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COMPLAINT TO THE EPISTRATEGUS VEDIUS FAUSTUS


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COMPLAINT TO THE EPISTRATEGUS VEDIUS FAUSTUS

P.Mich. inv. 2848 + 3000
February 15, A.D. 163
Karanis
Tafel I

Οὐχ οίῳ Φαύστῳ τῇ κρατείτωι ἐπιστρατήγῳ
παρὰ Γαίου Ἰουλίου ἔγραψε ὁ Σωτάριος τοῦ Ῥωμαίου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου Σωτάριος
καὶ ἔγραψεν τῆς ἑπτής ἐπιστρατηγοῦ τοῦ Σωτάριου ἐπιστρατηγοῦ τοῦ Ῥωμαίου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου Σωτάριου.

1 First fragment: 19 x 13 cm. The text runs along the fibers. The other side is blank. The papyrus is regularly cut off at the top (2.6 cm. have been left free), the left (approximately 3 cm. have been left free) and the right. Six vertical folds are still visible. The middle-brown papyrus was rolled from right to left.

Second fragment: 19 x 14 cm. At the bottom where the papyrus is regularly cut off there is a free margin of approximately 3 cm.

In the first line ample spaces are left between the words. Notice the use of the iota adscriptum (cf. P. Oxy. LX 4060, 98 note).
To Vedius Faustus the epistrategus, vir egregius, from Gaius Julius Niger, a veteran, of the Osirantinoan tribe and Hermaian deme. Being a person who was honestly discharged from the army, my lord, and not being troublesome I have reached a point where satisfaction from you becomes necessary. I have in a violent way suffered an unseemly insult from an Egyptian fellow, Isidorus, son of Achillas, scribe of the epiteretes of sequestered property of the village Karanis of the Heracleides division of the Arsinoite nome while his servant, Didymos, co-operated with him in this matter. I (now) state the matter: I happen to have bought from the treasury in year x of the deified Aelius Antoninus out of sequestered property one arura of an olive grove in the neighbourhood of Psenharpsenesis in the same division formerly property of Kastor, son of Pekysis, and after having paid x drachmas for the sale so as to be confirmed as owner (?) it was then allotted to me and I pay the taxes for it. Recently, however, the afore mentioned Isidorus wanting to damage us - - - I am about to take refuge with you - - - the things which he committed - - - he threw away (?) the pledges and again I complained about him. And so, his criminal actions against me being evident, I, a Roman, having suffered such things at the hands of an Egyptian, ask you, if it seems good to you, to order a letter to be written to the strategus of the Heracleides division of the Arsinoite nome and to have him send him here for your judgement and to hear me so that I may be able to obtain satisfaction from you and may receive your benefaction. Farewell.

Translation: (lines 1-15)

- - - I am about to take refuge with you - - - the things which he committed - - - he threw away (?) the pledges and again I complained about him. And so, his criminal actions against me being evident, I, a Roman, having suffered such things at the hands of an Egyptian, ask you, if it seems good to you, to order a letter to be written to the strategus of the Heracleides division of the Arsinoite nome and to have him send him here for your judgement and to hear me so that I may be able to obtain satisfaction from you and may receive your benefaction. Farewell.

Translation: (lines 26-37)

The lower part of this papyrus (lines 18 through 37) = P.Mich. inv. 3000 has been published by E.M. Michael as no. 12 of his Ph.D. (Ann Arbor 1966) = SB XII 11114. During a stay in Ann Arbor in October/November 1993 I discovered a photograph of the upper part (lines 1 through 17) of the same text = P.Mich. inv. 2848². The two parts do not seem to fit exactly

² Both papyri were found during the excavations of the University of Michigan at Karanis, conducted by Professor Boak in the year 1924-25. P.Mich. inv. 2848 was found in the Courtyard South of Street 5000 and P.Mich. inv. 3000 in structure 5006E², Room A, i.e. in a building adjacent to Street 5000 (cf. for the excavations of the University of Michigan at Karanis from 1924 until 1935 P. van Minnen, ZPE 100, 1994, 227ff. with abundant literature). Inv. 2848 has - as many other papyri and ostraca excavated at Karanis - been returned to Cairo and I had, therefore, to work from a photograph.
together and it is impossible to establish how many lines - if any - are missing between the two fragments.

The papyrus, heavily mutilated in its left part and along its six vertical folds (especially in the middle), contains a complaint to Vedius Faustus, epistrategus of the Heptanomia, by the well known veteran Gaius Julius Niger who, although being an Antinoite, lived - as so many other veterans of the Roman army - with his family in Karanis where a large number of their papers have been found\(^3\). Subject of the complaint are the problems caused by a certain Isidorus, son of Achillas, scribe of the superintendants of sequestered property and - as Niger stresses - an Egyptian, assisted in this by his servant Didymos. It seems that Isidorus denies Gaius Julius Niger’s ownership of an arura in an olive grove which Niger had bought from the treasury. Due to mutilation the course of the matter is not absolutely clear.

