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## Θύριον. A new occurrence of a rare word

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Θύριον. A NEW OCCURRENCE OF A RARE WORD\*

A papyrus-roll of the Cairo Museum which contains seven hypomnemata was published by Sayed Omar.<sup>1</sup> All these hypomnemata are dated to 144 A.D.

The first of them is a contract of lease of a house with a courtyard; the proprietors of that house are Harpokration son of Heras and Dioskoros son of Areios. The lessee, Pasion son of Philadelphos takes the house on lease for six years; rental in money is sixty drachmas yearly which is to be paid by him in two equal instalments.

Lines 12–14 contain an additional condition: ἐφ' ᾧ ἀνοικοδομήσετε ἐν τῇ | οἰκίᾳ θύριον ἐμοῦ τοῦ Πασίωνος(ς) | συνυπουργοῦντος. The lessee is thus obliged to collaborate in a work described with the words ἀνοικοδομεῖν θύριον. The above quoted fragment was translated by the editor as follows: '... unter der Bedingung, dass ihr unter meiner, des Pasion, Mithilfe das Thoereion(?) im Hause wiederaufbauen werdet ...'. In a note to line 13 S. Omar supplements missing letters in the word θύριον: "anscheinend Θοηρεῖον (lies Θοηρεῖον)"; the meaning of this supplemented word, according to him, would be interpreted as follows: "Θοηρεῖον bezeichnet sonst einen Tempel der Göttin (i.e. Thoeiris) während hier eine Hauskapelle mit Bildnis der Göttin und Opfertisch gemeint zu sein scheint".

Is it really the case that in the text of this contract the mention is made of rebuilding a house chapel? Although there are some archaeological analogies,<sup>2</sup> this would indeed be rare in an Egyptian house. Sanctuary of Thoeiris or simply Thoereion appears in the Greek papyri and inscriptions from Egypt 32 times but none of these references concerns a private house-chapel dedicated to this goddess.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, the reading Θοηρεῖον seems to be unacceptable in view of palaeography.<sup>4</sup> A horizontal stroke goes far out of *theta*. Even if it had been possible to join the *theta* and the *omicron* with such a long stroke (in our document, there is

\* I am deeply indebted to Professor Geneviève Husson for her helpful comments and some remarks that she made on this article after she had read its first version.

<sup>1</sup> S. Omar, *Eine Rolle mit sieben Hypomnemata aus dem Ägyptischen Museum zu Kairo*, ZPE 50 (1983), pp. 73–91.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. F. Luckhard, *Das Privathaus im ptolemäischen und römischen Ägypten*, Giessen, 1914, pp. 92–93.

<sup>3</sup> J. Quaegebeur, W. Clarysse, B. van Maele, *Athena, Neith and Thoeiris in Greek Documents*, ZPE 60 (1985), pp. 217–232.

<sup>4</sup> The photograph of this papyrus was given by S. Omar, ZPE 50 (1983), Tafel III.

no other case of this) too little space would have remained for an *eta* before the unquestionable *rho*. Such a method of lining through the oval of *theta* is explainable as the joint of *theta* and *psilon* (as in the word *θύραις* in line 26); an *epsilon* can fill the whole space between *theta* and *rho*.

So what we suggest is to read in lines 12–13: ἀνοικοδομήσετε ἐν τῇ οἰκίαι θύριον.

The word *θύριον* as a diminutive of the word *θύρα* appears in the papyri twice but only once with the meaning “little door”<sup>5</sup> and once with the special meaning “small sluice”.<sup>6</sup> In the literary texts this word appears frequently, always with the meaning “little door, wicket”.<sup>7</sup> This word was used by Constantine Porphyrogenitus (10th century A.D.) in a special sense, namely “the leaf of the folding door”.<sup>8</sup>

The verb ἀνοικοδομήσετε in line 12 of our papyrus should be interpreted as future tense (= ἀνοικοδομήσετε) or as conjunctive in the role of future tense (= ἀνοικοδομήσητε).<sup>9</sup> The verb ἀνοικοδομεῖν has two groups of meaning: “build

<sup>5</sup> P. Tebt. ii 414 (second century A.D.)—a letter from a woman to her sister. Among the things the addressee ought to claim there are: a wooden stool, a little door and a small trough(?) (vv. 35–36: δώσεις τὸν ξύλινον δίφρον καὶ τὸ θύριον (= θύριον) κα<ι> τὸ μικρὸν λυνίδιον (for ληνίδιον or λινίδιον?).

