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# New Kingdom Hieratic Papyri in the Collection of the Vatican Museums

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## ABSTRACT

The Vatican collection of New Kingdom hieratic documents is not particularly large, though its few holdings possess great philological and museological interest and represent a valuable witness to New Kingdom hieratic production. The materials in the collection consist of a few fragmentary administrative papyri and a magical papyrus of which only the recto has been published. It is not possible to reconstruct the acquisition history of these hieratic papyri, though they do appear in the catalogue of the museum prepared by Orazio Marucchi in 1891. Currently, all the New Kingdom hieratic papyri in the museum are being prepared for detailed publication as part of the *Progetto Orazio Marucchi*. The goal of this project is to improve accessibility to the entire collection of Egyptian papyri preserved in the Vatican Museums; to furnish new digital reconstructions of all these manuscripts; and to prepare a new catalogue that will complete the work begun by Annie Gasse in the nineties.

*“... lo studio delle antichità orientali e sopra tutto delle egizie e delle assire, facendoci conoscere da vicino i due popoli più celebri con i quali furono a contatto gli ebrei, illustra sempre più il gran quadro storico della Bibbia e serve mirabilmente a confermare l'antichità e l'autenticità di quel sacro volume.”*

MARUCCHI (1893: 15).

## 1. HISTORY OF THE COLLECTION<sup>1</sup> [A. A.]

The collection of Egyptian papyri in the Vatican Museums, formerly held in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (BAV), came into being in the last years of the pontificate of Pius VII

(1800–1823) and the first years of the pontificate of Leo XII (1823–1829). The Prefect of the Library at that time, Angelo Mai,<sup>2</sup> provided a brief outline of the papyri's acquisition in his introduction to

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<sup>1</sup> We would like to thank Claudia Montuschi (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana) for her valuable assistance.

<sup>2</sup> A. Mai held the position of Prefect of the Library from 1819 until 1833, when he was appointed Secretary of Propaganda Fide. During his time as Prefect, he worked to modernise the Vatican's typography.

Jean-François Champollion's (1825: VI) catalogue of the papyri.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, this introduction does not permit a detailed reconstruction of the acquisition history of the materials.<sup>4</sup>

The first group of Egyptian papyri to enter the collection were part of a gift from Angelo da Pofi, a missionary of the Order of Friars Minor who had just returned from a twelve-year long mission in Luxor, Upper Egypt. The items were given to the Butler of the Apostolic Palace, Cardinal Antonio Maria Frosini, and then delivered on 9th March 1818 to the first Custodian of the BAV, Monsignor Francesco Antonio Baldi.<sup>5</sup> The gifted items consisted of “*un papiro grande non svolto*” in a tin scroll; “*una scatola bislunga contenente altri due papiri più piccoli non svolti*”; 43 other papyrus fragments; and a number of miscellaneous items.<sup>6</sup> F.A. Baldi was commissioned to unroll the papyri in May and July 1819,<sup>7</sup> and the manuscripts were subsequently placed between two panels of glass in wooden frames before they were put on display in the entrance hall of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

A few years later, this original collection of items was further enriched by some papyrus scrolls donated by the famous Paduan traveller Giovanni Battista Belzoni. These were given to the Secretary of State, Cardinal Ercole Consalvi,<sup>8</sup> who arranged for their delivery to the BAV.<sup>9</sup> G.B. Belzoni had never met E. Consalvi, but he had spent time as a youth in Rome in an abandoned attempt at the priesthood, and it was G.B. Belzoni's respect for the church and E. Consalvi's position that led to his donation. This is evident from a letter written by G.B. Belzoni to the Cardinal on 26th April 1818, which marked the beginning of an intense correspondence: “*Eminentissimo, il rispetto che ho sempre mai nutrito per la Santa Corte di Roma, come pure per le persone culte ed amatori delle Scienze; Incoragito dalla fama delle bontà di Sua Eminenza, mi presi l'ardire di presentare l'inchiusa dichiarazione delle varie scoperte da me fatte in queste contrade...*”.<sup>10</sup> G.B. Belzoni had an interest in forging closer relations with the major European powers in order to finance his forthcoming travels.<sup>11</sup> In a subsequent letter dated to early 1819, G.B. Belzoni informed the Cardinal that he planned to send

3 See also Tulli (1941: XXIX–XXXIII); Lefevre (1941: 43–435).

4 Cardinali (2020: 133–172).

5 Arch. Bibl. 12, ff. 250r–258v.

6 Arch. Bibl. 12, 253r and 250r. For a more extensive discussion of the accession of these papyri into the Vatican collections, see Schiano (2020: 53–533).

7 Arch. Bibl. 12, ff. 254r–257v.

8 Cardinal E. Consalvi, as Secretary of State, was also appointed pro-librarian, meaning that he was the most eminent figure in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. A. Mai enjoyed a privileged relationship with the Cardinal, which facilitated A. Mai's work in the Library. See Cardinali (2020: 145–146).

9 G.B. Belzoni mentions a box containing seven papyri, three of which were unrolled and intact; two braids of an ancient wig found among some mummies; and some papyrus fragments written in Greek. By contrast, the catalogues prepared by A. Mai (1825) and Orazio Marucchi (1902) mention twelve papyri from G.B. Belzoni. Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine the extent of the gift on the basis of the surviving documents. It is not clear either when the items reached E. Consalvi, though a letter from Cardinal E. Consalvi dated 1st January 1820 mentions a box (of papyri) received by the Papal Legate of Ferrara; see Mercati (1943–1944: 311). The provenance of the items appears to be Luxor, a determination based on a number of internal characteristics. On their possible origins in Elephantine, see Schiano (2020: 549–550, fn. 35).

10 Mercati (1943–1944: 294).

11 Schiano (2020: 533).

a gift of “alcuni papiri manoscritti egizi”<sup>12</sup> to E. Consalvi as a sign of respect and esteem.<sup>13</sup> Unable at the time to travel to Rome in person, G.B. Belzoni delivered the papyri at the end of 1819 to Enrico Falconi, the Papal Consul in Venice, who handed them over to Cardinal Tommaso Arezzo, the Papal Legate of Ferrara, who in turn delivered them to E. Consalvi on 4th January 1820.<sup>14</sup> A. Mai later had the G.B. Belzoni scrolls unrolled and put on display next to the earlier A. da Pofi manuscripts; some of these G.B. Belzoni manuscripts, described as “assai grandi e di pitture adorni”,<sup>15</sup> were probably *Books of the Dead*.

Under the brief pontificate of Leo XII, A. Mai was again able to enlarge the collection, this time with some purchases that were described as “minor”.<sup>16</sup> In 1823–1824, he acquired some papyri from the Roman priest Giuseppe Leonardi,<sup>17</sup> Chaplain of Cardinal Frosini, and a “bell’intiero papiro geratico, benché non grande”<sup>18</sup> from a shop in Trieste belonging to Carlo d’Ottavio Fontana, a collector and dealer in Egyptian antiquities.<sup>19</sup> The description of this papyrus is too short for any identification of the papyrus or its genre to be made, but the fact that no vignettes are mentioned in the description suggests that the acquisition was a non-funerary text.

In May 1824, the English painter, archaeologist, and traveller Edward Dodwell offered the

BAV two hieratic papyri, together with a larger papyrus written in hieroglyphs.<sup>20</sup> The items were purchased for 350 scudi thanks to the generosity of Benedetto Colonna Barberini di Sciarra, Prefect of the Apostolic Palaces, and at the urging of A. Mai. It is not possible to identify the two hieratic papyri, but A. Mai carefully described the hieroglyphic papyrus, which can be identified as P. Vatican 38569, the *Book of the Dead* of Aseturet.<sup>21</sup> A. Mai’s later attempts to acquire further papyri were hampered by a lack of funds and the refractory policy towards Egyptian antiquities of the Camerlengo at the time, the Cardinal Bartolomeo Pacca.<sup>22</sup>

Seeking a more thorough understanding of the Egyptian papyri under his care, A. Mai invited the famous decipherer of hieroglyphic writing J.-F. Champollion to Rome; he had already been in Turin to examine the antiquities belonging to the “Drovettiana” and he was asked to draw up a complete inventory of the entire Vatican collection in 1825. His initial description of the collection was as follows: “Il lavoro è meraviglioso per il tempo in cui fu scritto, cioè nei primi albori degli studi egittologici ... Purtroppo quella descrizione non può considerarsi come sufficiente e neppur come esatta dopo i grandi progressi dell’egittologia da quel tempo fino a noi.”<sup>23</sup> J.-F. Champollion’s catalogue was later translated from French into

12 Mercati (1943–1944: 298).

13 G.B. Belzoni wrote as much to E. Consalvi on 20th November 1819: “Circa ai Papiris suplico che siano accettati come picciol tributo del grande rispetto che ho sempre mai nutrito per V.E.” See Mercati (1943–1944: 304).

14 For further discussion, see Schiano (2020: 533).

15 Champollion (1825: V).

16 In July 1822, A. Mai had sought to purchase an edition of the *Description de l’Égypte* for the BAV, recognising the value of such a publication. The price quoted, however, was not acceptable to the Vatican City State administration at the time (Arch. Bibl. 106, f. 146rv.).

