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Giving

The paucity of primary sources about the Byzantine Jews has been stimulating historians to look into the most obscure Genizah fragments.

MS CUL T-S NS 324.1, a single parchment folio, attracted the attention of Joshua Holo, who published it in 2000. The bad condition of the fragment made its analysis a challenging task. According to Holo, the manuscript constitutes a letter from Moshe Agura "to his brother-in-law name of the author, read as 'Market', may reflect his occupation as a merchant (2000: 8-9). Nine years later, he summarized his understanding of T-S NS 324.1 in the following words:

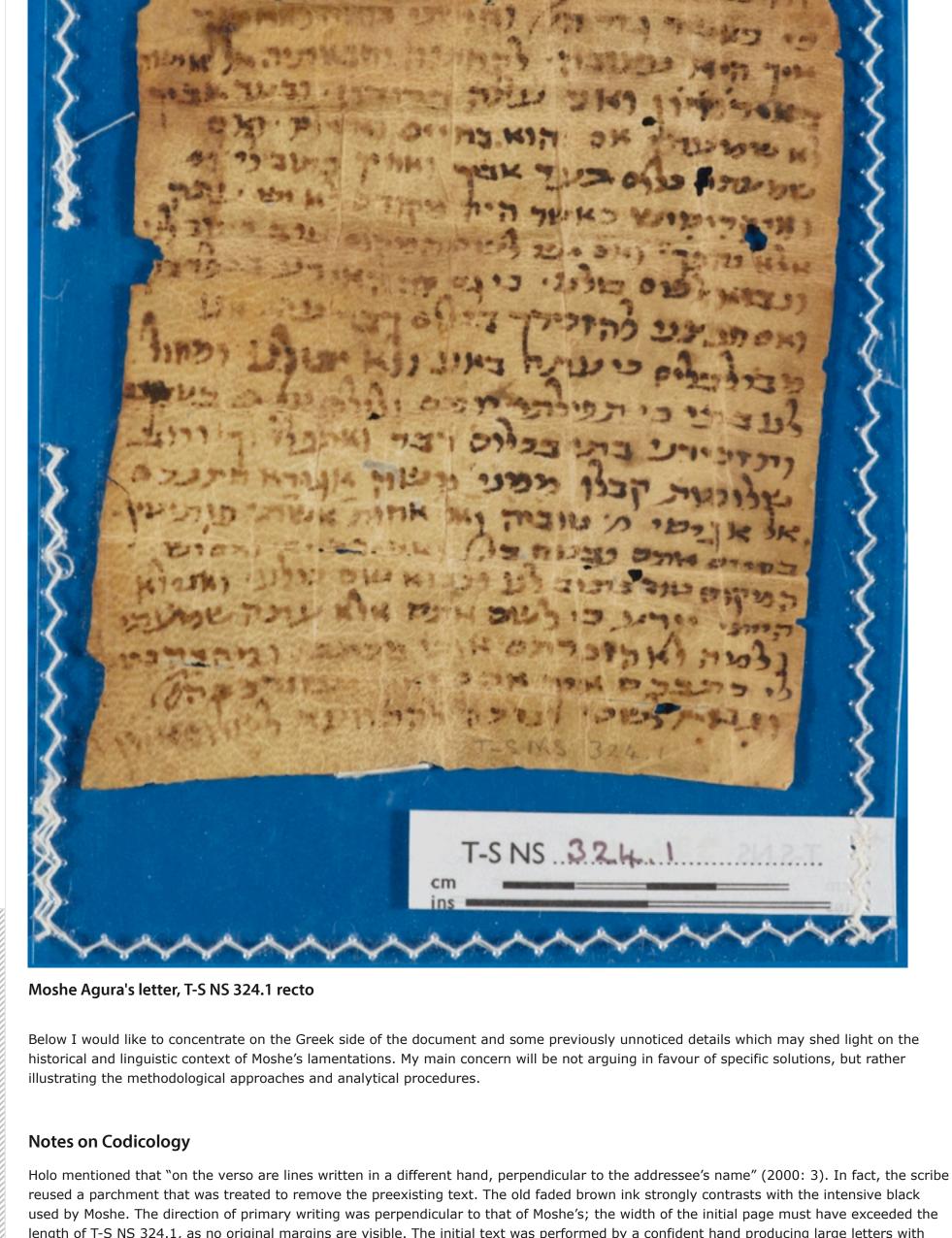
and family" (2000: 3), and is "the only ... firsthand ... account of the Byzantine victory of Crete" (2000: 1, 10). Holo suggested that the [...] a Genizah letter referring to the Byzantine reconquest of Crete captures a pivotal moment during which the tide began to turn in favor of the Byzantines, even as Jews apparently continued to trickle out. Moshe Agura, the author of the letter, writes to his family in Egypt that he hoped to join them there. Moshe describes how he left Crete after the Byzantine victory there in 961, ultimately settling