The second document which is referred to by the Spoglio Lessicale Papirologico (s.v. *θύριον*), SPP xx 211 (5th–6th century A.D.) cannot be taken into account since it gives this word in abbreviation (v. 12: τιμ(ῆ) ξύλ(ων) εἰς λόγ(ον) πυγμαίων (read πηγμάτων) τοῦ θυρ(ίου): the reading τοῦ θυρ(ιδίου) is also possible in this place.

The other diminutive of the word *θύρα*, namely *θυρίδιον* appears in the papyri only once: P. Oxy. xvi 2058 (descr.), v. 24: σίδηρα τῶν θυριδίων. According to G. HUSSON, *Oikia. Le vocabulaire de la maison privée en Égypte d'après les papyrus grecs*, Paris, 1983, pp. 117–118, the meaning of the word *θυρίδιον* in this document is identical with the second meaning of the word *θύρες*: both these words mean “niche murale”.

The word *θυρίδιον*, however, appears in the literary texts as a diminutive of the word *θύρα*, with the meaning “little door”: *Apophthegmata Patrum*, ed. J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 65. 128B (cf. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ed. G. W. H. Lampe, Oxford, 1968, s.v. *θυρίδιον*) and *Geoponica* 15.6.2.—a small door of a beehive (cf. LSJ, s.v. *θυρίδιον*). The author of this passage of the *Geoponica* is Paxamos who was probably of Egyptian origin and wrote his works in the first century B.C. (cf. W. MORTÉL, RE 18, coll. 2436–2437).

The word was also given by two codices as *varia lectio*, instead of *θύριον*, in Ar., *Nubes* 92 (cf. Aristophane, *texte établi par V. COULON et traduit par H. VAN DAELE*, tome I, *Les Acharniens—Les Cavaliers—Les Nuées*, Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 1948). Such a reading, however, cannot be maintained in view of metrics; its existence can be explained by the occurrence in the same line of another diminutive that was obtained by means of the same suffix—*ιδιον* (τῶκιδιον).

<sup>6</sup> P. Lond. iii 1177, pp. 180–190, vv. 243 et 245; cf. LSJ, s.v. *θύριον* (2), and F. PREISIGKE, WB, s.v. (1), “kleines Schleusentor”.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. LSJ, s.v. *θύριον* (1). More examples are given by H. STEPHANUS, *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae*, vol. IV, Paris, 1841, s.v.

<sup>8</sup> Porph., Cer. 15, 11.13; cf. E. A. SOPHOCLES, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, New York, s.v. *θύριον*.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. OMAR, *op. cit.*, *com. ad v. 12*.

up—wall up” and “build again—rebuild”,<sup>10</sup> but the first of them prevails in the papyri.<sup>11</sup>

There is one example of using the phrase *ἀνοικοδομεῖν θύραν* in the papyri. This is P. Oxy. xlvi 3285—a Greek version, written in the second century A.D., of a legal code which has survived in part in a famous Demotic papyrus of the third century B.C.<sup>12</sup> One of the paragraphs of this code in Greek translation is as follows (lines 38–42): ἐὰν τις καταβοήσῃ κατά τινος, φάμενος ἀ[ὐτὸν τὴν | θύ]ραν τῆς ἑαυτοῦ οἰκίας ἀνεωχέναι εἰς τ[ὸ αὐτοῦ οἰκό]πεδον, ἐὰν μὴ εὐρεθῇ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ ἐν ᾧ ἀ[νέω]χε τὴν θύραν ἴδιον οἰκόπε[ε]δον ὑπάρχον τῷ{ν} ἀντ[ι]δ[ί]κ[ω], ἀναγκάζεται ἀνοικοδομεῖν τὴν θύραν ἣν ἀ[νέω]χε. The editor of P. Oxy. xlvi 3285 (J. R. Rea) translated this paragraph thus: “If a man raises an outcry against another, alleging that he has opened the door from his own house on to his (the plaintiff’s) ground, if there be not found in this place in which he has opened the door private ground belonging to the antagonist, he is compelled to wall up the door which he has opened”.

