

Literary Koine

The Life of Aesop

The *Vita Aesopus*, also known as the 'Aesop Romance', presents a fictionalised account of the life of the legendary fabulist Aesop. Various recensions (or versions) of the novel have survived and these must trace back to an original now lost work, the author of which is unknown. While the earliest known version likely originated in the 1st century CE the story likely circulated in different forms for centuries before first being written down. As it was transmitted throughout antiquity the story evolved into a 'folkbook': "a work that belonged to no one, and the occasional writer felt free to modify as it might suit him." (Hansen, 2004) Of the various recensions that survive, the so-called *Vita G* is generally regarded as the best, and is the source of the excerpts included below.

1.) Life of Aesop; *Vita G* 1-2

[1] Ὁ πάντα βιωφελέστατος Αἴσωπος, ὁ λογοποιός, τῇ μὲν τύχῃ ἦν δοῦλος, τῷ δὲ γένει Φρὺξ τῆς Φρυγίας. κακοπινής τὸ ἴδεσθαι, εἰς ὑπηρεσίαν σαπρός, προγάστωρ, προκέφαλος, σιμός, λόρδος, μέλας, κολοβός, βλαισός, γαλιάγκων, στρεβλός, μυστάκων, προσημαῖνον ἀμάρτημα. πρὸς τούτοις ἐλάττωμα μεῖζον εἶχε τῆς ἀμορφίας τὴν ἀφωνίαν· ἦν δὲ καὶ νωδὸς καὶ οὐδὲν ἡδύνατο λαλεῖν.

[2] Τοῦτον ὁ δεσπότης κατὰ πάντα σιγηλὸν ἔχων καὶ ἀποίητον τῇ πολιτικῇ ἐργασίᾳ, ἔπειμψεν εἰς τὸν ἄγρον [...]

Vocab

βιωφελής -ές *useful for life*

λογοποιός -οῦ ὁ any professional prose-writer - here *teller of tales*

Φρύξ Φρυγός ὁ a *Phrygian* (cf. **Φρυγία -ας ἡ** *Phrygia*)

κακοπινής -ές *filthy* (cf. πινός -οῦ ὁ *dirt*)

ὑπηρεσία -ας ἡ *service*

σαπρός -ή -όν *rotten, putrid* - here *worthless*

προγάστωρ -ορος ὁ, ἡ *pot-bellied*

προκέφαλος -ον *having a protruding forehead* (LSJ: *having a sugarloaf head*)

σιμός -ή -όν *flat-nosed, snub-nosed*

λόρδος -ή -όν *bent backwards; convex* (other recensions of the *Vita* don't include this word at all, and various editors of the *Vita G* disagree on whether to include it)

κολοβός -ή -όν *maimed; stunted* - here *short or stocky*

βλαισός -ή -όν *generally twisted or crooked* - here *bow-legged*

γαλιάγκων -ωνος ὁ someone or thing *weasel-armed* (cf. γαλέη -ῆς ἡ *weasel*)

στρεβλός -ή -όν of one's body: *crooked, twisted*; of one's eyes: *squinty eyed*

μυστάκων -ον either 'having a prominent upper lip' (*liver-lipped*, cf. μύσταξ -ακος ὁ *upper lip*) or *mustachioed* (viz. a 6th c. Byzantine general Ἰωάννης ὁ Μυστάκων)

προσημαίνω *foretell, proclaim* - here as ATTRIBUTIVE PARTICIPLE *portentous*

ἀμάρτημα -ματος τό *error, sin* - here *failure*

έλάττωμα -ατος τό a *reduction of number/quality* (cf. **έλάσσων -ον**) - here *defect*

