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**THE STICK AND THE CARROT:
NOTES ON P. COL. VI 123, LL. 6–8***

THE VISIT OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS AND CARACALLA to Alexandria between 199 and 200 CE afforded the local population a rare opportunity for presenting its legal concerns directly to the emperors. The surviving documentation from this time provides us with valuable insight into the dynamics between the imperial authority and the subjects living in the province. The responses to petitions, in particular, demonstrate which problems were most pressing for local residents. One such glimpse into the burning issues of the moment gives an enigmatic ἀπόκριμα posted on the 14 March 200 CE in the stoa of the gymnasium and copied on *P. Col.* VI 123 (Alexandria, 200 CE). In its lines 6–8, we read: Οὐλπίω Ἡρακλάνω τῷ καὶ Καλλινείκῳ τὰς ἐπιβληθείσας Ἀλεξανδρεῦσι ἢ Αἰγυπτίοις ζημίας τῇ δωρεᾷ¹ χρόνον προσαγα[γόν]τες ἀνήκαμεν, ‘To Ulpius Heraclanus, also known as Kallinikos. We suspended the penalties imposed on Alexandrians or Egyptians, having added a time limit to the benefaction’.

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¹ The word was read as δῆλωθε(τα) in Westermann and Schiller’s first edition (WESTERMANN & SCHILLER 1954: 6); it was corrected by Youtie to τῇ δωρεᾷ (YOUTIE & SCHILLER 1955: 332 & 335).

The ruling informs the petitioner, that some penalties imposed previously on Alexandrians and Egyptians had been suspended for a limited time. Quite surprisingly, however, it is addressed to Ulpius Heraclanus Kallinikos,² a Roman citizen, as we can infer from his *tria nomina* styled with the expression *ὁ καί*.³ This inconsistency raises the need for explanation: what interest might he have had in inquiring about the penalties affecting only peregrines?

Arthur Schiller, trying to answer this question, argued that the penalties were imposed on Roman citizens too, but the amnesty applied solely to Alexandrians and Egyptians, therefore the petitioner, who had a double Roman and Alexandrian citizenship, was seeking to cite his latter status in the hopes of avoiding the penalty.⁴ Against such argument should be observed not only that no penalties for Roman citizens are mentioned in the text, but also that usually the latter, not peregrines, enjoyed leniency (see Wallace 1938: 119; Lewis 1964: 72–73; Oertel 1965: 391–396).

One could also assume simply that Ulpius Heraclanus extended the petition on behalf of someone else, but the comparison with other *ἀποκρίματα* speaks against such a thesis. The intermediaries were mentioned after the name of the interested party and their role was indicated with the word *διά*, ‘through’,⁵ while petitions submitted on behalf of a larger group were addressed to the petitioner or petitioners mentioned by name and *οἱ ἄλλοι*, ‘the others’.⁶ The formulation of the address in the

² Welles 1956: 86 and Purpura 2013: 687 argue that Ulpius Heraclanus received the Roman citizenship as a veteran. However, since there is no evidence to support this hypothesis, the source of his citizenship has to remain an open question.

³ Daux 1977: 405; on the habit of styling the *tria nomina* with the Greek expression *ὁ καί*, see Broux & Coussement 2014: 133.

⁴ Westermann & Schiller 1954: 52; more recently, this opinion was adopted by Dietze-Mager 2009: 250–251.

⁵ BGU I 267 (Arsinoites, 199 CE), ll. 6–7: Ἰουλιανῇ Σω[σθ]ενιανοῦ διὰ Σωσθένους ἀνδρός; P. Col. VI 123, l. 14: Κιλ[...]δισ τῷ καὶ Μίδα διὰ Φιλοκράτους υἱοῦ; l. 19: [Μα]θαλγῇ Ἀμβρήλου διὰ Ἀβδομάνχου υἱοῦ; l. 53: [Ἰσ]ιδώρῳ τῷ καὶ Ἡρακλ[εῖδ]εῖ [διὰ Ἀ]πολλωνοῦ; P. Oxy. VII 1020 (3rd cent. CE), l. 6: Προκόνδῃ Ἑρμαίου δι’ Ἐπαγάθ[ο]υ ἀπελευθέρου.