A fragment of the Demotic legal code, corresponding with the paragraph quoted above (col. viii, ll. 19–20) was translated by G. Mattha as follows: “If a man brings action against a man saying: «He opened the entrance of his house on my wasteland (or free-space, ψιλὸς τόπος)», if the one against-whom action is brought has no claim to the free-space, they shut the entrance to the house (leading) from it (sc. free-space)”.<sup>13</sup> G. R. Hughes made some corrections in this translation; the last phrase, according to him, is to be translated in passive voice (“... the doorway of his house is closed up completely.”).<sup>14</sup> Thus, the meaning of the verb *ἀνοικοδομεῖν*, “wall up” is in P. Oxy. xlvi 3285 determined by context.

P. Oxy. xliv 3195 (331 A.D.), a report of the monthly presidents of the *οἰκοδόμοι* could be taken as another instance of using the verb *ἀνοικοδομεῖν* with the meaning “wall up, block up”. This report has been made for the *logistes* acting in response to a petition. After the monthly presidents of the *οἰκοδόμοι* had inspected certain property in Oxyrhynchus, they reported that certain entrances or windows had been blocked up (ll. 16–21: ἐπεθεωρήσαμεν [...] ἐκ βορᾶ (sic!) οὖσ .[.α]λλῆς | οἰκίας τῆς αὐτῆς [Διδύ]μ[η]ς . . . ἔριτ .[.] ἐν βορᾶ | τῶχου (read βορᾶ τοίχου) οἰκίας [τῆς α]λλῆς Διδύμης ἐλευθέ | ρας οὔσας. [.....]. νοπ[.] [...] βορηνῆς | πλευρᾶς [.....] ἀλλῆς

<sup>10</sup> LSJ, s.v. *ἀνοικοδομέω*.

<sup>11</sup> F. Preisigke gives no other meaning of the verb *ἀνοικοδομεῖν* than “build up” (WB, s.v., “aufmauern, erbauen”).

<sup>12</sup> This Demotic code was lately published by G. Mattha, *The Demotic Legal Code of Hermopolis West*, IFAO, Bibliothèque d’Étude T. XLV, Le Caire, 1975 (with additional notes by G. R. Hughes). A German translation of this code was published by S. Grunert, *Der Kodex Hermopolis und ausgewählte private Rechtsurkunden aus dem Ptolemäischen Ägypten*, Leipzig, 1982.

<sup>13</sup> Mattha, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>14</sup> G. R. Hughes in: Mattha, op. cit., p. 113.

[.]νο[ικ]οδομη|θηγη; this fragment was translated by the editor thus: "... we found that of the courtyard to the north of the house of the said Didyme the window-openings(?) in the north wall of the house of the said Didyme were open, [but] ... of the north side of the said(?) courtyard were blocked up.". In lines 20–21 the verb ἀνοικοδομηθηγη (read ἀνοικοδομηθῆναι?) as well as ἐνοικοδομηθηγη can be supplemented; in line 17 the editor (J. D. Thomas) and G. Husson suggest to read θυρίτας (i.e. θυρίδας).<sup>15</sup>