νωδός -ή -όν *toothless* - here *dumb, mute*

ἡδύνατο DOUBLE AUGMENTED δύναμαι

λαλῶ (-έω) in KOINE the sense has become simply *speak*

σιγηλός -η -ον (cf. σιγή -ής ἡ *silence*) *silent*

άποίητος -ον *useless*

πολιτικός -ή -όν *of or in the city: civic*

2.) Life of Aesop; *Vita G* 4

[4] [...] σκάπτοντος δὲ τοῦ Αἴσωπου είς τὸν ἀγρὸν ἔτυχεν ἱεροφόρον τῆς

"Ισιδος πλανηθῆναι τῆς δημοσίας ὁδοῦ εἴς τε τὸν ἀγρὸν είσελθεῖν, ὅπου

συνέβη τὸν Αἴσωπον σκάπτειν. ίδοῦσα δὲ αὐτὸν μοχθηρῶς τὸ ἔργον

έπιτελοῦντα, καὶ τὴν περὶ αὐτοῦ ἀγνοοῦσα τύχην, φησίν “ἄνθρωπε, εἰ κάτοιδας ἐλεᾶν τὰς θνητὰς ψυχάς, πεπλανημένη μοι δεῖξον τὴν ὁδόν, τὴν εἰς τὴν πόλιν εἰσάγουσαν.” ἐπιστραφεὶς δὲ ὁ Αἴσωπος καὶ θεασάμενος τὸ τῆς θεοῦ σχῆμα ἄνθρωπον περικείμενον, θεοσεβὴς ὑπάρχων προσεκύνησεν καὶ ἥρξατο διανεύειν καὶ δηλοῦν “διὰ τί ἀπολιποῦσα τὴν δημοσίαν ὁδὸν εἰς τοῦτο τὸ κτῆμα εἰσελήλυθας;” ἡ δὲ νόησασα ὅτι ἀκούει μέν, λαλεῖν δὲ οὐ δύναται, ἥρξατο αὐτῷ νεύειν, ἅμα δὲ καὶ λαλεῖν· “ξένη εἰμὶ τῶν τόπων τούτων· ὡς δὲ δορὰς ἱεροφόρος εἰμί. μὴ είδὼς δέομαί σου, ἐπεὶ πεπλάνημαι, ὑπόδειξόν μοι τὴν ὁδόν.” ἀναλαβόμενος δὲ τὴν ξοῖδα ὁ Αἴσωπος, ἐν ᾧ ἔσκαπτεν, ἐπιλαμβάνεται τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς καὶ ἥγαγεν ἐπὶ τι σύνδενδρον καὶ προέθηκεν ἐκ τοῦ μάνδικος ἄρτον καὶ ἐλαίας, καὶ ἄγρια λάχανα ἀποκείρας ἐκόμισεν· ἤναγκασεν δὲ αὐτὴν μεταλαβεῖν τροφῆς. ἡ δὲ μετέλαβεν. ἀγαγὼν δὲ αὐτὴν εἶς τινα πηγὴν

ὕδατος ἔδειξεν αὐτῇ, εἰ καὶ τούτου θέλει μεταλαβεῖν. ἡ δὲ τροφῆς καὶ ποτοῦ

μεταλαβοῦσα τὰ κάλλιστα ηὔχετο τῷ Αίσωπῳ. καὶ πάλιν δεομένη ἐνένευεν

τελείαν τὴν χάριν ποιῆσαι καὶ τὴν ὀδὸν δεῖξαι. ὁ δὲ ἥγαγεν αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τὴν

λεωφόρον ὀδὸν τὴν ἀμαξευομένην καὶ δείξας ἀπέστη, καὶ περὶ τὸ ἔργον εἶχεν

τὸν νοῦν.

Vocab

σκάπτω *dig*

εἰς τὸν ἄγρον KOINE usage of εἰς + ACC. for ἐν + DAT.

ἔτυχεν IMPERSONAL usage of τυγχάνω (+ ACC. & INF.)

ἱεραφόρος -ου ὁ/ἡ a bearer of sacred vessels - here *priest/priestess*

Ἰσις "Isis" DEITY */isis*

πλανῶμαι (-άομαι) *wander or stray from* (+ GEN.)

συνέβη IMPERSONAL usage of συμβαίνω *happen* (+ ACC. & INF.)

έλεω (-άω) KOINE for CLASSICAL **έλεέω** *have or show pity*

ἐπιστραφείς AOR. PASS. PART. of **ἐπιστρέψω** *turn around*

περίκειμαι *wear as clothing*

ὑπάρχω in KOINE commonly used as a COPULA synonymous with εἰμί or **ἔχω**

διανεύω gesture with the head: *nod*

δηλοῦν variant form of the PRES. ACT. INFINITIVE δηλοῦν (cf. δηλώω)

κτῆμα -ματος τό *estate*

ξοῖς -ῖδος ἡ *chisel* - here apparently referring to a digging tool like a *mattock*

ἐν ᾧ INSTRUMENTAL use of ἐν (KOINE) *by which*

ἐπιλαμβάνομαι *lay hold of someone/something* (+ GEN.)

σύνδενδρος -ον *thickly wooded*

μάνδιξ μάνδικος *knapsack* (very rare, a loanword from LATIN *mantica* -ae f.)

λάχανον -ου τό SGL. *garden*; PLU. *vegetables*

ἐννεύω express by nod of the head: *sign, signify* (+ INF.)