⁶ Examples of such addresses: P. Col. VI 123, l. 12: Ἀνρηλίοις Ἀρτεμιδώρῳ καὶ Ἀνουβίωνι καὶ ἄλλοις; l. 23: [Ἀ]πόλλωνι Ἀρνεκτώτου καὶ ἄλλ[ο]ις; ll. 42–43: Διοσκώρῳ Ἡφαιστίωνος καὶ Πιεσῇ Ὀσίριος καὶ ἄλλοις; on which, see Coriat 1997: 317–319.

present document points toward the conclusion that Ulpus Heraclanus had extended the petition on his own behalf, although he himself was not affected by the ruling he inquired about.

This apparent contradiction between the civic status of the querent and his question may be reconciled by assuming that it was related to a function or a service he performed, an argument proposed already by William Linn Westermann (Westermann & Schiller 1954: 15).⁷ However, this interpretation met a serious objection, namely that a public servant requiring information related to the conduct of his office would have addressed the emperors in a letter (*epistula*) and received a reply in the same form (Coriat 1997: 77–81, 317). Seeing these difficulties, already Charles Welles argued that Ulpus Heraclanus was a tax collector inquiring about fines for overdue levies (Welles 1956: 86).

In order to reconsider the hypothesis relating the petition to the office executed by Ulpus Heraclanus, it is first necessary to establish the nature of the fines he was inquiring about. Although various hypotheses have already been offered in literature,⁸ it seems that yet another possibility of their interpretation is open. It places the ἀπόκριμα within the context of two imperial edicts preserved very fragmentarily in *P. Oxy.* XLVII 3364,⁹ which were issued by Septimius Severus and Caracalla during the same stay in Alexandria.¹⁰ The second of them, calling on the local population

⁷ His opinion was followed by MERENTITIS 1978: 33.

⁸ Westerman suggested that these were the penalties imposed by Severus on those who had supported Pescennius Niger in the revolt of 194–195 CE (WESTERMANN & SCHILLER 1954: 53); Wolff understood them as fines imposed for criminal offences related to administrative law (WOLFF 1956: 412); others saw them as fines for delayed payments of taxes (CASAVOLA 1955: 93; D'ORS 1956: 419; WELLES 1956: 86; HARKER 2008: 132; PURPURA 2013: 687).

⁹ On the document, see MCGINN 1998: 176–179. Besides the two edicts also a letter of the prefect Subatianus Aquila from 206 CE concerning execution of these orders was attached to the petition; the letter is mentioned also in *Sel. Pap.* II 289 = *P. Gen.* I² 16 = *W. Chr.* 354 (Soknopaiou Nesos, 207 CE), ll. 18–21; *P. Flor.* I 6 (Hermopolis Magna, 210 CE), ll. 10–14; see WILCKEN 1906: 548–549; THOMAS 2003: 204–206.

¹⁰ The orders are called διατάγματα in the petition which they precede: *P. Oxy.* XLVII 3364 (209 CE), l. 29: Α[ὐτο]κρατόρων καθολικῶς δι[ατετ]α[γ]μένων, 'The Emperors ordered generally in the edict'. For the date of the edicts, see THOMAS 1975: 202. STRASSI ZACCARIA 1988: 28 dates them to 206/209 CE. Against this later dating should be observed that

to return to their *ἰδία*,¹¹ is mentioned briefly also in two further documents.¹²

The edicts were seen in literature as related to preparations for the census of the year 201–202 CE,¹³ but such a connection is not strictly necessary. It is likewise possible that the intention was simply to compel fugitive settlers to return to their own villages and continue their normal activities.¹⁴ Similar requests were all but unusual, one can recall, for example, the order issued half a century earlier by the governor Marcus Sempronius

although the entire petition is closed on lines 44–45 with a subscript of 209 CE, these two lines were added later to the document, as shown by HAENSCH 1994: 521 & 528 n. 13 and THOMAS 2003: 205. The imperial orders were promulgated already in 200–201 CE, as demonstrated in SB XII 10884 (unknown provenance, 200–201 CE), ll. 6–8; on which, see CRAWFORD & EASTERLING 1969: 188–190.

¹¹ On the concept of *ἰδία* and the orders to return to residences, see BRAUNERT 1955–1956: 227–231; BRAUNERT 1964; STRASSI ZACCARIA 1988: 11–13, 35–36; COWEY 1995; JÖRDENS 2009: 69–75, 442–458.

