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- Other abbreviations should follow those of the *American Journal of Archaeology* and the *Transactions of the American Philological Association*.

- For ancient and Byzantine authors, contributors should consult the third edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, xxix-liv, and *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, xi-xiv.

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## Report of Proceedings in Red Ink from Late Second Century AD Oxyrhynchus

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### Abstract

Edition of a Greek papyrus in the collection of the University of Michigan (P.Mich. inv. 1568v).

P.Mich. inv. 1568v

11 cm by 9.5 cm (H. x W.)

ca. AD 187/8

In some respects P.Mich. inv. 1568v is a rather unexceptional piece, since it only contains a few fragmentary lines from a report of proceedings, about which little can be ascertained with certainty given the many lacunae and gaps in the text. Yet it deserves to be published for one noteworthy feature: it is written in red ink and is therefore a welcome addition to a very small corpus of such documents.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> While the use of red ink is attested in a wide variety of documents from the Pharaonic period through the Arabic period, very few were ever written entirely in red ink as it was mostly used to draw attention to certain words or phrases, mark the opening of various sections within a document, or render the total of certain accounts. See R. Parkinson and S. Quirke, *Papyrus* (Austin 1995) 45-46. In O.OI 19361 (ca. 1200-1080 BC), a hymn to the inundation (Hieratic), the verse points and date are written with red ink whereas the rest of the document is written with black ink. Similarly in O.OIM 25040 (ca. 1200-1080 BC), another hymn to the inundation (Hieratic), the verse points are written with red ink. In Princ. inv. Scheide M 95 (ca. 1100-950 BC), a Book of the Dead (Hieratic), certain lines are written with red ink, though most are written with black ink. Red ink was mostly made from a clay called ochre that contained a high degree of the mineral hematite (Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>) that was reddish in color. To make ink it was typically mixed with gum Arabic and water. The less ochre that was added to this mixture the more yellow the ink, whereas the more ochre that was added the more red the ink became. See P. Schubert, *Les archives de Marcus Lucretius Diogenes et textes apparentés* (Bonn 1990) 34. Additionally, red ink might also be made from either cinnabar (κιννάβαρις) or minium (μίλτος). See B.M. Metzger, *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible: An Introduction to Paleography* (Oxford 1981) 17.

In the Roman period red ink was used very rarely for writing an entire document.<sup>2</sup> In fact, a recently published catalogue of red ink documents from this period could list only fifty such texts.<sup>3</sup> A survey of these texts reveals that most of them were written during the second or third centuries and that the overwhelming majority come from the Arsinoite nome,<sup>4</sup> although a few red

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<sup>2</sup> During the Ptolemaic and Roman periods red ink appears to have been used mostly to highlight key words and phrases within a document or mark off and divide sections within a text. Likewise, it also appears to have been used intermittently in magical papyri, perhaps because it was thought to possess apotropaic qualities. See O. Montevvecchi, *La Papirologia* (Milano 1988 [1973]) 16; cf. *P.Oslo* 1.4 (AD IV). Additionally, it appears that red ink was the ink of choice for validating certain kinds of documents. For example, in *SB* 6.9233 (early III BC), a customhouse receipt, two red lines are drawn through the document and may constitute a mark of official validation. There are also some documents where red ink stamps have been used on the verso as a way of validation. For a list of these documents see Schubert (n. 1) 37-38, who lists 37 documents from the period between 108 BC and AD 223/4. To this list I would add the following: *P.Tebt.* 2.587 (26/5 BC), a tax receipt; *P.Duke* inv. 7v (AD 26), a loan; *P.Tebt.* 2.350 (AD 70/1), a receipt for tax on sales; *P.Mich.* 9.554 (AD 81-94), a division of inherited property; *P.Mich.* 10.585 (AD 87), a loan with right of habitation; *P.Mich.* 9.569 (AD 92), a contract concerning repayment of debt; *P.Mich.* 11.625 (AD 121), a receipt for taxes on loan with contract of habitation; *P.Louvre* 2.109 (AD 123 or 137), a contract concerning cession of catocic land.