ἀποκείρω *cut off, clip*

μεταλαμβάνω *share, partake (of something + GEN.)*

λεωφόρος ὁδός ή *highway, major road (cf. MOD. GREEK η λεωφόρος highway)*

ἀμαξεύω *traverse with a wagon*

ἀπέστη INTRANSITIVE 2ND AORIST of ἀφίστημι *stood away, withdrew*

3.) Life of Aesop; *Vita G 5, 7-8*

[5] ή δὲ ἱεροφόρος τῆς Ἰσιδος πάλιν τῆς ὁδοῦ λαβοῦσα καὶ μνησθεῖσα

τῆς τοῦ Αἰσώπου φιλοφροσύνης, ἐπάρασα τὰς χεῖρας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἴπεν

“διάδημα τῆς ὅλης οἰκουμένης, Ἱσι μυριώνυμε, ἐλέησον τόνδε τὸν ἐργάτην,

τὸν κακοπαθοῦντα, τὸν εὔσεβη, ἀνθ’ ᾧν εύσέβησεν, ούκ εἰς ἐμέ, δέσποινα,

ἄλλ’ εἰς τὸ σὸν σχῆμα. καὶ εἰ μὴ πολυτάλαντον τὸν βίον αύτοῦ διορθώσασθαι

βούλει, ὃν ἄλλοι θεοὶ ἀφήρηνται, τὸ γοῦν λαλεῖν αὐτῷ χάρισαι· δυνατὴ γὰρ σὺ

καὶ τὰ ἐν σκότει πεπτωκότα πάλιν εἰς φῶς προελέσθαι.” εύξαμένης δὲ ταῦτα

τῆς ἱεροφόρου ή Ἱσις, ή κυρία, ὑπήκουσεν· ταχὺ γὰρ ὁ περὶ εύσεβείας λόγος

εἰς τὰς θεῶν ἀκοὰς καταντᾷ. [...]

[7] ἐνταῦθα δὴ ή θεός, ή κυρία Ἱσις, παραγίνεται ἅμα ταῖς ἐννέα

Μούσαις, εἶτα ἔφη “ὸρᾶτε, θυγατέρες, εὐσεβείας κατακάλυμμα, τὸν

ἄνθρωπον τοῦτον, πεπλασμένον μὲν ἀμόρφως, νικῶντα δὲ εἰς εὐσέβειαν

πάντα ψόγον· οὗτός ποτε τὴν ἐμὴν διάκονον πεπλανημένην ὡδήγησεν·

πάρειμι δὲ σὺν ὑμῖν ἀνταμείψασθαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον. ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τὴν φωνὴν

ἀποκαθίστημι, ὑμεῖς δὲ τῇ φωνῇ τὸν ἄριστον χαρίσασθε λόγον.” εἴποῦσα δὲ

ταῦτα καὶ τὸ τραχὺ τῆς γλώττης ἀποτεμοῦσα, τὸ κωλῦον αὐτὸν λαλεῖν, αὕτῃ

δὴ ἡ Ἱσις ἔχαρίσατο τὴν φωνήν, ἔπεισεν δὲ καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς Μούσας ἐκάστην τι

τῆς ἴδιας δωρεᾶς χαρίσασθαι. αἱ δὲ ἔχαρίσαντο λόγων εὔρεμα καὶ μύθων

Ἐλληνικῶν πλοκὴν καὶ ποιήσεις. κατευξαμένη δὲ ἡ θεὸς ὅπως ἔνδοξος

γένηται, είς ἐαυτὴν ἔχώρησεν. καὶ αἱ Μοῦσαι δέ, ἐκάστη τὸ ἕδιον χαρισάμεναι,

είς τὸ Ἑλικῶνα ἀνέβησαν ὕρος.

[8] ὃ δὲ Αἴσωπος αὐτὸ τὸ τεχθὲν ὑπὸ τῆς φύσεως ὑπνώσας διεγέρθη καί

φησιν “ούδε, ήδέως ὑπνωσα.” καὶ τὰ βλεπόμενα όνομάζων—δίκελλα, πήρα,

μηλωτή, μάνδιξ, βοῦς, ὄνος, πρόβατον—“λαλῶ,” ἔφη, “μὰ τὰς Μούσας. πόθεν

ἔλαβον τὸ λαλεῖν; πόθεν; νενόηκα πάντως ἀνθ' ὃν εύσεβεῖν. προσδέχομαι οὖν

ἀπὸ θεῶν λήψεσθαι χρηστὰς ἐλπίδας.”

