

	<b>Peeous son of Ptolemaios</b>	ArchID 424. Version I (2013) Silke Vanbeselaere
Place	Arsinoites (Fayum), meris of Herakleides, Karanis	
Date	About AD 288-303	
Language	Greek	
Material	Ostraca	
Number of texts	34	
Type	<b>Private archive?</b>	
Collections	Formerly Ann Arbor, Michigan University; the ostraca have been returned to Cairo	
Find/Acquisition	Found during the Michigan excavations in Kom Aushim (Karanis) in 1924 in structure (house) 5002	

### Bibliography

S. BUCKING, 'On the Training of Documentary Scribes in Roman, Byzantine, and Early Islamic Egypt: A Contextualized Assessment of the Greek Evidence', *ZPE* 159 (2007), p. 229-231, 243.

The numbers in **bold** refer to *O. Mich.* I.

### Description

After the excavations held in Karanis during the winter of 1924-1925, Amundsen grouped the ostraca found in room G of structure 5002 as belonging to the 'archive of Peeous son of Ptolemaios (and family)'. After its first publication in *O. Mich.* I (1935), the archive has been reevaluated by the APIS team.<sup>1</sup> The APIS composition of the archive is what we consider a dossier rather than an archive, comprising numerous ostraca from structure 5002 but leaving out those that did not mention Peeous, while on the other hand, ostraca from other buildings mentioning Peeous were added. The archaeological context challenged us to recompose the archive: ostraca which have been found together as one batch in house 5002 (batch in room D, another in room F and a third one in room G) have all been added to the archive, because each batch contains some ostraca of Peeous and hence the entire batch may be attributed to him; ostraca from other structures have been left out.<sup>2</sup> The archive now consists of 34 ostraca (see App., where the newly added ostraca are marked by an asterisk).

The ostraca were discovered in different rooms of structure 5002 (mainly rooms D and G, one in E and two in F). The building contained at least seven rooms and various other objects were found there: glass beads (one of faience), a piece of textile, two glass oil lamps, glass shards, an altar and a writing tablet.

The ostraca date from the late third to the early fourth century AD. Precisely dated documents range from AD 288 till 303. Seventeen ostraca are receipts for the transport of grain to a harbour (**412, 418, 424, 426, 430, 435, 440, 445, 446, 448, 449, 452, 455, 460, 467, 476, 549**). Further texts are receipts for the delivery of grain (**168, 169, 560**) and chaff (**182, 184, 186**), a tax receipt (**136**), a list of names (**580**), a list of donkey drivers and dike workers (**337**), two

<sup>1</sup> See the APIS website <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/a/apis?page=index> and specifically for the archive of Peeous (according to APIS):

[http://quod.lib.umich.edu/a/apis?rgn1=apis\\_conn&select1=all&q1=peeous&op2=And&rgn2=ic\\_all&select2=all&q2=&op3=And&rgn3=ic\\_all&select3=all&q3=&view=thumbnail&type=boolean&from=index](http://quod.lib.umich.edu/a/apis?rgn1=apis_conn&select1=all&q1=peeous&op2=And&rgn2=ic_all&select2=all&q2=&op3=And&rgn3=ic_all&select3=all&q3=&view=thumbnail&type=boolean&from=index)

<sup>2</sup> We left out the ostraca **464, 496, 137** and **439**, because they were not found in structure 5002. Also **213** of AD 342, found in room A of structure 5002, has not been included, since it does not belong to the period AD 275-325 and has no obvious link to the archive.

money accounts (**103, 110**), an account of wool (**255**), a memorandum concerning meat (**265**), a receipt for delivery of eleven doors and a *πτυχή* (**258**), a writing exercise (**697**) and a nametag of Peeous (**644**).<sup>3</sup>

The archive was discussed by BUCKING 2007, who linked the writing tablet found in room E to **697** and **258**: the former ostrakon discovered in room G is apparently a writing exercise; the latter from room D is a receipt for delivery of eleven doors and a *πτυχή* (a writing tablet according to Bucking).<sup>4</sup> These three elements prompted Bucking to consider it a public archive of a writing office. However, the acquisition of a writing tablet does not necessarily point to a public building and/or archive.<sup>5</sup> Bucking's view also does not account for the centrality of Peeous and his father Ptolemaios in the archive. Moreover, *πτυχή* (a variant of *πτύξ*) found in **258**, is an uncommon word for writing tablet in the papyri, that may also denote the leaf (/leaves) of a folding door, which would better explain why it is delivered with eleven doors.