The phrase ἀνοικοδομεῖν θύραν or εἴσοδον has the same meaning in two literary texts which describe the death of Pausanias, king of Sparta. He died of starvation after he had been walled up by the ephors in the temple of Athena.<sup>16</sup> With the same words Palladius has described the act of John of Lycopolis who immured himself in three cells in the mountains near Lycopolis.<sup>17</sup> The verb ἀνοικοδομεῖν with the same meaning but in a different context appears also in some other literary texts.<sup>18</sup>

We cannot precisely determine what the word θύριον in our papyrus refers to. Θύριον seems to be most probably a little door, leading from one room to another inside the house. It is possible to describe this with the word παράθυρος although this word appears in the papyri only once.<sup>19</sup> We think, however, that the word θύριον could also denote a small door leading from the house to the courtyard or to the street just as the word πλαγία (θύρα) usually does.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Cf. J. D. Thomas, P. Oxy. xlvi 3195, com. ad loc. cit.; Husson, op. cit., pp. 114–115.

<sup>16</sup> Lycurgus, Oratio in Leocratem, ed. N. C. Conomis, Leipzig, 1970, 32. 128: Πausανίαν γὰρ τὸν βασιλέα αὐτῶν προιδόντα τῷ Πέρσῃ τὴν Ἑλλάδα λαβόντες, ἐπειδὴ ἔφθασε καταφυγῶν εἰς τὸ τῆς Χαλκιοῦ ἱερόν, τὴν θύραν ἀποικοδομήσαντες (Duker's conjecture: the reading of the Mss. is ἀνοικοδομήσαντες) καὶ τὴν ὄροφὴν ἀποσειεύσαντες καὶ κύκλῳ περιστρατοπεδεύσαντες, οὐ πρότερον ἀπῆλθον πρὶν ἢ τῷ λιμῷ ἀπέκτειναν.

Themistocles, Epistola 16 (in: *Epistolographi Graeci*, ed. R. Hercher, Paris, 1873, p. 756): οἱ δὲ (sc. ἔφοροι) ἀνοικοδομήσαντες τὴν εἴσοδον καὶ ἀφελόντες τὴν ὄροφὴν τοῦ οἴκου ὑπὸ ἐνδείας αὐτῶ παρέσχον ἰκέτη μένοντι ἀπολέσθαι. Twenty-one letters of Pseudo-Themistocles came into existence in the first century A.D. in the circle of the Stoic-Cynic literature (cf. W. Schmidt, O. Stählin, *Wilhelm von Christs Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*, 6. Auflage, II Band 1. Hälfte, München, 1920, p. 483).

<sup>17</sup> *Historia Lausiaca*, ed. G. J. M. Bartelink, with Italian translation by M. Barchiesi, Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, 2nd edition, 1975, 35.1: ἀνεχώρησε μόνος εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῆς Λυκῶ, εἰς αὐτὴν τὴν ἀκρόρειαν ποιήσας ἑαυτῷ τρεῖς θόλους καὶ εἰσελθὼν ἀνωκοδόμησεν ἑαυτόν.

<sup>18</sup> E.g. Diod. 11.21.3; Plut., Cimon 1.8; Apollodorus, Bibliotheca 2.5.3. In the latter case the meaning of the verb is obvious but two different readings coexist in the codices (ἀνοικοδομεῖν-ἀποικοδομεῖν). Some other literary texts are referred to by Stephanus, op. cit., s.v. ἀνοικοδομέω.

<sup>19</sup> P. Mich. Zen. 38, vv. 11–13; cf. Husson, op. cit., p. 108. This term appears also in P. Cairo Masp. iii 67313, v. 57, but in this document it seems to mean a wicket leading from the street to the house. This wicket is, according to Husson, op. cit., p. 103, beside the main gate and not in this gate (as supposed F. Preisigke, WB, s.v. παράθυρος.).

<sup>20</sup> Husson, op. cit., pp. 101–102: "la porte latérale ou secondaire".

Thus, without having determined the application of the word θύριον, we might translate the Cairo papyrus' passage reconsidered above: "... on condition that you with my, Pasion's, help will wall up a little door ...".

[Warszawa]

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