<sup>3</sup> P. Schubert, "BGU I 361 et P.Gen. inv. 69: retour sur l'encre rouge," *APF* 51 (2005) 250-252, where Schubert updates his former list (cf. Schubert [n. 1] 34-35) of documents (published and unpublished) written with red ink. To his most recent list I would add the following (unpublished) documents: *P.Mich.* inv. 1722 (AD II), a property return; *P.Mich.* inv. 1357v (AD III), names and amounts in arouras; *P.Mich.* inv. 6247 (AD III), list of names; *P.Mich.* inv. 6337 (AD III), contents unknown; *P.Mich.* inv. 6522 (AD III/IV), contents unknown; *P.Princ.* inv. GD 7706 D (AD III/IV), a list; *O.Col.* inv. 1259 (VI-VII), an exercise.

<sup>4</sup> Of the forty-two published documents listed by Schubert, twenty five (60%) are provenanced to the Arsinoite nome: *P.Hamb.* 1.31 (after AD 117), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; *CPR* 1.18 (= *SPP* 20.4 = *M.Chr.* 84 = *Jur.Pap.* 89), a report of proceedings about dispute over inheritance (AD 124); *P.Hamb.* 1.31a (ca. AD 126-138), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; *P.Ross.Georg.* 2.18 (= *P.Cair.Preis.* 31), a register of contracts (ca. AD 139/40); *P.Diog.* 6 (AD 143-161), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; *P.Diog.* 7 (AD 143-161), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; *BGU* 3.780 (ca. AD 155-159), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; *BGU* 4.1032 (after AD 173), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; *SB* 4.7427 (ca. AD 180-230), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; *BGU* 1.361 (= *M.Chr.* 92 = *FIRA* 3.57), a report of proceedings about dispute over inheritance (AD 184); *P.Petaus* 59 (AD 185), a copy of a list of nominations for a liturgy; *SB* 4.7362 (= *Sel.Pap.* 2.315), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status

ink documents are also attested from Oxyrhynchus, Hermopolis, Syene, Tenis (Memphite nome), Antinoopolis, and Alexandria.<sup>5</sup> For the most part these documents deal with official matters, and a disproportionately large number of them concern the registration of civic status (ἐπίκρισις of *ephebes*).<sup>6</sup> Noting the high proportion of such documents among red ink papyri, H.I. Bell suggested many years ago that such papyri likely served as personal certificates. As he noted, "... certificates [of the registration of civic status] written in red ink were extracts from the registers made at a later period than the actual registration and served merely as records of the entry which the party concerned could produce when required. They were written in red ink and sometimes provided with a decorative border to enhance the dignity of their appearance."<sup>7</sup> More recently, in a study of red ink documents by P. Schubert, he has found Bell's suggestion persuasive, particularly that certain documents pertaining to registration of various sorts and written in red ink should usually be thought of as personal copies produced sometime after the original was made for the purpose of supporting or establishing other claims.<sup>8</sup>

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(AD 188); *SB* 20.14237 (AD II-III), a lease receipt; *BGU* 1.175 (AD II-III), an extract of a tax register; *P.Diog.* 53 (AD II-III), a receipt of taxes; *SB* 6.9233 (beginning AD III), a toll receipt; *SB* 20.14512 (beginning of AD III), an extract of a register of archives; *BGU* 13.2226 (AD 202/3), a census declaration; *P.Diog.* 21 (AD 202/3), a census declaration; *P.Col.* 10.274 (AD 209), an extract of a property register; *CPR* 1.33 (AD 215), a list of in kind deliveries; *P.Diog.* 4 (AD 212-217), a declaration of birth; *P.Diog.* 2 (after AD 217), a declaration of birth; *P.Diog.* 8 (after AD 217), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; *P.Diog.* 65 (date?), contents undetermined.

