

	<p>Petaus, village scribe of Ptolemais Hormou and surrounding villages ArchID 182. Version I (2012) Karolien Geens and Yanne Broux</p>
<p>Place Date Language Material Number of texts Type Collections Find/Acquisition</p>	<p>Arsinoites (Fayum), meris of Herakleides, Ptolemais Hormou and surrounding villages AD 182-187 (plus older documents used as second-hand paper) Greek Papyrus 134 certain, 6 uncertain Official archive (with 1 private letter) Ann Arbor, Michigan University; Cologne, Papyrussammlung Acquired in 1937 (Michigan collection)</p>

Bibliography

- H.C. YOUTIE, 'Pétaus, fils de Pétaus, ou le scribe qui ne savait pas écrire', *CdE* 41 (1966), p. 127-143.
- E. SEIDL, *Rechtsgeschichte Ägyptens als römischer Provinz*, Sankt Augustin, 1973, p. 68, no. 2.5.
- U. HAGEDORN / D. HAGEDORN / L.C. YOUTIE / H.C. YOUTIE (eds.), *Das Archiv des Petaus (Pap. Colon. 4)*, Köln - Opladen, 1969.
- O. MONTEVECCHI, *La papirologia*, Milano, 1988², p. 255 no. 48.
- The numbers in **bold** refer to *P. Petaus*.

Description

The archive of Petaus is dispersed between the library of the University of Michigan, which purchased 27 papyri through C. Schmidt in 1937 (inv. nos. 6869-6895), and the Institute of Papyrology at Cologne (inv. nos. 300-409). In a few cases, fragments of the same document are kept in both collections.

Between AD 184 and 187, Petaus, son of Petaus, was village scribe (*komogrammateus*) of Ptolemais Hormou and surrounding villages. Little is known of his personal life. He had a father also named Petaus and a brother Theon, and the family came from Karanis.¹ In the Roman period, a *komogrammateus* was never stationed at his place of residency, probably to avoid partiality.² Other examples of village scribes mentioned in the archive of Petaus confirm this.³ Thus Petaus, who came from Karanis, was stationed in Ptolemais Hormou.

Petaus' jurisdiction extended over at least five villages: Ptolemais Hormou, Kerkesoucha Hormou, Syron Kome, Psinaryo and Herakleonos Epoikion, all located in the south-eastern part of the meris of Herakleides. Perhaps the villages Tanchoiris, Pharbaitha and Exo Pseur belonged to this *komogrammateia* as well.⁴ Depending on which village a document relates to, Petaus styles himself as *komogrammateus* of that place. When several of these communities are involved, however, he uses the phrase 'komogrammateus of Ptolemais Hormou and other villages' (κωμογραμματεὺς Πτολεμαίδος Ὁρμου καὶ ἄλλων κωμῶν),⁵

¹ Youtie 1966, p. 129; *P. Petaus*, 1969, p. 18.

² Youtie 1966, p. 130-132; *P. Petaus*, 1969, p. 18-20.

³ Ischyriion and Neseus are both originally from Ptolemais Hormou but the former is active as *komogrammateus* in Tamaus, the latter in Karanis. Neseus: 10, l. 8-9 and 11-13; Ischyriion: 11, l. 7 and 10-11.

⁴ *P. Petaus*, 1969, p. 22.

⁵ This is the case for example in 52, 53, 59 and 65.

which shows that Ptolemais Hormou was the most prominent of the five.⁶

The archive consists of at least 134 texts. Six other texts (**28-30**, **32a-c**) are letters and copies of loans between people that have no direct link with Petaus or his office and are therefore uncertain. **123** and **126-127** are not part of the archive *stricto sensu*; they are older documents of which the versos have been reused to write drafts preserved in the archive of Petaus. Given their early date (AD 135 and 165, respectively), the tax receipts **124-125** were probably also preserved in the archive as second-hand paper, though their verso was never inscribed.

Most texts in the archive are public documents relating to Petaus' office of *komogrammateus* (see App.). They include incoming and outgoing documents. The former group includes official letters and other documents, often addressed to other officials (*strategos*, *basilikos grammateus*, ...) which were forwarded to Petaus. The outgoing documents are either copies of the original document or drafts in preparation of the final version, which explains why they were kept in the archive. Many papyri are inscribed on the verso as well as the recto.

Most incoming documents are letters from Petaus' superiors, consisting of the original letter addressed to the royal scribe (*basilikos grammateus*) or *strategos*, introduced by a cover letter. The matter reported in the original letter was to be dealt with by Petaus; the letter was therefore forwarded to him and ended up in his archive. Only **1** and **3**, a birth-certificate and death-certificate, are directly addressed to Petaus.⁷

The outgoing documents contain copies of Petaus' responses (**17**, **19**, **21** and **22**) to some of the forwarded applications (**19** relates to **18** while **21** relates to **20**). Other copies of original documents sent by Petaus are letters to the *strategos* listing candidates nominated for village offices and liturgies. These texts provide an interesting insight in the matters Petaus has to deal with. Some are not copies of the official reports submitted to the *strategos*, but rather lists of names and work sheets showing the various stages of a text in the process of being composed. These work sheets do not contain any title or subscription and are often inscribed on the verso of another text; several drafts may be written on the same side.⁸

⁶ P. Petaus, 1969, p. 24.

⁷ Other birth- and death-certificates (**2**, **4-8**) were forwarded by the royal scribe Hermophilos to Petaus. **9** and **24**, two petitions addressed to the royal scribe, were also dispatched to Petaus. **12**, preserved in two copies, **18**, **20** and **23** are applications addressed to the *strategos*, which were then forwarded to the office of Petaus; **25** is a letter from the *eklogistes* of the Arsinoite nome. Both texts were probably passed on to Petaus, though neither of them contains a cover letter. **17** to **23** deal with sales of unproductive (*ὑπολόγος*) land. **26** and **27** are semi-private letters addressed to Petaus concerning a man who was wrongfully nominated *presbyteros* of the *komogrammateia*.