in Byzantine Rhodes. He derides both islands, deeply regretting his settlement in the empire, and he seeks to discover whether or not it is feasible to emigrate to Egypt. In fact, Moshe represents the last period of generalized Jewish emigration from the empire; characteristically, he relied on established [50] connections to his family, similarly Byzantine Jews bearing Greek names, who lived in Egypt, where Moshe now hoped to travel (Holo 2009: 49–50). The interpretation was taken verbatim by many junior scholars, e.g. Gallicker (2007), Huiling (2015), Kujanpaa (2016), etc., but had few other responses. A notable exception was D. Jacoby, who reflected on the document as follows: The Byzantine recovery of Crete in 961 is reflected by an undated Genizah letter sent by Moshe Agura from Rhodes to his relatives, who had emigrated and presumably lived in Egypt. Agura refers to a violent change of power in Crete, after which he left for Rhodes

where his brother-in-law was temporarily living or trading. Agura complains about Rhodes, 'for this island too, is evil in every respect'. Joshua Holo, who edited and commented upon the letter, claims that it illustrates the hardships as well as the legal and economic discrimination suffered by the Jews of Byzantium around the mid-tenth century. This interpretation is totally unwarranted. In fact, the letter reflects local conditions. The population of Crete, including the remaining Christians, did not assist the Byzantine forces in the reconquest of the island by Nikephoros Phokas, and there is good reason to believe that such was also the attitude of the Jews. The

main urban centre of Crete, later called Candia by the Latins. ... Muslims and Jews undoubtedly suffered more than Christians from the Byzantine recovery of Crete. It is likely that these local conditions induced Agura to leave the island. As for his complaint about Rhodes, it reflects the disappointment and impatience of a newcomer unable to integrate rapidly within the local economy. It should be noted that despite his complaints, Aqura did not intend to leave the island, unless the relatives to whom he addressed his letter assured him that they enjoyed better conditions. Moreover, he did not even hint at the possible emigration of his brother-in-law and the latter's wife, whom he had brought to Rhodes. It follows that the problems Agura encountered in Crete and Rhodes were of a personal and economic nature and do not reflect a deterioration of Jewish condition in the empire (Jacoby 2009: 163–164).

Byzantine recovery was followed by widespread looting, destruction, and presumably also confiscations of property in Chandax, the



Phonetics

In the second name of the author משה אַגוּרָא (l. 17) the final alef was misread for hei, and a dagesh in gimel was unnoticed. While the distinction of final letters is of no phonetic relevance as both reflect [a], the dagesh distinguishes a plosive velar from a fricative one. Consequently, it invalidates the suggested etymology of the proper name from the noun ἀγορά 'market square' (Holo 2000: 9), as there is no evidence for the pronunciation of lexeme $\dot{\alpha}\gamma$ op $\dot{\alpha}$ with plosive [g] in the contemporaneous sources. A reference to Gignac (1976: 211) to

Should we base ourselves, as it is appropriate, on the material of the current letter and the closest data, we must conclude that there are more chances that the form is an accusative, not a nominative. For example, the sentence in lines 6-7 לקחתיה והבאתיה אל אישה | באי רוֹדֹון ואני עתה shows that the author constructs Greek proper names in accordance with the requirements of Greek syntax: είς τὴν / στην Ῥὀδον. Δ

the Cretan dialect around the period under analysis and is reflected in Latin-script sources (Holton et al. 2019: 158, Corazzol 2015:50). It is also witnessed in CUL Or.1080 J1: אַרְכֿודּוּ Αρχοντώ (recto l. 3) and אלכסַדְריאָן Αλεξάνδριαν (verso l. 17; de Lange 1996: 11–15).