¹² SB I 4284 (Arsinoites, 207 CE), ll. 6–8: οἱ κύριοι ἡμῶν θιότατοι (l. θειότατοι) καὶ ἀήττητοι Αὐτοκράτορες Σεουήρος καὶ Ἀντωνεῖνος ἀνατεῖλαντες [ἐ]ν <τῇ> ἐα[υ]τῶν Αἰγύπτῳ, μεθ' ὧν πλείσ(τ)ων ἀγαθῶν ἐδωρήσαντο, ἠθέλησαν καὶ τοὺς ἐν ἀλλοδαπῇ διατρίβοντας πάντας κατιέναι εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν οἰκίαν (l. οἰκίαν) ἐκ'κόψαντες τὰ βίαια [καὶ ἄν]ομα, καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἱερὰς αὐτῶν ἐν[κελεύ]σεις κατεισήλαμεν, 'Our lords deified and invincible Emperors Severus and Antoninus appearing in their Egypt, among many good thing bestowed on us, they wished that all who remain in other people's land return from the exile to their own homes and abandon the violent and lawless (lives), and in accordance with their sacred orders we came back'; SB XII 10884 (unknown provenance, 200–201 CE), ll. 5–8: [τῶν κυρίων ἡμῶν μεγίστων καὶ] θειοτάτων ἀηττήτων Αὐτ[οκράτορων Σεουήρου καὶ Ἀντωνίνου] (...) [περὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ] ἀλλοδαπῇ διατρεϊβόντων, '(of our great lords deified and) invincible Emperors [Severus and Antoninus] (...) (on those) who remain in foreign land'; see CRAWFORD & EASTERLING 1969: 188–190; THOMAS 1975: 212–221; LEWIS 1977: 158; MCGINN 1998: 176–177; JÖRDENS 2009: 70–71, 442; ADAMS 2016: 265.

¹³ CRAWFORD & EASTERLING 1969: 188–190; LEWIS 1977: 158; JÖRDENS 2009: 70–71; DROß-KRÜPE 2023: 79 and n. 40. An example of a similar order to return home issued in preparation for the census is the edict of the prefect Gaius Vibius Maximus from 104 CE preserved in *Sel. Pap.* II 220 = *P. Lond.* III 904, p. 124 (Arsinoites, 104 CE), col. ii, ll. 18–43; on which, see STRASSI ZACCARIA 1988: 81; DROß-KRÜPE 2023: 74.

¹⁴ THOMAS 1975: 215; STRASSI ZACCARIA 1988: 75; JÖRDENS 2009: 73. Similar motivation may lie behind Caracalla's expulsion of Egyptians from Alexandria: *P. Giss.* 40 (unknown provenance, 215 CE) col. ii, ll. 14–29; see KUHLMANN 1994: 246–250.

Liberalis, which provided an amnesty for those who would return to their homes within three months of the notification.¹⁵

Such measures were necessary, because the considerable burden of taxes and liturgies to which the Egyptian population was subjected caused increasing evasion, which often took the form of abandonment of villages (*ἀναχώρησις*).¹⁶ This phenomenon not only adversely affected state finances (Kuhlmann 1994: 248–249; Jördens 2009: 324–328), but also caused social unrest, as fugitives joined bandit groups roaming the province.¹⁷ Seeking the protection of the prefect Subatianus Aquila from the unruly behaviour of one such fugitive, Herakleides son of Chairemon referred to the edicts of Septimius Severus and Caracalla in *P. Oxy.* XLVII 3364, ll. 1–9:

[ἐκ μέρ]ους κεφαλαίω[ν τῶ]ν κυρίων ἡμῶν Α[ὐτοκρατόρων Σεουήρου καὶ Ἀντωνίνου Εὐσεβῶ]ν Σεβαστῶν [π]ρ[οτ]εθέντος ἐν Ἀλεξανδρ[εία] -c. 30-
..... ὑποφόρους σκεπάζοντας τοὺς τὴν ἰδίαν πατρίδ[α καταλιπόντας -c. 22-
..... ἐπιτείμουν ὀνόματι ὑπομενοῦσιν, οἱ δὲ αὐτοὺς ὑπ[οδεχόμενοι (?) -c. 27-
.....]αι τὸ λοιπὸν τῇ πατρίδι ἧς τῇ ζημίᾳ ὁ ὑπόφορ[ος -c. 34-]α τῶν
αὐτῶν κυρίων. [να.] ἐπεὶ πολλοὺς πυνθαν[όμεθα -c. 26- ἐν τῇ ἀλλοδαπῇ] δι-
άγειν, προαγορεύομεν πᾶσιν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἰδ[ίους νομοὺς κατιέναι -c. 18-]
τῷ αὐτῷ ἡμῶ[ν] δεδωκ[ότ]ων τῇ Αἰγύπτῳ δω[ρεὰς -30- εἰ δέ τινες] μετὰ
ταύτην παρακούσαιεν τὴν νομοθεσίαν [-c. 36-]

