φθίνει) comes from the vessels. Pruritus and pain are also characteristic symptoms of these affections.[51]

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45 A. Roselli also suggests φυκτα for ἄ]|φυκτα, "irremediable" (with an iotacism υ > ι), which would be fine for the sense; compare Hipp., *Prorrh. II*, 6 (9.22.22 L.; about dropsy) and 12 (9.32.18 L.; wounds); *De diaeta acut.* (*App*.), 10.3 (p. 73.12 Joly = c. 6, 2.416.5 L.; about a kind of sore throat); 30.2 (p. 82.21 Joly = c. 10, 2.456.1 L.; fever); 52.1 (p. 91.13 Joly = c. 20, 2.498.1 L.; dropsy).

46 For this last context, Epic., *Letter to Pythocles*, 92; see also Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom*., 2.66 and 10.2.3.

47 Ps.-Alex. Aphr., *De febribus*, c. 27, 9 (1.101 Ideler); see also Steph., *In Hipp.* Prognosticum *comm*., 3.12 (*CMG* 11.1.2, p. 268.27 Duffy).

48 Aëtius, V, 67 (*CMG* 8.2, p. 39.21 Olivieri).

49 Gal., *De morb. causis*, c. 2 (7.7.8 and 8.2–3 K.).

50 On fluxion on the lungs, see also Hipp., *On the Places in Man*, 10.

51 Hipp., *Diseases II*, 50.1 (p. 186 Jouanna).

Pruritus can be a bad sign.[52] According to the *Coan Prenotions*, c. 435 (p. 319 Ferracci, ined. PhD, Paris, 2009), exanthems that look like scratches announce the withering away of the body. A mild fever also characterizes phthisis, especially that of the first type. These diseases are difficult to cure and always last a long time.[53]

The nosological treatises of the *Hippocratic Corpus* offer a point of comparison not only in terms of medical content. The presence in our papyrus of *short sections* of text delimited by *paragraphoi* and the fact that at least one section possibly begins with a subordinate clause, combined with the few decipherable words, allow us to glimpse *a scheme for the description of the disease* divided into sections, including at least (1) a semiotic section, (2) a prognostic section, and perhaps even (3) a therapeutic one.

This structure is reminiscent of the organization of the text in the six surviving columns of the above-mentioned *P.ÄkNo* 1, slightly later than our IFAO papyrus. Indeed, the text of the Cologne papyrus is arranged according to a tripartite scheme: (1) symptomatology, (2) diagnosis or prognosis, and (3) therapy.[54] According to the editors, I. Andorlini and R.W. Daniel, this structure is comparable to that of the nosological treatises of the *Corpus Hippocraticum*. The first two parts are presented in the form of a single conditional sentence. Introduced by ἐὰν δὲ or ὅταν δέ,[55] the protases are devoted to the symptom(s), often only one or two, and the apodoses to the diagnosis or prognosis. The standard form of the apodosis is cημαίνει + indication of the disease(s). As A. Roselli has rightly pointed out,

> the number of symptoms, the prognosis reduced to the essentials and the therapy that privileges a few operations suggest a comparison with the short chapters of compilations such as *Aphorisms*, *Prorrhetic I* and *Prognosis of Cos*, while the typical chapters of Hippocratic nosological treatises are much more extensive. Therefore, (…) we could consider the new text to be a compilation of a nosological nature that fits perfectly with the other compilations attested in the *Corpus Hippocraticum.* The treatise tends towards a therapeutic perspective.[56]

52 Hipp., *Coan Prenotions*, 432 (p. 319 Ferracci). The passages devoted to phthisis in this treatise (c. 426–436) mainly seem to refer to the first of the three *phthiseis* recorded by the author of *Internal Affections* (see *supra*, p. 319–320 and n. 33).

53 Hipp., *Prorrh. II*, 5 (9.20 L.).

54 Andolini, Daniel 2016, 13–15.

55 In our papyrus, the trace following the first attestation of ὅταν is compatible with *delta*; we read ὅ̣τ̣α̣ν̣ δ’ for the second occurrence.

56 Roselli 2021, 646.

Another comparable presentation scheme of the disease is that of the “Cnidian” treatises.[57] Each scheme forms an autonomous unit. With variations (depending on the treatise and occurring within each treatise) and exceptions,[58] it includes: (1) the identification of the illness, either with a title giving the name of the disease, or with a generally brief subordinate clause introduced by ἤν, but sometimes also by ὅταν or ἐπήν, indicating the nature of the disease and possibly its location and cause (we should recall that, in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, φθόη is only attested in *Diseases I* and *II*); (2) semiology: within this part, subordinate clauses are very rare, *except for* conditional or temporal clauses introduced by ἤν, ἐπήν, ὅταν (and, as an exception, by ἐπειδάν or ὁπόταν);[59] (3) therapeutics;[60] and, as a rule, (4) prognosis, i.e. an assessment of the prognosis and evolution of the disease — these last two sections may sometimes occur in reverse order. However, there are also discrepancies in the few lines that can be deciphered, particularly in the vocabulary,[61] and unfortunately we do not find even one of the criteria that might help us to determine a possible Cnidian origin (enumeration of the varieties of a disease, frequent prescription of purgatives, milk, serum, infusions into the lungs, the use of cauterization).[62]

The poor state of preservation of the roll and the small amount of decipherable text do not allow us to go much beyond the similarities noted above. We do not even know if there were any descriptions of other diseases, arranged one after the other according to an analytical perspective.[63] It remains difficult to ascertain whether our passage should be regarded as a “parallel redaction” of the material handed

57 This scheme has been studied in particular by Jouanna 1974, 83–87; 1975 (= 2024, 54–64) and 1983, 15–24 (see 15 n. 2 for the previous bibliography).

58 Jouanna 1983, 15: “Despite inevitable variations or exceptions, it is not out of place to speak in this case of a schema of exposure obeying to norms, so great is the constancy throughout the treatise”.

59 When the disease is presented in the title, the discussion on semiology follows in asyndeton; when the disease is presented in a subordinate clause, the discussion on semiology is the main clause. This part consists of a list of symptoms, listed in short, independent sentences placed on the same level and regularly linked by καί. The verbs of these clauses are almost exclusively in the present tense of the indicative (3rd pers. sg. or sometimes pl.). When the subject of the verb is the patient, the term designating him is always implied; it is generally the same when the patient is the complement of the verb.

60 This part is usually introduced either by the formula ὅταν οὕτως ἔχῃ or by the demonstrative οὗτος (in asyndeton), designating the patient. The body of the discussion consists of prescriptions; in one out of three cases, there is also a concluding formula beginning with ταῦτα (see l. 17 of P.IFAO).

61 To limit myself to just one example, the word ἀγγεῖα “vessels” never appears in the treatises attributed to the Cnidian school (but φλέβια is used).

62 On these criteria, see Bourgey 155f; Jouanna 1974, 132; 1983, 33f. For the milk, see Deichgräber 1971, 50 n. 10.

63 It is likely that the few remains of l. 1 of fr. 1A sup. belong to the description of another disease.

down by the treatises that have entered the *Corpus*,[64] or rather as an independent text, although, as we have seen, the way in which the disease is presented seems compatible with that of several treatises that have entered the *Corpus*. This papyrus could perhaps be included in the group of texts 'similar' to the Hippocratic ones, which A. Roselli has recently dealt with in an '*addendum*' to his fine paper "*Un corpo che prende forma*", published in 2000.[65]

With regard to the other layers that make up fr. 1, we will limit ourselves to mentioning in particular the presence of the noun cύμπτωμα (fr. 1A tr. ch., l. 9). Fr. 2 contains the remnants of the central part of a column that is distinct from the one we have just examined, but relates to it in terms of content. The loss of the beginning does not allow us to determine whether this column was divided into sections. Among the decipherable words, reference is made to anastomosis (l. 1), certainly in relation to vessels, which are mentioned again (ll. 2 and 7), to the presence of a "foreign, alien" element (l. 3), to a comparison concerning fumigants (l. 4),[66] to age (l. 5: different diseases according to age?), to an interval or distance, probably in relation to vases (l. 6), and to "lower parts" (l. 8). A '*sottoposto*' fragment to fr. 2 also attests to the word "suffering" (ἄλγημα).

Fr. 4 contains the last letters of one column and the beginning of the next one. Only three lines have survived from the first column and six from the second (including a tiny trace of the first and last), where the words ἐνεργόν, "active, industrious, vigorous" (l. 3) and πλῆθοc, "quantity, abundance" (l. 4) can be read. From the point of view of preservation, this fragment is very similar to fr. 5 (where the focus is clearly on veins) and 6 (where only a few traces of letters are still visible), but these fragments do not seem to fit together. Fr. 8 bears the letters *upsilon* and *delta*, probably for a word related to water (*hudôr*) preceded by a high dot.

4 Final Remarks

This presentation has given an idea of how difficult it is to identify the work and the author of P.IFAO grec inv. 520. This difficulty is due not only to the fragmentary and sometimes hopeless state of the papyrus, but also to the almost total loss of

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64 For a parallel redaction of the treatise on *Internal Affections*, see the testimony of *P.Köln* IX 356 (see *supra* n. 24), studied by Jouanna 2004, reprinted in Jouanna 2009, 663–678 and Jouanna 2024, 1309–1318.

65 Roselli 2000 and 2019.

66 *Diseases II* 2.47B (p. 181 Jouanna CUF). It may have to do with diseases of the chest, for which fumigants and fumigations are recommended.

contemporary and later medical literature between the time of Hippocrates and the Roman period. Indeed, only fragments of this literature remain, i.e. quotations in later works from the Roman or Byzantine periods. The Greek papyri are therefore all the more valuable, not only for papyrologists and philologists in general, but also for historians of medicine, because they allow us to fill in the gaps in our knowledge of the medical art of the Classical and Hellenistic periods (even as far as the Hippocratic tradition is concerned, the few Hellenistic papyri that have survived give us a sense of the wide range of traditions that have been lost). The papyri allow us to glimpse the richness and variety of what must have existed, been written, and even disseminated in Egypt during the millennium in which the flame of Hellenism burned. The study and publication of the thousands of Greek papyri still unpublished, some of which could be medical, such as the one presented here, but also of those already published, thus offer the best hope of discoveries for the future.

5 Appendix: Edition of P.IFAO grec inv. 520, frr. 1A–B sup. + fr. 1C + fr. 3 (col. II)

→ χοντ̣ . [— fr. 1A sup. (ll. 1–7)
ὅταν . [± 5] . ψη[ ]
γένηται, ταῦ̣τ̣[ὰ γ]ὰρ περ̣ὶ [τὸν]
θώρακα ἀγγεῖ̣α̣ [c]υμφθε̣[ίνει]
διὰ τὴμ φθόην ὑποτετ̣[αγμένα?]
υ . . [± 6] περὶ τὴν ἐπιφ[ά-] — fr. 1B sup. (ll. 6–13)
νε̣ι̣α̣ν̣ [. .] . . . . α̣δετα . [
τὰς̣ μὲν ἀρχὰς̣ . . . [
ἔχ̣ε̣ι̣, ὅ̣τ̣α̣ν̣ δ’ ἐπιτε[
ουϲ οἱ ϲυν̣ν̣οϲο̣ῦ̣ντ̣[εϲ
δυϲθεράπε̣υτα . ε[
φ̣ι̣κτα̣[.] . θ̣ε̣ραπε̣[— fr. 1C (ll. 12–17)
ϲατη ⟦μ̣?⟧ ο̣ . . . [ ] . αιρα̣[
τὴν ἄναψ̣ι̣ν ε[
α̣[1/2]χεα ϲυμ . [— fr. 3 (ll. 15–23)
φανε̣ντα[
τ̣α̣υτ̣ . [. ?] . . [
α̣ν̣ . [
[.] . . . [

ν̣ων ϲ̣. . [
. τῆϲ κεφ[αλῆϲ
ε̣. . ρωθη[
]τ̣ηϲψ[
– – – –

4. [ϲ]υμφθε̣[ίνει] : l. ϲυμφθίνει || 5. τὴμ φθόην : l. τὴν φθόην.

Translation of ll. 2–11
(...) when (...) occurs, as the same vessels in the chest area decay because of the consumption, beneath (?) (...) on the skin ... the beginnings (...) (the sick person?) has (...) while on the other hand (...) those who are ill also (...). Are difficult to cure (...) ... (...).

1. χοντ. [: the ink trace that connects the *nu* to the *tau* was added after the *nu* was written; only a trace of the upper end of the letter following *tau* remains, which is probably an *alpha* rather than *omicron*, *epsilon*, or *eta*; the *tau* has a particularly long horizontal stroke, especially in its second half, which is not typical of this copyist. The most obvious hypothesis is that we are dealing with a form of ἔχω (or a compound verb), but we cannot exclude other verbs (ἄρχομαι, ὑπάρχω, τυγχάνω, etc.).

2. ὅταν. [± 5]. ψη̣[ ]: only a very small, unidentifiable trace remains of the letter following ὅταν; the same is true of the one preceding the ψ. The letter following the ψ is composed of a vertical stroke, which can only correspond to the first vertical stroke of an *eta*; the stroke does not descend sufficiently to be read as an *iota*.

3. ταὐ̣τ̣[ὰ may be preferable to ταῦ̣τ̣[α, because there is need for an article (A. Roselli); only a trace remains of the lower part of the vertical stroke of the *upsilon*, while a trace of the following letter is visible. Only the lower part of the *iota* of περί is preserved.

4. The initial *alpha* of ἀ̣γγεῖα̣ is very abraded, and only the left end of the final one remains. The mark after the *theta* of ϲυμφθ- corresponds to the semicircle of an *epsilon*; an *alpha* does not seem possible.

5. τὴμ φθόην: only the horizontal stroke of the *tau* of τημ is preserved. There is an assimilation of the ν before the labial (φ), on which see Mayser 1970, 204; Gignac 1976, 167 (with examples from the Byzantine period). The θ of φθόην is currently covered by a piece of adhesive tape which descends transversely and covers a space of two letters (not preserved) at the height of l. 6, before περί.

ὑποτετ̣[: the presence of the left part of the horizontal stroke and the right part of the vertical one make it possible to identify the last letter as *tau*, for a form of the pf. part. of the very common verb ὑποτάττω, “place or arrange under, assign”, hence “subject, put after”. What does this participle refer to? Probably the vessels (we would therefore expect acc. nt. ὑποτετ[αγμένα]), or, maybe, consumption (fem. part. ὑποτετ[αγμένην], but the noun and the participle that follow are probably not coordinated). In the *Corpus Hipp.*, the verb is only attested in surgical treatises to designate the lower bone, i.e. the ulna (e.g. *Off. med.*, 16, p. 12, 10 Jouanna/Anastassiou/Ricciardetto CUF).

6. The beginning of the line is poorly preserved. Only the first letter is completely decipherable (*upsilon*), followed by the traces of two letters, the second of which could be *tau*. The fibres are particularly disturbed; traces of letters can be distinguished: do they belong to the lacuna of 6 letters that occupies this part of the line, or to another layer under the main one?

The second part of the line is better preserved. For the expression περὶ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν, “on the skin”, the last word, only partially preserved, occupies the end of line 6 and the beginning of the next one. The first *alpha* is in lacuna, while only a tiny trace remains of the second *alpha* and of the previous *iota*.

7. The beginning of line 7 is poorly preserved. The ending of ἐπιφ[ά]|ν̣ε̣ι̣α̣ν̣ can be guessed rather than read; but the decipherment seems certain. It is followed by a two-letter lacuna. What remains of the rest of the line is very fragmentary: we can see the traces of four letters, then a letter of which the upper part remains, forming a triangle (probably *alpha*), followed by δετα and finally by the trace of a last letter. What remains does not allow for satisfactory reading.

The presence of a *paragraphos* in the following interline suggests that a section ended with this line (see also the interline between ll. 1–2, 10–11, 12–13, and 15–16), perhaps at the end of the line. We do not know whether the sign was accompanied by a blank space.

8. In the margin to the left of the line that marks a new section, we see ink traces that could correspond to signs (slashes: ///). On this punctuation mark in the Greek medical papyri, see Ricciardetto 2019, 135 (on its association with the *paragraphos*, *ibid.*, 130); as a critical sign, Ricciardetto 2022, 11–14.

The new section, which is brief, since it occupies only three lines (ll. 8–10), begins with τὰς̣ μὲν ἀρχάς̣, “the beginnings”. The final *sigma* of ἀρχάς̣ has almost completely disappeared, as have the two following letters, which cannot be identified; the rest of the line is lost.

9. The fragmentary state of the section does not allow us to identify the subject of the verb ἔχει at the beginning of the line, which must have been in the second half of l. 8. The verb is followed by the clause ὅταν δ’, and then ἐπιτε[, presumably a form of ἐπιτίθημι (perhaps ἐπιτε[θ̣ῇ, signifying aggression?). The elision of δὲ is present but not marked.