17 Arch. Bibl. 65, f. 173r (receipt dated 23 October 1823).

18 Champollion (1825: V–VI).

19 Arch. Bibl. 106, ff. 226r–236r: 235r.

20 Arch. Bibl. 13, ff. 171r–173r (May–June 1824).

21 Mai (1825: 16, no. 1); Marucchi (1891: 116–119); Gasse (1993: 67–69, pl. XLVI, no. 56); Schiano (2020: 535).

22 Lefevre (1941: 429–454); Amenta (2010: 17–33).

23 Marucchi (1893: 5).



Italian by A. Mai, who published it with an introductory note in 1825.<sup>24</sup>

Two different editions of J.-F. Champollion's catalogue exist in the BAV. The first one (Vat. Lat. 9639),<sup>25</sup> featuring A. Mai's handwritten notes, contains quotations from Greek authors on the customs of the Egyptians as well as a handwritten sheet of paper by J.-F. Champollion that bears a complete list of the Egyptian months in Egyptian and in French, together with numerals in hieroglyphic and hieratic writing.<sup>26</sup> The second edition (Ferr. 1004, *olim* Vat. Lat. 10429), which belonged to the Vatican *Scriptor Orientalis* Michelangelo Lanci (a fierce opponent of both J.-F. Champollion and A. Mai),<sup>27</sup> and before him to the Vatican *Scriptor Graecus* Girolamo Amati, was acquired by the BAV through a testamentary disposition by Marquis Gaetano Ferrajoli.<sup>28</sup> This second version is particularly interesting, as it contains numerous annotations by M. Lanci and G. Amati,<sup>29</sup> which consist of critical comments directed against A. Mai and J.-F. Champollion:<sup>30</sup> “*Bella primizia della costosissima nuova tipografia*

*Vaticana; libello pieno di astio e di veleno contro i letterari più benemeriti della biblioteca Vaticana e di Roma; libello pieno zeppo di spropositi bestiali in italiano, in latino e specialmente in greco; il che dimostra all'ultima evidenza la bravura del direttore, principe assoluto.*”<sup>31</sup> G. Ferrajoli also added numerous annotations to the text and transcribed all of A. Mai's annotations from the first manuscript (Vat. Lat. 9639) in red ink. G. Ferrajoli also directed the following comment, in his own hand, against M. Lanci's earlier “slander”: “*Ad onta di queste ciance del Lanci, il sistema dello Champollion è seguito da tutti i dotti e del suo niuno rammentasi!*”<sup>32</sup>

In 1838, most of the Egyptian papyri in the BAV were transferred to the newly established Museo Gregoriano Egizio, which was officially inaugurated in February 1839. Years later, Father Abbot Giuseppe Cozza Luzi, Deputy Librarian of the BAV, and Stefano Ciccolini, its first Custodian, delivered to the Vatican Museums some further Egyptian papyri that had had not been transferred in 1838 and which had remained in cabinets for

24 Mai (1825). The catalogue was subsequently translated into German by Ludwig Bachmann (1827).

25 “*Ma il Catalogo edito dal Mai neppur comprende tutti i papiri che oggi si custodiscono nel Vaticano: perché alcuni forse furono trascurati come di minore importanza, ed altri certamente vennero dopo*”; see Marucchi (1893: 7).

26 These notes may be related to the lectures about hieroglyphics that J.-F. Champollion gave to the Count of Funchal in Rome; see Schiano (2020: 538 and 541, fig. 9). So writes O. Marucchi (1902: 258): “*Questo foglio che dovette essere iscritto dallo Champollion per soddisfare la curiosità del Mai, onde venne da lui religiosamente conservato insieme al libro, benché contenga nulla di nuovo per gli studi egittologici, è pure un documento di curiosità letteraria; giacché ci conserva probabilmente una lezione di egittologia improvvisa e scritta dal fondatore di questa scienza innanzi al famoso Prefetto della Biblioteca Vaticana.*”

27 Vian (2017: 475–486).

28 This copy was damaged during the flooding of the river Tiber in 1873. It was purchased by G. Ferrajoli in 1874.

29 Amati (1828).

30 The interpretation of hieroglyphics sparked a heated dispute between J.-F. Champollion and M. Lanci, who was concerned that J.-F. Champollion's results might disprove the events described in the Bible. A. Mai sided with J.-F. Champollion. On this controversy, see among others: Schiano (2020: 542); D'Ottone Rambach (2020: 244–253). Bracco (1942: 177–185; 1943) discusses all of J.-F. Champollion's detractors and supporters in Italy; one of them was Riccardi di Oneglia, who J.-F. Champollion referred to as “Jupiter asinari!”; these last two bibliographical references are the publication of the first forty pages of Giobatta Bracco's dissertation, discussed in 1911 at the R. Università di Napoli, the manuscript of which has never been published in full, see Bracco (1911).

31 So wrote M. Lanci on the title page: *Ferr.* 1004, p. 1r.

32 Marucchi (1893: 7).

some forty years.<sup>33</sup> Among these was the so-called *Great Book of the Dead* (P. Vatican 48832), published for the first time in 1888 on the occasion of the priestly Jubilee of Pope Leo XIII by O. Marucchi, the General Director of the Museo Gregoriano Egizio at the time.<sup>34</sup> O. Marucchi had also worked on a complete catalogue of the Vatican papyri, and this was also presented to the pope on his jubilee.<sup>35</sup> A volume by Annie Gasse (1993) on the entirety of the hieroglyphic and hieratic papyri in the Vatican collection appeared about one hundred years later, as the first volume in the series *Aegyptiaca Gregoriana*.<sup>36</sup> A subsequent volume in the series, also edited by A. Gasse (2001), was dedicated to the *Great Book of the Dead*.<sup>37</sup>

The museum's next acquisition of hieratic materials took place in 1951, when the hieratic papyrus of Tadimenu (Inv. 37481), along with

the entire archaeological collection of Carlo Grassi, was donated to the Vatican Museums by his widow Nedda Grassi.<sup>38</sup> Then, in 1974, on the occasion of the re-opening of the new Museo Gregoriano Egizio,<sup>39</sup> the museum's director Monsignor Gianfranco Nolli gave notice of the so-called "Papiro del restauro (Inv. 25039)". The papyrus' name derives from the fact that it was found, during the restoration process, rolled up inside a hollow bitumen-covered wooden statuette depicting Osiris (Inv. 19651).<sup>40</sup>

The most recent addition to the papyrus collection dates back to 1982, when the collection of the Museo Biblico (consisting of the Egyptian and Near Eastern antiquities held by the Pontificio Istituto Biblico in Rome), which had been built up since 1907 by the Rector Leopold Fonk, was deposited in the Vatican Museums.<sup>41</sup> The

33 Gasse (1993). A fund of *Papyri Vaticanae* remain in the BAV; these consist of Latin, Greek and Coptic papyri; two papyri in Demotic (Pap. Vat. Dem. 1 and Pap. Borg. Dem. 1); and one Aramaic papyrus. In addition, the Pap. Borg. Dem. 1 would appear to be a fragment of the demotic P. Vatican 38597. A (part of a contract) preserved in the Vatican Museums. This papyrus is currently being studied by Elena L. Hertel as part of the *Progetto Orazio Marucchi*. For a recent brief presentation of the demotic papyri in the Vatican Museums, see Archidona Ramirez & Hertel (2019).

34 Marucchi (1888). O. Marucchi exhibited the papyrus in 1924 in 80 frames in the last room of the Museo Gregoriano Egizio.

35 The catalogue consists of two parts: the first part, describing 17 well-preserved papyri, was presented at the Congress of Oriental Studies in Stockholm in September 1889; see Marucchi (1889). The second part, describing 85 fragmentary papyri in a worse state of preservation (listed under 138 catalogue numbers), is dated two years later; see Marucchi (1891). The first catalogue prepared by Enrico Fabiani in collaboration with O. Marucchi and dated to 1880–1882 also listed the museum's collection of papyri, all of which were exhibited in the new Museo Gregoriano Egizio. Marucchi's catalogue (1902: 255–303) states that they were all on display in Room VIII, "Sala dei papiri," where he counted 28 wall frames, plus another 6 in the two previous rooms.

36 Some Gasse (1993) fragmentary papyri are missing from the catalogue; these have recently been identified and inventoried: Inv. 38585, *Book of the Dead*; Inv. 38595, administrative papyrus, written in abnormal hieratic, recently published by J.J. Archidona Ramirez (2018: 29–46); Inv. 48829, *Book of the Dead*; Inv. D7287.6.1–6, *Book of the Dead*; Inv. D7288.8.1–8, *Book of the Dead*; Inv. D7289.5.1–5, *Book of the Dead*; Inv. 57837, administrative, hieratic fragments; Inv. 57838, figured fragment; Inv. 57839, fragment; Inv. 57840, fragment. The papyrus bearing the *Book of the Dead* Inv. 48823 was also missing from A. Gasse's (1993) catalogue; though its inventory number appears as no. 23 in the catalogue, this is actually a typing error for Inv. 48832 (*Great Book of the Dead*). The unpublished *Books of the Dead* are very fragmentary but are being collated as part of the *Progetto Orazio Marucchi*, see Chap. 2.

37 On this document, see also Gasse (2001); Gasse (2002).

38 Bosticco (1953: 209–221). On this donation, see Amenta (2009: 84–85).

39 On the new Museo Gregoriano Egizio, designed by G. Nolli, see Amenta (2009: 87–89).

40 F. Dati reported the discovery on 21st October 1965 during the restoration process; see Nolli (1979: 120). The papyrus, which contains several spells from the *Book of the Dead*, was later published by Faiza Haykal (1983).

41 The collection of Ancient Near Eastern materials was recently published by Amenta et al. (2022); a volume dedicated to the Biblico's collection of Egyptian antiquities is currently in progress. See also Gilbert (2009); Vattuone (2017: 15–28); Briffa (2022: 31–36).

collection included a number of fragments from a single *Book of the Dead* that belonged to the late Tasheritenmin, daughter of Nesykhonsu.<sup>42</sup>

The Vatican papyrus collection has formed a part of the *Progetto Orazio Marucchi* since 2012. As mentioned at the beginning, the information regarding the original nucleus of the collection of Egyptian papyri in the museum is too sketchy to allow us to state with certainty when and how the Vatican New Kingdom hieratic manuscripts were acquired.

## 2. THE PROGETTO ORAZIO MARUCCHI [A.A.]

The Vatican papyrus collection consists of 90 manuscripts in 50 frames; for the most part, these are held in storage.<sup>43</sup> The collection consists of a variety of texts that cover the span of ancient Egyptian history—from the Old Kingdom to the Roman Period—and which range from hieroglyphic to Demotic. The state of preservation of the manuscripts varies considerably. Some are perfectly preserved, while many others are in a highly fragmentary state. In some cases, the papyri reflect modern assemblages—a veritable *éclatement* of fragments scattered in haphazard fashion across multiple frames.<sup>44</sup> (fig. 1, 2 and 3) These interventions were undoubtedly carried out when the manuscripts entered the BAV and then the new Museo Gregoriano Egizio. As a result of these undertakings, however, it is very difficult to offer a reliable overview of the papyri in the collection. The division of material across several frames also requires scholars to make complicated

collations before they can even begin to work on most manuscripts, while collages made in the past are largely irreversible, making it impossible to correct for earlier errors.