Notes:

1) Vedius Faustus is no. 45 (p. 188) in J.D. Thomas, *The epistrategos in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt*. Part 2. *The Roman epistrategos*, Opladen 1982. He was to date attested between A.D. 157/8-March, A.D. 161 and April 15, A.D. 162(?). His successor, Flavius Gratillianus, is for the first time attested in May 28, A.D. 164. Year 3 in line 34 is, therefore, the 3rd regnal year (A.D. 162/3) of the emperor Marcus Aurelius. No new attestations of this epistrategus have appeared since 1982. *P.Mich*. inv. 160 has, together with *P.Oslo* II 18, been published as *SB* XIV 12087.


3) Although the word οὐκετάρανός (line 2) implies that Gaius Julius Niger received a *honesta missio* when he was discharged from the Roman army he stresses this fact here once again by the words καλῶς στρατευσάμενος. Naturally, he wants to put himself in a favourable light. I did not find a parallel for the expression καλῶς στρατευσάμενος but Niger undoubtedly translates the Latin *honeste missus* (*cf.*, *e.g.*, *CIL* V 938, 5; VIII 4333, 2). For στρατευσάμενος: *cf.* R.G. Warga, *Select Papyri* (Ph.D. Urbana - Champaign 1987), 13, 7 note.


4-5) τῆς ὑπὸ σοῦ ἐκδίκίας. *Cf*. line 32. *Cf*. also *BGU* XI 2061, 12; *SB* VI 9105, 26-27; *XVI* 12678, 20.

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I wish to thank Ludwig Koenen for his kind permission to publish this text here. During a visit to Heidelberg I discussed this text with D. Hagedorn who contributed to a better reading and understanding of it.

\(^3\) There are several more still unpublished documents pertaining to this family in the papyrus collection of the University of Michigan. Unfortunately, the ones I have come across are very mutilated. *Cf*. now also *ZPE* 106, 1995, 207, footnote 7.
It is to be noted that Gaius stresses the fact that he, as a Roman, has been bothered by an Egyptian (cf. lines 28-29). This is the same attitude the Greeks took towards the native Egyptians. Cf. J.W.B. Barns, *Egyptians and Greeks*, Papyrologica Bruxellensia 14, Bruxelles 1978; N. Lewis, *JEA* 79, 1993, 281 and footnote 25; L. Koenen in *Images and Ideologies: Self-Definition in the Hellenistic World*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1993, 225 and footnote 2.

5-8) οὗ [βριν] - - - οὖ τὴν τυχόσαν: the same expression in *P.Bad.* IV 48, 5; *P.Mich.* V 229, 20-21; 230, 17-28 and *SB* VI 9458, 5. We find οὗ τὴν τυχόσαν ἀνάσασιν καὶ θάλψιν in *P.Lond.* V 1727, 10; ο. τ. τ. θάνατον in *P.Berl.Frisk* 3, 10; ο. τ. τ. ἔνδειαν in *P.Oxy.* VI 899, 14; ο. τ. τ. καταφοράντων in *P.Tebt.* III 703, 161-162 and ο. τ. τ. ῥοπήν in *UPZ* II 110, 73.

6) Isidorus, son of Achillas, an Egyptian, has to date not appeared in other texts. Although an Egyptian (but both he and his father bear good Greek names), he is scribe of the ἡγηματογραφούμενον. Isidorus is a very common name, and it is probably not more than sheer coincidence that an Isidorus is attested as an ἡγηματογραφούμενον in Karanis in A.D. 162 by *BGU* XIII 2287, 7-8 (January 4) and *SB* VI 9427, 3-4 (July 29).

7-8) ἡγηματογραφούμενον: cf. N. Lewis, *The Compulsory Public Services of Roman Egypt*, Papyrologica Florentina XI, Firenze 1982, 29ff. These officials, to date attested between A.D. 144 and A.D. 189, occur in the following papyri (a) and ostraca (b):

a) *P.Mil.Vogl.* IV 244, 3-4 (A.D. 146/7 [cf. *BL* VIII 223. The only example of a πράκτωρ γε(νηματογραφούμ)εν in N. Lewis, *op. cit.*., 45 has to be taken out]); *SB* I 4416, 4 (approx. A.D. 157); *P.Oslo* III 117, 6 (A.D. 159/60); *BGU* XIII 2287, 8 (A.D. 162); *SB* VI 9427, 4 (A.D. 162) and *SB* XIV 11712, 2 (approx. A.D. 164). All texts originate from the Arsinoite nome. Γενηματογραφούμενον, usually abbreviated γενή( ), is either followed by ὑπαρχόντων διοικώνειν or by ὑπαρχόντων κόμης.

b) *O.Ontario Mus.* I 25, 1 (A.D. 144); *O.Bodl.* II 989, 1-2 (A.D. 144); 1693, 1 (A.D. 150); 995, 1-2 (A.D. 154); 996, 1-2 (A.D. 154); *O.Strassb.* 449, 1 (A.D. 165); *O.Bodl.* II 990, 1 (A.D. 167) and *O.Camb.* 75, 1 (A.D. 189). All texts originate from Thebes (of *O.Camb.* 75 the place of origin is not known with certainty). On the ostraca the title of these officials is always ἡγηματογραφούμενον. With the exception of *SB* XIV 11712 and *O.Camb.* 75 there is always more than one superintendant involved. In line 1 of *O.Camb.* 75 ἡγηματογραφούμενον (probably abbreviated) has to be supplemented. In *SB* XIV 11712, 2 (cf. the photograph in *BASP* 14, 1977, after p.142) the text has indeed the singular ἐπίτηρησις. I assume that the scribe left καὶ μ(έτοχοι) out by mistake (cf. *O.Bodl.* II 995, 1 where καὶ μ(έτοχοι) was added above the line).