10. Although easily deciphered, the beginning of the line is problematic. Perhaps we should divide ουcοι into |-ουc οἱ, i.e. the end of a word that begins on the previous line. In this case, οἱ would be the nom. pl. art. of part. cυγ̣γ̣οcο̣ῦ̣ν̣τ̣[εc. Only a few traces of the first two ν remain, but the decipherment of the word seems assured.

11. As attested by a *paragraphos* in the interline between ll. 10–11, a new section begins here. After δυcθεράπε̣υτα, the traces of two letters can still be distinguished. The first, of which the left and upper parts are preserved, appears triangular (*delta*?), while the second is probably an *epsilon* (for δέ?).

12. Despite the break in the papyrus and the fragmentary state of several letters, the reading φικτα at the beginning of the line is certain. For the possible integrations, see *supra*, pp. 323–324 and n. 45.

13. Deciphering the beginning of the line is quite difficult. At first glance, it seems possible to read cατηια, but the *iota*, which usually violates bilinearity, is too short and too close to the *alpha*; one could think of a *mu* (or even *eta*) corrected by an overload in the *omicron* (or *alpha*). What follows this letter is very uncertain, and only traces of letters can be deciphered. At the end of the line, however, the sequence αιρ is assured.

15. Only part of the first oblique stroke of the initial *alpha* remains; a tiny trace of the same letter is preserved by fr. 1C. After a gap of one or two letters, we read the sequence χεα, whose *epsilon* is very abraded; such an ending naturally leads one to think of an adjective in -χυc. Could it be a symptom? (Cf. the following word cυμ- followed by a trace of the upper part of a letter: cύμπτωμα, which is also attested in fragm. 1A tr. ch., l. 9, could be a possible integration).

16. The joining of frr. 1B+C has made it possible to recover the participle φανέντα or a compound form (e.g. ἐπιφανέντα vel προφανέντα).

17. The letters ταυτ are preserved in fr. 1C, while the minute remains of the following three (or four) are found in fr. 1B, of which it is the last preserved line.

19. After a gap of one letter, traces of three letters; one of the first two could be an *alpha*.

20. The reading of the first letter is very uncertain.

21. After an unidentifiable letter, we read τηcκε̣ [(for τῆc κεφ[αλῆc?).

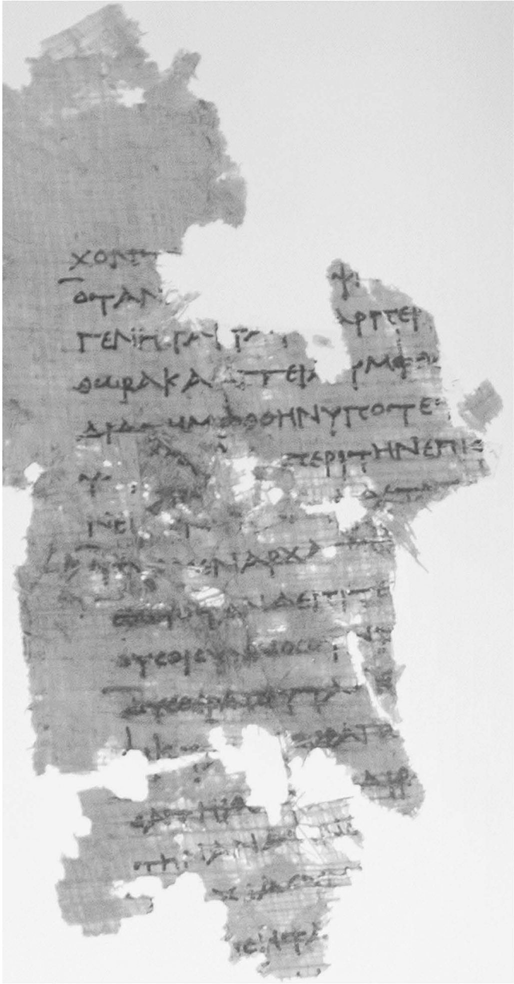

Fig. 58: P.IFAO grec inv. 520, fr. 1 A-C. © Ifao.

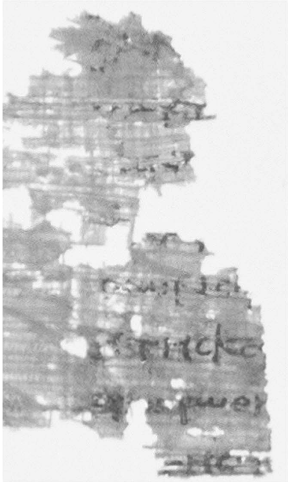

Fig. 59: P.IFAO grec inv. 520, fr. 3. © Ifao.

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Nicola Reggiani

Greek Medicine in Hellenistic Egypt: *SB* VIII 9860, One of the Earliest Greek Collections of Medical Recipes on Papyrus

Abstract: The contribution deals with papyrus *SB* VIII 9860 (University of Athens, Classical Seminar inv. 2780 + 2781), which preserves one of the earliest known collections of Greek medical recipes on papyrus, dating back to the 3rd c. BC. The chapter presents general thoughts on the artefact in the cultural context of Greek medicine in the early Ptolemaic Egypt.

Abstract: *SB* VIII 9860, Greek medical papyri, ancient Greek medicine, early Ptolemaic medicine, prescriptions for eye-salves.

1 Introduction

The two large papyrus fragments kept at the Classical Seminar of the University of Athens under the inventory numbers 2780 and 2781 belong to the same original roll. 2780 preserves the final part, as shown by the wide unwritten space (*agraphon*) on its right-hand side. Both fragments exhibit irregular profiles although the upper and lower (small) margins are almost entirely preserved. Inv. 2781 preserves four columns of very irregular length, the first of which is partially obliterated at the beginning of the lines. The other fragment preserves two columns with the same formal characteristics of the former.

2 Editorial History

The two fragments were donated (along with two further pieces) to the University of Athens by Michael G. Tsoukalas. He had received them from an Athenian physician, who had himself inherited them from his father. In 1962, Tsoukalas published the two papyrus fragments in modern Greek,[1] an edition later catalogued as *SB* VIII 9860. The editor correctly recognised in the text on the recto a collection of medical recipes but failed to notice the final *agraphon* of inv. 2780. As such, his sequencing

1 Tsoukalas 1962, 22–50. The *editio princeps* also provides black and white tables of the papyrus.

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erroneously reversed the respective collocation of the fragments: he published inv. 2780 (2 columns of text) as fragment A and inv. 2781 (4 columns) as fragment B. The *Sammelbuch* re-edition assigned a letter to each column, from a to f, in the same order as arranged by Tsoukalas. The correct sequence of the two fragments was first recovered in 1981 by Isabella Andorlini,[2] who performed a general reconstruction of the material status of the papyrus and proposed some reading improvements. Based on the verso text, she highlighted the fact that though the two fragments do not join directly the textual loss on the recto is limited to the intercolumnar space between the last column of the first piece and the first column of the second. Basil G. Mandilaras, in his partial re-edition of the verso (Mandilaras 1984), reached the same conclusions about the respective collocation of the two fragments.

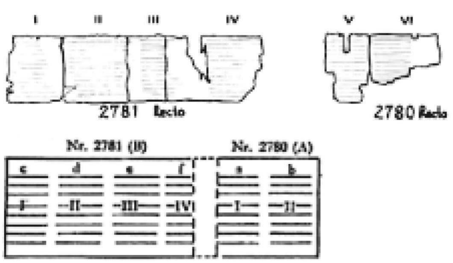

Fig. 60: Reconstruction of the sequence of the fragments of *SB* VIII 9860, by B. Mandilaras (above) and I. Andorlini (below).

Other textual improvements have been advanced by Louise C. Youtie,[3] Joachim Hengstl,[4] and Marie-Hélène Marganne,[5] but the cultural relevance of the papyrus deserved a new overall reconsideration.[6] It is indeed among the earliest Greek medical papyri, and there is a reasonable chance that it could be considered the earliest collection of medical prescriptions on papyrus. As such, it represents an invaluable witness of the very first phases of Hellenic medicine in Egypt. Moreover, since it might be just a little more than a century later than the earliest treatises of the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, it might also witness the initial phases of Hellenic medicine *tout court*.

2 Andorlini 2018, 63–65.

3 Youtie 1977, 144 n. 12.

4 Hengstl 1978a = *BL* VII 215; Hengstl 1978b, 271–73 = *C.Pap.Hengstl* 111.

5 *Apud* Clarysse 1983, 83 = *BL* VIII 356.

6 A new commented edition is forthcoming in the *Greek Medical Papyri III* volume.

3 Palaeography and Chronology

These columns are written on the recto along the fibres in an extremely irregular script, which at some time changes into a much tidier, almost library style (col. III). This might indicate a second hand at work; neither presents ligatures. The shapes of the characters are very early. *Alpha* is almost always shaped with a pointy loop and straight strokes, though some cursive trends can be detected in softer loops and curved strokes here and there. However, sometimes (e.g., IV 14, 18) they retain the more archaic outline in three strokes with a horizontal bar, even displaying a top vertical line as, e.g., *P.Horak* 26, tentatively dated to 260 BC.[7] Some evolved traits (e.g., lunate *sigma*; rounded *epsilon*, sometimes with an extended middle stroke; small *omicron*; *nu* with a slightly curved trend to raise its right-hand half) coexist with epigraphic layouts (*xi*; *phi* with an almost triangular outline; *psi*). The impression is of a hand dated to the first half of the 3rd c. BC, before the development of the Alexandrian chancery fashion known from the Zenon archive and other contemporary documents (compare with *P.Grenf.* II 7b + *P.Ryl.* I 39 + *P.Hib.* II 190 + P.Heid. inv. 401, a medical treatise usually dated to the early III BC;[8] see also *P.Hamb.* IV 237,[9] dated to 277 or 265 BC, with similar trends but a bit more cursive and slanting). The symbol for the drachmas occurs throughout. It is sometimes of a narrower shape with the middle bar rising above instead of being horizontal, as in some texts from the Zenon archive (e.g., *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59012, 259 BC) as well as earlier examples (e.g., *P.Hib.* I 30, fr. d, 282–274 BC; *P.Hib.* I 31, fr. b, ca. 270 BC).

An early collocation in the 3rd c. BC is also suggested by the document transcribed on the verso of our papyrus, partially republished by Basil Mandilaras in 1984 and catalogued as *SB* XVI 12818 (formerly *SB* VIII 9861 after the first edition). It presents a series of administrative accounts, which contain a reference to the 28th year of Ptolemy II = 258/257 BC. This means that the verso was written briefly after that date, and the recto is necessarily earlier.[10]

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7 Harrauer 2010, 146 and Abb. 5. An alternative dating is 222 BC. A similar feature is already deployed as early as the late 4th c. BC by the Peukestas papyrus, see Turner 1974.

8 Seider 1970, no. 6.

9 Harrauer 2010, Abb. 4.

10 Mandilaras 1984. Remarkably, the text on the verso contains the earliest of the rare papyrological attestations of the toponym Rhakotis and of the first Serapeum, built in Alexandria. It is noteworthy to add also that the recto is said to be a palimpsest, but I was not able to check this feature neither on the original nor on a digital picture.

4 Content

The original roll was undoubtedly a personal copy, redacted by one or more individuals interested in medicine for professional or cultural purposes. It is therefore most remarkable to note that the mechanics of the transmission of medical recipes comply with what has been studied about the Hippocratic prescriptions and the later collections on papyrus, not to mention Galen and the other Roman and late antique compilers.[11] The irregular handwriting and pagination, the inconsistent layout, and the repeated reference to different medical authorities all point to the practice of collecting personal compilations of medical recipes selected from a variety of sources and customized according to individual practical needs.

The textual structure of the recipes is generally articulated in the three traditional sections: (1) προγραφή (the title, usually consisting of the category or name of the remedy and/or its therapeutic scopes); (2) cύνθεcιc (composition, typically arranged in a list of ingredients with their respective quantities); and (3) cκευαcία (preparation, with the directions for the assemblage and the use of the product). The title is frequently replaced by the formulaic ἄλλο (I 8, 14, III 17, IV 18, VI 18), meaning a remedy of the same type or scope as the preceding one(s). That this abbreviation had already by this time become an a-syntactic semiotic indicator of the beginning of a new recipe[12] is proved by its centred alignment at IV 18. The sequence [ἄλλο κεφ]ạλῆc (I 14), meaning "another (remedy) for the head," also finds many comparisons and even parallels in the medical literature (e.g., Gal., *Comp. med. gen.* 13.544.3 K.: ἄλλη κεφαλική; Aet. 6.53.9 Olivieri: ἄλλο κεφαλῆc καθαρτικόν).

In one case, the remedy exhibits a telling drug name: ἡ ἀρετή (III 4). The word ἀρετή is attested elsewhere as the name of a medicament, certainly to stress its renowned efficacy. The term is used twice by Galen (*Comp. med. gen.* 13.531.11 K. ἡ ἀρετή, and especially *ibid.*, 831.15–832.4 K.), where he records a medicament — a *trochiskos* against haemorrhoids and knobs — that has some ingredients in common with the one reported in our papyrus (Cypriot ash, myrrh, opium poppy, wine). In the medical papyri, an ἀρẹτ̣ὴ{ι} πρὸc λεπτὰ ῥεύματα | καὶ ἑλκώματα is recorded in *P.Oxy.* VIII 1088, I 8–13 (Oxyrhynchus, 1st c. AD).[13]

11 On the recurring structures of ancient Greek and Near Eastern medical prescriptive texts, see Goltz 1974. On the Hippocratic recipes, see Totelin 2009. On the recurring structures of Greek prescriptions and collections of recipes on papyrus, see Andorlini 2017, 3–36; Reggiani 2018; 2019; 2023a; 2023c.

12 See Reggiani 2023b.

13 See Lundon 2004, 122–125 for the reading in the Oxyrhynchus papyrus, with reference to our receptarium.

Most interesting are the cases in which the title of a remedy evokes a proper name, certainly the physician who allegedly created it. This is a distinctive feature of Greek medicine, reflecting a personal consideration of medical progress that is completely lacking, for example, in the Egyptian cultural background, and resulting in explicit relying on the *auctoritas* of earlier physicians.[14] Among the mentioned physicians, Mnason (IV 8, V 1) is repeatedly cited by Galen as a source for Asklepiades' pharmacological books. This Asklepiades, called ὁ φαρμακίων, was a famous pharmacologist active between the end of the 1st c. AD and the beginning of the 2nd c. AD, who authored a treatise on the external and internal remedies. The first five books were titled Μαρκέλλας and the other five Μνάσωνος.[15] The reference in our papyrus attests to the fact that Mnason's work was already a source of pharmacological compilations in the early 3rd c. BC. Less easy to identify is Dionysios (III 5): several physicians called after this name are mentioned among Galen's pharmacological sources, one from Miletus (*Comp. med. loc.* 12.741.17 K. Διονυςίου Μιληςίου πρὸς τριχῶντας), one from Samos (*Comp. med. gen.* 13.745.17 K. Διονυςίου Σαμίου), and one without geographical specification (*Comp. med. loc.* 12.760.2 K. ἄλλο, Διονυςίου ἐπιγραφόμενον). It is impossible to state their chronology. Certainly the one mentioned by Galen as a school-fellow is too late (*ibid.* 835.6–7 K. Διονυςίου ςυμμαθητοῦ, ὥςτε δίχα ἑλκώςεως ἀπαλλάττειν) as is the one mentioned by Oribasius as a contemporary of himself (*Ecl.* 101.6.1–2. ἄλλο πρὸς ςύριγγας καὶ μώλωπας, ὃ ἔλαβον παρὰ Διονυςίου ἐν Ἱεραπόλει). On the contrary, Euedos (V 17) is otherwise unknown to the extant medical literature, unless he can be identified with a certain Euenos cited by Galen, *Comp. med. loc.* 13.178.5–6 K. Εὐηνοῦ πρὸς τὰς τοῦ ςτομάχου ἀνατροπὰς καὶ περιωδυνίας, ποιεῖ καὶ πρὸς τὰς κατὰ μέρος φλεγμονάς (from Asklepiades).