The *Progetto Orazio Marucchi* stems from the need to improve accessibility to the entire collection of Egyptian papyri preserved in the Vatican Museums. It will also provide new digital reconstructions of all the manuscripts. Finally, a new catalogue will complete the work begun by A. Gasse in the nineties.<sup>45</sup> Launched in 2012 under the direction of Alessia Amenta (Curator of the Reparto Antichità Egizie e del Vicino Oriente) and Florence Albert, the project represents a collaboration between the Paper Restoration Laboratory in the Vatican Museums, the Diagnostic Laboratory for Conservation of the Vatican Museums, and several scholars with different areas of expertise.<sup>46</sup>

As part of the project, the entire collection, of which the hieratic pieces are the standouts, is being re-numbered.<sup>47</sup> The most fragmentary papyri, which consist of dozens and dozens of manuscripts scattered mainly across three frames, are also in the process of being identified. The project will use software processing to collate each of these individual manuscripts into a single “virtual frame”. As a result, the new catalogue will reflect not just the state of the papyri as they currently stand in their 50 frames but will also include these virtual reconstructions. The history of the conservation of the manuscripts, from their acquisition by the BAV to the present day, will also be a significant component of the new catalogue. With the

<sup>42</sup> The fragments are possibly related to papyrus Gasse no. 33, Inv. 38601.2.1–2 (under study). The inventory numbers of the fragments are D7287, D7288, and D7289.

<sup>43</sup> Only two papyri are exhibited in Room II of the Museo Gregoriano Egizio; they are the so-called *Papiro del restauro* (Inv. 25039, Gasse no. 10), and the *Book of the Dead* (Inv. 38569, Gasse no. 56).

<sup>44</sup> Thus Marucchi (1902: 269): “Avvertiamo che taluni frammenti furono malamente separati gli uni dagli altri, come si noterà nei singoli luoghi, ma non si è creduto prudente di ricongiungerli; perché attesa la estrema fragilità dei papiri medesimi essi potevano essere ulteriormente danneggiati.”

<sup>45</sup> Gasse (1993).

<sup>46</sup> Sara Demichelis, Elena L. Hertel, Juan J. Archidona Ramirez†, and Daniel M. Méndez-Rodríguez.

<sup>47</sup> On the *Progetto Orazio Marucchi*, see Albert (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2022b); see also Méndez-Rodríguez (2018), Archidona Ramirez (2018), Archidona Ramirez & Hertel (2019, 2021).



collaboration of the Paper Restoration Laboratory, a report on the state of preservation of the papyri has been drawn up, in order to better present also the history of the conservation approach to papyri over time (see Chapter 2.1).

The project itself is named after O. Marucchi, the *Direttore Speciale del Museo Egizio e Archeologo dei Musei Vaticani* from 1895 until his death in 1931. O. Marucchi also published the first catalogue of papyri in the Museo Gregoriano Egizio.<sup>48</sup> He was trained as a Christian archaeologist and was undoubtedly the foremost student of Giovanni Battista de Rossi, the father of modern Christian archaeology. His collaboration with the Vatican Museums dates back to 1879, when E. Fabiani, the previous director of the Museo Gregoriano Egizio,<sup>49</sup> appointed him to help compile a catalogue of the entirety of the museum's

collection. The nature of this assignment inevitably led to an Egyptological concentration,<sup>50</sup> while the death of E. Fabiani in 1883 left him to complete and publish their work alone.<sup>51</sup> In 1885, Pope Leo XIII appointed O. Marucchi as “*Scrittore per la lingua latina per la Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana e archeologo dei Musei Pontifici*” and invited him to participate in the Congress of Orientalists in Stockholm in 1889, “*dove l'autore (Marucchi) ebbe l'onore di essere inviato a presentare alcune pubblicazioni di egittologia da lui fatte per conto della Biblioteca Vaticana*”<sup>52</sup> (which publications included the first part of the catalogue of papyri in the Museo Gregoriano Egizio).<sup>53</sup> O. Marucchi was devoted to the study, publication, and preservation of the collection, and his general catalogue remains a valuable reference to this day.



Fig. 1. Frame containing fragments of papyrus glued together aesthetically (© Governatorato dello S.C.V. - Direzione dei Musei)

<sup>48</sup> Marucchi (1893); see also O. Marucchi (1891), who describes 17 manuscripts in detail.

<sup>49</sup> E. Fabiani (1815–1883), a clergyman, a scholar in archaeology and oriental languages, as well as in Etruscan language, belonged to the cultured community of the Rome of his time. He was in charge of the catalogue of the Vatican Egyptian antiquities, in which he had always been very interested because of the connections with the biblical world.

<sup>50</sup> There are numerous archive documents, in which O. Marucchi asked for Egyptological books to train himself in the subject.

<sup>51</sup> The collaboration with E. Fabiani stopped at the first four of the ten rooms of the museum at the time and covered the years 1880, 1881 and 1882. For the complete catalogue, see Marucchi (1899: 5): “*Ma essendo che il nostro museo non era mai stato soggetto di illustrazione speciale, questo catalogo doveva esser destinato eziandio all’uso degli studiosi che visitano con attenzione tutto il museo vaticano, i quali non troverebbero nelle ordinarie descrizioni di esso cenni sufficienti sulle antichità egiziane; e perciò doveva redigersi non già sotto di forma strettamente scientifica e per i soli egittologi, ma in modo facile e piano e con le opportune spiegazioni.*”

<sup>52</sup> Marucchi (1899: 5).

<sup>53</sup> Marucchi (1889).

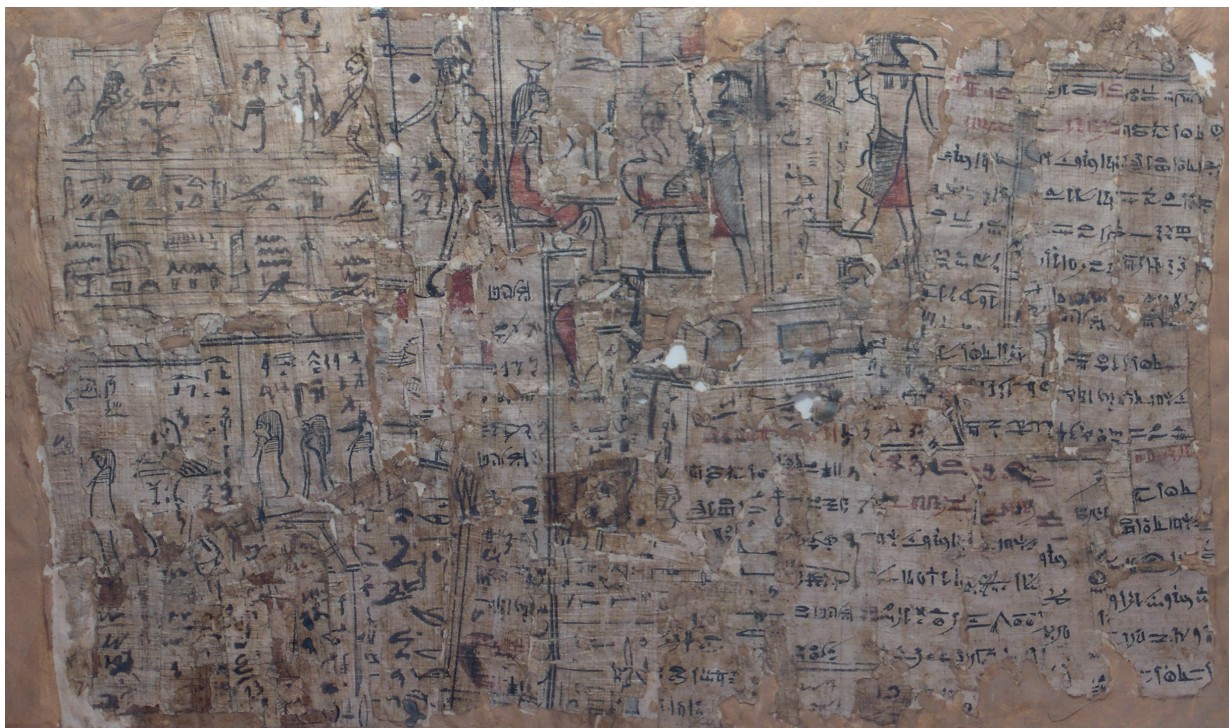


Fig. 2. Frame containing fragments of papyrus glued together "de façon anarchique" (© Governatorato dello S.C.V. – Direzione dei Musei)

## 2.1. The conservation papyri project in the Vatican Collection [C. FdP.]

In tandem with the *Progetto Orazio Marucchi*, a project to preserve the papyri held by the Vatican has commenced in collaboration with the Paper Restoration Laboratory and the Diagnostic Laboratory for Conservation in the Vatican Museums, as well as other experts in the field. The main objectives of this project are to preserve these materials according to the most up-to-date practices, and to reconstruct their previous conservation history. The Egyptian papyri in the Museo Gregoriano Egizio were previously kept by the BAV, whose professional conservation standards were very high for that time.

### 2.1.1. History

The early conservation performed on the Egyptian papyri in the Vatican collection is poorly documented. In his introduction to Champollion's 1825 catalogue, A. Mai briefly discusses the precarious condition of the manuscripts, a result not only of their age but also damage caused during their discovery, transportation, and careless handling (which risked reducing some of them almost to dust).<sup>54</sup> In his discussion, A. Mai notes that the A. da Pofi manuscripts, for example, were rolled up inside metal tubes in order to better protect them during transit. They were then unrolled in order to allow for their study and proper preservation. In this regard, the experience of the BAV own laboratory with Latin manuscripts was

<sup>54</sup> Champollion (1825: V).