[Extracts from] the dispositions of our lords the E[mperors Severus and Antoninus Pii Augusti] published in Alexandria ... those protecting tax-payers who have [abandoned] their homeland ... shall be subject to punishment by way of ... but [those who receive] them shall be liable for the remainder of the fine due by the taxpayer to his municipality ... [Another edict (?)] of the same lords: ‘Since we have heard that many ... live [in foreign

¹⁵ *SB XX* 14662 = *W. Chr.* 19 = *BGU II* 372 (Arsinoites, 154 CE); on which, see STRASSI ZACCARIA 1988: esp. 14, 52; COWEY 1995: 195–199; MCGINN 1998: 174–176; LITINAS 1999: 73; JÖRDENS 2009: 285–286, 314; JÖRDENS 2013b: 319–334.

¹⁶ In general, on *ἀναχώρησις* in the Roman period, see LEWIS 1937: 63–75; BRAUNERT 1955–1956: 260–292; BRAUNERT 1964: 164–186; POETHKE 1969: 69–72; GARA 1988: 948; LINK 1993: 306–320; KUHLMANN 1994: 248–249; LEWIS 1996: 64–66; JÖRDENS 2009: 304–330; JÖRDENS 2010: 345–354; ADAMS 2016: 265, 275; DROß-KRÜPE 2023: 75–79.

¹⁷ On the connections between *ἀναχώρησις* and banditry, see FORABOSCHI 1988: 833; STRASSI ZACCARIA 1988: 16, 30, 44; COWEY 1995: 195; MCGINN 1998: 172, 174–177.

land], we order that all [return] to their own [homeland] ... we have granted such great gifts to Egypt ... [but if someone] after this would disregard our law ...'

The edict cited second by Heraklides defines the context of both regulations. The emperors requested in it that all those who are subject to pay taxes shall return to their homeland.¹⁸ What's more, in order to encourage run-aways to return voluntarily, a period of amnesty was announced. Regrettably, no details regarding its duration or scope have been preserved. One can only cite for comparison a similar amnesty granted by Antoninus Pius and announced by M. Sempronius Liberalis which lasted three months¹⁹ and afforded to those who voluntarily returned the restitution of sequestered property along with the cancelation of all pending judicial inquiries.²⁰ This comparison is, however, not conclusive, and the amnesty announced by Septimius Severus and Caracalla could have offered different conditions.

The dispensation was of less importance to Herakleides, who cited first the other edict imposing penalties not only on the fugitives but also on those aiding them.²¹ According to this regulation, those sheltering absconders were made liable to the municipalities from which their protégés fled

¹⁸ Although the edict's text is very fragmentary, its content is confirmed in a passage of Herkleides' petition: *P. Oxy.* XLVII 3364, ll. 28–30: τῶν κυρίῳ[ν] ἡμῶν ἀητ'τήτων Α[ὐτο]κρατόρων καθολικῶς δι[ατετ]αμένων π[άντας εἰς τὰς] ἰδίας πατρίδας ἀπ[ιέναι] καὶ μὴ ἐν τῇ ἀλλοδαπῇ [δια]τρε[ί]βειν, 'and since our invincible lords Emperors have ordered generally in the edict, that all are to return to their homeland and shall not dwell in foreign places'.

¹⁹ *SB XX* 14662, col. ii, ll. 16–18: κα[ρ]τερχέ[σ]θωσαν οὖν ἀμ[έ]ρμυνοι καὶ ἔστω π[ρο]θεσμία [αὐτο]ῖς, ἐξ οὗ ἂν τοῦτ[ό] μου τὸ διάταγ[μα] ἐν ἐκά[στ]ῳ νομῶ προτεθῇ, μῆνες γ, 'That they return therefore secure a deadline is set for them: three months from the day in which this edict of mine shall be posted in each nome'; see STRASSI ZACCARIA 1988: 14, 52–53.