14 See Fabricius 1972; Reggiani 2020.

15 See Wellmann 1896; Fabricius 1972, 192–199 and 246–253. Galen's passages are: *Comp. med. loc.* 13.47.16–17 K. αἱ ὑπ' Ἀςκληπιάδου γεγραμμέναι ἀρτηριακαὶ ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ τῶν ἐντὸς, ἃ Μνάςωνος ἐπιγράφει; *ibid.*, 206, 1–4 K. αὗται μέν εἰςιν αἱ ὑπὸ Ἀνδρομάχου γραφεῖςαι δυνάμεις ἡπατικαὶ, μεταβήςομαι δὲ ἤδη πρὸς τὰς ὑπ' Ἀςκληπιάδου γεγραμμένας ἐν τῷ τρίτῳ τῶν ἐντὸς, ἃς Μνάςωνος ἐπιγράφει; *Comp. med. gen.* 13.442.3–9 K. αἱ ὑπ' Ἀςκληπιάδου γεγραμμέναι λευκαί. ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀςκληπιάδην οὖν ἤδη μεταβὰς παραθήςομαι τὰς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ γραφείςας ἐμπλάςτρους λευκὰς ἐπὶ τῷ τέλει τοῦ τρίτου βιβλίου τῶν ἐκτός. ἐπιγράφει δ' αὐτὸς αὐτὰ πρώτην Μαρκέλλαν καὶ δευτέραν καὶ τρίτην καὶ τετάρτην καὶ πέμπτην, ὥςπερ τὰ ἄλλα τῶν ἐντὸς πέντε, πρῶτον Μ<ν>άςωνα καὶ δεύτερον καὶ τρίτον καὶ τέταρτον καὶ πέμπτον; *Antid.* 14.135.10–11 K. περὶ τῶν ὑπ' Ἀςκληπιάδου γεγραμμένων κατὰ τὸ ε′ τῶν ἐντὸς παθῶν, ὃ <Μν>άςωνος ἐπιγράφεται; *ibid.*, 137.1–5 K. τὰ δὲ πρὸς τὰ τοιαῦτα πάθη πινόμενα φάρμακα καὶ ποτίςματα κέκληκεν ὁ Ἀςκληπιάδης ἐν τῷ δ′ τῶν <Μν>άςωνος κατὰ τὸ τέλος αὐτὰ γεγραφώς. ὑςτάτας μὲν οὖν ἔγραψεν ἀντιδότους ὁ Ἀςκληπιάδης ἐπὶ τῇ τελευτῇ τοῦ ἐν <Μν>άςωνος; *ibid.*, 168.1–3 K. τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀςκληπιάδου γεγραμμένα κατὰ τὸ ε′ τῶν <Μν>άςωνος, πρὸς τὰς ἐκ τῶν ἰοβόλων βλάβας.

Even more remarkable is the mention of Praxagoras (II 1), who is most likely to be identified with the Coan physician of late 4th–early 3rd c. BC, the teacher of Herophilus. He "was regarded in antiquity as the most prominent representative of the Coan School after Hippocrates."[16] Based on the chronology of the papyrus, the source of the textual section citing Praxagoras (II 1–III 3) must have been contemporary with him, and the papyrus came shortly after. The use of the imperfect ηὐδοκίμει may suggest personal elaboration of the text by the author of the papyrus copy; this might explain the radically different style, with the recipe preceded by an articulated and narrative introduction.[17] This section appears also to have been written in a tidier script, closer to library fashions.[18]

The therapeutic scope of the recipes is recurrently indicated with the preposition πρός followed by the names of the diseases to be treated in the accusative. Once it is placed at the beginning of the recipe (I 2–3), while in other cases at the very end (IV 15–17, V 8–11) after the imperative χρῶ, which always acts as the linguistic indicator of the end of a prescription (I 7, [13], II 9, III 16, IV 7, 15, V 8, 16, VI 8).

The ingredients are in the genitive and are irregularly listed in columns (II 11–13) or consecutive rows (II 8–12, 14–16, II 14–III 3, III 5–12, IV 1–5, 9–12, 19–20, V 2–5, 18–22, VI 1–5, 9–17) with the quantities indicated in symbols and numerical letters (I 14, II 11–13, III 5, V 2, 18–19, 21–22, VI 2–5, 9–17) or spelled out (I 15–16, II 14–III 3, III 6–12, IV 1–5, 9–12, 19–20, V 3–5, 20). However, variations occur even within the same recipe,

16 Steckerl 1958, 1. On Praxagoras in general, see Steckerl 1958; Capriglione 1983; Lewis 2017, 1–11.
17 Πραξάγορας μὲν ηὐδοκίμει ἐν ταύτη<ι> | τῆι δυνάμει. ἐχράτω γὰρ αὐτῆι καὶ | ὑγρᾶι κα<ὶ> ξηρᾶι καὶ κολλυρίωι· | ὑγρ̣ᾶι μὲν ο<ὖ>ν ἐν γλυκεῖ τρίβων λεῖον |[5] καὶ ποιῶν μέλιτος τὸ πάχος· ξηρᾶι δὲ | ἐν οἴνωι τρίβων λεῖον καὶ ξηραίνων. | πάλιν δὲ εἰ βούλει αὐτῶι κολλυρίωι | χρῆcθαι ἀναπλάc<c>ων ἐν οἴνωι καὶ | ἀναξηραίνων, χρῶ ἐν ὕδατι. |[10] ἔcτιν δὲ ἐξ ὧν cυντίθεται κτλ. "Praxagoras used to have an excellent reputation in this medicine. Indeed, he used the same (medicine) either wet or dry or as a collyrium. (He used it?) wet grinding it uniformly in sweet wine and making it of the consistency of honey. (He used it?) dry grinding it uniformly in the wine and drying it. Again, if you want to use the same as a collyrium, mould in wine and dry it, use with water. Here follow (the ingredients) of which it is composed…" The sequence ἐcτὶ δέ introducing the ingredient list can be found later, e.g. in *PSI Congr. XXI* 3, II 13 (collection of recipes, unknown provenance, 1st c. BC).
18 The shapes of some letters of this section seemingly differ from the preceding column. For example, the horizontal bar of *epsilon* tends to detach from its semicircle (ll. 2, 4, 10) even becoming a simple dot (l. 2), a trend found also in a case of *kappa* with the lower diagonal stroke detached from the rest of the character (l. 5, first letter; l. 2, third letter from the end). *Pi* is somehow more refined, with hooks at the end of the vertical legs and a top bar slightly extending to the left. Sometimes, the third leg of *nu* starts a little before the end of the second leg (l. 6). However, other characters exhibit the same shape as the previous column, so that it is hard to say whether we are dealing with a second hand following the same palaeographical models of the first one, or with the same hand, writing in a tidier way. At any rate, this happens in the upper part of the column, while towards the end the writing becomes more and more irregular.

which may lead us to suspect at least a partial transcription from a dictate. Most of the recipes are for ophthalmological and/or dermatological salves, sometimes explicitly called κολλύρια (II 7, III 15, IV 15, V 7–8), other times recognisable from the instructions of composition (e.g., the use of the verb ἀναπλάccω) or from the ingredients.[19] Typically, they contain stimulating, astringent, analgesic, and disinfectant elements — either of vegetal or of mineral origin — together with amalgamating substances (usually κόμμι, gum Arabic). The pharmacopoeia is of the Greek type, with exotic additions well known to the Hellenic tradition as early as Hippocrates.[20] Although it is impossible to find exact parallels in the extant literature, the compositions are perfectly compliant with the corpus of the Hippocratic prescriptive texts.

The instruction sections also follow typical schemes,[21] providing verbal indications in the present imperative or aorist participle. The terms belong to the classical Greek technical medical language: ποιέω "do" (I 4, 6, II 5) for general actions to perform; ἀναπλάccω "mould" (I 7, II 8, III 14–15, IV 6, 14–15, V 7, VI 8) and ἐμπλάccω "plaster up" (I 13) for the fabrication of the *kolluria*; (ἐκ)λεαίνω "grind, pound" (I 12, III 12–13,

19 Early examples of similar formulations can be found in the Hippocratic corpus. See for instance the only occurrence of the word κολλύριον at *Mul. aff.* 51.5–8 Ἢν δὲ ἀλγέῃ τῶν μητρέων τόπον, ἀμυγδαλῆc τρίψαc πικρῆc καὶ ἐλαίηc τὰ ἁπαλὰ φύλλα, καὶ κύμινον καὶ δάφνηc καρπὸν ἢ τὰ φύλλα, καὶ ἄννηcον καὶ ἐρύcιμον καὶ ὀρίγανον καὶ νίτρον, ταῦτα μίξαc καὶ τρίψαc λεῖα, κολλούρια ποιέειν μητρέων. The word κολλ(ο)ύριον, linguistically a diminutive of κολλ(ο)ύρα, a kind of bread (Battaglia 1989, 88f.), indicated any small solid block of aromatic or medical substances such as frankincense (Bonati 2012, 19–21) or salves. See Kind 1921.

20 Hellenic ingredients — vegetal: alkanet; aristolochia; carrot (Gazza 1956, 98); centaury (Gazza 1956, 84); chaste-tree; chrysanthemum; dill (?) (Gazza 1956, 79; Dalby 2003, 117); henbane (Gazza 1956, 99f.); hogweed (Gazza 1956, 91); iris (Gazza 1956, 82); marjoram (Dalby 2003, 207); oregano (Dalby 2003, 243f.); pears (Dalby 2003, 253f.); poppy (Gazza 1956, 88f.; Dalby 2003, 268); rose petals (Dalby 2003, 284); rue (Gazza 1956, 94; Dalby 2003, 284f.); saffron (Gazza 1956, 86; Dalby 2003, 289f.; Amigues 2006, 303; Totelin 2009, 154); unripe grapes. Mineral: burnt copper (Gazza 1956, 105); schistous alum (cτυπτηρία); verdigris (or iron rust, ἰόc); white lead powder (ψιμίθιον, Gazza 1956, 105; Andorlini 2017, 44–48). Exotic ingredients from the East (most of them already used in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*): cinnamon (Gazza 1956, 103; Amigues 1996, 662f.; De Romanis 1996; Dalby 2003, 87f.; Amigues 2006, 297; Totelin 2009, 149f.); gum resin (μάλδακον = βδέλλιον, Andorlini 2017, 81f.; not in the CH); ladanum (once in the CH, *Mul. aff.* 189, 1); myrrh (Gazza 1956, 97f.; Dalby 2003, 226f.; Amigues 2006, 335; Totelin 2009, 148–149; Andorlini 2017, 37–40); pepper (Gazza 1956, 92; Dalby 2003, 254f.; Amigues 2006, 321; Totelin 2009, 150f.); spikenard (Gazza 1956, 89f.; Dalby 2003, 229f.; Amigues 2006, 415; Totelin 2009, 150–152). Exotic ingredients from the South: ebony (once in the CH, *Diaet.acut.* 33, 1); gum Arabic (κόμμι, twice not as an ingredient in the CH, *Artic.* 33, 11 and 36, 13); silphium (Amigues 2002, 195–208; Dalby 2003, 303f.; Totelin 2009, 158–161). Ingredients from the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean (all attested in the CH except one): Cnidian berry (Gazza 1956, 84; Touwaide 2002, 999; Amigues 2006, 300; Totelin 2009, 167f.); copper ore (μίcυ, Gazza 1956, 103); Cypriot ash (Totelin 2009, 167); Kimolian earth (not attested in the CH).

21 See Totelin 2009, 55–58.

IV 5, 13, V 15–16, VI 7) and τρίβω “pound, crush” (II 4, 6, V 5–6) for triturating solid / dried components; ἀνακόπτω “cut off” (I 16) for slicing solid components; (ἀνα)ξηραίνω “desiccate” (II 6, 9) for drying out humid ingredients; χράωμαι “use” for the final application of the product (II 1, 8, V 13, and see above as regards χρῶ). The indication to knead the ingredients “till the consistence of honey” (I 4–5 ὡς μέλιτος | [ἔχειν πάχος], II 5 μέλιτος τὸ πάχος) or “at best” (IV 14 ὡς βελτίστωι, 13–14 ὅτι | κ̣ά̣λ̣λιστα, VI 7 ὅτι βελτίστωι) also recalls the typical Greek recipes (see e.g. Hp., *Mul. aff.* 238, 12 ποιέοντα τὸ πάχος ὅσον μέλλει; Gal., *Comp. med. loc.* 12.430.11 K. ὡς μέλιτος σχεῖν πάχος). Bulking agents are wine or water as usual.

Particularly remarkable is the participle προς̣|[ζμησά]μενος (I 17–18), reconstructed by Isabella Andorlini[22] as a form of a compound of the verb σμάω “rub, massage,” especially with a soap or an unguent (σμῆμα). This recovers a rare technical term used in other papyri that are much later than ours (both from the 2nd c. AD): *P.Ryl.* I 29a, 21 προς̣ζ̣μησάμενος;[23] *PSI* X 1180, fr. A, II 47–9 προεζμησμένον and 64 προα̣ζμήξας (προα̣<πο>ζμήξας Andorlini, see *P.Chic.* 4, 4 προαποσμήξ[ας]).

A special mention is warranted also for the two occurrences of the verb συντίθημι, which is a technical term indicating the “putting together” (σύνθεσις) of the ingredients in the final product. The term is hardly ever explicitly used in the prescriptive formulations, where it is usually only implied. Here, however, we find συντίθεται (II 10) employed in the discursive section about Praxagoras (see above), then συνέθηκε (III 18) in another passage. These occurrences reveal an earlier stage of expression for the prescriptive textual genre (the one mostly attested in the Hippocratic corpus) before a simplification of the syntax tending towards the development of a graphical-expressive jargon, which would inevitably prevail in the receptaria on papyrus.[24]

5 *SB* VIII 9860 and the Greek Pharmacological Tradition

The alternation between prescriptions with a more discursive syntax and recipes with more schematic structures recalls the articulation of another of the earliest medical collections on papyrus: *P.Ryl.* III 531, of unknown provenance and palaeo-

22 Andorlini 2018, 64f.

23 “Si recupera grazie al suggerimento del Vitelli in nota” (Andorlini 2018, 64f.), but I was unable to find which note.

24 See Andorlini 2017, 29–35.

graphically dated between the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 2nd c. BC. The general appearance of the recto of the Rylands papyrus is much more elegant than ours, with wide columns copied in an irregular library hand. Its articulated content and style have been compared with the Hippocratic gynaecological treatises,[25] of which it represents a variant and customized stage of reception in the practical activity of an ordinary physician. However, the verso of the same fragment preserves traces of much more schematic formulations, with columned ingredients and quicker indications. These represent the earliest examples of such personal compilations (later famous instances include *P.Oxy.* VIII 1088 and *PSI* X 1180) and show the process of selecting and gathering the medical prescriptive knowledge from various circulating sources.

Such sources constituted a heterogeneous corpus of prescriptive manuals and therapeutic treatises comprising not only Hippocratic material but also compilations now completely lost, like Mnason's books mentioned above. We can perhaps gain some glimpses into the medical literature circulating in early Ptolemaic Egypt (roughly before the spread of the treatises stemming from Herophilus' anatomical school in the mid-3rd c. BC Alexandria) from fragmentary witnesses. For example, *P.Hib.* II 191, consisting of six fragments copied in an upright bookhand dated to 260–230 BC on the verso of an official letter book, seemingly contains a series of discursive prescriptions addressing gynaecological matters. In addition, *P.Yale* II 123 (unknown provenance, 3rd c. BC), a fragment of library flavour, preserves the remains of a therapeutic discussion of Hippocratic ascendance.[26] Other early personal re-elaborations of prescriptive medical material that deserve mention are *P.Hib.* II 192 and *GMP* II 11 (= *P.Eleph.Wagner* 4). The former, dated to ca. 270–250 BC, contains the remains of a couple of elaborated discursive recipes copied in a practised documentary hand on the same roll (same side) as an economic account (most remarkable is the section title κολλυρίων cύνθεcιc "preparation of the salves", l. 10). The latter, assigned to the late 3rd c. BC, contains a list of ingredients with quantities copied in a personal hand tending to cursive. Notably, both deploy spelled-out measures and quantities.

Another point in common between our papyrus and the Greek prescriptive tradition on papyrus is the paratextual arrangement deployed to keep the sequenced structure of the texts as clear as possible. In our fragment, the recipes as single textual units are divided by means of *paragraphoi* and other irregular layout features: *eisthesis* of the body of the text (I 9–13, reconstructed on the ground of the textual supplements), centred titles (IV 18 ἄλλο, V 1 Μνά[c]ωνος, 17 Εὐήδου), and marginal

25 See Calame 1983; Totelin 2009, 81–83; Andorlini 2017, 20–22; Roselli 2019, 83–85.

26 See Reggiani 2021.

critical marks (coronides or cross-checks: III 4, 17, IV 18, VI 9).[27] This is a far less regular system than, for instance, the one adopted in *P.Ryl.* III 531. There, the recipes are consistently separated with *paragraphoi* and long *ektheseis* of the first line of each textual block, but the underlying concept is the very same and is found in many other later examples.[28]

A final point to be taken into consideration is the presence of personal annotations or additions to the material, chosen and selected from the original sources as discussed above. This is one of the most relevant aspects of the ever-progressing nature of the medical art, which relied on both the authority of the preceding masters and the experience of each individual practitioner.[29] In our papyrus, we can perhaps identify an instance of this at V 11–16, where, after recording the complete formulation of a κολλύριον of Mnason's,[30] a sort of variant is appended: εἰ | δὲ βούλει ἐμπ<λ>άcτωι | χρᾶcθαι αὐτῆι τῆ͂ | [cπο]δῶι καὶ τῶι μη | [κω]ν̣ί̣ῳι ὀπτῶι λει | [άνας ξ]ηρῶ, χρῶ "If you wish, employ the plaster with the same ash and the cooked poppy, pound it dry, use." This strongly recalls the situation in *P.Ryl.* III 531, II 14–15, where, after a brief prescription against suffocation from the uterus certainly inspired by Hippocrates,[31] there seems to be an additional supplement, preceded by a short blank space (*vacat*), which highlights its separation from the main formulation: τοῦτο καὶ πρὸc τοὺc τῶν διδύμων πό | νου<c> βο{ι}ηθεῖ καὶ κλυcτήριον ἔcτιν ὑcτέρων "This helps also against the pains at the testicles and is an enema for the uterus." Several later examples of such personal additions to consolidated recipes can be found in the medical papyri up to the most famous Michigan Medical Codex.