Vocab

έπαίρω *lift, raise*

μυριώνυμος EPITHET only used for Isis *Countlessly Named*

εύσεβέω *live piously* - here TRANSITIVE *do (something + ACC.) piously*

πολυτάλαντος -ον *having many talents* (a large amount of money); *prosperous*

χαρίζομαι *give (as a gift or favour)*

σκότει DATIVE SGL. of **σκότος -ους τό** (3RD DEC. variant of σκότος -ου ὁ)

προελέσθαι AOR. MID. INF. of προαιρέω - here *bring forth*

καταντῶ (-άω) *arrive*

παραγίνομαι HELLENISTIC/IONIC for ATTIC παραγίγνομαι *emerge, appear*

πλάσσω *form, fashion*

όδηγῶ (-έω) *lead as a guide*

άνταμείβομαι *give back in exchange: repay*

ἀποκαθίστημι *re-establish, restore, reinstate*

τραχύς -εῖα -ύ *jagged, rough* - here of speech referencing Aesop's *inarticulateness*

εὔρεμα -ατος τό KOINE for CLASSICAL εὔρημα *inventiveness*

πλοκή -ής ἡ *plaiting, twisting, weaving* - here *artful devising*

είς ἐαυτήν LITERALLY *to herself* - here *to her own dwelling*

τὸ τεχθὲν ὑπὸ τῆς φύσεως *creation of nature* (τεχθέν - AOR. PASS. PART. τίκτω)

ὑπνῶ (-όω) *sleep*

διεγείρω *wake up* (cf. ἐγείρω *rouse, stir, raise*)

πήρα -ας ἡ (rare) *pouch*

προσδέχομαι *accept; expect*

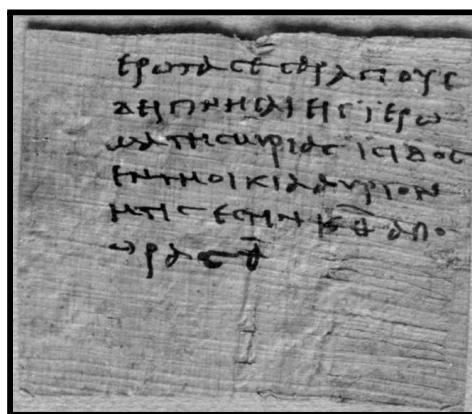
μά INTERJECTION (+ ACC.) *by* - here used in a POSITIVE OATH (KOINE); in CLASSICAL GREEK μά is found in NEGATIVE OATHS (νή + ACC. being reserved for POSTIVE OATHS)

Documentary Koine

1.) *P.Fouad.* 76 - 100 - 199 CE, Provenience Unknown

Sarapous sends an invitation for a dinner in honour of Isis. The invitation is written on a small rectangular piece of papyrus, which is completely intact and folded into two.

Papyrus 5 cm 6.5 cm (papyrus was folded in two in antiquity)



Transcription

- | | | |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | ἐρωτᾶς εἰς Καραποῦς | ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ, αὐλῇον, |
| 5 | δειπνῆςαι εἰς ἑρω- | ἥτις ἐστὶν καθ, ἀπὸ |

Non-Standard Spellings

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| 1 | ἐρωτα cf. ἐρωτᾶ | 3 | ἴσιδος cf. "Ισιδος |
| 2, 3 | ἱέρωμα cf. ιέρωμα | 4 | τῇ οἰκίᾳ cf. τῇ οἰκίᾳ |

Note

Known as a *diaeresis*, (or *trêma*), the umlaut-like double point written above letters in papyri usually marks an iota or upsilon at the beginning of a word. Sometimes (as in modern edited Greek texts) it can also distinguish a vowel that forms its own syllable.