<sup>5</sup> Oxyrhynchus: *PSI* 7.736 (AD 208), a communication to a strategus concerning a dispute over property; *P.Oxy.* 12.1535 (AD III), a list of land owners; *P.Oxy.* 40.2940 (AD 270/1), an extract of register of archives; Hermopolis: *P.Ryl.* 2.153 (AD 169), a copy of a will; *P.Flor.* 1.46 (AD 186), an extract of a loan contract; Syene: *SB* 6.9227 (after AD 161), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; *SB* 6.9228 (after AD 161), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; Tenis (Memphite nome): *SB* 3.6995 (AD 124), a declaration concerning birth of a slave; Antinoopolis: *P.Fam. Tebt.* 32 (AD 146-161), an extract of a register of a recording of civic status; Alexandria: *BGU* 11.2070 (AD 142-144), a report of proceedings about dispute over inheritance.

<sup>6</sup> Of the forty two published documents, sixteen (38%) concern the registration of civic status: *P.Hamb.* 1.31 (after AD 117); *BGU* 4.1033 (after AD 117); *P.Hamb.* 1.31 (AD 126-38); *BGU* 1.113 (AD 143); *P.Diog.* 6 (AD 143-161); *P.Diog.* 7 (AD 143-161); *P.Fam. Tebt.* 32 (AD 146-161); *BGU* 3.780 (AD 155-159); *SB* 6.9227 (after AD 161); *SB* 6.9227 (after AD 161); *BGU* 4.1032 (after AD 173); *SB* 4.7427 (AD 180-230); *SB* 4.7362 (AD 188); *P.Mich.* 15.708 (AD II-III); *P.Diog.* 2 (after AD 217); *P.Diog.* 8 (after AD 217).

<sup>7</sup> H.I. Bell, "Diplomata Antinoitica," *Aegyptus* 13 (1933) 526.

<sup>8</sup> Schubert (n. 3) 249-250.

Turning to P.Mich. inv. 1568v, it should first be pointed out that there are three other reports of proceedings written in red ink: *CPR* 1.18 (= *SPP* 20.4 = *M.Chr.* 84 = *Jur.Pap.* 89) from Ptolemais Euergetis (AD 124); *BGU* 11.2070 (ll. 19-33 and Verso, Col. 1 = *SB* 5.7516) from Alexandria (AD 142-144); and *BGU* 1.361.2.10-3.30 (= *M.Chr.* 92 = *FIRA* 3.57) from Ptolemais Euergetis (AD 184). However, P.Mich. inv. 1568v is to be distinguished from these proceedings in one key respect: whereas they are all written on the recto, P.Mich. inv. 1568v is written on the verso of a land register.<sup>9</sup> Remarkably, this is the only red ink papyrus written on the verso of another document.<sup>10</sup> If it is accurate to suppose that documents written entirely with red ink should not generally be regarded originals, but rather personal copies or even abstracts provided by the register upon request to support another claim, it seems odd that the present document is written on the verso of an old land register, as one might expect such a text to be written on a clean sheet of papyrus. Perhaps, then, the scribe simply copied the present text on the verso of another document since he was short on papyrus and because it would not affect the integrity of the present document for the claim it was establishing.<sup>11</sup>

Aside from being written on the verso this fragment is not markedly different in its appearance from other red ink documents. The hand of the document is not exquisite but it is not altogether sloppy even if it displays some irregularity.<sup>12</sup> While the beginning of each line is lost, not much seems to be

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<sup>9</sup> The land register's remains are very fragmentary. It appears the register contained at least two vertical columns; however, only half of each is partially preserved and both contain considerable effacement making them largely illegible. Nevertheless, the text on the recto may be safely identified as a land register given the appearance of certain abbreviations and the repeated use of numbers and large fractions, such as  $\overline{\iota\varsigma}$  (1/16),  $\overline{\xi\omicron}$  (1/64), that are typical for various measurements in arourae. The register is written in black ink, although there are some red ink spots that made their way onto this side of the text. The hand of the recto is rather skilled and differs from the hand on the verso. This hand shares some affinities with the hands of *P.Oxy.* 38.2871 (AD 175/6), a *sitologi* document, and *P.Oxy.* 45.3242 (AD 185-187), a declaration of property.