27 The elaborated coronis at III 4 apparently resembles a similar marginal sign in *P.Tebt.* III.2 897 (= *P.Bingen* 1), a fragment of late 3rd c. BC that allegedly contains a variant version of Hippocrates' *Regime* but more likely pertains to some other kind of scientific or technical text (see Andorlini 2021, 15–19; Reggiani 2024).

28 See Reggiani 2023a.

29 See Reggiani 2023b.

30 V 1–11 Μνά[c]ωνοc· | cποδοῦ κυ[π]ρίαc (δραχμὰc) δ, | ὀποῦ ὀπτο[ῦ] \[τ]ρι/όβολον, κόμ | μιοc λευκο̣[ῦ] ὀβολὸν ἡ | μιοβέλιο̣ν. τ̣αῦτα{υ} τ̣ρ̣ί | ψαc ἐν οἴν[ωι] ἢ̣ ὕδατι | καὶ \ἀ/ναπ̣λ̣άcαc κολλύ | ρια, χρῶ {πρὸc τὰ} πρὸc | τὰ ῥ̣εύματ̣α | καὶ τὰc περιωδυνί | αc καὶ φλεγμονάc "(Remedy) of Mnason: 4 drachmas of Cypriot ash, three obols of cooked juice (of silphium), one obol and a half of white gum Arabic. Pound these ingredients in wine or water and mould in collyria, use for the rheumatisms and the strong pains and the inflammations."

31 II 12–14 πρὸc τοὺc ἀπὸ τῶν ὑcτέρων πνιγμούc· | ἐνυδρίδουc τοὺc νεφροὺc ξηράναc | δίδου ὅcον τοῖc τριcὶν δακτύλοιc | λαβεῖν ἐν οἴνωι εὐώδει "Against the suffocations from the uterus: dry out the otter's kidneys, give as much as three fingers to take in perfumed wine." *Sim.* Hp., *Mul.* II 200 = VIII 382, 12–13 Littré ὅταν πνίγηται ὑπὸ ὑcτερέων· κάcτορα καὶ κόνυζαν ἐν οἴνῳ χωρὶc καὶ ἐν ταὐτῷ πινέτω "when (she) suffocates from the uterus: castoreum and enula, drink separately and once in wine". See Roselli 2019, 84.

6 Conclusions

In conclusion, our *SB* VIII 9860 represents a unique example of an early stage of transition from ‘classical’ medical compilations to the Hellenistic (and later on, Roman) development of personal collections attested in the Greek papyri. The works of the individual, anonymous practitioners[32] who harvested the available source texts in order to build their own collections[33] were certainly less fortunate than Galen and other later compilers in terms of transmission and survival of their written endeavours. Nonetheless, they witness the same need for practical reference books of their ever-progressing τέχνη.

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32 For an overview of the medical practitioners in Hellenistic Egypt see Alessia Bovo’s poster presented at the 30th International Congress of Papyrology (Paris, 25–30 July 2022) and titled *I medici nei papiri dall’Egitto tolemaico*, to be published in the congress proceedings.

33 It is not perhaps coincidental that most of the collections of medical recipes on papyrus seemingly exhibit thematic homogeneity — they were likely created after a selection of the available sources on the ground of the actual diseases that each medical practitioner had to cope with. We must also reflect on the fact that the Greek physicians who came to Egypt right after Alexander’s conquest and in the following decades might have been forced to contend with unknown kinds of illnesses and different health problems than those which they were accustomed to in their motherland. This aspect would have made the compilation of reference material much more impelling than usual.

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Lucio Del Corso

Music, Books, and Literary Attitudes in the Zenon Archive

Abstract: The archive of Zenon son of Agreophon offers invaluable information on the economy, the culture, and the social structure of Hellenistic Egypt. Moreover, as it has been demonstrated in previous studies, it is also a primary source on the diffusion and the relevance of literary pastimes for the local elite that set in the Arsinoite nome under the reign of Ptolemy II, when the country achieved an unprecedented level of economic prosperity. The present contribution offers a survey of the archives' documents related to music and literary culture, in order to outline some elements of the process of acculturation which was pursued by the new Greek rulers. In such perspective, a special attention is also given to a document as *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59534 a 'paraliterary' text which was surely part of the archive.[1]

Keywords: Hellenistic Egypt, literary papyri, Greek education, literacy.

1 The *Kitharodos* Satyra

The strong relationship of Ptolemy II with literature, music, and rare books is universally acknowledged.[2] It is unsurprising, then, that such interest was shared by members of his entourage. This was the case also with the best-known minister of finance in the Hellenistic World, the *dioiketes* Apollonios, who had a *kitharodos*,

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1 In order to make the apparatus of footnotes less burdensome, the papyri which are discussed in the article have not been provided with their MP[3] or TM number, even if the two databases have been widely used (last queries: February 2024); for the same reason, the bibliography given for the discussed texts does not pretend to be comprehensive, but it is consciously limited to the selected topics of interest for the present article. The images of most of the papyri of the Zenon archive can be viewed online, especially through the websites www.psi-online.it (PSI), and ipap.csad.ox.ac.uk/ (P.Cair.Zen.) (last visit June 2024).

2 A recent, brilliant sketch of Ptolemaic royal patronage in Murray 2008.

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among his servants in Alexandria, the "small girl" Satyra,[3] as we know from a list of people working for him (*somata*) written after May 257 BC, *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59059. Apart from *hetairai* skilled in music (attested in our sources from the late Classical age on),[4] female musicians are seldom mentioned,[5] but a *kitharodos gyne* was quite unusual. Literature offers but a single point of comparison, in one of the fictional erotic letters by Alciphron (II 31 = III 33 Bergler): the seductive Parthenio, who has stolen the heart of a married man, Coriscus, and therefore is blamed by his wife Anthylla with colourful epithets such as *ippopornos*. This rarity is due to the professional profile of *kitharodoi*.

Playing the *kithara* was always a part of the traditional aristocratic Greek education (even Achilles relieved his rage with that musical instrument), and from the 3rd c. BC even the most skilled professional Egyptian musicians, the *imy-r3 ḥsww* ("chief musicians-*hesou*"), would sometimes play the *kithara* too, although their traditional string instrument was the harp, attested from the remote 4th dynasty.[6] But *kitharodos* was a quite specific, and exclusive, title.[7] The literary evidence stresses the proficiency of the artists called by that term: "those are *aulodoi*, who could not become *kitharodoi*", Cicero writes (*Pro Murena*, 29), quoting a common saying among *Graeci artifices*. Likewise, in Plutarch's works, which offer plenty of reflections and information on concrete performative practices, apart from one passage where the word is used for the Homeric singer Demodokos,[8] the *kitharodoi* are usually artists who devote themselves to more complex lyric poetry, as Pylades, who sang Timotheus' *Persians* at the Nemean games in the summer of 205 BC;[9] or, for a much earlier period, quasi-mythical figures as Arion, who was said to have invented the dithyramb,[10] and Terpander, the putative father of choral lyric.[11] Consequently, in the extant sources only very distinguished patrons seem to employ *kitharodoi*. For

3 *Korasion*, as she is called by Zenon in a docket added to *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59028 (below, 354), although "she was apparently not a young child" (Rowlandson 1998, 98); for the documents mentioning her see *Pros.Ptol.* V 14436, and Power 2010, 60–62 (with a balanced discussion on her professional status).

4 Rocconi 2006.

5 Female musicians are sometimes attested even in inscriptions from Delphi: see Perrot 2013. On the role of music in the education of girls and young women (from the upper social classes) see, in general, Pomeroy 1977 (4th c. BC evidence) and Pomeroy 1984, 60–61.

6 On the musicians called *ỉmy-r3 ḥsww* see Emerit 2013 (reference to the use of the lyre or *kithara* on p. 89). On string instruments in Pharaonic Egypt in general, see Manniche 1975, 36–91; on harps and harpists, see Krah 1991 and Emerit 2016.

7 See, in general, Belis 1988 and 1995.

8 Plut., *Quomodo adolescens*, 20A.

9 Plut., *Philopoemen*, 11.2.

10 Plut., *Septem sapientium convivium*, 161a–b.

11 Plut., *Apophthegmata Laconica*, 238c.

instance, Alexander the Great, even during his Bactrian adventures, was followed by a *kitharodos*, the loyal Aristonicus of Olynth, who had previously served Alexander's father, Philip II, and after his glorious death was honoured with a bronze statue in the sanctuary of Delphi.[12]

The specificity of such performers is also confirmed by the simplified, 'bureaucratic' phraseology of Hellenistic documents. *Kitharodoi* are quite well attested in inscriptions throughout the Greek world, but especially in some of the most ancient Hellenic cities, in Greece itself or Asia Minor; indeed, they seem much rarer in Egypt and in the other territories under the Ptolemaic sphere of influence. Each of the *koinà* ("guilds") of *technitai* of Dionysus, founded by the Ptolemies in several parts of their kingdom, comprised just a single *kitharodos*.[13] One is listed among the artists who issued the decree in honour of Lysimachos, *hipparchos* and *prytanis* in Ptolemais Hermeiou, under the reign of Ptolemy II, around the same years that Satyra was playing;[14] a century later, another *kitharodos*, a member of the *koinon* founded in Cyprus by Ptolemy VIII, is mentioned in an honorary decree for Theodoros, son of the governor of the island.[15] Even later, in the Imperial age, the profession kept its halo of exclusivity.[16] *Kitharodoi* were still part of the organizations of *technitai*, but they would appear to have become even rarer. Be that as it may, the *koinon* of Oxyrhynchus counted among its members one Agathokles Asterios, a citizen of Alexandria and Antinoupolis, in AD 288;[17] and some *kitharodoi* were still active in late antiquity: one order of oil from Fayum, dated to the 6th c. AD, was issued on behalf of the *paidarioi* of Theodoros *kitharodos*, probably one of the last representatives of his profession.[18]

Such a long detour allows us to look back at our Satyra not as a generic entertainer ("harpist" would be a reductive translation), but as a highly skilled performer. Unfortunately, although extant documents provide some hints, we do not know much about her. As in the case of other people in Apollonios' service, even

12 Aristonicus' relationship with Alexander and his fate (including the posthumous honorary statue in Delphi) are briefly described by Plut., *De Alex. fort.* 2, 334 F; we can read about the circumstances of his death (during a Scythian raid not far from the city of Zariaspa) in Arr. IV, 16, 6. Belis 1995, 1051–1052.

13 On the *koinà* of *technitai* in the Hellenized world, from the Hellenistic to the Roman age, see the surveys by Aneziri 2009 (with previous bibliography) and Le Guen 2022 (focused on the *technitai* of Dionysus). See also below, footnote 49.

14 Bernand 1992, no. 6; Vandoni 1964, no. 58; on the date see also Bowman 2020, 74–75.

15 *SEG* XIII 586, 142 BC; Aneziri 1994, 194.

16 Power 2010, 90–107.

17 *PapAgon* 3, ll. 20 and 26.

18 *SB* XIV 12124; Mitthof/Papathomas 1994, 80–81.

Satyra's overall social status is unclear.[19] Once she is mentioned in a list of paid employees, together with some of the highest-ranking members of the *oikia*, like Artemidoros "the steward" (*eleatoros*; *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59059).[20] But in the only surviving letter from her, she complains because of late payments and asks for some decent clothes, for herself and her mother, remarking: "we cannot be naked" (*P.Cair.Zen.* I 59028).[21] Maybe this is the reason why Satyra was rewarded with two linen tunics of the finest quality in 257 BC (*P.Cair.Zen.* I 59087)[22] — one for her and one for her mother, perhaps. Were her complaints a consequence of real economic difficulties or just a rhetorical trick?

However, even if the pay was not the best, *kitharodoi* were appreciated by the staff working for the *dioiketes*. After retiring from active work for the crown and settling in Philadelphia as a merry country gentleman, Zenon, Apollonios' *factotum*, sponsored the studies of an aspiring *kitharodos*, Herakleotes, at the bequest of Demeas, former president of the town gymnasium.[23] The general interest in this professional category is demonstrated by another, curious hint. On the back of some accounts related to one of the journeys made by the *dioiketes* (*P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59706),[24] someone (a clerk?) sketched the image of a beardless standing figure, with a string instrument in its left hand: a *kitharodos* (Fig. 61).

Despite some difficulty in putting the figure in the right perspective, and in following the right anatomy, some distinguishing traits are clearly visible, such as the perfect oval face and the long neck. Such characteristics make it difficult to connect

19 Reinhold Scholl, who collected the relevant texts in *C.Ptol.Sklav.* II, believes all the people paid by Apollonios to have been slaves, including the *paidaria* mentioned in the Zenon archive (see below, 365); same perspective in Goldhill 2005. But the relationships between some of them — such as Satyra herself, but also other individuals who were assigned prominent roles and enjoyed a substantial degree of freedom in carrying out their duties — and their master(s) may also point to forms of free employment, which are well documented for Egypt (in addition to sacred or chattel slavery): see Thompson 1992 (referring to Scholl's *corpus*) and, more generally, Thompson 2011, 195–200. For a balanced picture of the social conditions of slaves in Ptolemaic Egypt see, moreover, Bieżuńska-Małowist 1974, 106–133, and, for the terminology employed, Straus 1976 (though focused on the Roman period), 1980 and 1981.

20 *SB* III 6716; *C.Ptol.Sklav.* II 118.

21 *C.Ptol.Sklav.* II 116. Rowlandson 1998, 97–98, no. 77; Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 98 (with previous bibliography).

22 *SB* III 6783; *C.Ptol.Sklav.* II 132.

23 See below, n. 65.

24 The account on the recto does not provide any date, or any information useful to infer it. Anyway, it would seem more likely to assign it to the years before Zenon's retirement to Philadelphia, i.e. before 248/247 BC ('Phase IV' of the archive, according to Vandorpe 2015, 452–453). The drawing on the verso is described by Horak 1992, 234, no. 76.

the drawing to an 'ordinary' male player.[25] We might think that this is an image of Apollo,[26] except for one detail: the only extant, bare foot is adorned by an anklet, a typical female jewel, which does not seem a typical element of the Hellenistic images of the god. So, we might wonder whether this was a way of alluding to a female *kitharodos* such as Satyra. But apart from this (and from the romantic implications we might like to imagine), another element is worth noting. Our singer does not hold a standard *kithara*, but a *de luxe* instrument, with an elaborate sound box, tuning pegs, and 15 strings rather than the standard seven:[27] as many as the strings of the *kithara* which a famous musician such as Limenius used in order to perform his Paean to Apollo,[28] and in any case a feature exclusive to the instruments used by professionals. The presence of such an instrument in a rough drawing suggests considerable familiarity with the performative practices of high-level players.

Unfortunately, we ignore the characteristics of the texts and of the compositions which our Satyra and her colleagues proposed to their audience. Extant Ptolemaic papyri offer a large number of texts which theoretically could be sung with the accompaniment of a *kithara*. Apart from challenging (and famous) pieces such as Stesichorus' *kitharodikos nomos*, transmitted by a *cartonnage* from Ghoran or Magdola now in Lille,[29] and which we can hardly imagine being sung in the Hellenistic period, the *skolia* in the sympotic anthologies found in Elephantine[30] and Tebtunis[31] are good examples of suitable texts: light verses, sometimes expressing an appreciation of basic pleasures in life, such as wine-drinking and sex, sometimes exuding delicate feelings. Satyra's repertoire surely included texts regarding such topics, which made up a substantial portion of Greek poetical production. But *kitharodoi* also had to engage in public performances, and probably Satyra was no exception. A faint suggestion may be inferred from her aforementioned complaint letter, where we read that she got the *opsonion*, her salary, at the festival for Demeter

25 Clarysse 1983, 53, suggests anyway the possibility that the sketch was linked to Herakleotes, the *protégé* of Demeas (below, 365).