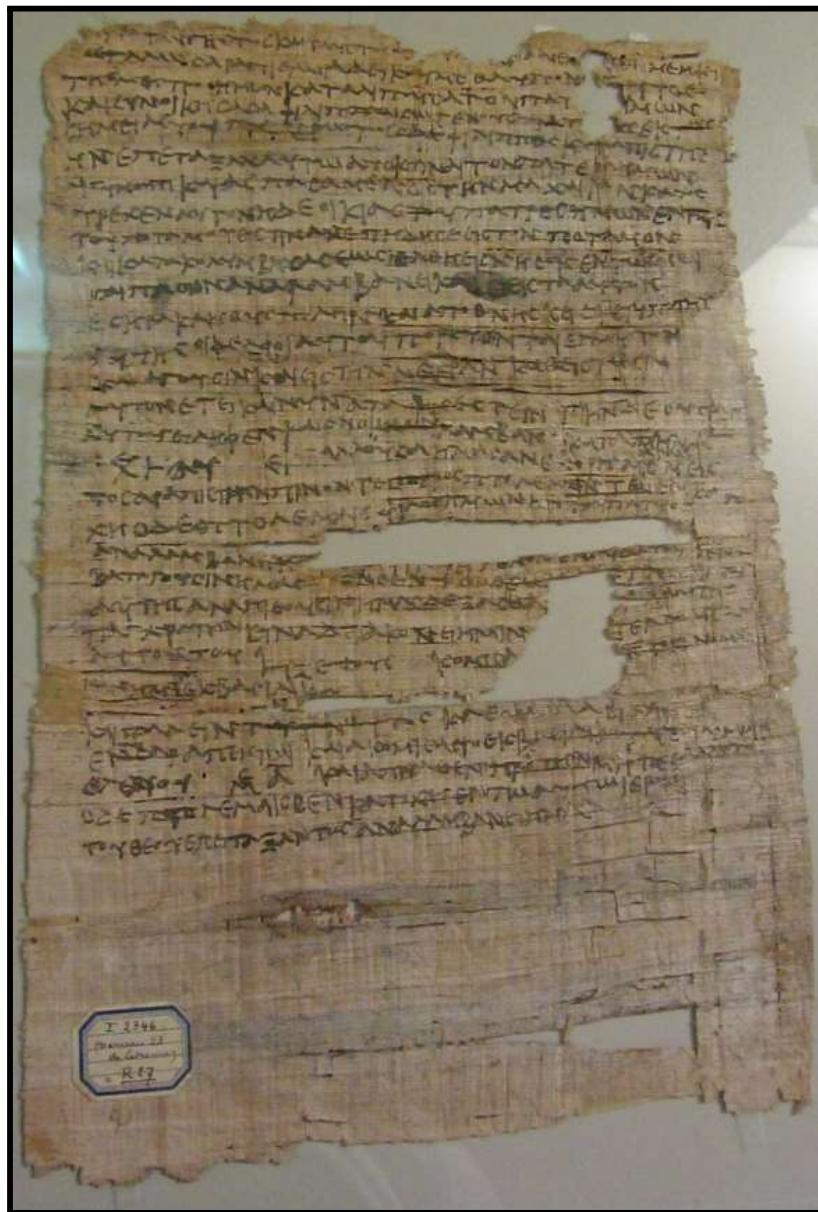
Vocab

Σαραποῦς -οῦτος ὁ/ἡ (uncommon) PERSONAL NAME Sarapis
ιέρωμα -ατος τό consecrated object, offering - here *holy place*
αὔριον ADVERB *tomorrow*

2.) UPZ. 18 - 163 BCE, Memphis

A petition to the Ptolemaic bureaucracy concerning two Egyptian girls, the twins Taues and Taous, who (by an extreme case of domestic neglect recounted herein) have found themselves seeking shelter in the Serapeum of Memphis. The petition was composed on their behalf by a certain Apollonius, brother of Ptolemaios son of Glaukias, a κάτοχος (a *recluse*, literally one who is *held back* from lay society by undertaking service in a temple) at the Memphis Serapeum who took the twins under his wing. Much of the details of Ptolemaios' life with his brother and the twins are preserved in the Archive of the Katochoi of the Sarapieion (for further info see Rowlandson (1998, pp.99-105).

Papyrus 5 cm 6.5 cm (papyrus was folded in two in antiquity)



Transcription

1r παρὰ Ταυγῆστος καὶ Ταῦστος δ[ιδ]υμ[ῶ]ν τῶν ἐν [τῷ] ἐν Μέμφει

μεγάλω Σαραπιείωι. ἀδ{ε}ικούμεθα ὑπὸ Νε[φό]ρυτος

τῆ\c/ μητρὸς [[μετρος]] ἡμῶν. καταλ(ε)ιποῦσα τὸν πατ[έρα] ἡμῶν

καὶ συνοικήσασα Φιλίππωι Σωγένου στρατι[ώτ]ης ἐκ τῆς

5 σημείας τοῦ Πυ[...]ρῶτος, ὁ δὲ Φιλίππος, κατ' ἀπιστηί-

ην ἐπέταξαν αὐτῷ ἀποκτ(ε)ῖναι τὸν πατέρα ἡμῶν

[...]τι καὶ {α}σπασάμενος τὴν μάχαιραν κατέ-

τρεχεν αὐτόν. ἡ δὲ οἰκία{c} τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν ἐνγὺς

τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἐστιν, ἀπεπήδησε εἰς τὸν ποταμὸν

