

## P.Giss.69: evidence for the supplying of stone transport operations in Roman Egypt and the production of fifty-foot monolithic column shafts

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Students of Roman sculpture and architecture have paid scant attention to the small corpus of papyri concerned with quarrying and stone transport operations in Roman Egypt. This is unfortunate since these documents contain much useful information regarding the availability of several varieties of prestige stone (granite, breccia, alabaster, etc.) employed for sculpture and architectural elements. This note examines one such papyrus (*P.Giss.69*), discussing its implications for our understanding of the prestige stone supply. The document's principal interest lies in the fact that there is a strong possibility that a column shaft mentioned in the text can be identified as one of those intended for use in the Temple of the Deified Trajan in Rome. If correct, this identification can be used to resolve a long-standing dispute about the date of the temple's construction.

The document in question is a grain requisition from Heptakomia that formed part of the official correspondence of Apollonios, *strategos* of the Heptakomia Apollonipolites nome.<sup>1</sup> It was acquired by the Museum des Oberhessischen Geschichtsvereins in Giessen in 1902, and published in 1912.<sup>2</sup> Below is the text as edited by Kornemann, followed by an English translation:

[.....] 'Α[πολλωνίωι τῶι] τειμωιάτωι  
 χαίρειν.  
 Χαιρήμοωα τὸν ἀναδιδόντα σοι τὸ ἐπιστό-  
 [λι]ον τοῦτο οὐκ ἀγνοεῖς, ἀδελφε· καὶ γὰρ πέ-  
 5 ρυσι ἐπὶ τὴν παράλημψιν τῶν ἱματίων  
 αὐτὸν παρὰ σοὶ κατέλειψα καὶ νῦν δὲ πρὸς  
 παράλημψιν κρειθῆς ἔπεμψα αὐτὸν, ᾧ  
 παρακαλῶ ἐν πάσι σπουδάσαι καὶ πάσαν τὴν  
 10 οὔσαν ἐν τῷ ὑπὸ σοὶ ν[ομῶ] κ[ρειθῆν] ἐν  
 τάχει αὐτῷ ἐπίστειλαι καὶ βωθήθειαν δῶναι,  
 ἴν[α δι]ὰ σπ[ο]υδῆς ἐμβαλόμενος πάσαν τὴν  
 [κρειθῆν] τα]χέως εἰς Καινὴν παρακομίση,  
 ἐπεὶ διὰ τὴν τοῦ πεντηκοντάποδος στύλου  
 15 καταγωγὴν πλείστα κτήνη ἔχομεν καὶ  
 ἥδη σχεδὸν κρειθῆ λειπόμεθα· πλείστον  
 μοί, ἀδελφε, καὶ ἐν τούτῳ παρέξιη, ἐά[ν ἡ]  
 κρειθῆ ταχέως .[....].ισγένηται.  
 ('Ἐτους) γ̄ Ἀδριανοῦ Καίσαρος τοῦ κυρίου ...] γ̄

[ἌΠ]ΟΛΛΩΝΙΩΙ ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΩΙ ἙΠΤΑΚΩΜΙΑΣ

1 This was a short-lived administrative district situated between the Lykopolite and Aphroditopolite nomes in Upper Egypt. See A. Calderini, *Dizionario dei nomi geografici e topografici dell'Egitto greco-romano* vol.1, fasc.2 (Madrid 1966) 159-60.

2 See E. Kornemann and P. Meyer, *Griechische Papyri im Museum des Oberhessischen Geschichtsvereins zu Giessen* Band 1, Heft 3 (Leipzig-Berlin 1912) 56-58 and Tafel 10. For an English translation of the text, see A. Johnson, *Roman Egypt* in T. Frank (ed.), *An economic survey of ancient Rome* 3 (1936) 625-26. The papyrus was acquired by the Museum from a dealer at Eshmunên, ancient Hermopolis Magna, where Apollonios had substantial holdings. For details of the acquisition of this and the other documents in the Apollonios archive, see E. Kornemann and P. Meyer, *ibid.* Band 1, Heft 1 (1912) vii-viii.