<sup>10</sup> As far as I was able to ascertain none of the fifty red ink documents included in Schubert's list were written on the verso. Though part of *BGU* 11.2070 is written on the verso it is simply a continuation of the recto.

<sup>11</sup> It may be noted that there is one example where a different text is written on the back of a red ink papyrus. On the verso of *P.Oxy.* 12.1535 (AD III), a list of landholders, may be found a receipt for burial (= *P.Oxy.* 12.1535v [10 February AD 249 or 259]).

<sup>12</sup> At times letter sizes fluctuate and there is also some inconsistency with letter spacing as letters are bunched together in certain sections of the fragment and well spaced in other areas. Notwithstanding these fluctuations the letters are for the most part well-formed cursive and are generally distinguishable except in the case of  $\beta$  and  $\kappa$  whose

missing to the right: the writing gets progressively smaller, which suggests the writer was nearing the end of the line; at ll. 10, 11, and 13 there appears to be a gap between the last visible letter and the edge of the papyrus, which suggests the lines ended thereabouts.

Though this piece was purchased by the University of Michigan in 1924 and was unprovenanced, it seems likely that it originated in Oxyrhynchus. In the final line (l. 15) reference is made to an individual bearing the name and alias “Herammon also called Kastor.” Only one other individual by this name and alias is known and appears in *P.Oxy.* 36.2762 (census return) as the strategus of the Oxyrhynchite nome in the year AD 187/8. Two additional pieces of evidence may be cited to reinforce this identification. First, the word “strategus” can be read at the end of l. 14 and should be taken as reference to this “Herammon also called Kastor” who appears in the following line, and second, earlier in the same line (l. 14) reference is made to the “twenty-eighth year” (κηϛ), the very same year of Commodus’ reign that is referred to in *P.Oxy.* 36.2762.8.

The present fragment appears to preserve the introductory section of a report of proceedings, where the location and date of the proceedings was typically given and the opening statements were made.<sup>13</sup> Besides the name of the strategus there are only two other persons mentioned in the fragment, Menestheus (l. 9) and Soter (l. 14). Given that both persons are recorded speaking (εἶπεν), it seems at least likely that these speakers (lawyers?) represented the opposing parties.<sup>14</sup> While the fragment affords precious little context, there is a reference to “theft” (βαστάζω) in l. 7 and a reference to “money” (τὸ ἀργύριον) in l. 11. Interestingly, the other three reports of proceedings preserved in red ink all concern disputes over inheritances. While it might therefore be tempting to suppose the present proceeding deals with this same issue, there is nothing definitive in the extant portions of the text to establish this connection.<sup>15</sup>

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forms are virtually identical. Though a better hand might be expected for a red ink document, it is certainly not worse than what is found in *P.Oxy.* 40.2940 (AD 270/1), an extract of register of archives (red ink).

<sup>13</sup> R. Coles, *Reports of Proceedings in Papyri* (Bruxelles 1966) 29-38.

<sup>14</sup> Given the use of plural verb forms in ll. 7, 9, and 11, as well as an address in the plural in l. 13, it is certain that at least one of the parties involved was composed of multiple persons. On the speakers at court see Coles (n. 13) 38-48.

<sup>15</sup> Even though *BGU* 1.361 deals with a dispute over inheritance there is an allegation of “theft” (βαστάζω) in Col. 3.10, similar to the reference found in l. 7 in the present document.