26 *P.Cair.Zen.* IV, p. 137; Horak 1992, 234.

27 On the technical features of Greek *kithara* see at least Maas/McIntosh 1989 (165–198 on early Hellenistic instruments), Landels 1999, 47–61, and especially West 1992, 51–56 and 379–381 (post-classical developments of the instrument).

28 Text (with musical interpretation, commentary, and bibliography) in Pöhlmann/West 2001, 71–85, no. 21; see also West 1992, 379.

29 P.Lille inv. 111 c + 73 + 76 a-c (MP^3 1486.1); Davies 1991, fr. 222(b).

30 *BKT* V.2, pp. 56–63; Page 1962, fr. 917; Ferrari 1989; and Pordomingo 2013, 163–168, no. 21.

31 *P.Tebt.* I 1 and 2; Pordomingo 2013, 171–180, nos. 23–24.

(in 258 BC?),[32] the *Demetria*, which are sometimes called with the typically Greek name of *Thesmophoria*. On that occasion it was not strange for a female musician to give public performances, at least according to a first-class literary source, Callimachus' *Hymn to Demeter*: this poem, which is set during the *Demetria* in Alexandria (or in any case reflects the Alexandrian way of celebrating the festival),[33] is structured as a succession of mythical tales sung by a female narrator, accompanied by a chorus of women.

Fig. 61: *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59706v, part. Courtesy of AIP – CSAD Oxford University.

32 The only dated document concerning Satyra is *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59087, written in 257 BC; if we assume that the two linen garments were given to the girl after her complaint, the *Demetria* mentioned in the letter must have been held in late September or early October 258 BC (in the 3rd c. BC the festival began on the first days of the month of Phaophi: see Perpillou-Thomas 1993, 79).
33 See Stephens 2015, 266–267 (discussing the different scholarly perspectives on this point).

The *Demetria* / *Thesmophoria* required accurate planning, and not merely with regard to musical performances:[34] jars of wine from Rhodes and Knidos were delivered, opened, and drunk, even in small towns such as Tebtunis;[35] special cakes and bread were baked;[36] gifts were given, especially to women;[37] and, finally, piglets were sacrificed and eaten.[38] Such 'ingredients' did not meet the 'taste' of the Greek élite alone. Demeter was closely connected to Isis, her Egyptian equivalent (who, unlike other Egyptian deities, did not despise pigs).[39] This successful syncretism allowed the festival to enjoy popularity across all sectors of society, in the countryside as well as in urban settings, among 'new' and 'old' Egyptians alike, so to become an occasion for a joint celebration: in a second-century ostracon from Philadelphia, the *Thesmophoria* are combined with the *Isieia*, a festival for Isis, and said to be led by a woman bearing a typically Egyptian name, Thermouthis.[40] So, if we read our papyri within the framework of Ptolemaic society of the time, the figure of Satyra and her involvement in the *Demetria* become emblematic of a general tendency to 'overexpose' Greek cultural elements while framing them into a foreign setting, and of the transcodification pattern that allowed part of such elements to become rooted in a large, ethnically hybrid audience, by using music and literature as catalysts.[41]

In our attempt to reconstruct the first stages of this process, we can benefit from the largest and most coherent group of texts to have emerged from the Egyptian sands so far: the archive of Zenon, the main source for Satyra's story and many others.[42] It would be difficult to give a full account of all the references to the cultural life of

34 Casarico 1981, 126–131; Perpillou-Thomas 1993, 78–81 (with full literary and papyrological evidence).

35 *P.Tebt.* III.2 1079.

36 *BGU* VII 1552 (accounts of grain used to make bread during the festivals of Isis, Thermouthis, and Demeter).

37 *P.Col.* III 19; a possible gift in monetary form (a donation to "the wife of Herodes") is also recorded in *P.Flor.* III 388.

38 *P.Cair.Zen.* III 59350.

39 Lobban 1994; Volokhine 2014, esp. 147–167.

40 *BGU* VII 1552; Perpillou-Thomas 1993, 80.

41 A similar perspective is adopted by Paganini 2017, esp. pp. 151–152, in his analysis of Greek and Egyptian associations: "as different features from different backgrounds were present, equally important … we should approach them with a wider mindset".

42 For a general description see Vandorpe 2015 (whose periodization is followed here), with the mention of other general works on the archive; *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXI is the essential tool to use the documents of the archive for broader historical reconstructions.

Hellenistic Egypt it offers. Yet, it seems worthwhile to examine this archive once more, in search of some basic patterns.[43]

2 The Zenon Archive and the Cultural Life of Hellenistic Egypt

We may debate to what extent the Ptolemies pursued coherent acculturation policies, but from the documents preserved in the Zenon archive it is quite clear that music and literary practices played an important role in Ptolemaic society. Such practices were related to the effort to establish new lifestyles in those areas where the Greeks had recently settled.[44]

At a surface level, this implied a concrete engagement in organizing and promoting public and private performances. From a Greek point of view, one of the most obvious ways to pursue this goal was the creation of new spaces. The archive shows that, in parallel to the impressive works for the irrigation of the large estate he had been granted by Ptolemy II, Apollonios undertook an architectural programme to enlarge and embellish the nearby Philadelphia through the construction of new buildings: a temple of Sarapis, with a *dromos* connecting it to a pre-existing temple of Isis,[45] a porch,[46] and finally a θέατρον.[47] Unfortunately, there

43 For previous overviews of references to cultural life in the Zenon archive, see especially Orrieux 1983, 130–136, and Orrieux 1985, 71–74.

44 This dimension is not fully highlighted in some previous works. For instance, in Westermann 1932, an overall survey of Greek social life in the villages of Roman Egypt, Zenonian documents are interpreted from a completely different perspective, leading the scholar to comment that "[Zenon's] interest in music was probably not so great" (p. 20).

45 *P.Cair.Zen.* II 59168, 256 or 255 BC. The *dromos* is probably also mentioned in *P.Cair.Zen.* II 59169 (not dated). May this coincide with the paved street found by P. Viereck and P. Zucker in their 1908–1909 campaign? See the description in Viereck 1928, 12–13 and Davoli 1998, 141.

46 *P.Cair.Zen.* II 59200, 254 BC (the reading cτοᾶc, on the back of the letter, leads to the integration of the word on the recto, l. 2: anyway, although the editor does not underdot the word, the letters are not entirely clear, as he acknowledges on p. 60).

47 *P.Cair.Zen.* V 59823, 253 BC. The reference to the building of a theatre (τὸ θέατρον οἰκ[οδο]μῆcαι) is clearly legible on the back, as happens with the word cτοᾶc in *P.Cair.Zen.* II 59200, but unlike in the case of the latter, the connection with the main argument of the document (a letter from Promethion, a banker in Mendes, on the price of wax) is quite faint. Moreover, the note was added by a different hand from that of the recto: we may suppose that this remark was a sort of reminder concerning an order issued by Apollonios elsewhere. A reference to a theatre is also found in a register of daily expenses, *P.Lond.* VII 2140, l. 3 (though we cannot be sure that it is the theatre in are no archaeological traces of this theatre, nor do extant documents provide any details about the spectacles held there. At such chronological level, θέατρα served as multi-purpose buildings, suitable for a variety of events, ranging from mimes to public conferences.[48] Nevertheless, it is tempting to imagine that the κωμῳδός Mikion — mentioned in a letter written to Zenon by one Demetrios some years after 252 BC[49] — performed some of his sketches there.

Indeed, music and literature were popular far beyond the limits of dedicated spaces. When Zenon began working in the Arsinoites, he soon became involved in the organizing of crucial communal events, such as festivals, which, marking the passage of time and of the seasons, soon acquired a characteristic mix of Egyptian and Greek elements, especially in rural areas, as we have seen in relation to the *Demetria*. Food was a key element on such occasions: in one papyrus (*P.Col.* III 43) the boat captain Phamounis lists the payments he received for different reasons (and at first for the refurbishment of his ship), including five drachmas from Zenon and one goose "for the party" (ll. 15–16). But along with gourmandise, performative elements were always involved, both in public and private celebrations, as music and dance could easily serve as a bridge between different worlds. So, a register written in 244–243 (*PSI* IV 388 = Vandoni 1964, no. 31) records small, periodical payments made to poets (ll. 13, 19 and 38), hired for some *eortai*;[50] and other accounts list — besides sums spent to purchase vegetables, bread, figs, and nuts — the payments for one *kinaidos* — a performer who was at the same time a dancer and a mime[51] — and one *auletes* (*P.Col.* IV 94 = Vandoni 1964, no. 30).

Similar pastimes were widespread in all the Greek settlements in Egypt, across different social *milieux*, until the end of the Ptolemaic period, and beyond. Thus in a letter found in Hibah (*P.Hib.* I 54),[52] written around 245 BC, Demophon asks Ptolemaeus — the holder of a minor post — to send him the *auletes* Petous, with his

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Philadelphia; besides, its exact meaning is unclear). On such documents see Capasso 2021, 287–288, and, in this volume, the contributions by M. Capasso (esp. 194–195) and S. Perrone (esp. 205–206).

48 See at least Longo 1988.

49 *P.Cair.Zen.* III 59417. Though κωμῳδοί are rarely attested in extant Ptolemaic papyrus documents, they were a relevant part of the Egyptian entertainment system: the inscription for Lysimachos (above, n. 14) lists six comic actors as members of the guild of *technitai* in Ptolemais and two comic poets, together with two tragic poets and one tragic actor, accompanied by four *synagonistài*.

50 A general discussion on the procedures for hiring performers for rural festivals can be found in Perpillou-Thomas 1993, 234–238 (the surviving contracts are all from the Roman period, but it is clear that the practice goes back to the Ptolemaic period); see also Belis 2013.

51 Capasso 2021, 290.

52 Vandoni 1964, no. 80; *C.Ptol.Sklav.* I 84.

Phrygian pipes and his other *auloi*, as well as Zenobion the *malakos*, a kind of performer not dissimilar from the *kínaidos*; the mention of a sacrifice (*thousia*, l. 15) points to the religious dimension of the gathering. Some decades later *SB* III 7182 — a set of fragments from Philadelphia kept together with the papyri of the Zenon archive but written at the beginning of the 2nd c. BC[53] — lists the expenses of a 'club' of servants, or of freeborn individuals of low social status, for the organizing of various social events: they do not require a stable place for their gatherings, which are held sometimes in a room inside a stable (fr. 4, col. II) and other times in a granary (fr. 4, col. III); however, songs and music are crucial components, and therefore all members pay a fee for an *auletes* and a *kinaidos*.[54]

The spread of cultic associations and clubs[55] made festival celebrations more and more elaborate, even emphasizing the role of music. In a first-century BC document from Tebtunis, *P.Tebt.* I 208, a party for the god Souchos involved the hiring of musicians and *kinaidoi*, together with chariots (*poreioi*) and horses. Another document, *P.Tebt.* I 231, mentions more modest payments to an *auletes* and a *kordistes*, a dancer specializing in the *kordax*, a dance already known to the Attic comic poets, but generally considered quite vulgar, according to Athenaeus (14, 30, 631d).

The actual circumstances of all such performances are completely lost to us, and the performers hired for them are as faint as shadows: in most cases the papyri do not even give their names, though we may infer some general clues as to their economic conditions by comparing the rewards they were given with the wages for other occupations and services, and from the amount of taxes they paid.[56]

The payment these performers received appears to vary according to their skill, though it does not usually seem too generous: in *PSI* IV 388 the expenses for the "poets" are just three obols, and similarly the musician in *P.Col.* IV 94 is given just one τέταρτον ὀβολοῦ, while for the *kinaidos*, in the same document, an expense of three drachmas and four obols is recorded. Actors were possibly more appreciated, since Mikion, the κῳμωδός mentioned in *P.Cair.Zen.* III 59417, was paid nine drachmas for his services (l. 11); but the same document also records the payments for two potters, Neetis and Doxaios, who were given, respectively, 12 and ten drachmas. Certainly, it is difficult to make comparisons between different activities without the original context (for we should know at least the amount of time each

53 Edgar 1925 (*editio princeps*, still worth reading for its clear elucidation of the main problems raised by the text); Westermann 1932, 21–22; *C.Ptol.Sklav.* I 91.
54 See fr. 5r, ll. 18–19.
55 On their evolution see Muszynski 1977 and Monson 2007a and 2007b (mostly based on Egyptian sources, but also taking Greek evidence into account).
56 An approach first explored by Grassi 1920, esp. 134–135; see now *P.Count* II, pp. 135–138.

individual spent at his or her work). Nevertheless, considering the available figures, the social status of an entertainer, even a highly qualified one, would appear to have been inferior to that of a craftsman, and barely above a labourer's.[57] We have more information about *auletai*, who are the best attested performers.[58] They were resident and active in rural areas as well as in larger towns: an *auletes* was resident in the village of Lysimachis, together with two dancers who are taxed with him as part of a single group, according to a register compiled in the last years of Ptolemy II's reign (*P.Count* 23, vi.62–64). Some *auletai* enjoyed a decent lifestyle: one, Iakoubis son of Iakoubis, is listed among the small owners from the village of Samaria, where he owned 13 sheep, seven lambs, and one goat: wealthier than the average inhabitant, yet far from the richest ones (*P.Tebt.* III.2 882; 155 or 144 BC).[59] In a later register of *laographia* from Tebtunis, however, another *auletes*, Kephalion, is among the least wealthy individuals, paying only 500 drachmas for that part of the year (*P.Tebt.* I 189). Many years before, the *auletes* Petakos, connected to Apollonios' *entourage*, wrote a sad letter from a prison (*desmoterion*), begging for Zenon's help because he was starving, as he lacked even "what is necessary" (*PSI* IV 416 = Vandoni 1964, no. 61).

The significant number of musicians and performative occasions implies a wealth of musical and poetical compositions, both religious and mundane, whose characteristics are difficult to trace.

At the highest levels, rituals involved a substantial production of new texts, in different languages. According to the trilingual decree of Canopus (238 BC)[60] the annual procession for Princess Berenike — deified after her premature death — was accompanied by hymns sung by choruses of young women, composed by the *hierogrammateis* and then copied and recorded on "sacred bookrolls" (ll. 65–70). Although the texts, which the inscription alludes to, were written by local priests for most part in the Egyptian language,[61] it is difficult to imagine that the cult for a

57 On wages in Ptolemaic Egypt see, in general Maresch 1996, esp. 191–192, and von Reden 2007, 206–210 (with a focus on the remuneration of the workers on Apollonios' estate).

58 See *CPR* XIII, pp. 53–57, for a list of *auletai* attested in extant papyri, with the remarks of Perpillou-Thomas 1995, 226, and Capasso 2021, 289–290.

59 Iakoubis is clearly a Jewish name, and one wonders whether, at that time, the village was wholly inhabited by Jews: see *C.Pap.Jud.* I, 171, no. 28.

60 *OGIS* I 56 = *I.Ptolemaic* 119, ll. 55–59; see the commentary in Bernand 1970, 1030–1033.

61 In his famous description of a 'typical' Egyptian ritual procession (*Stromata* 6.4.35–37), Clement of Alexandria states that on such occasions high-ranking priests (such as the *horoscopos*, the *hierogrammateus*, and the *prophetes*) used to display their sacred books; some of them are said to have been written in hieroglyphic script (*hiera grammata*), most notably the books of the *hierogrammateus* (6.4.36): see Bernand 1970, 1005 and 1031–1032.

deceased Greek princess did not also include the use of texts composed in her language, and which must have been transcribed in some form.

At a lower level, a large array of songs was surely introduced in rural festivals, for cultic or mundane purposes. Most of the tunes and the songs played by the *auletai* and other poets and musicians in those circumstances were originally conceived for oral circulation; only in some cases did they acquire a stable textual form (and therefore a circulation as books of some sort). Any collection of 'popular songs' was structurally unfit to generate a textual tradition, if the circumstances that had originally required its creation no longer existed, and so its destiny was often 'submersion'[62] — in Hellenistic Egypt as much as elsewhere in the Greek world. Yet, some later papyri have yielded collections of poetic texts which may echo popular songs in a more elaborate form. The sophisticated short compositions preserved by two first-century rolls from Oxyrhynchus, *P.Oxy.* I 5 and *P.Oxy.* XV 1795, are good examples.[63] They exhibit the use of a rare meter (a hexameter with an iambus in the last foot) and a high poetical diction, with Homerisms and Ionic forms, and they are organized as an acrostic: a poetic *lusus* typical of Hellenistic poetry. However, they are presented to the readers as texts to be actually sung by an *aulos*, since at the end of each composition we read an exhortation to an imaginary musician: αὐλεῖ μοι, "pipe me a tune"; and the variety of the topics, presented with no logical sequence (*P.Oxy.* XV, p. 113) and ranging from hedonistic invitations to enjoy life's pleasures to moral reflections and maxims, reflects a variety of literary entertainments that a real public attending a festive event would have appreciated.