Morphosyntax

historical reasons that will be discussed below, but also because of its spelling: Judaeo-Greek feminine names would normally end in hei, while אַגוּרֵא is a well-formed masculine name. On the other hand, [agura] functions in the letter as a kind of signature. The form in which signatures feature in the medieval Cretan documents is a universally unclear point: many names that should end in the nominative in -ς appear without it. Various explanations can be adduced to this fact, including the rethinking of formulas / pragmatic contexts as requiring the accusative, not nominative; loss of final [-s] in certain phonetic environments and extension of the phenomenon into other environments (see Holton et al. 2019: 161-163); imitation of foreign (Venetian) names, etc. Notwithstanding the large amount of evidence (notarial deeds of Baruh, Olokalos, et al., the Kallergi

agreement with about 300 signees, Κατάστιχο ἐκλησιῶν καὶ μοναστηρίων τοῦ κοινοῦ, etc.), the topic, to my knowledge, has never been addressed systematically, and some scholars, e.g., Charalambakis, went so far as to suggest that the nominative form of some names "was

Several options are available for the name's root [agur-]. It may be etymologically related to the noun $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\circ\dot{\nu}\rho$ iverory, to 'a fruit of cucumber (Cucumis sativus), melon (Cucumis melo)' (ILEG s.vv. αγγουρεά, η Ι 1β and αγγούρι 3) or 'watermelon' (Citrullus vulgaris) (ILEG s.v. αγγούρι 2). Medieval Greek lexicographers do not give other botanic possibilities, but medical sources suggest that other species of genus Cucurbita (pumpkin / zucchini / gourd / squash - Cucurbita maxima / Citrullus Colocynthis, etc.) could be subsumed under this term.

unknown". There can be consequently no certainty, whether *[agura] is an accusative or an asigmatic appositive nominative.

The deminutive ἀγγουράκι is used to denote *Hypochoeris Cretensis*, an endemic species of edible greens (ILEG, s.v., and s.v. ἀγγουρελαιὰ 2.). As to the derivative meanings, the word was used as an euphemism for penis (Kriaras s.vv. ἀγγοὑριν and ἀγγουράκι; ILEG s.v. αγγοὑρι 1β). Ι do not know of any medieval precedents for the modern meanings 'insignificant thing, trifle' or 'difficulty, impediment' (see LKNE s.v. αγγούρι 2a, Georgakas s.v. αγγούρι 2), but they too could have existed. The etymology of $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\dot{\alpha}$ our 'cucumber' has been an object of extended discussions. Some believe it to originate from the adj. $\ddot{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\dot{\alpha}$ byform of MG ἄγουρος 'unripe, untimely' < AG ἄωρος (sc. πέπων or sim.). The adjective 'unripe' could itself serve an etymon of the name under discussion - but substantivized, as for instance in MG αγόρι 'boy', since the derivational models discussed below do not allow for adjectival bases. Hesychius preserves the lexeme ἄγγορα· ῥᾶξ, σταφυλή, which seems to be a hapax, but cf. `unripe grape' in DGE s.v. ἄγωρος -ον.

If X, as in our case, is a kind of food, another option is also available: (d) 'the one who likes to eat X', e.g. Ζωμάς or Ζουμάς, Ἄλμοζωμάς '(saulty) broth-lover', Φαβάς 'the one who likes *fava*, a beans' dish', Movoκυθράς 'the one who likes μονόκυθρον, vegetable and meat dish' (all – Tsouderos 2001: 77). Habits of eating were described in similar fashion, e.g. Βουκίας, Χαψάς `the one devouring or swallowing large pieces of food'.

other possible roots of the אגורא described above. The derivatives formed from the root gyyoup- would not be specifically Jewish: on the contrary, chronologically, geographically and morphologically they are widely attested throughout the Greek realm. The *praepositus* named Άγγοὑρης is mentioned in several Byzantine chronicles, ⁶ and the same nickname was given to a famous rebetiko composer and singer Vangelis Papazoglou (1896-1943). Modern Greek Christian family names Άγγουρᾶς and Άγγοὑρας are recorded all over Greece, and in Ottoman times were used also in Asia Minor. In Crete, family names in -ας would be expected in the inland of Chania (Kontosopoulos 2008: 40).

The breakdown undertaken here aims in illustrating the procedure of analysing a Judaeo-Greek second name. Inter alia, it shows that the possibility of its having anything to do with ἀγορά 'market square' is negligible, neither can it be taken as evidence to the fact that Moshe was active in commerce. In general, randomly matching the Judaeo-Greek characters to whatever Greek one happens to know is not a good idea - not the least because the personal name under analysis does not have to be Greek. It could have had a Semitic origin, e.g. be related

to Bab. Aram. אגורא 'brick' or אגורא (Targ. Jonathan to Num. 23:3), or even stem from a language of another family whose links with the context are not evident. The options that can be reconstructed on linguistic grounds proper are plentiful and should not be limited at this

Moshe's Family Those Mentioned ...