-----  
 ] . . . . [ . . ] . . [   
 Μεχ]ειρ κ̄δ̄ . [   
 ]θα κα[ι] περι[ι   
 ] . [ . . . ]ανας γρα[   
 5 ]ο οὔτε γὰρ ερει . . . . [ . . . . . ] . [   
 σ]τρατηγίας. *vac.* περι ὧν εἰώθα[μεν?   
 ] ἐβαστάξαμεν τι αὐτοῦ. οἱ μ[   
 ] πολύν. *vac.* ἐξ οὗ μόνα διακο[υ]σα[   
 ]μεν παρ' αὐτοῖς. *vac.* Μενεσθεὺ[ς] εἶπεν. *vac.* [   
 10 ]ει διὰ γραμμάτων μόνον κ[αῖ] ει   
 τ]ὸ ἀργύριον αὐτοῖς ἠγνο[ . . ]μο[   
 ]. [ ]τῷ ἐνκέκλικα παρὰ τῷ λ[ . ] . . . [   
 γεγρ]άφα[θε] ἔτε' εὐρηκέναι ποίου ἐστὶν [   
 ] [Σωτήρ] εἶπεν. *vac.* κη (ἔτους). *vac.* ὁ δὲ στρατηγὸς [   
 15 ] Ἡράμμων ὁ καὶ Κάστωρ [ . ] . . . [   
 -----

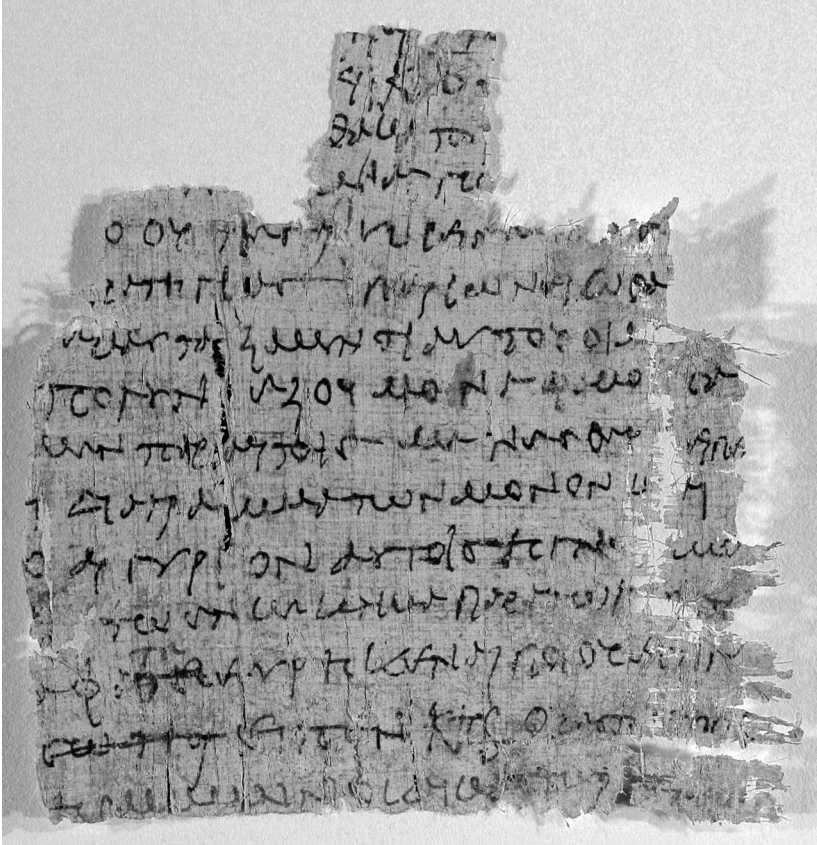
12 l. ἐγκέκλικα 13 κη] pap.

4 σ]τρατηγίας: Does not refer to the strategus specifically but rather to the “office” or “bureau of the strategus” (*P.Oxy.* 36.2764.11n.). Consequently, it almost never occurs on its own (except in *P.Tebt.Fam.* 15.3.63 [AD 114-115]).