Fig. 3. P. Vatican 38602. The numerous fragments have been glued back together often in a questionable manner  
(© Governatorato dello S.C.V. - Direzione dei Musei)

invaluable.<sup>55</sup> Further to this, A. Mai also discusses how all of the Egyptian papyri were stored “*in speciosi quadri con cartoni e sete e cornici dorate e cristalli, entro cui questi avanzi nilotici si rinchiusero, difendendoli così dall’aria, e dal tatto nocevole degli osservatori; ed esponendoli al pubblico con decorosa appariscenza nella sala d’ingresso alla biblioteca*”.<sup>56</sup>

Longer rolls were probably cut up and glued onto cardboard sheets of varying thickness, though A. Mai makes no specific mention of this procedure.<sup>57</sup> Smaller papyrus fragments were glued onto various supports, sometimes in a completely arbitrary manner that paid no heed to the consistency of the reconstruction. A good example of this is one of the “minor” hieratic administrative fragments. This was mounted on a piece of orange cardboard together with a number of disparate fragments of funerary papyri from different manuscripts.<sup>58</sup> The administrative hieratic papyrus Inv. 38591 was glued onto an animal bladder support, and its first two pages were made “level” with the other pages by gluing some unwritten papyrus fragments to their bottom edges.<sup>59</sup> The remaining small administrative fragments in the collection were also glued onto an animal bladder support, again without any apparent *modus operandi*, leaving behind a number of inconsistent overlaps and joins.<sup>60</sup> Further to this, alterations in the glue used to mount the papyri has caused the structure and the colour of the papyrus to deteriorate; the fragments have darkened and are covered by a glossy patina. Finally, because the original conservators

favoured the more legible side of the papyri, paper supports were sometimes glued to the *recto* (usually the primary-use side of the papyri) rather than the *verso*.

### 2.1.2. Recent conservation operations

Most of the Egyptian papyri in the collection were mounted by their original nineteenth-century conservators inside wooden frames and fixed between two sheets of glass; in the case of larger manuscripts, these were divided into several pieces and mounted side by side. Altogether, the collection amounted to sixty very heavy frames, ranging in size from 466 cm × 29.5 cm to 25.5 cm × 14.5 cm. This method of conservation made it possible to keep the papyri flat and, in the case of opisthographic documents, to view both sides of the manuscript. Over time, however, various degradations occurred. In some cases, the papyrus itself became stuck to the glass, while various microorganisms and salt efflorescences can also be observed on some of the papyri. In addition, the larger frames have become deformed, meaning that insects and incoherent dust pollution have been able to penetrate into the newly created spaces between the glass.

In 2001, the then curator of the Reparto Antichità Egizie e del Vicino Oriente, Lorenzo Nigro, commissioned the restorer Cristina de’ Medici to modify the mounts used for the papyrus collection and to carry out prompt interventions

<sup>55</sup> At the time the BAV was at the forefront of the restoration of paper material. For this reason, Father Antonio Piaggio, who was at that time the curator of the miniatures in the BAV and well known for ingenious discoveries, was called upon in 1752 to collaborate on unrolling the charred Herculaneum papyri; so, he developed a special “machine” for opening Herculaneum rolls, which remained the only effective tool for this purpose until the first half of the 20th century, cf. Capasso (1991: 94–98, and fig. XXXVII–XXXVIII). For a more extensive presentation of this technique, see Gallo (1951: 86–89).

<sup>56</sup> Champollion (1825: V).

<sup>57</sup> The Vatican’s *Great Book of the Dead* (P. Vatican 48832) was in fact cut into 31 pieces that were then glued onto linen cloth; cf. Gasse (2001: 7).

<sup>58</sup> P. Vatican 48830; see Gasse (1993: 21, no. 6). On the work of identifying and reassembling fragmentary papyri from different frames, see the section above by A. Amenta.

<sup>59</sup> Gasse (1993: 20–21).

<sup>60</sup> P. Vatican 57837.



wherever necessary. In the case of the small and medium-sized papyri, it was decided to replace their mounts with a “lighter” solution that allowed for them to be placed flat inside special drawers in the storeroom. In the case of the large papyri, on the other hand, it was decided to continue using frames and to hang these in the storeroom.

All of C. de’ Medici’s interventions were preceded by disinfestation using the anoxic method, while the opening of the frames made it possible to better investigate the state of conservation of the materials themselves, highlighting problems that were common to the parts of the collection acquired in the early 1800s. Whether whole or fragmentary, the papyri had for the most part been glued onto different types of supports—including cloth, silk, paper, cardboard, tracing paper, and animal bladders—all of which were unsuitable for the proper preservation of the finds. As such, the surfaces of some of the papyri exhibited delamination and fractures, while the degradation of the glues of animal origin used to mount the fragments had sometimes led to colour changes in the papyri and the pigments used to inscribe them. In addition, past conservators had even cut various papyrus fragments up in order to remove damaged sections of the papyrus or to facilitate the mounting process; unrelated fragments had also often been glued arbitrarily to the same support, while the fragments of some individual papyri were dispersed across different mounts. Further to this, the linings used to reinforce or to flatten some of the fragments had produced deformations in some cases. Other fragments exhibited holes caused by woodworms, especially those fragments mounted on paper that contained lignin.

C. de’ Medici’s work on the papyri involved a delicate brush cleaning. This was accompanied where possible by light micro-vacuuming (through a frame with an additional protective net) in order to remove surface dirt. A further

delicate operation involved the removal, with Laponite compresses, of the adhesive tape used to assemble various fragments, as well as the replacement of this tape with strips of thin Japanese paper glued with Tylose MH 300 P. The small liftings of the fibres were consolidated using the same glue (Tylose MH 300 P). After cleaning, the papyri were reassembled inside double *passepapouts* made from durable acid-proof cardboard. Strips of medium-thickness Japanese tissue paper (No. 508) were used to hold the fragments together; Tylose MH 300 P glue was used on the *verso* of the papyri and inside the *passepapout* itself. The windows of the *passepapouts* were designed not to cover the outer edges of the papyrus; in the case of papyri mounted on their *verso*, these windows make it possible to observe the cloth/cardboard. Finally, two Mylar sheets were fixed to the outside of the *passepapouts* with Nechen (polyethylene) bio-adhesive tape. The *passepapouts* were closed using Tivek conservation tape.

Only in cases where the papyrus fragments did not have a lining and were particularly fragile, they were simply placed within the double *passepapout* and between two sheets of Mylar. In the case of the papyri stored in large-format frames, it was decided to replace the double glazing with Lexan (polycarbonate), which is more resistant than Plexiglas, after disinfestation. Finally, in the case of papyri that were not reinforced by canvas, these were removed from their frames and subjected to mechanical cleaning and light consolidation; afterwards, they were placed inside double *passepapouts* made of durable acid-proof cardboard.

### 3. THE HIERATIC MATERIALS AND THE HIERATIC DOCUMENTS FROM THE NEW KINGDOM IN THE VATICAN COLLECTION [F. A.]

Funerary papyri predominate within the Vatican papyrus collection. Of the roughly 90 documents

identified in the collection,<sup>61</sup> most are *Books of the Dead* or other funerary texts;<sup>62</sup> they date from the New Kingdom to the Roman Period. Hieratic texts comprise more than 60 of the identified documents; these date from the Third Intermediate to the Roman Period. (Only in exceptional cases are funerary manuscripts in hieratic dated before the 21st Dynasty.)<sup>63</sup> Hieratic was also widely used in priestly *usus scribendi*.<sup>64</sup> As far as the New Kingdom is concerned, the funerary manuscripts in the Vatican collection are written exclusively in cursive hieroglyphic. Several other hieratic documents from the same period are also preserved.<sup>65</sup>

The Vatican funerary papyri consist of a great variety of texts. Some of these texts highlight specific forms and uses of hieratic which may help us to understand certain aspects of this form of writing. The layout, atypical textual organisation, and palaeography of papyri P. Vatican 48813<sup>66</sup> (fig. 4) and P. Vatican 38581<sup>67</sup> (fig. 5) for instance, provide us with valuable information about the early phase of the late tradition of the *Book of the Dead* known as the “Saite recension.”<sup>68</sup> Likewise, P. Vatican 38566 exhibits two distinct forms of hieratic and provides valuable insight into the

organisation and work of the scribes within the workshops where they copied texts.<sup>69</sup> The different uses and forms of hieratic cursive in funerary texts are an interesting area of research: beyond palaeographic analyses of the cursive itself, such texts can provide context for the production of papyrus.

The Vatican collection is not characterised by a large quantity of New Kingdom hieratic documents, but rather by the quality and/or the philological and museological interest of its few holdings, which represent a valuable witness to New Kingdom hieratic production. These consist of a few fragmentary administrative papyri and a magical papyrus of which only the *recto* has been published. It is not possible to reconstruct the acquisition history of these hieratic papyri, but they appear in the first catalogue of the museum compiled by O. Marucchi in 1891.<sup>70</sup> The New Kingdom hieratic papyri in the museum will all be subject to detailed publication as part of the *Progetto Orazio Marucchi*. As such, we present only an overview of their main aspects here; this brief excursus will hopefully encourage further interest in the collection.

61 “Benché il Libro dei Morti sia notissimo agli egittologi per le molte pubblicazioni, che se ne son fatte, pur tuttavia è sempre di grande importanza studiarne i diversi esemplari appartenenti a tempi diversi: perché nel lungo periodo del regno egiziano si fecero varie redazioni di quel libro religioso, l’ultima della quale è dei tempi saitici... di più in una stessa redazione si trovano varianti ragguardevoli tanto negli intieri capitoli e nei titoli rispettivi e nei quadri figurati, quanto nelle frasi, nelle parole e nell’applicazione di alcune regole grammaticali. Può dunque facilmente comprendersi quanto giovi agli studi sulla religione e sulla lingua degli antichi egiziani il confronto accurato di molti testi di quel documento, e come perciò non debba trascurarsene dall’egittologo neppure un frammento benché insignificante, perché da un frammento solo può talvolta ritirarsi un qualche insegnamento”; see Marucchi (1902: 265).

62 The Vatican collection includes roughly fifty *Books of the Dead*, some of them large, as well as specimens of the *Book of Amduat*, the *Book of Breathings*, and the *Book of Caverns*.