²⁰ *SB XX* 14662, col. i, ll. 15–17: τὸν π[όρο]ν τ[ὸν] ἐκ ταύτ[ης] τῆς αἰτ[ίας] ἔτι κατεχόμενον ἀπ[ολ]υθ[ή]σεσθαι, 'that the patrimonies, which are proscribed for that reason, will be released'; ll. 18–19: μηδ[έ]μίαν πρὸς α[ὐ]τοὺς ζήτησιν ἔσεσθαι, 'there will be no inquiry against them'; see STRASSI ZACCARIA 1988: 18–19, 72–74; 76–79; COWEY 1995: 195–199; LEWIS 1996: 65; JÖRDENS 2009: 285–286, 446–450; DROß-KRÜPE 2023: 78–79.

²¹ LEWIS 1937: 66–71; TAUBENSCHLAG 1952: 124; CRAWFORD & EASTERLING 1969: 188–189; THOMAS 1975: 202, 217; MCGINN 1998: 175; JÖRDENS 2009: 70–71.

for the revenue shortfalls.²² These fines were seen by John David Thomas (1975: 218) as a change in policy, because earlier the community of origin had to cover such a deficit of tax revenue through the payment of the *μερισμὸς ἀνακεχωρηκότων*.²³ According to the Severan edict, this shortfall, instead, should be covered by those who sheltered the fugitives (Thomas 1975: 218). Other fines for those protecting absconders were mentioned in two passages of Herakleides' petition, *P. Oxy.* XLVII 3364, ll. 30–32 and 39–40:

... καὶ σοῦ τοῦ δεσπότη[υ κε]λεύσαν[τος ἐν τῷ π]αραθέντι [...]ο[ι...] οἰ-
κείας ἐπ[ι]μ[ε]νοντα [συλλ]αβέσθαι, μετὰ καὶ τοῦ [...]ις[...]. τὸν ὑ[ποδε-
χόμε]νον εἰς ἐπιτε[ί]μου λόγον κ]ατ' ἀν[δρα] συχνὸν ἀργ[ύριον ὧ]ς παρακη-
κοότων τ[ῶν] θείων] νομοθ[εσιῶν] ...

... and you (scil. Subatianus Aquila), o lord, commanded [in the] accompanying (letter?)²⁴ ... those remaining out of their homes shall be arrested as well as ... the one who shelters them to the penalty [by way of] a great amount of money per person as those who have disobeyed the divine laws ...

... ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἐπ[α]γκάσαι τὸν ὑποδε[χόμενον αὐτὸν τελέσαι τὰ τε] διὰ
τῆς θείας νομοθε[σίας ὅρ]ευσθέντα κατ' ἄνδρα σηστέρτια ν ...

... and still force the one sheltering him to pay the 50,000 sesterces per person determined by the divine constitutions ...

Herakleides alleges in his petition that the fugitives, who did not comply with the request to return to their homeland were to be arrested, while those who aided them were to be punished with a fine of 50,000 sesterces per sheltered person.

For the identification of the penalties on which the emperors informed Ulpius Heraclanus in the *ἀπόκριμα* with those imposed in the aforementioned edicts speaks not only that both documents mention

²² SB XII 10884 (unknown provenance, 200–201 CE); see THOMAS 1975: 212–213; LEWIS 1977: 158; JÖRDENS 1997: 519; JÖRDENS 2009: 70–71, 287–292, 315–317; ADAMS 2016: 265, 275.

²³ SB I 4338 (Thebes, 117–137 CE); on *μερισμὸς ἀνακεχωρηκότων*, see LEWIS 1937: 63–75; WALLACE 1938: 137–140; PALME 1989: 49–50.

²⁴ Thomas, following suggestion of Turner, sees here a reference to the governor's letter accompanying the imperial edict; see his commentary in COLES & HASLAM 1980: 130.

finer called ζημίαι (*P. Oxy.* XLVII 3364, l. 5, and *P. Col.* VI 123, ll. 7–8), but also that both of them refer to a benefaction consisting in a temporary amnesty, δωρεά (*P. Oxy.* XLVII 3364, l. 8, and *P. Col.* VI 123, l. 8).²⁵

The ἀπόκριμα specifies that the petition of Ulpius Heraclanus concerned penalties imposed on Alexandrians or Egyptians. The latter term refers to all the inhabitants of the *chora* who possessed neither Roman citizenship nor citizenship of one of Greek cities.²⁶ Although this group was internally highly differentiated and had its own wealthy elite, its social status was inferior to that of citizens, and they were subject to the poll tax (*tributum capitis*, λαογραφία), which was raised on the basis of the census.²⁷ The request of returning to one's ἰδία expressed in the second edict as well as the penalties and amnesty mentioned therein without a doubt applied to this group of people. Also, the recall of the great gifts granted to Egypt in line 8 of *P. Oxy.* XLVII 3364 confirms this assumption.