10 καὶ κατακολυμβήσας ἕως ἔλθη [[ηλθη]] εἰς νῆσον ἐν τῷ \π[ο]τα/μῷ

καὶ πλοῖον ἀναλαμβάνει [[ανα[.]αμβανει]], καιθειστᾶ αὐτὸν

εἰς Ἡρακλήσ τοῦ πόλ{ε}ιν καὶ ἀποθνήσκει ἐκεῖ ὑπὸ τῆς

λύπης. οἱ <ἀ>δελφοὶ αὐτοῦ πορεύονται ἐπ' αὐτὸν

καὶ ἄγουσιν καὶ εἰς τὴν νεκρὸν καθεῖταιν

15 αὐτόν, ἔτειν καὶ νῦν ἀταφός ἐστειν. τὴν δὲ οὐσίαν

αὐτοῦ ἔιληφεν καὶ ἐνοίκιον λαμβάνει κατὰ μῆνα

χα(λκοῦ) (δραχμὰς) αν. ἐκβάλλουσα ἡμᾶς ἀνεχορή(σα)μεν \ ἀνω / εἰς

τὸ Καραπιείην [[καραπιει[.]ν]] πεινῶντες πρὸς Πτολεμῷ[[αῖ]]ντω^ν ἐν κατο-

χῇ, ὁ δὲ Πτολεμαῖς [[.τολεμαις]] φίλος ἡμῶν ἦν τοῦ πατρὸς,

20 ἀναλαμβάνει ἡμ[α]ς καὶ τρέφει. γενομένου δὲ τοῦ πένθου[ς]

κατάγουσιν ἡμᾶς πενθεῖν τῷ θεῷ. οἱ δὲ γνώριμοι

αὐτῇς ἀναπεινῶνταιν ἡμᾶς δέξασθαι [τὸν] [υἱὸν αὐτῆς

Παγχράτην, {ε}ΐνα δειπνεῖταιν. [διας]τέλλομεν

αὐτὸν τοῦ {ἔτους} ιζέτους κομίσα[σθαι] [ῶ]δε τὸ γινόμε-

25 νον ἡμῖν ἐκ βασιλικοῦ.

καὶ πάλειν [[τοῦτον]] οὗτος κλέψας{α} ἀ εἴχαμεν

ἐν \ τῷ / Καραπειείωι καὶ ἀ<ε>κομίσατο [[κομίσας]] ἐκ βασιλικοῦ παρ' [[περὶ]] ὑμῶν

ἐλαίου [[ελαίου]] με(τρητήν) α καὶ ἀπῆλθεν [[απελθεν]] πρὸ\c/ τὴν μητέρα [[μητηρά]] αὐτοῦ.

ὁ δὲ Πτολεμαῖ(o)c ὁ ἐν κατοχῇ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ Ἱερῷ

30 τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπ{ε}ιτάξαντος ἀναλαμβάνει ἡμᾶς

[.....]

1v παρὰ Πτολεμαίου Γλαυκίου Μακ[ε]δ[ών]

ὁ ἐν κατοχῇ ἡτη ἥδη ἐνδέκατον

Non-Standard Spellings

2	μεγάλω cf. μεγάλω	18	π(ε)ινδόντες cf. πεινῶντες
5-6	ἀπιστηί ην cf. ἀπιστίαν	18	Πτολεμ[[αῖ]]ν cf. Πτολεμαῖον
6	ἐπέταξαν αὐτῷ cf. ἐπέταξεν αὐτῷ	18	κατοχῇ cf. κατοχῇ
8	ἐνγὺς cf. ἔγγὺς	23	δ{ε}ιακονεῖ cf. διακονῇ
10	ἔλθη cf. ἔλθη	26	εῖχαμεν cf. εῖχομεν
11	καιδειστᾶ cf. καθιστᾶ	29	ἐν κατοχῇ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ Ἱερῷ cf. ἐν κατοχῇ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ Ἱερῷ
12	Ἡρακλήους cf. Ἡρακλέους	1v	Μακ[ε]δ[ών] cf. Μακεδόνος
17	ἀνεχορή(κα)μεν cf. ἀνεχωρήσαμεν	2v	κατοχῇ cf. κατοχῇ
18	Σαραπιείην cf. Σαραπιεῖον	2v	ἡτη cf. ἔτῃ

Vocab

Ταύγης Ταυγῆτος/Ταυγῆστος ἡ PERSONAL NAME *Taues*

Ταῦς Ταῦτος/Ταῦστος ἡ PERSONAL NAME *Taous*

Μέμφις -εως ἡ PLACE NAME *Memphis* (here an i-stem, also found as a dental stem)

Μέμφις -ιδος ἡ)

Σαραπιεῖον -ου τό a temple of *Serapis* (here that of Memphis, a significant site)

Νεφόρις Νεφόριτος/-υτος ἡ PERSONAL NAME *Nephoris*

Σωγένης -ου ὁ PERSONAL NAME *Sogenes*

σημεῖον -ου τό here a military *standard* (METONYM for a *body of troops*)

[...]τι we can infer from the narrative that the name of the twins' father was originally written here, which other papyri confirm was *Hargynoutis*

ἀπιστία -άς ἡ *distrust*

σπῶ (-άω) *draw* (a sword; usually in the MIDDLE)