⁸ **45-47** are lists of liturgists appointed in view of the prefect's impending visit to the Arsinoites, while **48**, preserved in two copies, both drafts, contains the names of the soldiers assigned to guard the prefect's residence while visiting the Arsinoites. **49-51** are concerned with work on dikes; **52** lists the liturgists appointed for irrigation and providing sowing seed; **53** and **54** relate to a liturgy of overseeing the collection of taxes in grain. **55-58** contain nominations for the liturgical offices of *epiploos* (responsible for ship transport of tax grain to Alexandria and delivery of grain samples). **59-65** contain lists of candidates for the liturgy of tax collection. A list of persons nominated for the liturgy of *sitologos* is found in seven documents: one is a copy of the original letter sent to the *strategos* (**59** [final version]), while six drafts of this document (**59** [draft fr. a-f]) have been preserved in the archive as well. **66-74** are lists of *demosioi* of several villages in the *komogrammateia*. In **75-78**, Petaus suggests to the *strategos* substitute supervisors of estate land. **76-78** relate to the replacement of a certain Horos, fatherless, son of Tamounis alias Moros. **10** and **77** belong to a *tomos synkollesimos* consisting of copies of documents sent to the *strategos*. **79-83** are lists of persons and

The archive contains only one private outgoing letter, written by Theon, Petaus' brother, concerning a loan they received from a certain Heron.

Among the accounts and lists, lists of inhabitants are most numerous: they deal with people from Ptolemais Hormou (**91-99**), Syron Kome (**100-107**), Kerkesoucha Orous (**108-117**), Herakleonos Epoikion (**116-117**) and Psinaryo (**108**, col. V). **89** and **118-120** are lists of names without clear purpose. **33-37** are accounts of expenses; **38-39** are accounts of income and expenses involved with the office of *komogrammateus*. **42** is a list of taxes for the villages of the meris of Herakleides. **43-44** are tax accounts, on the basis of which the taxes on land owners were determined. The large portion of lists in this archive can be explained by the duties of the *komogrammateus*, who dealt with taxes and land ownership.

Finally, two writing exercises of Petaus can be considered internal documents: **121** and **122 c-d** are written on a papyrus with two accounts, with no apparent relation to each other, and they show that Petaus, though village scribe, was in fact not literate. In **121** Petaus strenuously copied his signature 12 times in a clumsy handwriting. He made some telltale mistakes, e.g. in the abbreviation sign after $\kappa\omega\mu\omicron\gamma\rho$ the usual J is written backwards as Z . In l. 5 he forgot the augment of the verb and he repeated this mistake in all his following attempts, which shows that he merely copied the previous line without knowing what it actually meant.⁹ **122 d** is similar, but contains only two lines, both reading Πεταῦς ἐπιδέδωκα ('I, Petaus, have handed in'). Contemporaries must have considered him a 'slow writer'. When Petaus was asked to investigate the case of a certain Ischyriion, who was charged of not being capable of practising the office of village scribe on account of being illiterate ($\acute{\alpha}\gamma\rho\acute{\alpha}\mu\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$), he retorts that Ischyriion subscribes all documents coming from his office.¹⁰ Yet he does label him as illiterate ($\acute{\alpha}\gamma\rho\acute{\alpha}\mu\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$).¹¹ His description of Ischyriion fits Petaus himself. Apparently it was possible to function as *komogrammateus* with a limited knowledge of written Greek. This does seem odd, considering his job description as a village scribe. But as Youtie remarks, where would the administration find a new literate village scribe every three years in a largely illiterate society?¹² He figures Petaus must have had some help and points to his brother Theon.¹³ The acknowledgment of loan kept in the archive (**31**) contains a subscription by Theon: 'I, Theon, wrote the greater part also for Petaus'. Since it was drafted during the first year that Petaus resided as the village scribe in Ptolemais Hormou and the creditor they owed money to lived in the village under Petaus' jurisdiction, Theon probably accompanied his brother for the duration of his term of office.

Archive texts *P. Petaus* 1-27, 31, 33-125; *uncertain*: 28-30, 32a-c.

85-87 also contain names of liturgists; **86** is preserved in three copies. **88** is a list of liturgies and names, apparently used to prepare official lists submitted by the *komogrammateus*. **90** is a list of candidates for an unknown liturgy. In **84**, finally, Petaus suggests to the *strategos* a certain Miysis to replace Petesouchos, son of Orsenouphis, letter carrier. The *strategos* had received a petition from the village elders of Kerkesoucha Orous, requesting him to appoint someone from another village of the *komogrammateia* as letter carrier and ordered the village scribe Petaus to deal with this matter.

⁹ Youtie 1966, p. 129.

¹⁰ **11**, 9 and 35-37 (AD 184, Arsinoite nome).

¹¹ **11**, 35.

¹² Youtie 1966, p. 137.

¹³ Youtie 1966, p. 142.

Text types Letters, petitions, accounts, lists, nominations, birth and death certificates, writing exercises (see App.) =

- Incoming documents: incoming correspondence (original letters addressed or forwarded to Petaus and cover letters) and petitions (addressed or forwarded to Petaus).
- Outgoing documents: major part of the archive: drafts and copies of outgoing correspondence, reports, lists and nominations.
- Internal documents: documents for strict internal use: writing exercises by Petaus; second-hand paper.

Appendix Typology of texts