63 Albert (2022a).

64 On the use of hieratic writing from the Third Intermediate Period onwards, see Albert (2022a); Albert (forthcoming).

65 Albert (2020); Albert (forthcoming a).

66 Albert (2019).

67 Albert (2022b).

68 Albert (2024).

69 Albert & Lenzo (2022).

70 Marucchi (1891).

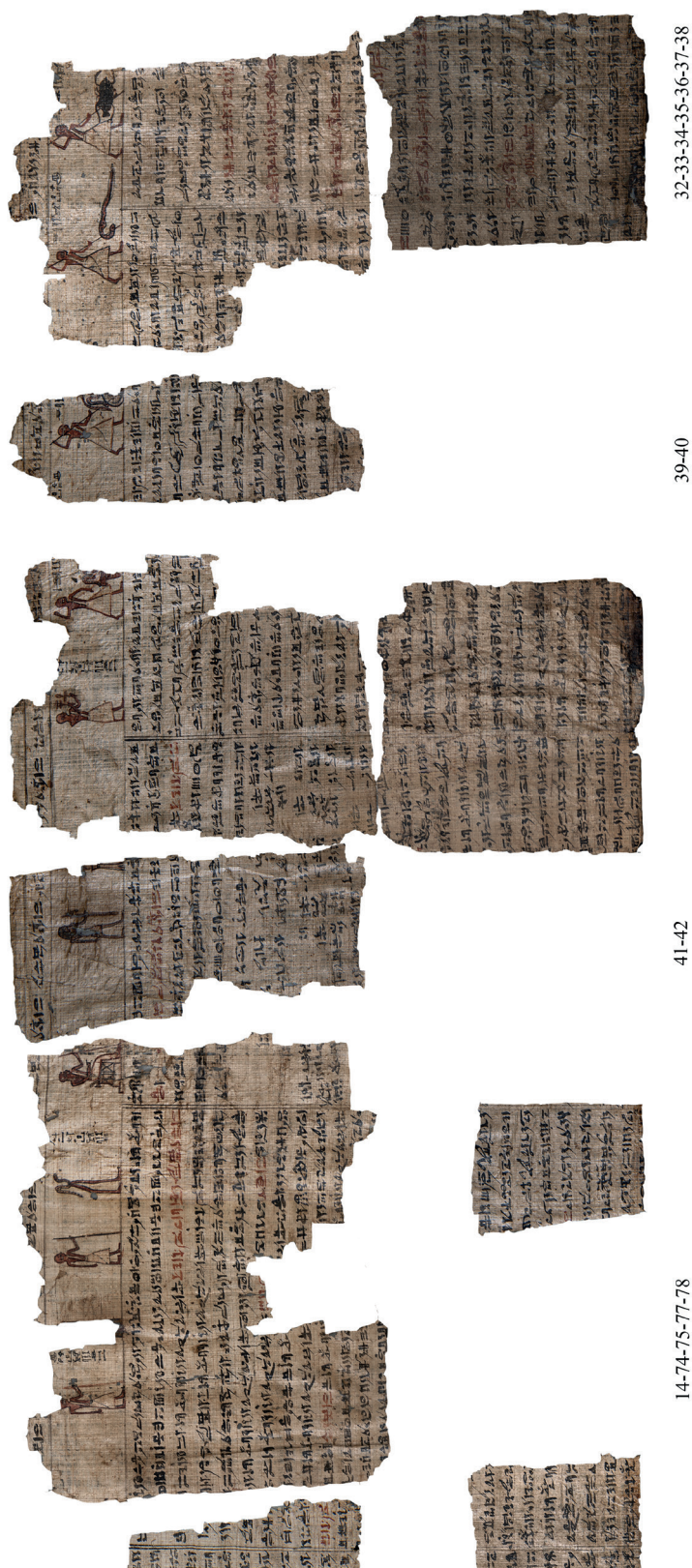


Fig. 4. Reconstruction of the  
P. Vatican 48813: sequence 33-34-35-  
36-39-40-41-42-14-74-75-77-78  
(© Governatorato dello S.C.V. –  
Direzione dei Musei)



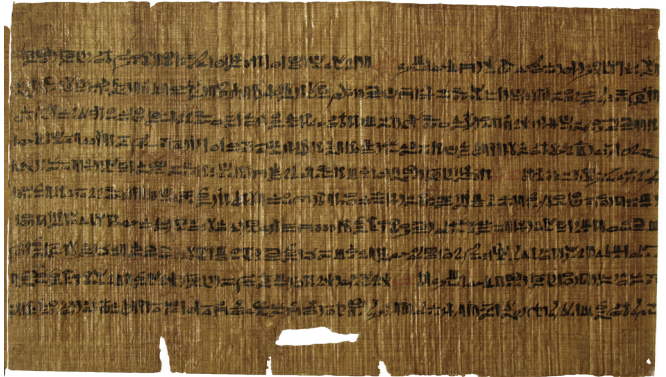
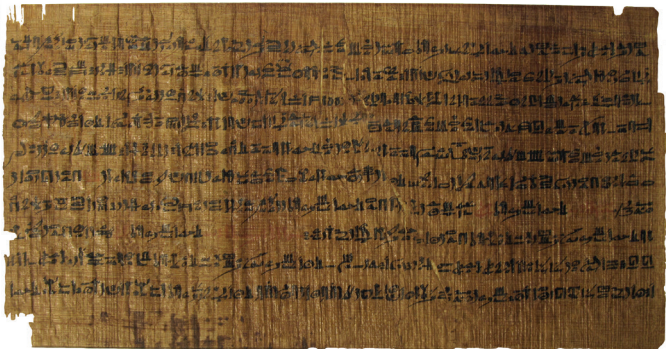
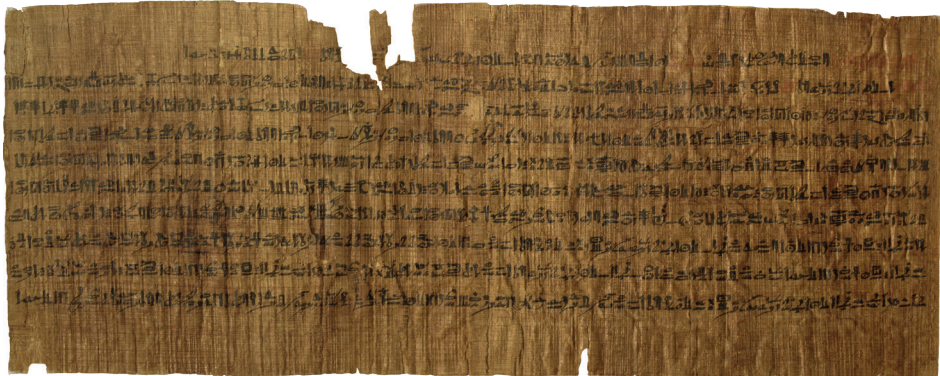
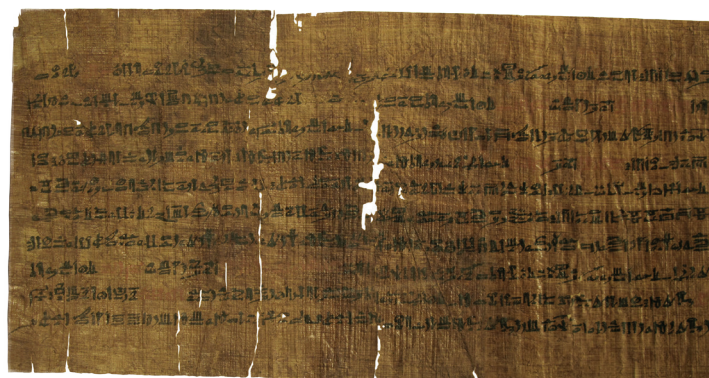
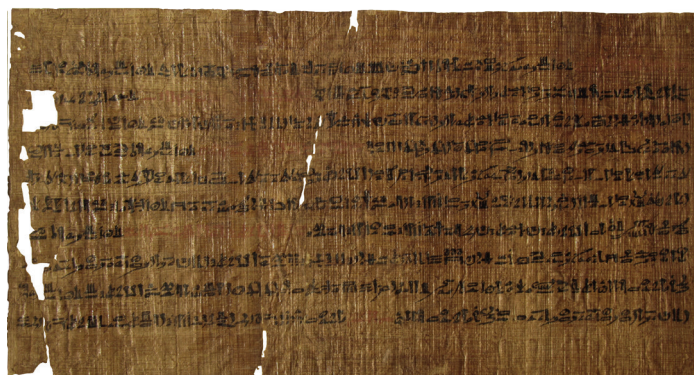
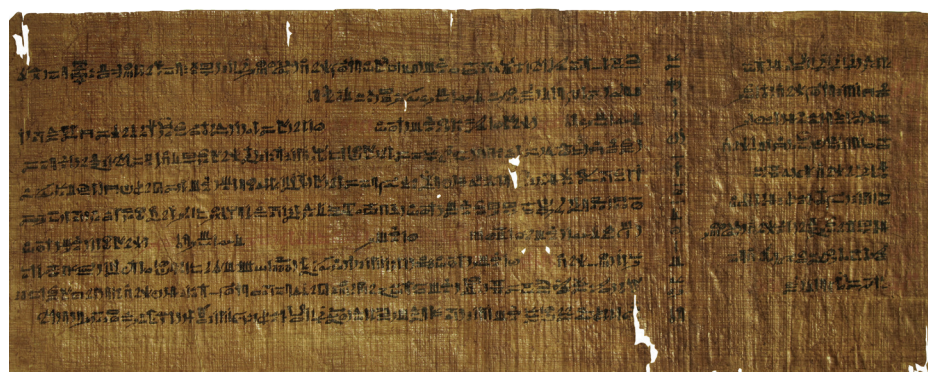
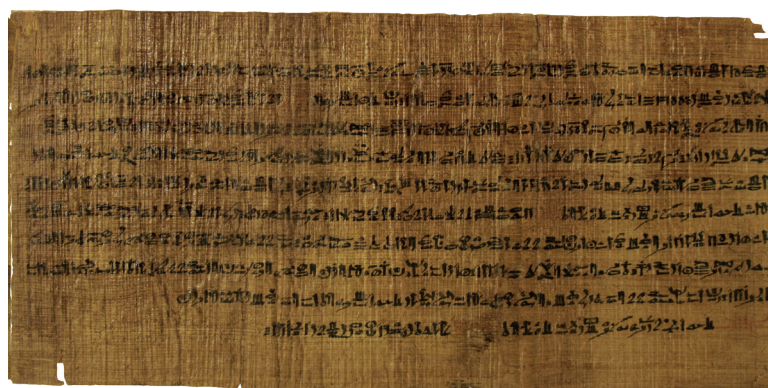


Fig. 5. P. Vatican 38581 (© Governatorato dello S.C.V. – Direzione dei Musei)





### 3.1. The Magical Papyrus from the Vatican: Papyrus Vatican 38573 (fig. 6)

P. Vatican 38573 has long been known to Egyptologists. It was first mentioned by J.-F. Champollion (1825: 26) in his catalogue of the Egyptian papyri in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; it was subsequently mentioned in more recent catalogues of the collection,<sup>71</sup> as well as being referred to in various studies. The first (and most complete) edition of the text was prepared by Émile P. Suys in 1934,<sup>72</sup> though É.P. Suys only edited the recto and a small section of the verso. More recently, Katharina Stegbauer (2015: Spruch 51, 277–290) offered a new translation and textual analysis of the recto. The brief discussion in É.P. Suys (1934: 86) aside, the verso remains unpublished.