6 περι ὧν εἰώθα[μεν?: This phrase is without any parallel, but it is likely that ἔθω is followed by a verb since it is usually accompanied by a complementary infinitive. The ω in ὧν is written with black ink but then the following ν is written with red ink. Here presumably the scribe mistakenly dipped his pen into the black inkpot, and once he realized his mistake he quickly dipped his pen back into the red inkpot and kept writing. As a result, the remainder of this line is written with a brownish tint.

7 ἐβαστάξαμεν: While this verb typically has the meaning of “to lift, raise, bear, carry or support” (LSJ, s.v. βαστάζω), in the papyri it is almost always used in the context of theft where it has the meaning of “carrying off (illegally)” or “stealing” (*P.Oxy.* 50.3561.15 [AD 165]; *P.Oxy.* 58.3926.13-14 [AD 246]). Assuming that this is the connotation of the verb in this fragment perhaps there was some admittance of wrongdoing on the part of the defendant since it is used in the first person.





8 ἔξ οὐ μόνα: It is difficult to make sense out of what the writer was trying to convey at this point. If the reading μόνα is correct, then it must anticipate a neuter plural noun.

9 Μενεσθεύ[ς]: While the name is attested in five other documents from Oxyrhynchus that range in date from the early first century to the late third century, none are contemporary with the present text (*P.Ryl.* 4.677 [AD 14-37]; *P.Oxy.* 1.97 [AD 115-116]; *P.Oxy.* 12.1459 [AD 226]; *P.Oxy.* 7.1044 [AD 235]; *P.Oxy.* 1.55 [AD 283]).

10 Perhaps both times εἰ in this line.

– διὰ γραμμάτων μόνον: This phrase can be understood in different ways. If the writer intended μόνον as an adverb it could mean “once,” with the

implication that only a single letter was sent. Alternatively, it could also be used as a way of drawing contrast to something else. If on the other hand μόνον is to be taken as an adjective where the writer has mistakenly interchanged ω > ο the implication is that correspondence was strictly epistolary and more than one letter could have been sent.

11 ἡγνο[ . . . ]: perhaps ἡγνό[ει].

12 ἐνκέκλικα: This unusual spelling is also attested in *BGU* 3.1012.8 (170 BC) and *SB* 6.9252.8 (= *P.Fam. Tebt.* 19 [AD 118]). In the papyri this verb typically has the connotation of being “shut in” or even “imprisoned.” The meaning here is probably something like, “I have locked N.N. up with N.N.” Since this verb is immediately followed by παρὰ τῷ λ[ . . . ] . . . [ . . . ], the reading could be something like παρὰ τῷ λαμπροτάτῳ ἡγεμόνι.

13 The correction is in black ink. In the lacuna at the end perhaps ἔτους vel sim., if l. 14 refers back to this line.

14 [Σωτήρ]: Though this name is more prominent in the Ptolemaic era, it is nevertheless still attested well into the Roman period. What the exact reasons were for the scribe crossing this name out can only be a matter of speculation. If this report constitutes a later copy, as the use of red ink seems to imply, it may simply have been an error of transcription.

– κη (ἔτους): This date may be taken as a reference to the twenty-eighth year of Commodus’ reign (AD 187/8). While Commodus only reigned as sole emperor for almost thirteen years (17 March AD 180 to 31 December AD 192), he reckoned his tenure as a continuation of his father’s and accordingly reckoned his reign from 7 Mar 161 (D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*<sup>2</sup> [Darmstadt 1996] 147-151). The reference to Commodus’ reign does not necessarily provide the precise date of the papyrus but only the *terminus post quem*.

15 Ἡράμμων ὁ καὶ Κάστωρ: Besides the present document he is only attested in *P.Oxy.* 36.2762. See J. Whitehorne, *Strategi and Royal Scribes of Roman Egypt*<sup>2</sup> (Firenze 2006) 100.

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