The term 'Alexandrians' refers to the citizens of Alexandria who enjoyed privileged status and were exempt from both the poll tax and liturgies in the *chora*.²⁸ Consequently, the request to return home probably did not apply to this group of people. Nevertheless, it is possible that Alexandrians could have been subject to penalties and fines imposed in the first edict, if they were sheltering fugitives from the *chora*. If such a hypothesis is accepted, the ἀπόκριμα allows one to assume further that the amnesty mentioned only in the second edict applied also to the penalties imposed in the first one.

²⁵ Also in *P. Catt.* II 6–8 = *SB* I 4284 (Arsinoites, 207 CE) the benefaction is indicated with a similar formulation in line 7: πλείς(τ)ων ἀγαθῶν ἐδωρήσαντο, 'many good things which were bestowed'.

²⁶ BOWMAN & RATHBONE 1992: 114; ROWLANDSON 2013: 220–224; JÖRDENS 2013a: 69; BROUX & COUSSEMENT 2014: 130–131; MAROTTA 2017: 186–187; FISCHER-BOVET 2018: 208–242; BROUX 2019: 92–93.

²⁷ LEWIS 1970: 9–11; SEIDL 1973: 131–132; RUPPRECHT 2011: 9–13; VANDORPE 2012: 263–264; JÖRDENS 2012: 254–257; JÖRDENS 2013a: 69; ROWLANDSON 2013: 221; MAROTTA 2017: 187–190; DOLGANOV 2022: 656–692; DROß-KRÜPE 2023: 72–76.

²⁸ DELIA 1991: 21–23, 63–68; BOWMAN & RATHBONE 1992: 116; JÖRDENS 1999: 148–155; JÖRDENS 2009: 331–334; DIETZE-MAGER 2009: 241–252, 268–271; CARBONI 2020: 276; DROß-KRÜPE 2023: 79.

In conclusion, the circumstances that led Ulpus Heraclanus to submit his query can be reconstructed as follows: The population of the *chora* had been exhorted in the imperial edict to return to their *ιδία*. On those who did not follow the order and those who sheltered fugitives fines and penalties were imposed. At the same time, a limited period of amnesty was announced, allowing the run-aways to return without facing penalties. In such cases, also those who had sheltered them would be exempt from sanctions.

It is difficult to reconstruct the querent's plea from the brief imperial response. It could concern the exact beginning of the amnesty or the question of to whom it applied. Ulpus Heraclanus' interest in this issue could have resulted from his activity as either a low-ranking official or a liturgist involved with either identifying culprits or collecting fines. This shows that *ἀποκρίματα* could concern not only private conflicts, but also inquiries related to the exercise of public office. Requests for clarification of recently introduced regulations, like this one, illustrate how quickly the local community tried to implement new laws issued by the emperors, struggling at the beginning with their application. Moreover, if this interpretation is correct, the issuing date of the *ἀπόκριμα* – 14 March 200 CE – can be seen as the *terminus ante quem* for the edicts copied in lines 1–9 of *P. Oxy. XLVII 3364*.

The edicts show that maintaining order in the province and keeping a steady flow of taxes was important for the central government. Emperors seem to have used a well-known carrot-and-stick approach to achieve their aim. On the one hand, they reaffirmed and extended penalties for failure to comply with the order to return to one's homeland and implemented new fines for those who supported fugitives. On the other hand, they announced an amnesty, allowing the absconders to return to their villages within a determined period without facing sanctions.

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Abstract: The article presents a new edition and translation of *P. Mert. II 81*, offering textual corrections based on available high-resolution images. The palimpsest document is a letter from Epöeris to Demetrios (whom she calls ‘son’, most likely in an affectionate, non-literal sense) discussing a dispute involving a priest. Epöeris relates she has been engaging in persistent oracular consultations seeking divine guidance for Demetrios, which demonstrates how oracles were used in everyday decision-making in Roman Egypt. The letter provides insights into kinship terminology, social relationships, and ritual practices. The newly restored text clarifies episodes of family negotiation, possibly personal debt, and the handling of sensitive affairs through temple oracles.