#### 3.1.1. *Description*

The papyrus is fragmentary and written on both sides. Its seven fragments are placed next to each other in a single frame. The recto, which is better preserved than the verso, consists of 4 columns of text (24–25 cm wide); each column consists of 10–11 lines of hieratic text. The right-hand side of the papyrus is the least well preserved; the texts on the first two fragments in particular are rather faded and the papyrus bears some white traces that hinder its reading. The other five fragments are perfectly legible. Despite its deterioration, the document survives to its full height (19–20 cm) and retains the upper and lower margins that frame the lines of text. That said, it is not possible to establish the original length of the papyrus: its surviving section corresponds more or less to the central part of the scroll and it is not possible to

determine either the beginning or the end of the text.

The verso consists of the remains of five columns of text that are also 24–25 cm wide. The columns consist of 11 (columns 1, 2, 4, 5) and 12 lines (column 3) lines of hieratic text. The first two fragments of the verso are the least well preserved; they are also marked by whitish traces which hinder the reading of some passages. The other fragments are slightly easier to read, but the ink is so faded in many places that the transcription of the text is very difficult. The hieratic on the verso seems to have been copied very quickly—the signs appear thinner and less angular, while the spaces between the signs is less regular than on the recto—but this impression may simply be the result of the poor state of preservation. Alternatively, the apparent difference in quality between the recto and the verso may be explained by the nature of the copied texts: though they all reflect a magical register, they were used for different purposes.<sup>73</sup> Like a miscellany, the papyrus consists of several magical texts, one after the other, while the texts may have been copied at different times, most likely by different persons.

In his publication, Adolf Erman (1893: 120) assumes that a section of the papyrus is missing between columns 2 and 3 on the recto.<sup>74</sup> There is indeed a break in the papyrus here, but the verso bears a column of text at the same point, meaning that no fragments and/or columns of text are lost here.

#### 3.1.2. *Dating and provenance*

It is not possible to establish a definite date or provenance for the papyrus, though the palaeography suggests a 19th Dynasty date.<sup>75</sup> There is no

<sup>71</sup> Marucchi (1891: 91–96, pl. 2–3; 1902: 267–268, 283–286, no. 19a); Gasse (1993: 20, pl. VII–VIII, no. 5).

<sup>72</sup> Erman (1893); Suys (1934).

<sup>73</sup> On the link between the sacredness of a text and its written register, see Dorn & Polis (2017).

<sup>74</sup> <https://sae.saw-leipzig.de/de/dokumente/papyrus-vatikan-inv-38573> (accessed 19.01.2024).

<sup>75</sup> <https://sae.saw-leipzig.de/de/dokumente/papyrus-vatikan-inv-38573> (accessed 19.01.2024).

detailed information about the provenance of the papyrus or the circumstances of its acquisition. As discussed in Chapter 1, the first papyri to enter the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana arrived, while a second lot was acquired in 1820. Our papyrus could have arrived at either of these times, as J.-F. Champollion mentions it in his catalogue in 1825. It is possible that the papyrus comes from Luxor; its thematic parallels with other magical texts from Deir el-Medina might suggest a more specific provenance.<sup>76</sup>

### 3.1.3. Contents

#### *Recto*

The recto of P. Vatican 38573 contains a *historiola*. In the story, Horus is supposed to rescue his uncle Seth, who has been poisoned by an animal, while Isis tries to dissuade him from helping (col. 1, l. 1–col. 2, l. 2). The narrative is followed by several magical formulae against poison, introduced by *nn ḥꜥ=ṯ m*, according to the following form: “You will not stay in [a part of the body], because [god] is against you, the divinity of [a part of the body]...”<sup>77</sup>

#### *Verso*

The verso is more difficult to read due to the damaged surface of the papyrus, the erasure of ink in places, the presence of long, pale rubrics, and the lack of known parallels. Only a short section of the verso has been published in transliteration by É.P. Suys (1934: 86) in *Orientalia* (= col. 4, l. 5–11). All of the texts on the verso exhibit the

same structure: they consist of a succession of magic formulae, written in black ink, that are introduced by the expression *ky r(ʔ)*, “another spell” and followed by a long rubric introduced by the expression *ḏḏ=tw r(ʔ) pn ḥr*, “this spell is to be recited over...”, specifying where the text should be recited in order to be effective. This kind of prescription comes close to those found on the verso of P. Turin CGT 54050.<sup>78</sup>

É.P. Suys’s partial translation of the texts allowed A. Roccati (1994) to locate similarities with other texts, including the divinatory formulae on P. Chester Beatty VIII, v° 11–14 and P. Turin CGT 54064 (unpublished). Although no other similarities have been discovered yet, other formulae on the verso underline its divinatory nature, namely those introduced by *ky r(ʔ) šmw n Rʔ* (col. 1; l. 6; col. 2, l. 9–10), *ky r(ʔ) šmw ...* (col. 2, l. 1; col. 2, l. 5), and *pʔy šmw [...]* (col. 2, l. 3), which would seem to characterise this text.

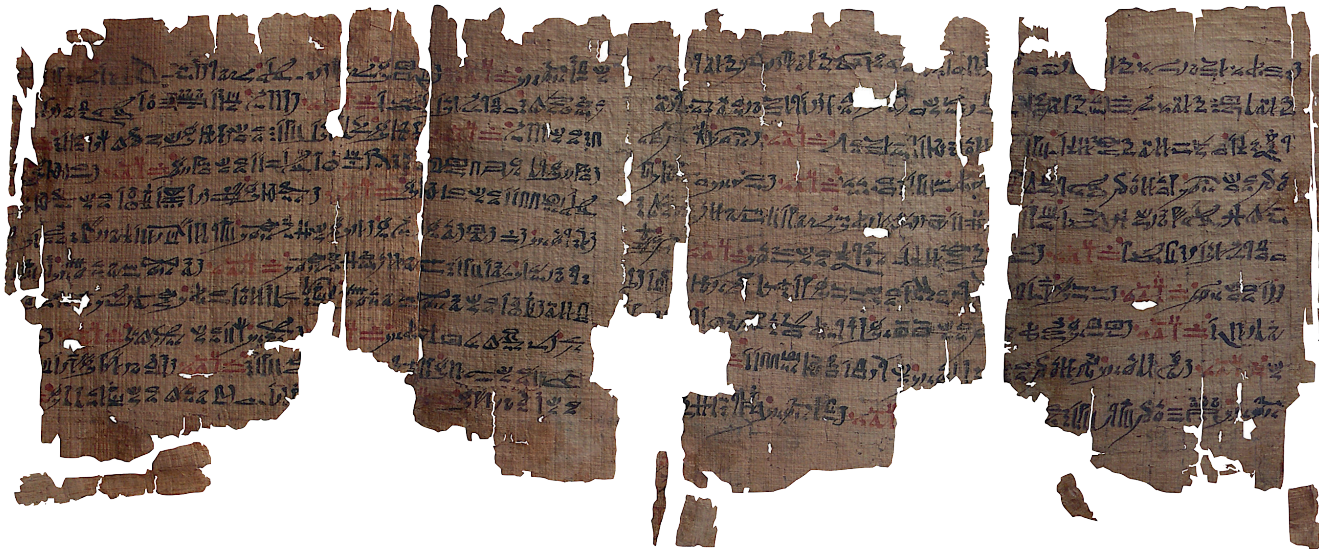
The verso of P. Vatican 38573 is interesting as attests to texts and formulae that are more widely known from much later Demotic magical literature. Because other hieratic sources of the same type are much more fragmentary, an exhaustive translation of the texts on the Vatican papyrus is more than justified. Finally, the thematic similarity of the papyrus to many other magical manuscripts should encourage a palaeographical analysis; this might allow for the establishment of a more precise provenance and for the possible identification of the scribes who worked on such magical miscellanies.

<sup>76</sup> Compare, for example, P. Genève MAH 15274: Stegbauer (2015: Spruch 52, 291–301); P. Leiden 343+345; P. Chester Beatty VII, v° 2.5–5.11: Massart (1957); P. Chester Beatty VIII, vols. 11–14: Gardiner (1935: pl. 47–49).

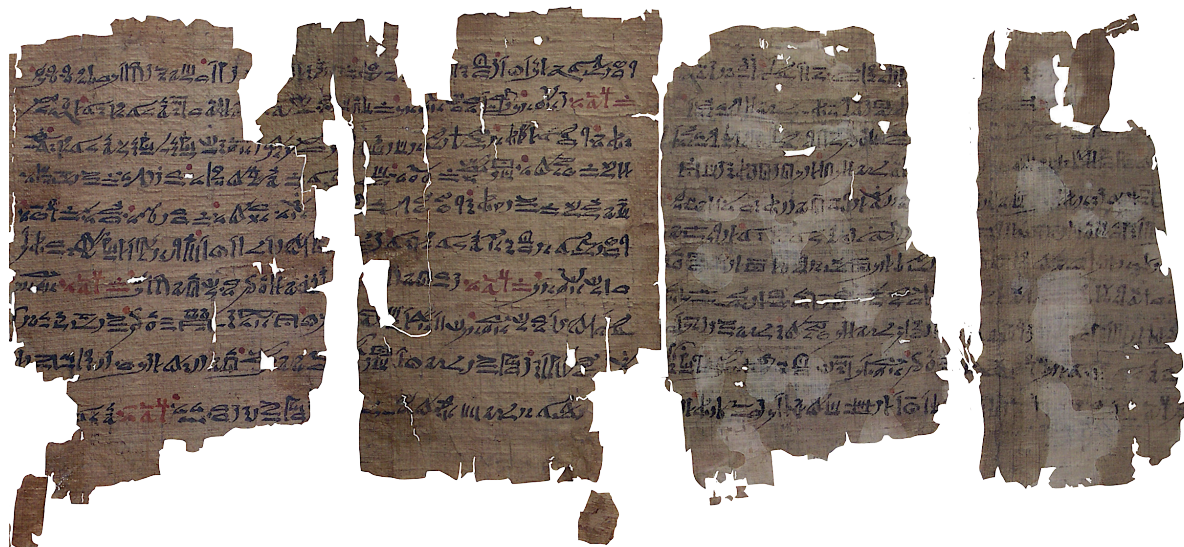
<sup>77</sup> Compare P. Genève MAH 15274, P. Leiden 343+345, and P. Chester Beatty VII, vols. 2.5–5.11: Stegbauer (2015: Spruch 52, 291–301); Massart (1957). On these formulae, see Stegbauer (2015: 62–63).