But we may also speculate that different audiences required a diverse repertoire, and that members of the Greek elite, such as Zenon, probably enjoyed listening to music and poetry that reflected their 'Classical' heritage. The great appreciation for aulodic repertoires which included 'traditional' texts is clear from the presence in the archive of *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59533. This fragment contained the final part of a lyric composition, possibly the end chorus of an unknown tragedy, with musical notations intended to be played with the accompaniment of an *aulos*, according to Egert Pöhlmann and Martin West's reconstruction.[64]

62 For a definition of the category of 'submersion' see Rossi 2000, 170–173 (Rossi 2020, 128–130), and Colesanti/Lulli 2016, 1–5.

63 Tedeschi 1991 (see esp. 235–236 on the literary value of these compositions, which scholars have judged in different ways); see also Perrot 2016 (with further bibliography).

64 Pöhlmann/West 2001, 41–43, no. 8.

3 *Paideia* and (Local) Evergetic Attitudes

In the documents from the Zenon archive, this concern for organizing (and attending) festivals and performances seems to be part of a more general attitude: the spread of Greek literary pastimes and Greek *paideia* as a local form of evergetism.

Much of this effort was centred on the local gymnasium, which for some years was managed by a very close friend of Zenon, Demeas.[65] We do not have any information about its location, or its foundation, but we can see that Zenon and other prominent members of the local elite were personally involved in providing anything it required, such as honey for the festival (again!) of the *Hermaia*,[66] and were also willing to pay cash for the upkeep of the place.[67] At the same time, they possibly organized intellectual activities for its members. A letter addressed to Zenon,[68] while lacking its left half, clearly concerns an upcoming lecture περὶ ποιητοῦ (l. 3), "on the poet": most likely Homer, the poet *par excellence*.[69] The speaker is probably a distinguished person, since the sender seems to worry about the final outcome, and asks for his friend's help to gather as many people as possible (l. 4, πλείϲτουϲ ϲυναγάγῃϲ).

It would be hard to find a parallel for such concerns in extant papyri, but something similar is attested, on a far larger scale, in many Greek cities outside Egypt. Inscriptions from several regions sometimes mention lectures or lessons on Homer, or on other literary topics, sponsored by wealthy gentlemen to increase the activities programmed in local gymnasia. For instance, an honorary decree from Eretria, inscribed around the end of the 2nd c. BC,[70] praises Metrodoros for paying Dionysios of Athens, a "Homeric philologist", to hold a one-year cycle of lessons in the gymnasium for boys, ephebes, and "anyone who cared about education". A few decades

65 The documents which mention Demeas are listed in *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXI, p. 311 (see also *Pros.Ptol.* VI 16990). Demeas was active in October 243, as we know from *P.Lond.* VII 2013 (which informs us that he tried to be appointed as director of the local bank at Philadelphia: see the explanation in *P.Lond.* VII, p. 164) and *P.Cair.Zen.* III 59366 (but the document also mentions the following Years 5 and 6 of Euergetes), although by 242–241 he was no longer in charge of the gymnasium, as in *PSI* IV 391 he is called 'former president'; he died at some point in Year 6 of Euergetes (242–241 BC), as *P.Iand.Zen.* 60 records a payment made by Zenon on behalf of Demeas' heir Herakleotes, on Phamenoth 27 = May 17.

66 *PSI* IV 391 b, ll. 25–26. The *Hermaia* are also mentioned in *PSI* V 528, l. 9, together with the *Mousaia*, the "festival of the Muses" (ll. 9–10).

67 *PSI* IV 391 a, ll. 5–8.

68 *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59603.

69 On the references to Homeric poetry in documents see, in general, Fournet 2012.

70 *IG* XII.9, 235.

later, at Priene, the magnanimous Zosimos paid an anonymous γραμματικός for one year;[71] and of course lessons on grammar and many other subjects were very common in big cities such as Athens.[72]

Even in Philadelphia, far from mainland Greece and the core of the Hellenized world, the gymnasium was the most suitable place to host a lecture on literary matters. The organizing of this event would appear to reflect a pattern of evergetism which was typical of the Greek elite throughout the Mediterranean, albeit on the more limited scale of a small, if ambitious, town in a remote rural area which was inhabited by Greeks for the first time in those years.[73]

Such evergetic attitude emerges more clearly from other documents, written over the course of the two decades that Zenon spent in the Arsinoites, and all focusing on the same issue: the παιδεία of youths. Bernard Legras has written fascinating pages about them, reconstructing the stories of some of their protagonists and framing them in the background of their contemporary society.[74] So, I will just survey some of their main characteristics.

Zenon's involvement in children and young boys' education began as early as the first years of his stay in Philadelphia. The first references to it are found in three letters dated to 257 BC, written by Hierokles — who was deeply involved in the education of young people in Alexandria[75] — to Artemidoros, Apollonios' personal doctor, and to Zenon himself.[76] They mostly focus on the progress made by the young Pyrrhos in the study of literature and *mathemata* under Hierokles' supervision and with financial support from Zenon, who met all his needs, from food to proper garments.

Such simple requests are the main topic of other letters addressed to Zenon, such as *PSI* IV 418, written by Pyron (another officer in the service of Apollonios)[77] on behalf of an unnamed *paidion* who was attending a gymnasium.[78] Similarly, in

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71 *I.Priene* 112, col. xxiv, ll. 74–76.

72 See e.g. *IG* II/III^2 1006 (122/121 BC), ll. 62–64. A collection of relevant sources, with a focus on literary education, in Del Corso 2007 and 2012.

73 Orrieux 1987, 519–522, and, in this volume, the contribution of C. Römer, esp. 61–63.

74 Legras 1999, 17–30.

75 In *Pros.Ptol.* VI, p. 284 he is considered the "directeur d'une palestre", but his role is unclear: see Legras 1999, 26.

76 The three letters are *P.Lond.* VII 1941, *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59060 and 59061; see Legras 1999, 25–27 and Clarysse/Vandorpe 1995, 58–59. On Hierokles see *Pros.Ptol.* VI 17146; *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXI, p. 346, no. 1; on Artemidoros: *Pros.Ptol.* IV 10160 = VI 16582; *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXI, p. 302, no. 13; Ricciardetto 2017, esp. 158–159.

77 *Pros.Ptol.* I, p. 136; *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXI, p. 411.

78 Orrieux 1983, 134; Legras 1999, 28–29.

PSI V 528 the young Kleon asks Zenon to send him and his mother the monetary allowance they are awaiting, along with some oil and a sum for the feasts in honour of Hermes and the Muses.[79] In another occasion Zenon sent a cloak to a young athlete named Dionysios as a reward for his victory at the *Ptolemaia*, held in Hiera Nesos: a much appreciated gift, as we know from the message of gratitude written by the victor's brother Zenodoros (*PSI* IV 364; 251 BC).[80]

We may suppose that at least part of the small sums of money which Zenon sometimes recorded in his private accounts on behalf of *paidaria* were intended for such purposes.[81] Sometimes, more generous efforts were requested. In a lacunose letter, *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59064, Metrodoros alludes to some πινάκια required for παιδ[, integrated by the editor as παιδ[αρίοις (l. 7):[82] since the following line (l. 8) opens with a form of the verb γράφω, it is not unlikely that the πινάκια were writing tablets,[83] to be given to boys (maybe for school exercises?). The burden was much heavier especially when higher education was involved. Herakleotes, who was studying to become a *kitharodos* and wished to be appreciated even in Alexandria, was awarded a salary (*opsonion*) as well as special provisions and a good instrument (a *kitharis* worth 100 drachmas), thanks to a generous bequest by Demeas: before his sudden death, the director of the gymnasium named the talented boy as one of his heirs, inadvertently causing considerable annoyance to his friend Zenon.[84]

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79 Orrieux 1983, 134–135; Clarysse/Vandorpe 1995, 61–62.

80 The letter was written in 251/250 BC: see Clarysse/Vandorpe 1995, 59–60, and Legras 1999, 27–28. It is unclear whether Hiera Nesos is to be identified with a location in the Arsinoites (Perpillou-Thomas 1993, 153 n. 10 suggests a place not far from Karanis) or in the Delta (Clarysse/Vandorpe 1995, 60; Remijsen 2010, 111).

81 See e.g. *P.Cair.Zen.* II 59176, ll. 84, 89, 90 (255 BC; *C.Ptol.Sklav.* II 212); in *PSI* VI 580 (246/245 BC) one *choinix* is given, among the others, to "the *paidarion* of Demetrios" (l. 7), but the context (and the word *paidarion*) is too generic to draw any conclusion on his status (see *infra*).

82 *C.Ptol.Sklav.* II 156; on Metrodoros see *Pros.Ptol.* V 14220; *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXI, p. 367, no. 2.

83 The standard meaning of the word: see *e.g. LSJ*, *s.v.*; the editor suggests that they were "perhaps 'plates'" (*P.Cair.Zen.* I, p. 88), but this would be an unnecessary *hapax*.

84 The *dossier* regarding Herakleotes includes a letter dated to 241/240 BC, *P.Lond.* VII 2017, two (undated) *memoranda*, *P.Cair.Zen.* III 59440 and *PSI* IX 1011, and finally the list of payments *P.Iand.Zen.* 60. The main outline of the story is clear, though many details remain obscure. Demeas bequeathed Herakleotes a sum of money, which was administrated by his friends Zenon and Nestos in order to provide a monthly sum of money to pay for the boy's expenses (*P.Cair.Zen.* III 59440 refers to the ὀψώνιον and a monthly allowance for different expenses generically called κατὰ μῆνα ἀνάλωμα, and this is reflected also in the longer letter *P.Lond.* VII 2017). Something went wrong, however, since the boy had to demand his money several times: the extant letter explaining the situation refers to several previous *hypomnemata*. The documents are discussed in depth in Orrieux 1983, 130–132; Clarysse/Vandorpe 1995, 60–61; Legras 1999, 23–25; and Capron 2013 (with some new readings for *P.Lond.* VII 2017); see moreover *P.Iand.Zen.*, p. 209.

In any case, the behaviour of Zenon and his friends was in line with the evergetic attitudes of Greek elites all around the Hellenized world.[85] Providing a couple of boys with what they needed for training in the gymnasium was the local transposition, on a far smaller scale, of what Greek grandees did in other, bigger, and more ancient Hellenic cities, involving much larger assets. In Priene, Zosimos was publicly praised at first because he had paid for the oil and other basic necessities required by the boys who attended the gymnasium of the city;[86] but his efforts were only a pale imitation of the unattainable standards set by Hellenistic kings, who would occasionally donate remarkably large amounts of money or commodities (as grain) to cover the educational expenses of entire cities, even those far from their own courts, as Attalos II did on behalf of the Delphians.[87]

From the 3rd c. BC to the late Hellenistic age, ensuring a complete education for young people became a major concern for the prominent members of Greek society across the Mediterranean, possibly as a consequence of the theoretical debates started with the recommendations made by Aristotle, and some later philosophers. The burden of offering an answer to such claims, anyway, rested on the shoulders of single benefactors: some of them were so wealthy and generous to deserve even honorary decrees which kept the memory of their contribution over the centuries, but most would have faded into oblivion within a few decades.[88] In any case, devoting money to the education of less fortunate boys was an established 'moral duty' for the Greek elites, and the new 'colonial society' of Ptolemaic Arsinoites was no exception.

In the microcosm of Philadelphia, the starting point for such acts of liberality was personal acquaintance. In *P.Mich.* I 77 one Apollonios — a friend of Zenon's,[89] not to be confused with the *dioiketes* — expresses his positive opinion about a boy who has been presented to Zenon by the *didaskalos* Philon,[90] probably in order to get him a sponsorship.[91] Such relationships (and sponsorships) built around a

85 On the social and cultural aspects of evergetism during the Hellenistic period (apart from the 'classic' Gauthier 1985) see, in general, van Minnen 2000 (focusing on Egypt), Müller 2011, and Domingo Gygax 2016.
86 *I.Priene* 112, col. xxiv, ll. 58–64.
87 Dittenberger, *Syll.*^{3} 672 (162/160 BC).
88 Del Corso 2005, 3–16; Criscuolo 2015.
89 *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXI, p. 295, no. 37.
90 *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXI, p. 437, no. 8; unfortunately, only he is mentioned in this document.
91 The text is full of allusions that are difficult to grasp (370 and n. 112). According to Edgar's reconstruction, Apollonios stresses that the *paidarion* is a good choice, even if Zenon was probably disappointed because of his age (maybe he supposed that the boy was too old for starting such training): see *P.Mich.* I, pp. 155–156.

gymnasium could imply acts of courteous attention and even genuine forms of affection. Sometimes these emerge from cursory remarks: in a to-do list (*PSI* IV 430)[92] Zenon jotted down a remark about "meeting the *paidarion* of Hermon" after several more burdensome tasks (such as buying oil, caring for the horse, transcribing the accounts for the oil…). At the end of another letter full of unclear details, *PSI* V 534 (addressed to Zenon by an unknown sender),[93] we find a sentence which might be interpreted as a sign of affection: "and Etearchos wrote you what Charmos made me […], wishing to destroy me and the *paidarion*" (ll. 13–18, with a lacuna on l. 15). Real, intense feelings of affection were surely the reason why Demeas planned to provide continued assistance to Herakleotes even after his death through a generous bequest.[94]

All this may help to answer a debated point: what was the status of *paidaria*? Reinhold Scholl included all the documents mentioning them in his *corpus* of Ptolemaic documents on slavery (*C.Ptol.Sklav.*). But even if the word was largely used for slaves and servants (as is the case in many of the documents from the archive),[95] it could also be used as a generic diminutive of παῖς, as attested by literary sources (see *LSJ*, *s.v.*, 1). Besides, the tone used by Zenon's correspondents in letters such as *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59060 or *PSI* IV 418 is far from that of someone who is describing the features of a 'product' (which is what slaves ultimately were).[96] A more plausible alternative is that *paidaria* were war orphans, whose fathers had died during "une des nombreuses guerres des Ptolémées".[97] Even Kleon, the writer of *PSI* V 528, may have been ἀπάτωρ, although he calls Zenon his "father": this expression should simply be interpreted as a sign of the boy's fondness for his benefactor.[98] More generally, it is conceivable that these were freeborn boys[99] from families of Greek

92 *C.Ptol.Sklav*. II 147; *Sel.Pap*. I 180.

93 *C.Ptol.Sklav*. II 177.

94 Above, n. 84.

95 See e.g. *PSI* V 529 = *C.Ptol.Sklav.* I 21: Nostos asks Zenon to lend him money on the security of his *paidarion*.

96 On the semantic value of *paidarion* see also Straus 1976, with the discussion on pp. 349–350: in the Hellenistic period *paidarion* "désigne des garçons aussi bien libres qu'esclaves" (Bieżuńska-Małowist 1974, 349), but in the Roman period the word "signifie toujours esclave" (Straus 1976, 350).

97 Clarysse/Vandorpe 1995, 61–62 (words quoted from p. 62). Clarysse and Vandorpe's position is quite clear: "Nous rejetons l'hypothèse selon laquelle c'étaient de jeunes esclaves entraînés comme des chevaux de course pour l'argent qu'ils pourraient rapporter dans des concours" (p. 61).

98 Rowlandson 1998, 96–97; *contra*, see Orrieux 1983, 135: in his view, terms such as "father" and "mother" are never used in a metaphorical way in the documents from the archive; so Kleon was "un enfant naturel ou adoptif", and his mother "une affranchie", or anyway someone from a low social class.

99 See Legras 1999, 29.

colonies who — for some reason — could not afford to bear the expenses of a Greek education in Philadelphia or even further away, as in Alexandria.

Extant documents are quite explicit in showing that the ultimate goal of sponsorship was to help the boy to achieve a proper education. Hierokles' letter to Zenon is clear. At the beginning, the sender sums up the worries that the sponsor expressed in a previous letter: "you wrote me about Pyrrhos, that if we know for certain that he will win, to train him, but if not, that it should not happen both that he is distracted from his literary studies and that useless expense is incurred".[100] Concrete educational achievements were Zenon's first concern. Yet, even the short-term, local-scale evergetism practised by members of the Arsinoitic elite brought a small, immediate reward: the possibility that the supported boy might win a prize at one of the *agones*, allowing his sponsor too to acquire some local fame and honour, according to a long-standing Greek tradition. Thus, in his letter Hierokles, after reassuring his friend about the boy's progress, praises Zenon as a future winner: "to tell it trusting in the gods, I hope you will get the crown!".[101]

Hierokles was writing from Alexandria, so we can be sure that the games he was referring to were held there. Upon their arrival in the country, the Greek kings had introduced *agones* for different occasions: from the ἀγῶνες μεγαλοπρεπεῖς created by Ptolemy I to commemorate the death of Alexander the Great (Diod. Sic. 18. 28.4) to the *Ptolemaia*, the quinquennial games instituted by Ptolemy II in honour of his father, and the *Theadelpheia*, which the same king established in honour of himself and Arsinoe II.[102] We can be confident that the programmes of such games did not solely consist of athletic activities, but also included poetic contests, such as those in which Demeas' favourite, Herakleotes, sought to participate, in order to display his poetical prowess.[103] It is unclear whether *agones* could also be organized outside of Alexandria,[104] but we may suppose that gymnasia were the setting for

100 *P.Lond.* VII 1941, ll. 2–4; transl. T.C. Skeat (*P.Lond.* VII, p. 27).