κατατρέχω *chase down*

ἀποπηδῶ (-άω) *leap off*

κατακολυμβάω *swim beneath the surface*

καθιστάω KOINE variant of καθίστημι *set down; drop off; deposit*

Ἡρακλέους πόλιν LITERALLY *city of Herakles: Heracleopolis* (Ἡρακλεόπολις)

ἄταφος -ον *unburied*

ούσία -ας ἡ that which is one's own - here *property*

λαμβάνειν τὸ ἐνοίκιον *charge a rent* (+ GEN. OF VALUE)

ἐνοίκιον -ου τό *rent for lodgings* (from ADJ. ἐνοίκιος -ον *within the house*)

ἐκβάλλω here *evict*

ἀναχορῶ (-έω) *retreat*

πεινῶ (-άω) *be hungry*

Πτολεμαῖος -ου ὁ PERSONAL NAME *Ptolemaios*

πένθος -ου τό a *mourning* (cf. **πενθέω** *mourn* - here + DAT.)

Παγχράτης -ους ὁ PERSONAL NAME *Pankrates*

γνώριμος -ους ὁ a *well-known person: acquaintance*

διακονῶ (-έω) here *act as an advocate*

κατοχή -ης ἡ a *holding down/fast; hindrance; detention* - here at the Serapeum

ἐκ βασιλικοῦ here βασιλικός -ή -όν is a SUBSTANTIVE from the royal (treasury)

διαστέλλω in CLASSICAL *disperse; define*; in KOINE *dispatch with orders*

τὸ γινόμενον ἡμῖν LITERALLY *what is accruing for us* - i.e an annuity (or its interest)

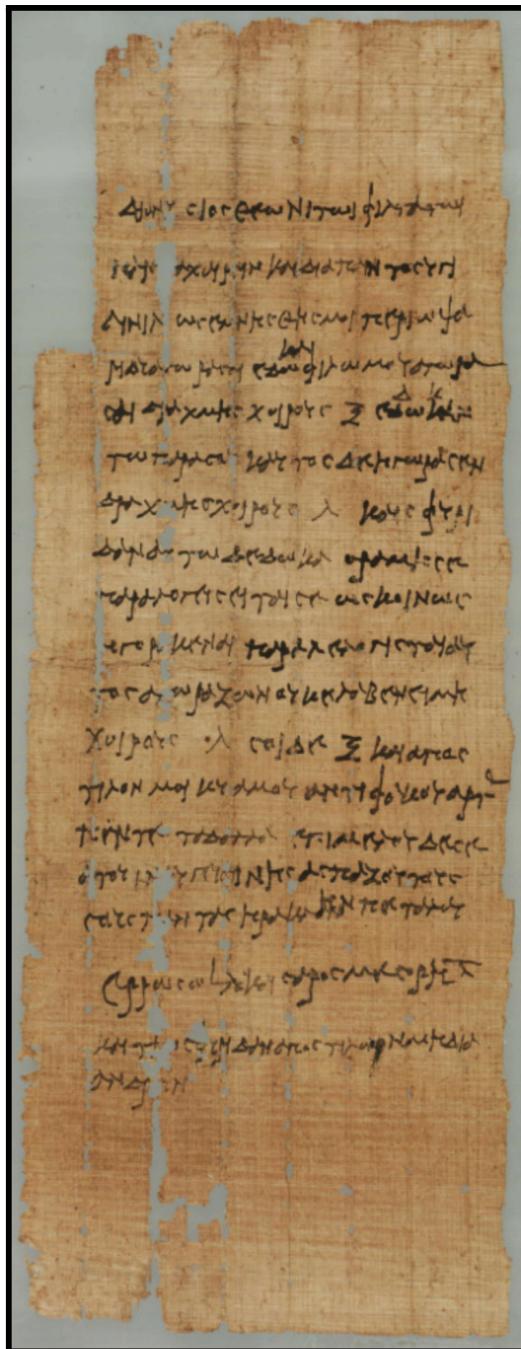
ἔλαιον -ου τό *olive oil*

μετρητής -οῦς ὁ a *liquid measure*

3.) P.Oslo. 2.47 - 23. Aug. 1 CE, Provenience Unknown

This curious papyrus preserves a brief exchange between two men with some sort of shared business interest. This private letter essentially constitutes a memorandum from a certain Dionysius sent to Theon, in which the purchasing of fish and beans, as well as (no-doubt more tantalisingly) a warning against scamming middle-men is discussed. Personally, I find the usage of the perfect tense highly linguistically interesting in this letter composed in the middle phase of Koine Greek.