In our view these ostraca belong to a private archive, possibly a professional private archive. Peeous is the central actor, as he appears in about half of the ostraca.<sup>6</sup> In five texts he is called a *σακκοφόρος*, a porter who loaded sacks of grain from the granary onto donkeys and/or onto the ships.<sup>7</sup> He acts as an agent of his father Ptolemaios in five ostraca,<sup>8</sup> and in one of these (**455**), he pays for himself and for his father (Πτολεμαίου ἀπερ(γαζομένου) δι(ὰ) Πην(οῦ)). In a few instances, Peeous acts as an agent for other people such as Valeria Antonia (**424** and **440**)<sup>9</sup> and Agrippinus, son of Agrippinus (**446**). Peeous, son of Ptolemaios, is further attested in documents outside the archive.<sup>10</sup> Two were found in building 5005 (**496** and **137**), excavated in the same winter of 1924-1925 in Karanis and located near structure 5002. Other documents found in building 5005 mention a brother of Peeous, Ptolemaios.<sup>11</sup> The documents and objects of 5005 resemble those of 5002 and may represent the archive of Peeous' brother, Ptolemaios.<sup>12</sup>

Archive texts

*O. Mich.* I 103, 110, 136, 168, 169, 182, 184, 186, 255, 258, 265 (= *SB* VI 9039), 337, 412, 418, 424, 426, 430, 435, 440, 445, 446, 448, 449, 452, 455, 460, 467, 476, 533, 549, 560, 580, 644, 697.

<sup>3</sup> The fragmentary ostrakon **533** is either a receipt for transport of grain (according to Amundsen) or a list of names (according to Youtie's unpublished notes).

<sup>4</sup> Bucking did not mention these eleven doors when discussing **258**.

<sup>5</sup> R.S. Bagnall, *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, Oxford, 2009, p. 11-12.

<sup>6</sup> Peeous is mentioned in seven of the thirteen ostraca of room D, in one of room F and in nine of the eighteen ostraca of room G.

<sup>7</sup> C. Adams, *Land Transport in Roman Egypt*, Oxford, 2007, p. 192. An Aurelius Peeous, son of Ptolemaios, is village head (κωμάρχης) of Karanis (*Chr. Wilck.* 186).

<sup>8</sup> **430, 439, 455, 464, 476**. In one case Peeous' brother Ptolemaios acted as an agent for their father (**448**). Youtie compared this case to that of Neilos and his father Ptolemaios in **378** (H.C. Youtie, *Scriptiunculae I*, p. 70 note 25).

<sup>9</sup> Valeria Antonia is always mentioned together with Ptolemaios, father of Peeous. A family link is plausible.

<sup>10</sup> *BGU I 286* (Aurelius Peeous, son of Ptolemaios; *sakkophoros*); **439; 533** (*sakkophoros*); **496** (*sakkophoros*); *P. Cair. Isid.* 17; *P. Cair. Isid.* 28; *P. Cair. Isid.* 10 (Peeous, son of Ptolemaios); *P. Cair. Isid.* 14 (Peeous, son of Ptolemaios). For the *P. Cair. Isid.* papyri, see the archive of Aurelius Isidoros (ArchID 34).

<sup>11</sup> According to *P. Cair. Isid.* 17, Peeous has a brother, Ptolemaios.

<sup>12</sup> A private letter to Bakchios (*P. Mich.* XV 755) was found there, as well as a wooden toy fish (see APIS-record 0000.00.7425) and some shells that were used as beads (see APIS-record 0000.07.8523).

**Text types** Tax receipts and other receipts, accounts, lists, writing exercise, memorandum and nametag = incoming and internal documents.

**Appendix** Find spots of the ostraca

<b>O. Mich. I</b>	<b>Find spot in structure</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Date (AD)</b>
<b>5002</b>			
455	Batch of room D	Receipt	296
460	Batch of room D	Receipt	298
476	Batch of room D	Receipt	299
184*	Batch of room D	Receipt	300-301
182*	Batch of room D	Receipt	301
186	Batch of room D	Receipt	303
110*	Batch of room D	Account	275-325
168	Batch of room D	Receipt	275-325
169*	Batch of room D	Receipt	275-325
255*	Batch of room D	Account	275-325
258*	Batch of room D	Receipt	275-325
337*	Batch of room D	List	275-325
580*	Batch of room D	List	275-325
265*	Room E	Memorandum	Before 284
533*	Batch of room F	Text of uncertain nature	275-325
549*	Batch of room F	Receipt	275-325
412*	Batch of room G	Receipt	288
418*	Batch of room G	Receipt	289
424	Batch of room G	Receipt	291
426	Batch of room G	Receipt	291
430	Batch of room G	Receipt	292
435	Batch of room G	Receipt	292
452*	Batch of room G	Receipt	292-294
440	Batch of room G	Receipt	293
445	Batch of room G	Receipt	293
446	Batch of room G	Receipt	293
136*	Batch of room G	Receipt	294
448	Batch of room G	Receipt	294
449*	Batch of room G	Receipt	294
467*	Batch of room G	Receipt	299
560*	Batch of room G	Receipt	275-299
644	Batch of room G	Nametag	275-299
697*	Batch of room G	Writing exercise	288-299
103*	Batch of room G	Account	275-325

\* Newly added ostraca, see the Description above.