101 *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59060, l. 7.

102 See in general Perpillou-Thomas 1993, 151–158, Remijsen 2010, and Le Guen 2022, esp. 43–46. On the *Theadelpheia* see now Chepel 2022, with edition and commentary of a unique papyrus with the programme of the festival, found by the Egyptian-Russian expedition in Deir el-Banat.

103 As shown by the papyrus from Deir el-Banat (above, n. 102), the *Theadelpheia* comprised several kind of poetical and musical contests, ranging from choral and dramatic poetry to performances of *auletai*, kitharists and kitharodes: see the detailed remarks in Chepel 2022, 165–168 (commentary to the text) and 177–178 (general discussion of the *mousikoi agones*).

104 Many festivals were celebrated in the *chora* as in Alexandria: it is the case e.g. of the *Ptolemaia*, according to *PSI* IV 364 (see the commentary *ibid.*, 95), and of the *Basileia* (Perpillou-Thomas 1993, 153). Yet Remijsen 2010, 111 considers it unlikely that *agones* were held in Egyptian towns different from Alexandria before the reign of Septimius Severus.

local competitions reserved for their members, as had commonly been the case since the Classical period: for instance, it is difficult to imagine a festival for the Muses — such as the *Mouseia* mentioned in the letter by the young Kleon (*PSI* V 528) — without poetic performances, and a gymnasium would have been the most appropriate setting for such an event.[105]

These efforts to promote Greek lifestyles and education, and their most evident performative output, the *agones*, both in the capital and on a local scale, seem perfectly in line with the cultural policy of the first Ptolemies, who largely devoted their evergetism to the pursuit of such goals, and concretely supported all efforts to spread and develop the knowledge of Greek language and literature through a coherent system of fiscal incentives.[106]

4 The Literary Education of Zenon and his Circle

On the local level, the main agents of such strategy, the members of the newly created local elites such as Zenon and his friends, were themselves steeped in literary culture and did not hesitate to show it in given circumstances. Apollonios, the man who expressed his approval of the boy endorsed by the *didaskalos* Philon, used a prose "that has a distinctly literary flavour":[107] as Edgar noted, Apollonios inserted a iambic trimeter in the text of the letter,[108] and used a literary expression — from an as yet unidentified work, but echoing a famous Homeric verse — to add an ironic touch to his message.[109] Another correspondent, Nicarchos, sent Zenon a reminder on a dispute he had already won, asking him to compel the farmer Dionysodoros to pay his due share of expenses; on the back of this letter, to the right of the address, Nicharos added a quote from the prologue of a lost play by Aeschylus, probably the *Mysoi*:[110] ἰὼ Κάικε Μύcιαί τ' ἐπιρραί, "Hail, Caïcus, and you tributary streams of Mysia!".

105 Orrieux 1983, 135; on the festival, mentioned in the Zenon archive also by *PSI* IV 391 b (242/241 BC), see Perpillou-Thomas 1993, 91–93.
106 *P.Count*, II, pp. 52–53 and 125–133; Criscuolo 2015, 83–84.
107 *P.Mich.* I, p. 156.
108 See ll. 7–9: εἴ ⟦οὖν⟧ cοι | πρὸ γνώμηc ἐc|τὶν οὕνεκεν | χρόνου.
109 See ll. 10–13: ἕωc τὸ δὴ | λεγόμενον | πολιὰc cχῆι καὶ | τὰ λοιπά. The expression πολιὰc cχῆι points to the πολιὰc … τρίχαc of Priam in *Il.* 22.77, as noted by Pintaudi 1990.
110 *TGrF* III, 143. The verse is quoted by Strab. 13.1.70 (616 C) as coming from the *Myrmidones*, but this was a mistake made by the geographer, unanimously corrected to *Mysoi*: see, most recently, Sommerstein 2008, 150–151 (with a synopsis of the piece), and Radt 2008, 521 (where *Myrmidones* is considered a mistake on the writer's part, not a scribal error).

It is reasonably certain that the verse was written by the same hand that transcribed the *memorandum* on the recto, and it seems to have been deliberately positioned in a way that would make it immediately noticeable to the addressee. In this case, the quote was not just an occasional scribble or a *probatio calami*, but served a specific purpose: it was a sort of nod, a learned allusion that both could understand, and a way to recall a common background, though the context of the allusion is unclear: maybe it was just a bombastic way to amplify the greeting, or maybe it was something more personal (an allusion to Zenon's origin from Asia Minor? A comic comparison between him and Telephus, the main character of the tragedy?).[111]

Though this kind of literary awareness is uncommon in the documents from the archive, Zenon and his correspondents would more generally appear to have enjoyed and appreciated literature and the refined *Witz* that its knowledge could produce. Events of daily life were sometimes set against a literary background. For instance, one of Zenon's friends (maybe the same Apollonios who wrote *P.Mich.* I 77) composed two epigrams, following the rule of epideictic rhetoric, for the death of his favourite dog, Tauron;[112] the author of the compositions was so aware of the poetic rules of such literary *lusi* as to choose the Doric dialect for his verses, possibly to produce a parodic effect.

The sheet with the epigrams for Tauron takes us to a further plane which the Zenon archive helps to explore: the availability of books in Egypt's peripheral areas and readers' cultural practices. Clear references to book circulation can be found at least in two much discussed documents: the most ancient list of books ever found among Graeco-Egyptian papyri, *P.Col.* IV 60, and a more common (yet extremely interesting) letter written by Demeas, the gymnasiarch, *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59588.

The former, *P.Col.* IV 60, is no more than a short note on a papyrus strip, where we find a reference to some bookrolls, including an uncommon work as a collection of excerpts from the writings of the renowned historian Callisthenes of Olynthus.[113] The heading of the document connects the rolls to Zenon's brother, Epharmostos, as it reads: ἃ κατηνέχθη | Ἐ]φαρμόςτῳ βυβλία (ll. 1–2). The presence of Epharmostos

111 Telephus could easily have been considered an evocative figure by the Greeks in Ptolemaic Egypt, because of his mythological role as a Greek king in a barbarian country; this has been adduced as a further reason for the transcription of the prologue of another tragedy about his fate, Euripides' *Telephus*, on *P.Mil.* I 2, a papyrus sheet found inside Memphis' Serapeum and written by Apollonios son of Glaukias. See Legras 2011, 214–216.

112 *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59532; Pepper 2010 (on the rhetorical construction of the two epigrams, esp. 616–618; the possible identification of the author of the epigrams with the Apollonios who wrote *P.Mich.* I 77 is suggested on p. 609, n. 13).

113 New edition, with a full commentary and discussion of the various proposed integrations, in Otranto 2000, no. 1, 1–4.

enables us to narrow down the chronology of the document, since it has been inferred that Epharmostos died quite young, around 242 BC. But other biographical elements make it quite difficult to understand the expression and the real nature of the document. From the *editio princeps* onwards, the phrase has been taken to mean "books which have been carried down for Epharmostos" (*P.Col.* IV, p. 8). This translation poses some problems with regard to the origin of the books. Indeed, we know that Epharmostos had spent several years in Alexandria since his childhood: in 257 BC he was living in the house of the *dioiketes* Apollonios, and he probably completed his studies in the city under the supervision of two friends of Zenon's, Hierokles and Ctesias; later, around 248 BC, he joined his brother in Philadelphia.[114] So, the list was plausibly written in that period of time. But in the same years Zenon was travelling around the Delta (258 to 256 BC), and he then moved to Philadelphia, to take up his position as manager of Apollonios' estate (from 256 to 248/247 BC). So, if the list records books sent to help a young boy in his studies, it implies that soon after settling in Philadelphia Zenon could rely on a substantial collection of books, which covered even authors falling well outside the standard canon. But there is also another possibility: we might take Ἐ]φαρμόστῳ as a dative of agent,[115] and suppose that Zenon is listing books brought from Alexandria by his younger brother, either when he relocated to the Arsinoites or during a short stay before his final move into the region. A serious obstacle to this interpretation is the verb employed, καταφέρω, which in the passive form mainly means "to be brought down" by a river (see *LSJ*, *s.v.*). As in extant papyri, it is most commonly employed for items carried from Upper to Lower Egypt, this would imply that the books were moved from the Arsinoites to Alexandria, not vice versa. Whatever the 'direction' of the exchange, the text bears witness to the fact that in early Ptolemaic Egypt books circulated even through small and peripheral exchange channels.

This is also reflected by the second document, where reading and discussing literature are apparently presented as common pastimes within Zenon's 'circle'. At the end of a letter discussing some trivial business questions (*P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59588), Demeas abruptly tells his friend:

> καὶ τὰ βυβλία, εἰ ἤ[δη] | [με]ταγέγραψαι, ἀπόστειλον, ὅπως ἂν ἔχωμεν διατριβήν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ᾧ λαλή[σωμεν] | [ἔχο]μεν.

114 Świderek 1956, 136–137, for a reconstruction of Epharmostos' biography starting from the documents from the archive; see also *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXI, A, 330, *s. v.* Ἐφάρμοστος 1 (a list of all the texts mentioning him) and Clarysse/Vandorpe 1995, 34.
115 On the dative of agent in papyri see Mayser 1970, 2.2, 273.

> And send the books, if you have already transcribed them, so that we may have a discussion: we have nothing we will be able to speak about (ll. 3–5).

Unfortunately, we only have a *terminus ante quem* to date the letter: Demeas' death, which occurred before 242/241 BC.[116] So, we cannot know if the μεταγράφειν mentioned by the sender was pursued through local writers or more sophisticated scribes or secretaries in the capital, but we can be quite sure that it refers not to documents, as supposed by Edgar,[117] but to "literarische Werke", as first stated by Ulrich Wilcken and then widely accepted.[118] Indeed, words such as διατριβή and λαλεῖν would hardly match an allusion to documentary practices, and they are rarely attested in extant documentary texts.[119] Their semantic nuances point to the sphere of literature and literary pastimes: διατριβή could mean either intense "study" or lighter "amusement" (according to *LSJ*, s.v.), and λαλεῖν was traditionally used for non-serious "chatting" among friends or even with a negative overtone (especially in comedy),[120] although in later papyrological sources the word seems to lose this specific connotation.[121]

However, beyond these considerations, the two documents can be seen to reflect a common picture: both the circulation of books and related reading practices fall within a distinctly collective dimension, according to well-established cultural patterns which the literary evidence usually attributes to the learned elite of larger Hellenic cities.[122]

116 *Supra*, n. 65.

117 *P.Cair.Zen.* IV, p. 45.

118 *BL* II 2, 45; see Orrieux 1985, 71 (with further bibliography).

119 Apart from this letter, the word is attested only in four papyri, all much later: *BGU* VIII 1849 (around 47 BC), *P.Hib.* II 274 (after AD 212), *SB* XXIV 16000 (early 4th c. AD), and *P.Cair.Goodsp.* 15 (AD 362). Some are noteworthy on account of the unusual choice of uncommon words, particularly *P.Hib.* II 274 (the draft of a petition whose object is unclear); above all, in none of them does the term διατριβή refer to the "discussion" or "consultation" of other documents.

120 As in Eup., fr. 116, where "chatting" is opposed to the λέγειν of a good speaker (quoted in Montanari, *Dizionario*, s.v., 1).

121 See e.g. the letter *SB* XVIII 13867, ll. 35–37 (λα|[λεῖν δ]ὲ αὐτῷ περὶ τοῦ χαλ|κοῦ), written in the 2nd c. AD.

122 Del Corso 2005, 83–94.

5 Zenon and the Books

It is quite probable that the very few literary fragments — roughly half a dozen — sold together with the archive's documents are the meagre remains of the larger collections of books that Zenon and his friends put together (and that were stored somewhere apart from the other texts). In this case, they would show the availability, in the small town of Philadelphia, of a remarkable array of rare works and uncommon literary genres that within a couple of centuries would be almost forgotten: Archilochean tetrameters (*Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XX 14), tragic *adespota* (*P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59533), and mythological tales (*Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XX 16), together with uncommon works by famous poets, such as Euripides' *Hippolytus* (*Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XX 15, the earliest extant manuscript of the play), which was never a favourite reading in Graeco-Roman Egypt.[123]

The same picture can be drawn from larger groups of literary fragments found together in circumscribed areas but without a clear connection to any group of documents, such as the papyri from the Gurob or Hibah *cartonnages*: the arrival of the Greek settlers clearly implied the penetration into former rural areas of Egypt of a large mass of literary texts, reflecting the wide range of texts available in the new settlers' home regions.[124]

Some texts of the Zenon archive, however, reveal something more: the readers' social profile and their active involvement in cultural practices which implied the conscious manipulation and readjustment of previous literary material in order to produce new texts for specific purposes. Two uncommon fragments, *PSI* VI 624 and *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59534, help us to reflect on this dimension.

Differently from the other fragments, the former of these two does not bear any poetry or 'high' literature, but a rather dull prose text: a "practical agricultural handbook",[125] whose surviving section focuses on viticulture, a hot topic for any officer or businessman involved in the process of transforming the Arsinoites agrarian

123 For an overview of the literary fragments supposedly belonging to the archive see Clarysse 1983, 52–53, and Orrieux 1985, 71–75. While there are no serious reasons to reject the idea that the other literary texts belong to the archive, the case of *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XX 16, originally published as *P.Bad.* VI 176 and later republished as *P.Heid.* II 10, is more problematic. It is "recorded at Heidelberg as belonging among the papyri acquired from the Zenon archive" (*Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XX, p. 94), but it has a document on the verso (*Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XX 73) written in a script whose type seems slightly different from those normally attested in Zenonian papyri. Anyway, the variety of scripts found in the archive has not yet been fully explored (for a recent overview see Crisci 2010), so the palaeographic argument seems inconclusive.

124 Del Corso 2004.

125 Turner in *P.Hib.* II, p. 56.

landscape — the very basis of the economic and political projects pursued by the first Ptolemies.

As Hélène Cadell first pointed out,[126] the surviving text is not (part of) the column of a roll, but a fragment (maybe one half, maybe less) of a single sheet, previously used for another document, which was carefully washed out (a practice not unusual in Ptolemaic Egypt).[127] Considering its actual size (19.5 × 9 cm), the sheet originally had a format very close to the one used for the beautiful letters from Apollonios' chancery and for other business documents typically found in the archive.[128] In any case, the writing does not run along the longer side, as in official documents, but along the shorter one, according to the layout usually adopted for literary texts.

The peculiar 'documentary' format matches the palaeographic features of the papyrus, which is written in a quick 'business hand' that is not uniform but quite legible. Girolamo Vitelli (and Medea Norsa), who first edited the text, cautiously suggested that the scribe was Zenon himself,[129] but unfortunately without explaining the reasons that led to this assumption. Indeed, the hand has certain features in common with that of other papyri most probably written by Apollonios' former manager, such as *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59129, a letter addressed to his friend Panakestor.[130] Both handwritings share some notable characteristics with the (Hellenistic) Alexandrian chancery script: the strokes unfold along an 'upper' guideline, so that some letters acquire a characteristic shape, such as *ny* (with the second stroke extended as a long, horizontal upward line) and *omega* (with a flat and high second half). In both these handwritings, moreover, we find some quite specific elements: a peculiar *beta*, reduced in size but with a prominent lower belly, and a two-strokes 'open' *upsilon*. Nevertheless, the overall impression we get in each case is somewhat different: the handwriting of *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59129 sometimes has a spiky appearance, while *PSI* VI 624 is more rounded. Without a systematic survey of the papyri (possibly or surely) written by Zenon, we cannot reach a definite conclusion. However, it is clear that the papyrus

126 Cadell 1969; see also Foraboschi 1985, and the general remarks in Del Corso 2016, 276–277.

127 For a general discussion of extant palimpsest papyri from Graeco-Roman Egypt see Crisci 2003 and Schmidt 2007 and 2009; see also Clarysse/Vandorpe 2006, 2–4 (a list of palimpsest papyri from the 'archive' of Ptolemaios and Apollonios from the Serapeum of Memphis).