Papyrus 26 x 9.7 cm (papyrus is intact save for wear to its right upper third)



Transcription

1r Διονύσιος Θέωνι τῷ φιλτάτῳ

πλεῖστος αγαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὑγι-

αίνειν. ὡς ἐμνήσθης μοι περὶ ὡψα-

ρίου ἀγωράκαι, ἔδωλος καὶ φίλω μου ἀγωρά-

5 καὶ δραχμῆς χοίρους ξ. ἔδολος/ωκλε/εν

τῷ παρὰ σου. καῦτὸς δὲ ἡγώρασεν

δραχμῆς χοίρους λ. καὶ σφυρί-

δαν αὐτῷ δέδωκα. ὅρα μή σε

παραλογείσειται {σε}, ὡς κοινῶς

10 ἡγορακέναι παραλελόγισται. αὐ-

τὸς ἀγωράζων οὐκ ἔλαβεν εἰ μὴ

χοίρους λ., σοὶ δὲ ξ. καὶ ἀπό-

τιλόν μοι κυάμου ἀντὶ φακοῦ ἀρτ(άβας)

πέντε. τὰ δ' ἄλλα ἐπιμέλου {δὲ} ce-

15 ατοῦ ἵνα ὑγειαινῆς. ἀσπάζου τοὺς

coὺς πάντας, Ἡρακλῆν / πετάλου.

ἔρωτα. (ἐτούς) λ Καίσαρος Μεσορή λ.

καὶ τὴν cφυρίδαν ἀπόστ<ε>ιλο[[νο]]ν μὴ διὰ

Ἀνδρ[ο]ῦν.

1v ἀπό-

δος Θεωνᾶτι

Non-Standard Spellings

2	πλῖc[τ]α cf. πλεῖστα	9	παραλογείσειται cf. παραλογίσηται
2-3	ὑγιαίνιν cf. ὑγιαίνειν	12	coὶ cf. σὺ
3-4	ἀψαρίου cf. ὄψαρίου	12	ἀγωράζων cf. ἀγοράζων
4	φίλω cf. φίλῳ	12-13, 18	ἀπόστιλόν cf. ἀπόστειλόν
4, 4-5	ἀγωράσαι cf. ἀγοράσαι	14-15	ceatoū cf. σεαυτοῦ
5	ἔ\δ/ωκ\κ/εν cf. ἔδωκεν	15	ὑγειαινῆς cf. ὑγιαίνης
6	τῶ cf. τῷ	16	Ἡρακλῆν / cf. Ἡρακλῆν
6	ἡγώρασεν cf. ἡγόρασεν	17	ἔρωτα cf. ἔρρωσο
8	αὐτῶ cf. αὐτῷ		

Vocab

έμνήσθην although MORPHOLOGICALLY a PASSIVE, this AORIST form of μιμνήσκω retains a MIDDLE sense *remind (someone + DAT.) about something (+ περί + GEN.)*

όψαρίον in origin a DIMINUTIVE of τὸ ὄψον *small prepared meal*, in KOINE it comes to denote simply a *fish* (cf. MOD. GREEK τὸ ψάρι *fish*)

ἀγωράζω here *make a purchase*

εἰ μή these PARTICLES when used together are CONTRASTIVE *except that, but instead*
ὸράω here TRANSITIVE with the sense *make sure that* (+ ACC. & INF.)

παραλογίζομαι use false reasoning: *cheat, defraud* (MOD. GREEK *lose one's mind*)

χοῖρος *pig* - here referring to a kind of fish found in the Nile: *pigfish*

κύαμος -ου ὁ *bean*

φακός -οῦ ὁ *lentil*

ἀρτάβη -ης ἡ (EGYPTIAN) measure of volume equal to 24 - 42 χοίνικες (~2 pints)

ἀπόστειλον μὴ this must surely be read ἀπόστειλόν μοι

Papyrological Sigla

abc Letters are unclear, imperfectly preserved or ambiguous.

[] (LACUNA) Letters missing (or obscured by damage) - not restored by the editor.

[abc] The missing letters have been restored by the editor.

[. . .] Lacuna cannot be restored but the extent of loss is known - one dot per letter.

〔 〕 (RASURA) Erasure of letters (in antiquity), not restored by the editor.

〔 . . . 〕 Erasure cannot be restored but the extent of loss is known.

〔〔abc〕〕 Erasure of letters in antiquity restored by the modern editor.

καὶ 〔xai〕 A word that has been corrected but the original misspelling can be discerned.

{abc} Wrongly or accidentally omitted letters added back in by the editor.

(abc) Deliberately omitted or abbreviated letters added back in by the editor.

{abc} Superfluous or erroneous letters the modern editor is deleting.

\abc/ Text which has been added between lines of the original in antiquity.