

PAPYRUS TEXT TELLS OF ROMAN TRIAL FOR FORGERY AND TAX FRAUD

VIENNA, AUSTRIA—[Cosmos Magazine](#) reports that the 133 lines of Greek text on a papyrus discovered in the Judean Desert have been translated and published. Anna Dolganov of the Austrian Academy of Sciences said that the text contains prosecutors' notes for a trial to be held before Roman officials. "This papyrus is extraordinary because it provides direct insight into trial preparations in this part of the Roman Empire," Dolganov said. The defendants, Gadalias and Saulos, were accused of tax evasion and the fraudulent sale and release of slaves in the Roman provinces of Judea and Arabia, and of forging documents to conceal their crimes. "Forgery and tax fraud carried severe penalties under Roman law, including hard labor or even capital punishment," Dolganov noted. The papyrus shows that Roman institutions had been implemented in the region, and that the state was able to regulate private transactions, she added. The defendants had also been accused of rebellious activities during the visit of Emperor Hadrian to the region around A.D. 129 or 130, a time between two major Jewish uprisings against Roman rule. "Whether they were indeed involved in rebellion remains an open question, but the insinuation speaks to the charged atmosphere of the time," Dolganov explained. The outcome of the trial remains unknown, she concluded. Read the original scholarly article about this research in [Tyche](#). To read more about evidence for Jewish resistance to Roman rule, go to "[Cave of Swords](#)," one of ARCHAEOLOGY's Top 10 Discoveries of 2023.



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Retrieved January 30, 2025 from [News - Papyrus Text Tells of Roman Trial for Forgery and Tax Fraud - Archaeology Magazine](#)