Keywords: oracular inquiry, Roman Egypt, private letters, kinship terminology, documentary papyri, palimpsest, family relationships.

Lajos BERKES & Anton KISTOL

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of Jesus' apocryphal letter to Abgar and the other is a tax receipt from Djeme, dated to 717 AD.

Keywords: Dnipro Museum, Coptic ostraca, Egypt, apocrypha, tax receipt.

Jelle BRUNING

<i>Seven Arabic slave sale contracts on papyrus</i>	29
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Keywords: slavery, slave trade, sale contracts, Egypt, Arabic papyri.

Katarzyna DE LELLIS-DANYS, Grzegorz OCHALEA,

✉ Aleksandra PAWLIKOWSKA-GWIAZDA

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Abstract: First editions and re-editions of six Coptic and Copto-Greek ostraca from the collections of the Warsaw National Museum and the University of Warsaw. Five objects come from the Polish-French excavations at Edfu (Egypt) in 1930s, one from the Polish works at Faras (Nubia), and one is most likely of Middle-Egyptian provenance. The pieces from Edfu represent the well-known types of texts on potsherds known from other publications of the material from this site. They include receipts and accounts connected with deliveries of wine and crops. The text from Middle Egypt is an addition to the collection some 170 ostraca of the so-called *etmoulon* type. The ostrakon from Faras is the only literary text in the lot, preserving the beginning of Psalm 1. The edited ostraca are also studied from the perspective of their materiality, presenting the characteristics of vessel forms and fabrics used for their production.

Keywords: Coptic and Copto-Greek ostraca, Edfu, Faras, Middle Egypt, *etmoulon* ostraca, wine, literary ostraca, Psalms, materiality.

Giulio IOVINE

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cent. CE) and may cover a single occurrence, a petition or records of court proceedings, referring an individual pretending to be a priest to escape his liturgies.

Keywords: archive of Ammon, late antique Egypt, Egyptian priesthood, petition, court proceedings.

Adam ŁUKASZEWICZ

An inscription from Hermopolis 145

Abstract: Hermopolis was an important cultic and administrative centre of Graeco-Roman Egypt. During three seasons (1987–1990) a Polish-Egyptian archaeological expedition directed by Marek Barański carried out excavations in the city's Great Basilica. The inscription under discussion is one of the results of these excavations.

Keywords: Hermopolis, archaeological works, Greek inscription, Hermes.

Gabriella MESSERI

Conto di vino (SB XII 10892 verso) 155

Abstract: First edition of a wine account extending over six columns. Columns i–iv (iv is lost) record the sale of vintage wine and columns v–vi payments to the parties involved (intermediaries, administrators, camel drivers, and donkey drivers) made with the profits from the sale of wine. The vineyards are located in the area of Karanis. The account was most likely written in 194 CE using the back of the land administration register SB XII 10892 edited by Anna Świderek in *JJP* 16/17 (1971) and republished by the author *JJP* LIV (2024).

Keywords: wine account, wine production, wine prices, land transport, Karanis (Arsinoites).

Radosław MIŚKIEWICZ

Diocles' Law (Dem. 24.42) and the problem of the validity of laws in Athens in the late fifth century BCE 179

Abstract: The article examines the significance of Diocles' Law (Dem. 24.42) for the growing problem of (in)validity of laws in the Athenian legal order in the late fifth century BCE. Diocles' Law should be understood as part of the broader set of vital principles that constituted an 'evolving law reform' aimed at consolidating laws and strengthening the rule of law and democracy after deep constitutional crises. This study reconstructs the factual and legal background to which specific clauses of Diocles' Law refer (sections 2.1–2.4; ἐν δημοκρατία, κυρίου εἶναι, the archonship of Eucleides, ἀναγεγραμμένοι).