8) Didymos is too common a name for us to establish whether the same person occurs in other texts. It is likely that Didymos was a servant of the scribe Isidorus (cf. N. Lewis, *op. cit.*, 30).

9) [τὸ δὲ π]ρόσ[γυ]α τίθημι: the same expression is used in *P. Fouad* 26, 35-36.

10) It is likely that Niger acquired the one arura in one of the later years of the reign of the emperor Antoninus Pius. For the often attested title θεός Αἰλίος Ἀντωνῖνος, see P. Bureth, *Les Titulatures impériales*, Papyrologica Bruxellensia 2, Bruxelles 1964, 76f. There is no need to supplement and read in *P.Hibeh* II 274, 8 the unique titulature θεός Αἰλίος Ἀντωνῖνος Ἐυεδῆς.

For the meaning of γενηματογραφέον, see *BGU* XV 2488, 1 note.

11-12) For Psenharpesens, a village in the vicinity of Karanis and often mentioned in documents from inhabitants of Karanis, see A. Calderini - S. Daris, *Dizionario dei nomi geografici e topografici dell'Egitto greco-romano* V, Milano 1987, 148. In *SB* IV 7360 (A.D. 214) Gaius Gemellus Horigenes reports the status of certain lands at Psenharpesensis and
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Karanis which he had inherited from his grandfather, Gaius Julius Niger. περὶ πεδίων Ψενορμνήσως ἐν τόπῳ Πουλίτας λεγομένου (cf. H.C. Youtie, ZPE 13, 1974, 249ff. = BL VII 193) he registers 1 1/2 aruras ἐλαιώνος ἱκκεκαμιμένου.

12) Kastor, son of Pakysis, husband of Teseuris is known from P.Cair.Mich. 359, 1704; P.Mich. IV 223, 1329; 224, 577.1003.2871.3858.6009. The spelling [Πεκόςως] (originally the scribe wanted to write Πεκόςως) is noteworthy, since in Karanis (and its environments) the usual spelling was Πακόςως. The spelling Πεκόςως occurs also in P.Mich. inv. 2893 = a copy of a census register (Karanis; post A.D. 138) to be published in this periodical.

13) ὑπὲρ κυρω[...]: I would expect something expressing the meaning which I put in my translation. One naturally thinks of ὑπὲρ κυρω[...], but the absence of the article is disturbing. Another possibility is ὁ ὑπὲρ κυρωθ[...]i.

15) μὴ [...]: probably a form of the verb μηνύειν. This form was perhaps followed by διῶ.

16) I was unable to find a Petheus, son of Petsiris, in another text published to date. Both proper names are quite common at Karanis.

21) After Γαίου there is a clear trace on the papyrus of probably a lambda. Unfortunately, too many persons whose nomen gentile starts with a lambda (Λογγίνος, Λόγγος, Λουκίλλας etc.) are attested at Karanis (and its environments) to identify the Gaius L[ of the present text.

23) A reading: προφέροντα τὸν Σατόρνιλον ἀπαίτει με = "proclaiming that Satornilus has paid asks from me" is not to be excluded. The subject of ἀπαίτει being Isidorus. It is, however, absolutely not clear which role the known or afore mentioned (τὸν !) Satornilus would have played.

26) κημενον is a possible reading/supplement.

27) E.M. Michael supplemented τὰ ἐνέχυρα[εμοσό] although in the note on line 10 of his part of the text he writes:"τὰ ἐνέχυρα could be complete in itself and no changes in meaning would result." I do not think that the space available is large enough to have contained ἐνέχυρα[εμοσό].

E.M. Michael collected and discussed in a note on line 10 of text 12 of his Ph.D. all the instances of the verb προφήσειν in the papyri. He came to the conclusion that in all the cases studied by him προφήσειν indicates "that the person who does the "throwing" does something or is prevented from doing something that should not be done." Only two other instances of this verb have appeared since: P.Strashb. 701, 9 (provenance unknown; II B.C.) and P.Mich. inv. 4658a (to be published in this periodical. Karanis; A.D. 320). Neither the mutilated Strasbourg text nor the Michigan papyrus clarifies the meaning of προφήσειν either (the promise made by P. Carlier in his note on lines 8-9 of P.Strashb. 701 to "revenir prochainement, ailleurs, sur les divers emplois de προφήσειν et ἐπιρίσπειν " was, as far as I could establish, not kept).

32) Underneath this line there is a horizontal stroke to separate the body of the text from the subscriptions.

37) ἀπόδοσ: cf. R. Haensch, ZPE 100, 1994, 491f.
P.Mich. inv. 2848