128 See e.g. *P.Cair.Zen.* II 59155 (official letter from Apollonios to Zenon, 256 BC; 33 × 19 cm) or *PSI* IV 341 (request made by Apollophanes and Demetrios to Zenon, 256 BC; 28.5 × 11 cm.

129 *PSI* VI, p. 61 ("sembra di mano di Zenon").

130 For a tentative description of Zenon's hand, with a list of relevant documents, see Seider 1990, 193–199, Crisci 2010, 294–295 (*P.Cair.Zen.* I 59129 is reproduced as tav. VIa), and Del Corso 2024; some reflections on the characteristics of individual hands in the archive can also be found in Evans 2010, 59–63 (focusing especially on Zenon and his friend Amyntas).

was copied by someone who had acquired a ‘graphic’ education very similar to Zenon’s, resorted to this proficiency for the same professional reasons, and probably had a similar social status.

But there is a more interesting element: the ‘informal’ appearance of the script suggests a text which is provisional and ‘in progress’, closer to a draft version than a (hastily produced) copy of some fixed work. This is clear from the number of significant textual interventions made by the writer: on the upper part of the sheet some words were replaced with a different pericope, written *supra lineam* but now only partially preserved (l. 5); below, we see the substantial integration of a whole line (χαραχώcουcι [*l.* χαρακώcουcι] δὲ τὸν βλαcτόν, between l. 13 and 14), signalled by a *paragraphos*, and then (l. 19) an unnecessary word is cancelled (a repetition of the verb cυντελέcουcιν, already at l. 17). Such changes can partly be explained as a consequence of a more careful reading of a model: we may think that the words added between l. 13 and l. 14 were first missed as a consequence of a “saut du même au même”, which was soon noticed by the readers, or that some sort of analogous psychological mechanism led the scribe to write the same verb twice; but at l. 5 the ratio of the correction is different, and can only be understood as a conscious way of modifying a text which, on the whole, seems rather convoluted and syntactically lame. In order to explain such textual oddities, considering also the palaeographic characteristics of the script, we might suppose that our text is a sort of ‘autograph’, “un texte original, qui s’appuie autant sur des connaissances livresques que sur des faits d’expérience”, as Hélène Cadell writes: a text intended as a “memory aid” for the actual work to be carried out in the vineyards of Philadelphia and composed by drawing upon previous, more detailed agricultural treatises, which were summarized, simplified, and adapted to the local circumstances.[131]

A tendency to produce textual tools based on more complex works is reflected by another, tantalizing, and uncommon fragment.

P.Cair.Zen. IV 59534 is a sheet written on both sides (Fig. 62); it was cut off from a pre-existing roll and used for another text, which was carefully washed off before the new text was added: an early palimpsest. Its three narrow, irregular columns contain an unusual text: some lines consist of one or two words, some of small pericopes; the limit of each ‘entry’ is marked by a *paragraphos*, so we can easily distinguish between pericopes and single words. Some of the words listed have a clear poetic value, such as βαθύκολποc (col. II 37) or the *hapax* cτερνοcχιδήc (col. II 36); others are much more common, such as βία (col. I 22) or ἐπαγγελία (col. I 24). The longer pericopes (e.g. col. II 33–35 and 49–51) have no independent meaning, but rather seem like paraphrases of longer sentences, with a more complex syntax.

131 Cadell 1969, 120.

Fig. 62: *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59534 V. Courtesy of AIP – CSAD Oxford University.

What we have is clearly a collection of notes on another literary work: "partly quotations, partly explanations", as Edgar, the first editor, pointed out.[132] This text is almost unparalleled, although extant Ptolemaic papyri include glossaries and lexicographic collections of rare words (e.g. *P.Hib*. II 172). In them the entries are mostly organized according to a lexicographic criterion (albeit not alphabetically). Indeed, *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59534 follows the unfolding of a text, in which different actions were described or a story was told. In order to understand the exact functions of the papyrus, it would be crucial to identify the literary nature of the text it refers to. But with regard to this point, Edgar preferred not to offer any hypotheses; De Luca, in his revision of the papyrus, suggested that it could be "a work on a philosophical or rhetorical subject",[133] while more recently Ucciardello opted for a different solution: in his view the papyrus is a collection of "reading notes" taken from a range of other texts, including rhetorical and poetical ones, possibly aimed at increasing the linguistic knowledge ("bagaglio linguistico") of the person who transcribed them.[134]

There is anyway a third option which deserves consideration. The first block of entries has a common theme: food. This is clear from the first legible word in col. I, cιτεία,[135] and later from the explicit references to a cold dish that should be warmed (col I 11–12), and to boiled and roasted meat (col. I 16–17). This list is introduced by a curious expression, ἐπαίνεcιc ὠμότ[ητοc, which one is tempted to translate as "praise of indigestion", in the light of what follows.[136] The preceding lines (ll. 7–8) are more obscure. Both are connected to the action of smelling, given the presence of words such as ῥινί (l. 7) and ὄcφρανcιc (l. 8); so ἕλκειν would mean "drawing up" and hence "breathing" something (a figurative way of using the verb also attested by Hippocrates, *Aër.* 19. 4), while ἀτμίδων, "vapours", would be connected with something that is breathed (but the use of the genitive is unclear). A vague point of comparison for these terms is offered by some trimeters from the

132 P.Cair.Zen. IV, p. 3.

133 De Luca 2002, 264.

134 Ucciardello 2012, 11–12.

135 According to the digital reproduction of the papyrus — taken from the original photograph from the archive of the "Association Internationale de Papyrologues" and now available through the website of the Oxford Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents (see below) — this reading is preferable to cημεῖα, mentioned in the *editio princeps*' commentary as a possible alternative. In this case, βρ[ῶμα, proposed by Hunt, is a perfect integration for l. 2 (*P.Cair.Zen.* IV, p. 3), and would be consistent with the idea that the whole section is focused on food.

136 This meaning of ὠμότηc is clearly attested not just in medical treatises, but in the works of various different authors, such as Diodorus Siculus (10.7.1 Vogel) and Plutarch (*Quaest. conv.* 4.1, 661b). See *LSJ*, *s.v.*, 2.

Kline by Nicostratus, a fourth-century comedian, quoted by Atheneus (3.111d = Nicostratus, fr. 13 K.-A.):

> ὀcμὴ δέ, τουπίβλημ’ ἐπεὶ περιῃρέθη,
> ἄνω ’βάδιζε καὶ μέλιτι μεμιγμένη
> ἀτμίc τιc εἰc ῥῖναc· ἔτι γὰρ θερμὸc ἦν (…)
>
> The smell of it, when the cover was removed,
> rose straight to my nostrils, along with a sort of
> steam mixed with honey; because it was till warm (…)
> (transl. S. Douglas Olson)

The character from the *Kline* is describing the delicious smell of a tasty ναcτόc, a kind of bread or flat-cake made with honey, whose exact nature was matter of discussion among Atheneus' learned banqueters. More generally, as is widely known, colourful descriptions of foods and their effects on the human senses are typical of Greek comedy, especially Middle Comedy: apart from Nicostratos, lists of delectable foods, characters longing for delicacies, or cooks preparing them can be found, for instance, in fragments by Sotades,[137] Antiphanes,[138] and Alexis.[139] As a further hint in such a direction, at the end of the sheet we find mentions of a cook (col. III 74) and of dances (col. III 76–77), another typical element of Greek comedies. Generally speaking, the possible contents of the other lines are not inconsistent with this hypothesis, although the exact meaning of each pericope would deserve a far deeper analysis, in order to confirm the plausibility of this proposal. Although the references are far from clear, we read of someone being brought (col. II 6, cυνελόμενοc) in a place where he can see beautiful furniture (col. II 33–34, [ὅτ]αν ἴδη[ι κ]αλὰ | [cκ]εύη), and who, after sitting down (καθίcαc, col. II 34), falls half asleep (νυcτάζει, col. II 35).[140] Later on there is a mention of money lent (an usury loan? δανείcῃ, col. II 46) and some kind of bargaining: someone demands the return (ἀπαιτεῖν, col. II 47) of a small sum of money, two drachmas, which then become just one (col. II 48; it is interesting that both sums are expressed through the characteristic abbreviation used in most of the archive's documents); then one character (either the individual

137 Fr. 1 K.-A. = Ath. 7.293b-e.

138 Fr. 181 K.-A. = Ath. 9.370e.

139 Fr. 191 K.-A. = Ath. 3.117d-3.

140 Since the left margin of the column is torn, there are no traces of the original *paragraphoi* which distinguished the different actions, so that we cannot be totally sure that the temporal subordinate clause and the verb νυcτάζει have the same subject, though this solution seems the most logical; traces of a *paragraphos* are clearly visible between l. 35 and l. 36 (as tentatively mentioned in the commentary to the first edition). On the verb see also Skoda 2021, 681.

was half asleep or someone else) pretends to be stupid (μωρόϲ) in order to reach a different place (col. II 49–51).

Such scenes would fit within a comedy plot. One difficulty might be the mention of someone who tells stories while seated (καθήμενο[ϲ μύ]|θουϲ λέγειν, col. III 72–73), and whose connection with the comic characters is far from obvious. The presence of the adjective βαθύκολποϲ, used in the *Iliad* and in the Homeric Hymns, as well as by Pindar and later Theocritus,[141] and of the *hapax* ϲτερνοϲχιδήϲ (col. II 36) instead do not pose any difficulties, since the poetic diction of comedy was broad and could incorporate similar forms, if only for parodic purposes.[142]

If this view is correct, we should at least wonder whether *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59534 might contain notes by someone who was reflecting on a section from a comedy that is now lost. We may be tempted to connect such a text with school or learning practices, but, once again, its script suggests a different scenario. As in the case of *PSI* VI 624, this sheet is written in an 'informal' hand, which mixes standard, square, and slightly rounded letters with some typical elements of the Hellenistic Alexandrian chancery script, such as the *ny* with the middle stroke moved to the upper line, or *omega* with the second half reduced to a line and moved to the top. Moreover, the letters are sometimes clearly detached, and at other times leaning on each other, creating pseudo-ligatures or ligatures where the influence of the chancery model is especially clear. The *ductus* is not always uniform,[143] and in any case the lack of proper calligraphic training is evident. This is something that can also clearly be detected in other 'informal' handwritings used to copy literary texts connected to the archive, such as the sheet with the epigrams for the dog Tauron: the writer (Apollonios?) starts with a well-spaced square script and gradually shifts to a chancery-like one, transforming the oblique and middle strokes of the letters into horizontal strokes aligned with the upper guideline (as is especially clear in the last verse of the first epigram, l. 12).[144]

This informal handwriting seemed to Edgar to be "identical with that of *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59545 (a)",[145] the draft of a letter written when Zenon was in the Delta, in 257 BC. The scholar offered no evidence supporting this claim, but his idea might be correct. At first sight, the two papyri seem quite different in terms of their general

141 See e.g. *Il.* 18.122; 24.215; *h. Cer.* 5; Pind., *Pyth.* 1.12; 9.101; Theocr. 17.55.

142 For an overview of the linguistic variety of Greek comedy, see the short overview by Valakas 2007 and the essays collected in Willis 2002.

143 I am using the word according to 'Italian' conventions, i.e. as a way to express the 'speed' of execution of the handwriting.

144 For a discussion of other examples of fluctuating hands in Greek literary papyri (especially from the Roman age), see Del Corso 2010, 358–359.

145 *P.Cair.Zen.* IV, p. 13.

appearance, but this is chiefly due to the different *ductus* and overall 'graphic' accuracy of *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59545 (a), which is a direct consequence of its content: as we would expect, despite its 'cursive' lapses, it is more homogenous than the draft letter, which seems hastily written and untidy. When cursive script is found (e.g. at the end of columns II and III), reflecting the 'bureaucratic' milieu of the copyist, the two handwritings show strong similarities and many letter shapes match perfectly: for instance, the 'open' three- or two-strokes *alpha*, *theta* (with the middle line on the upper part of the letter), *kappa, my*, *ny* (often with a curl, although this 'decorative' element is also common to many 'chancery' hands from the period), *tau*, and *omega*. It is worth mentioning that the same characteristics can be found in a third papyrus, *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59546, which is clearly related to *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59545 (a), since the former contains a 'more polished' (yet perhaps not final) draft of the letter preserved in the latter.

All this might not be enough to demonstrate the identity of the three handwritings beyond reasonable doubt. But should a closer inspection confirm it, we would have a clear example of the array of scripts that any ordinary clerk or official had to master in the Ptolemaic period — as well as in other epochs — in order to fulfil his daily tasks, which involved the production of an array of different texts.[146] At another level, the (alleged) identity of the three hands would be a further indication of the links of *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59534 with the archive and Zenon's literary pastimes. The back of the draft letter *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59545 (a) has been used for another draft letter, *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59545 (b), which actually consists of a few phrases written in a different, more confused, and much swifter hand. This does not follow the 'aesthetic' principle of the 'upper' guideline and shows a considerable degree of freedom in the distribution of the letters on the line, by sometimes dividing them and other times juxtaposing them. We cannot exclude that these barely legible scribbles simply represent another 'level of cursiveness' exhibited by the scribe who wrote the letter on the recto: Ptolemaic cursives, when they do not follow the model of Alexandrian chancery script, sometimes result in an incoherent mix of heterogeneous graphic elements, with the simultaneous use of different forms for the same letters or groups of letters.[147] And the hand of that rough draft letter also shares many features with other handwritings in the archive, such as the one in the flour accounts *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59004, written in 259 BC,

146 Del Corso 2022, 100–102.

147 The characteristics of the quickest and most cursive scripts attested by the archive are described in Crisci 2010, 291–292 (with some examples).

when Zenon was still at the beginning of his career and working as Apollonios' 'business representative' in Palestine.[148]

Apart from individual hands, such parallels help us to achieve a better understanding of the palaeographic characteristics of *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59534. Its irregular appearance is not due to the uncertainties of someone still training in school, but clearly originates from the same 'graphic background' that we find in the documents written by clerks and scribes working with and for Zenon: the same people, we may add, who must also have been responsible for *metagraphein* the books that were sent to him, as mentioned in *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59588. So, the 'literary' notes in the papyrus can be considered a sort of private lectional aid, intended for a reader keenly interested in literature, even if lacking the erudition to appreciate certain nuances, and who nonetheless wished to achieve a full understanding of an uncommon text.[149] This — we may note — was precisely the kind of knowledge required to discuss and comment on such a text with friends, as Demeas wished to do with Zenon.

6 Some Final Remarks

Let us sum up our enquiry so far. While many stories from Zenon's archive are bound to remain elusive, including many personal details of the individuals associated with them, the documents it comprises can help us to outline some elements of the process of acculturation pursued — whether intentionally or not — by a transnational Greek elite coming from various parts of the Hellenized world

148 Relevant similarities include the shape of *beta* (second belly far more pronounced of the first), *kappa* (long first stroke, short and curved oblique strokes), *eta*, *ny*, and *upsilon*. We can also find the same 'cursive' variants of those letters in *P.Cair.Zen.* I 59003, a draft contract for the sale of a slave girl.

149 In such a perspective, the possible relative chronology of the papyri involved suggests further, highly conjectural hypotheses. *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59545 (a) was written in 257 BC, as we know from his 'final draft', *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59546; that year Zenon spent the whole summer in Alexandria, as we know from other documents, and in the previous months he extensively travelled across the Delta, accompanying his master Apollonios on two well-documented inspection trips (*Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXI, pp. 264–268). If we assume that *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59534 and the draft *P.Cair.Zen.* IV 59545 (a) are by the same hand, it is highly probable that the literary notes in the former reflect reading experiences which originally took place in Alexandria; and since we know that after the summer Zenon was again travelling in the Delta, but then fell seriously ill for several months in the winter (Clarysse/Vandorpe 1995, 26–27; Vandorpe 2015, 450), we take a further leap of fancy and imagine him making his convalescence more tolerable through books and literature. But, of course, there is no serious ground for such fanciful speculation.

to settle in the towns founded and embellished by the new rulers of Egypt: the spread of performances and performative contexts combining popular songs and more refined Greek poetry; efforts to promote Greek sports and education, from an evergetic perspective that required local notables to fund gymnasia, organize relevant cultural events, choose the right boys to be sponsored, and sometimes even support aspiring local artists; and, finally, an interest in literary pastimes.

Within this complex framework, bookrolls were an appreciated commodity and a useful tool. Hence, the new settlers were keen to import and have them at their disposal, as is demonstrated by the few (yet extremely significant) references found in the archive. Zenon himself probably gathered a substantial number of literary works. It is an unfortunate circumstance that most of them are lost (or that they can no longer be connected to him and his milieu). Nevertheless, the introduction of this literary material into a remote corner of the Hellenized Greek world marked a further step towards the survival of a significant portion of the Greek literary legacy over the centuries.

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General Index

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Papyri, Ostraca, Tablets

Manuscripts