More broadly, it outlines the challenges the Athenians faced at that time, and the measures they took to address them, arising not only from the two oligarchic coups d'état, but also from mounting problems in their legal, constitutional, and judicial order. The article also argues that an analysis of Greek legal language – and its manoeuvrings as seen in Andocides' *On the Mysteries* – confirms that issues of the validity (κυρίως εἶναι) of laws must be distinguished from those concerning their application (χρησθαι). Even though the latter also played a role at the time, especially due to the *caesura* marked by the archonship of Eucleides (403/2), the central argument is that Diocles' Law was enacted to impose order specifically on the validity of laws at a very particular historical moment. This law was relevant retrospectively to 'the scrutiny of the laws', with the vital involvement of ἀναγραφεῖς τῶν νόμων from the beginning of their work in 410, and, more broadly, to future law-making. In addition (section 3), the article eventually identifies the principle of 'legal certainty', which underpinned the introduction of Diocles' Law, and formed a key part of Athenian legal culture at the end of the fifth century BCE.

Keywords: Diocles' Law; validity of law; application of law; classical Athens, law reform, law-making, the scrutiny of the laws, legal certainty, law consolidation.

Anna PLISECKA

The stick and the carrot: Notes on P. Col. VI 123, ll. 6–8 237

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Keywords: ἀπόκριμα, ἰδία, imperial edict, amnesty, petition.

Jakub URBANIK

The purpose of P. Dionysia (P. Oxy. II 237) and its mysterious beginning 251

Abstract: This article presents a new hypothesis regarding the function the so-called *Petition of Dionysia* (*P. Oxy. II 237* = *P. Dionysia*). The study re-examines the papyrus' structure and its procedural context, focusing on its newly deciphered mysterious beginning (col. i) by Constantinos Balamoshev. The findings suggest that *P. Dionysia* be not the original petition but rather a copy, possibly official, produced during its administrative processing. I conjecture that the document represents a late procedural stage, possibly including the governor's final decision and subsequent requests for execution.

Keywords: Dionysia, juristic papyrology, Roman administration of justice, court/judicial procedure, Roman Egypt, local law, Reichsrecht, Volksrecht.

Joanna WEGNER

Clerical authority in late antique Egypt: A papyrological perspective 283

Abstract: Papyrological sources from late antique Egypt attest to a variety of non-religious contexts in which clergy below the episcopal level – mainly presbyters and deacons – exercised authority in rural settlements. These contexts include formal and informal representation of village communities, mediation in conflict, and policing of the morals. While these phenomena have already drawn the attention of scholars, they were often viewed strictly as an outcrop of the religious authority wielded by the clergy. The present contribution is an attempt to nuance this perspective by taking into consideration the diverse socio-economic factors which contributed to the social standing of the clergy. It uses Pierre Bourdieu's field theory, with its subsequent reiterations, as the main theoretical framework and builds on the concepts of capital accumulation and convertibility between social fields in order to arrive at a multifaceted analysis of the clerics' position as fully integrated members of rural societies.

Keywords: late antiquity, Greek and Coptic papyri, clergy, institutional church, authority, field theory, forms of capital.

Marzena WOJTCZAK & Jakub URBANIK

To sell or to have sold? Hypotheke-praxis and dikaia time in P. Budge 311

Abstract: A tiny archive composed of the famous Coptic arbitration protocol *P. Budge* and three associated Greek documents, a settlement of claims, a sale, and a loosely connected marriage document, bring forward a fascinating controversy of the tormented times between the Persian and the Arab conquests of Egypt. Its settlement testifies to the operative force of law, legal awareness of its users, and dispute-resolution strategies in an environment of intrinsic legal plurality. A new text edition, providing an in-depth study of this material, delving into the dispute resolution method, rhetorics, and proper reconstruction of the events, is presently in the works. Before it is published, we would like to present here an aspect of this matter, closely connected to the very origin of the dispute, viz. our hypothesis on the nature of the security provided by the borrower, the widow Thekla, to her creditors, the consorts Philemon and Thekla. This central matter of the *P. Budge* controversy witnesses the profound legal awareness of its parties. Operating within the legal framework provided by Roman law, and without attempts to transgress it, the law-users of seventh-century Edfu managed to bend and form it to serve best their needs, creating a flexible form of security,

fitting the circumstances of Thekla-the-Widow and the creditors couple. It is amazing to see how, even at the dusk of its domination of Egypt, the Roman legal *forma mentis* was so strongly present in this inherently plural society.

Keywords: Edfu, arbitration, late antique Egypt, securities, *hypothèque-praxis*, *dikaia time*, legal practice, *apotage*, *hypothekimaia asphaleia*.

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