<sup>78</sup> Roccati (2011: 15, 30–36, 171–173).



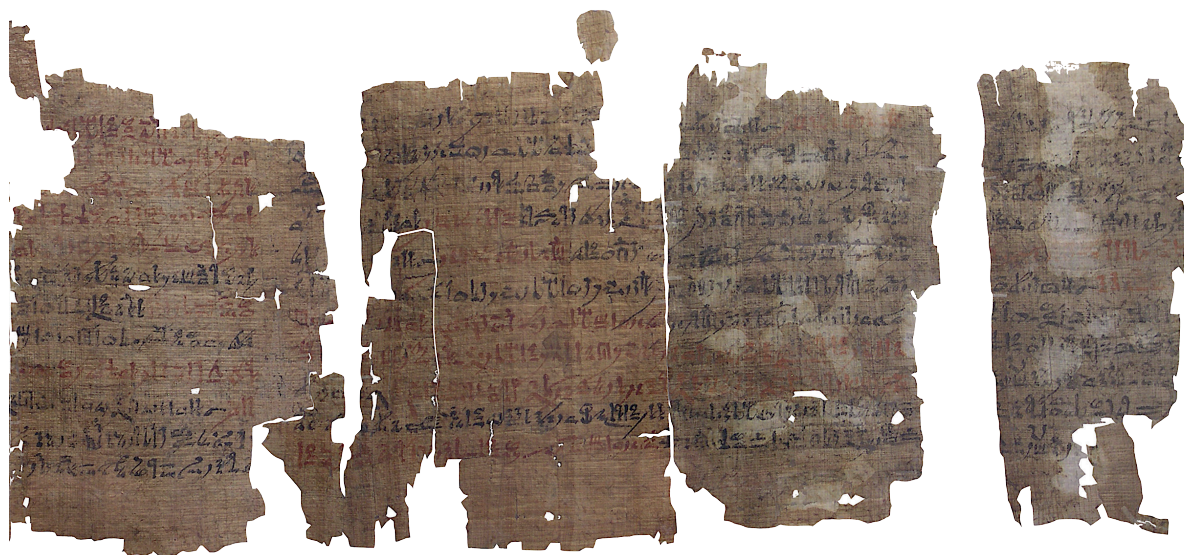






5 cm

Recto



5 cm

Verso

Fig. 6. P. Vatican 38573 (© Governatorato dello S.C.V. – Direzione dei Musei)

### 3.2. Administrative Papyri [S. D.]

In addition to funerary papyri, the collection of the Museo Gregoriano Egizio includes examples of other types of New Kingdom hieratic texts, including a small number of fragmentary administrative documents from the end of the 20th Dynasty.<sup>79</sup>

#### 3.2.1. *Papyrus Vatican 38591* (fig. 7)

The largest and best-preserved administrative papyrus in the Vatican collection was first mentioned by J.-F. Champollion (1825: 26) in his catalogue.<sup>80</sup> Along with the other Egyptian papyri, this document was hung in the first room of the BAV (Frame XII, letter C). J.-F. Champollion described it in some detail: “*Manoscritto geratico. Parte inferiore di un papiro contenente il fondo di sei colonne di un testo che è parte di un registro di computisteria, tenuto in Tebe da uno scrivano Tutmosis, sotto il regno di Ramses V della XVIII dinastia. Le altre parti di questo curioso manoscritto esistono nella raccolta di Drovetti, che oggi costituisce il magnifico museo reale egizio di Torino. Osservasi in questo frammento la lista di una grande quantità di riscossioni parziali, con le somme diverse che ne risultano, espresse in cifre geratiche di tinta rossa. I nomi delle varie persone ricordate in questi conti sono scritti con tinta nera.*”<sup>81</sup> Although J.-F. Champollion’s reference to the 18th Dynasty is incorrect, his description is accurate. That said,

the upper part of the manuscript is yet to be found in the Turin collection, though the papyrus in the *Drovettiana* exhibit clear similarities with the Vatican manuscript; it is possible that further fragments of the document preserved in the Vatican may be found in the Museo Egizio in Turin. The manuscript was listed in O. Marucchi’s catalogue in 1891 as a “*Fragmentum papyri litteris hieraticis exaratum quinque columnis constans. Continet partem textus computationis...*”<sup>82</sup> It was dated paleographically to the 19th Dynasty. It has been described more recently in the catalogue of the Vatican papyri published in 1993 by A. Gasse (1993: 20–21),<sup>83</sup> where it appears as no. 6.

As pointed out by J.-F. Champollion (1825: 26), this fragmentary papyrus represents the lower half of an accounting text.<sup>84</sup> The manuscript is damaged, both in the area of its upper half and at its beginning, while it is possible that the last page actually corresponds to the end of the document. The papyrus also displays a number of regularly spaced vertical fractures.<sup>85</sup> At some unspecified time after its musealisation, the document underwent conservation treatment and was glued onto a paper support.<sup>86</sup> During this process, the first two pages were incorrectly mounted, and what was the first page became the second one. The pages were repositioned correctly in 2022,<sup>87</sup> on the basis of the fibres and a long red mark that served to separate the text on page two from the text on the next

<sup>79</sup> Gasse (1993: 7).

<sup>80</sup> Champollion (1825).

<sup>81</sup> Vat. Lat. 9639; see also Mai (1825: 25).

<sup>82</sup> Marucchi (1891: 97, no. 84) discusses only five columns and not six.

<sup>83</sup> “Fragments d’un papyrus administratif” (Inv. 38591).

<sup>84</sup> Taking into consideration the sum of the three preserved fragments (but excluding the gap to be inserted between the first and the second fragments), the height of the papyrus is 15 cm at its highest surviving point, and its total width is 51.5 cm.

<sup>85</sup> At some point, the scroll must have been crushed. As usual, the width of the fractures decreases. The outermost is 7.3 cm; we would expect the second to have been 7 cm; the third, the fourth, and the fifth are 6.5 cm; the sixth and the seventh are 6.2 cm; and the eighth is 6 cm.

<sup>86</sup> Glue was probably used because the papyrus had curled.

<sup>87</sup> The restoration work was carried out by the late C. de’ Medici. We also owe the current arrangement of most of the manuscripts collected in the Vatican Papyrus Library to her.





Fig. 7. P. Vaticano 38591 (© Governatorato dello S.C.V. - Direzione dei Musei)

page. The size of the gap between what has now become the first page and the second page can be estimated by comparing its size with that of the other pages, while taking into consideration that the *kollesis*<sup>88</sup> between the two parts corresponds to at least 1.5 cm. Some additions to the papyrus are evident at the lower part of the first two pages; these were made by juxtaposing unwritten fragments and were perhaps inserted in order to equalise the height of the pages.<sup>89</sup>

Although there are no certain data regarding the provenance of the papyrus, the typology of the text and the content of the manuscript point directly to Thebes and more specifically to Deir el-Medina. The surviving text on the recto is six pages long and lists the names of workmen, divided into both sides of the gang, and corresponding amounts of cereals (in *khar* and sub-multiples). The text is annotated in red in order to highlight the numerical quantities and grand totals for both sides of the gang (*dmd*). A large margin appears below the text, where sporadic numeric annotations also appear in red: these appear to be calculations made during the drafting of the text rather than a secondary reuse of the papyrus.

With respect to the dating of the papyrus, although no dates are preserved within the text itself, prosopographic analysis allows the text to be dated to the end of the 20th Dynasty, and more specifically to the period between the reign of Ramesses IX and Ramesses XI. In fact, some of the people mentioned in the text appear in other

documents that are coeval with the last rulers of the 20th Dynasty. As noted by A. Gasse (1993: 8), the palaeography of the text confirms this proposed dating: the text was written quickly, in a rather small hand, and employs frequent ligatures. Some of the recipients of cereal deliveries listed in the text are also attested in other documents from the late Ramesside Period: two door-keepers (of the necropolis),<sup>90</sup> *iryw-ʿ n pʿ-Hr*, Khonsumosi<sup>91</sup> and Thutmosi,<sup>92</sup> together with the physician (*swnw*) Minkhau.

Khonsumosi, son of Panehesi,<sup>93</sup> was a door-keeper on the right side who was certainly active from Year 17 of Ramesses IX until Year 12 of Ramesses XI.<sup>94</sup> The identification of the door-keeper Thutmosi, whose patronymic is never specified in the Vatican papyrus, is less certain. Two doorkeepers with the same name are known from the late Ramesside Period and both are coeval with Khonsumosi. The first, the son of a Re[...], is attested in P. Turin Cat. 2004, where deliveries of clothes to the community of workmen are reported in Year 16 of Ramesses IX.<sup>95</sup> However, the same document also attests to a [Thut]mosi, son of Kadjore, who was the doorkeeper for the gang on the left side in Year 8 of Ramesses XI.<sup>96</sup> Unfortunately, the Turin papyrus does not preserve the title of the latter Thutmosi. However, in the following line, the overall number of persons benefiting from the deliveries of clothing is specified: 31 men and the doorkeeper, whose name is not specified. Given that it was common practice

88 A *kollesis* of 1.5 cm corresponding to the end of the fourth page is preserved.

89 This adjustment cannot be dated with certainty, but it is likely to have been carried out during the first conservation treatment when the papyrus was glued on a paper support.

90 Goecke-Bauer (2003: 140–142); Gabler (2018: 474–475).

91 Col. x+1, 4 and x+5, 4.

92 Col. x+6, 4.

93 P. Turin Cat. 2018, *passim*; KRI 6, 853–861.

94 Černý (1973: 167168); Goecke-Bauer (2003: 150).

95 P. Turin Cat. 2004+2007+2057/68+2106, r° 3, 6; KRI 6, 652; Černý (1973: 168); Davies (1999: 201). The text is barely legible and, as with the previous line, appears to have been deliberately erased by the scribe.

96 Černý (1973: 168); Davies (1999: 201).

in accounting documents to report the deliveries made to doorkeepers in the final section of the list of the beneficiaries, usually just before the grand totals, we would expect Thutmosei,<sup>97</sup> son of Kadjore, to be the doorkeeper referred to in the text.<sup>98</sup> As such, the Turin papyrus would represent our first record of Thutmosei, son of Kadjore,<sup>99</sup> in the role of doorkeeper as early as Year 16 of Ramesses IX. The subsequent mention, in Year 17,<sup>100</sup> of the doorkeeper Thut[mosi] does not necessarily refer therefore to the son of Re[...], whose service may have ended in Year 16 of Ramesses IX. At present, the available data do not permit a certain identification of the doorkeeper Thutmosei mentioned in the Vatican papyrus. In the end, it must be pointed out that the texts in which both Khonsumosei and Thutmosei (son of Kadjore) appear all date to the reign of Ramesses XI,<sup>101</sup> and that the service of both doorkeepers appears to have ended in Year 12 of this ruler's reign.<sup>102</sup>

In addition to the two doorkeepers, the list on the Vatican papyrus includes the physician, *swnw*, Minkhau,<sup>103</sup> also active at the end of the 20th Dynasty during the reign of Ramesses XI<sup>104</sup> and known to be the owner of a house in Medinet

Habu.<sup>105</sup> His salary is indicated in P. Turin Cat. 2018 (corresponding to 1 ½ *khar*),<sup>106</sup> where he is mentioned after the doorkeeper Thutmosei of the left side; by contrast, the Vatican papyrus lists him after Khonsumosei, the doorkeeper of the right side. This may indicate that the physician was integrated within the community as a whole and not just into one part of it.<sup>107</sup> In the Vatican papyrus, he is paid 2 *khar*, the same amount as the two doorkeepers.<sup>108</sup>

Pages x+5 and x+6 of the papyrus enumerate deliveries made for the scribe of the auxiliary personnel of the Necropolis, *sš smd.t bnr*,<sup>109</sup> as well as the grand total of deliveries made to both gangs. The name of the scribe is not indicated, though it is well known that both gangs had their own scribe: Sobeksoneb, Amennakht, and Uennefer on the right side, and Hori and Iufenamun on the left side.<sup>110</sup> The scribe of the *smd.t* was given 9 *khar*, a considerable amount (assigned equally to both sides) that was to be divided among the auxiliary personnel (as in P. Turin Cat. 2018).<sup>111</sup> Complicating the picture, however, is mention of a further scribe after the *smd.t* of the left side: this is Shedsukhonsu, to whom 1 ¾ *khar* was allocated.

97 The doorkeepers remuneration can be found at the end of the text along with the remuneration for such other workmen as the physician, young recruits, as well as offerings to the gods; see Gabler (2018: 399).

98 Contra B. Davies (1999: 201), who does not consider Thutmosei to have been in service.

99 M. Goecke-Bauer (2003: 151) only discusses Thutmosei, son of Kadjore, for P. Turin Cat. 2004, and does not mention the son of [...].

100 Botti & Peet (1928: pl. 37, 19).

101 Goecke-Bauer (2003: 150–151, and fn. 652).

102 This date is based on P. Turin Cat. 2018 and P. Turin Cat. 2006+1895+1961: Gardiner (1948, 35–44 *passim*).

103 Col. x+1, 5; x+ 5, 5.

104 P. Turin Cat. 2018, D, 9; KRI 6, 862.

105 P. BM EA 10068, v<sup>o</sup> 4,12; Janssen (1997: 27); Gabler (2018: 713).

106 KRI 6, 862.

107 Gabler (2018: 399).

108 Gabler (2018: 399).

109 Gabler (2018: 412–413).

110 Davies (1999: 123–142); Gabler (2018: 714–717).

111 r<sup>o</sup> A1, 7–9; A2, 1–2; *passim*; see also Davies (1999: 140).



The name of this scribe does not appear among the local administrative personnel;<sup>112</sup> he perhaps belonged to the group of “other scribes” which B. Davies (1999: 284)<sup>113</sup> argues did not officially belong to the “Tomb” (*p3-Hr*) or to the auxiliary personnel (*smd.t*), and who were more probably employed in a funerary temple on the Westbank.<sup>114</sup> It should be noted that a scribe of the same name, employed at the temple of Amun, is mentioned in one of the *Tomb Robberies Papyri*,<sup>115</sup> dated to Year 17 of Ramesses IX, which would be consistent with the Vatican papyrus.

Among the other people listed in the accounts—without titles—an individual named Paherentahatnakht should be mentioned. It is possible that he should be identified with the scribe and *wab*-priest of the same name, and father of the scribe Penparai,<sup>116</sup> whose name appears in some Theban mountain graffiti. The Vatican papyrus also mentions a Penparai on its last surviving page, but he is referred to as the son of Nebnefer. This second Penparai is included in the list without a title and would have been a simple workman assigned to the left side; in Year 8 of Ramesses XI, he was integrated into the right side,<sup>117</sup> later becoming the foreman in Year 20 of Ramesses XI.<sup>118</sup>

A single page of text consisting of six lines appears on the *verso* of the manuscript; it was written that the top of the *recto* corresponds to the *verso*. The *incipit* on the *verso* is located at its right

edge and coincides with the first fracture of the scroll. The rest of the *verso* is blank, except for four black marks whose meaning is uncertain. The text mentions deliveries of grain rations for the first and the second months of the Akhet season, but it does not specify which year.

### 3.2.2. *Papyrus Vatican 48830, fragment (fig. 8)*

According to A. Gasse (1993: 21), the fragment Inv. 48830 derives from the papyrus described above (Inv. 38591). An autoptic examination, however, excludes this possibility, though the fragment almost certainly derives from a context similar to P. Vatican 38591. The fragment is currently glued to a sheet of orange cardboard together with several other fragments belonging to various funerary papyri from a much later period. The fragment is 3.2 cm high and 3.3 cm wide and preserves the initial part of three lines of text: the first line contains a reference to a delivery (*diw*), while some dates are annotated in the next two lines: the Year 20 is clearly legible, and it may have been followed by other numerals; as such, it is appropriate to interpret the date as lying somewhere between Year 20 and Year 30.<sup>119</sup>

An examination of the fragment's *verso* is not feasible at present because the fragment is still attached to its paper support; it is likely that it was blank, however, as other hieratic opisthographic fragments in the collection were glued onto transparent paper.

<sup>112</sup> Davies (1999: 283–284).

<sup>113</sup> Paankhau, Amenhotep, Djai, and Anuy are mentioned at the end of the Ramesside Period.

<sup>114</sup> The possibility that Shedsukhonsu was a painter must be excluded, though the term *sš* is sometimes used as an abbreviation for *sš kdw*.

<sup>115</sup> P. BM EA 10053, r<sup>o</sup> 4.3; KRI 6, 510.

<sup>116</sup> Graffiti 904 and 1009; see Spiegelberg (1921). J. Černý (1973: 207, and fn. 2) mentions Penparai as the father of the scribe; Davies (1999: 104).

<sup>117</sup> P. Turin Cat. 2018, r<sup>o</sup> A2, 7; A3, 6a; KRI 6, 851–853.

<sup>118</sup> Davies (1999: 233–234).

<sup>119</sup> The numeral 20, repeated twice, is followed by a gap where another number may have lain.





Fig. 8. Fragment of the P. Vatican 48830 glued together with other fragments of funerary papyri  
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### 3.2.3. Hieratic fragments (Inv. 57837)

Some thirty hieratic fragments, so far undocumented in the reference bibliography, should also be mentioned here. These are very small in size and can be traced to different manuscripts.<sup>120</sup> Although there is no certain information regarding their origin, their contents allow us to ascribe them to the Theban area, and more specifically to Deir el-Medina.

Restoration work carried out in 2007 by the Paper Restoration Laboratory in the Vatican Museums allowed the identification of some of these fragments: among them is a fragment belonging to the first page of the *Vatican Great Magical Papyrus* (fig. 9), while another can be attributed to a *Book of the Dead* from the Late Period. The remaining fragments clearly reflect different administrative texts, all of which can be assigned to Deir el-Medina on an onomastic basis. Two rejoined fragments note deliveries of commissions that occurred in Year 4, Akhet 1; known persons are mentioned among the beneficiaries of these deliveries, including the workman Aapatjau,<sup>121</sup> as well as a certain Neferhotep, who in the absence of titles and a patronymic, is not readily identifiable (fig. 10).<sup>122</sup> Four more fragments, probably belonging to the same manuscript, document deliveries of timber—a genre of text well attested in Deir el-Medina.

This small set of papyrus fragments is a good example of the dispersal of papyri from the Theban area in the 19th century—a result of determined collectors at the time. Future work may perhaps allow these fragments to be (virtually) reconnected with further intact manuscripts held in other museums.<sup>123</sup>



Fig. 9. New fragment of the magical P. Vatican 38573  
(© Governatorato dello S.C.V. – Direzione dei Musei)

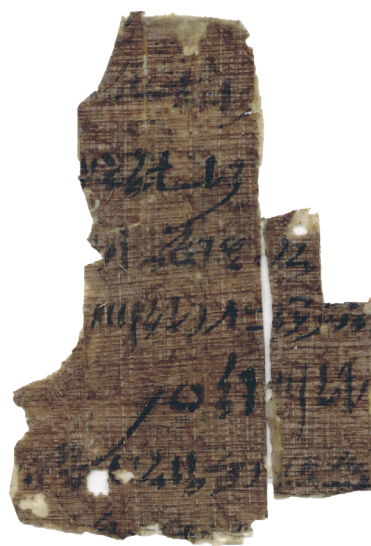


Fig. 10. Fragment of the P. Vatican 57837, r<sup>o</sup>  
(© Governatorato dello S.C.V. – Direzione dei Musei)

<sup>120</sup> Inventoried with a single number.

<sup>121</sup> Davies (1999: 203–204): from Year 1 of Ramesses IV to Ramesses IX.

<sup>122</sup> A very common name among the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina; as such, the individual in question cannot be identified without further references. See Davies (1999).


<sup>123</sup> An identification of fragments from P. Turin Cat. 1865+2032 in the Vatican collection would confirm a connection between the two sets of early acquisitions made by the museum.

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