If the top part of the parchment was symmetrical to its lower part, there is quite sufficient place for yet another addressee in front of Pothiti. Even if the latter is titled in the same way as in l. 18, i.e. as אשתי פותיטין אחות, there is enough space for זוגי, there is enough space for In l. 16 Moshe promises to the addressee ואתפלל לך. "Praying for one's house" in the context of the Genizah was a normal way to express personal concern about one's wife and bring forward the close ties of the couple in a socially acceptable way. It is also notable that the text of twenty four lines contains as many as three promises to come and join the addressee(s), albeit only "if the place is good". The covert purpose of this repetition could be reassuring the wife that she is not going to end up as aguna.

Tagganot Candia, the proceedings of the Jewish communal council in Candia between 1228 and 1583, mentions two people with the second name spelled אגורא. The first of them is a signee of the taqqana dated to the first half of the thirteenth century (no. 13, l. 11). His first name

It has been already noticed that the Greek influenced the Hebrew of the letter writer: instead of expected אין in l. 10 he used לא יש (Holo 2000: 4–5). However, the impact of the main spoken language goes way beyond calquing the Greek existential constructions. A blatant feature of Hebrew-Greek interference is the lack of distinction between שם and שם due to the polysemy of their translational equivalent ἐκεί 'there' / 'towards there' (Kriaras s.v. εκεί 1 & 2). לשם is thrice used in sense of direction (II. 12, 20, 24) and twice in sense of

location (II. 11, 21). The usage is so unstable, that even the literally repeated phrase may include different forms of the adverb: נבוא שם (I.

Similarly, since the Greek comparative particle ὅπως ʿas, like' is homonymous with the temporal conjunction 'when' (see LSJ s.v. ὅπως Ι 4 &

The form לא הייתי יודע in l. 21 is suggestive, as it may reflect an attempt to reproduce the imperfective verbal aspect as opposed to nearby עתה

The letter exhibits an interesting use of the noun דבר 'thing, word' for the reinforcement of the indefinite pronoun: בכלום דבר in II. 13 and 16. Plain כלום also occurs: ואם שמעתה כלום in l. 9. The addition of דבר illustrates the well-known phenomenon of 'Jespersen cycle': the original negation becomes devaluated, and a new word is called to reinforce it. Strong negations, initially acceptable only in negative contexts, then drift to other syntactic environments, such as conditionals or questions. The process repeats itself cyclically in many world's languages. The use of דבר after כלום is not found in biblical texts, and their combination is generally rare. As a simple search shows, isolated usages of

this combination are encountered in a number of sources from different periods and places, such as Deuteronomy Rabbah, Seder Eliyahu Rabbah, gaonic responsa, Zohar, Maimonidean responsa, Yalkut Shimoni, etc. However, the only work where this combination occurs more than twice, seems to be Lekah Tov by Tobiah Ben Eliezer, the spiritual leader of Candia community in the 12th century who must have

While the noun meaning 'thing' is widely applied in emphatic negations (and Hebrew כלום is itself an example of such, containing מאום), its appearance still could be due to the native tongue of the author. Are there any facts in medieval Greek that can be paralleled with the

structures of our letter? It appears that there are. During the rich and complicated evolution of indefinite and negative pronouns in Medieval Greek, the reinforcing elements were drawn from a variety of sources, including pronouns (τι 'something'), adverbs (ποτε 'sometimes') and

Μὲ συμφωνίες, στοιχήματα τὰ ἐβάλασιν ἐγράφως νὰ μὴ ἔχῃ δύναμιν καμμίαν νὰ κρένῃ μοναξός του, οὔτε νὰ κάμνη τίποτε πρᾶγμα γὰρ εἰς τὸν κόσμον άνευ βουλῆς καὶ θέλημαν ὅλων του τῶν συντρόφων. Λοιπόν, ἀφέντη βασιλεῦ, ἐγὼ ἐξουσίαν οὐκ ἔχω νὰ δώσω πρᾶμα τίποτε ἐκ τὸν τόπον ὅπου ἔχω,

> "In the agreements and pledges they recorded in writing that no one would be able to decide by himself, neither to do anything at all (lit. anything thing in the world) without the will and agreement of all the comrades. So, o Sire, I have no right to give anything (lit. thing anything) from the place where I rule, as it was gained by the sword of our parents..." (ed. Schmitt, II. 4283–89). 10

The frequent use of the emphatic construction resulted in the word πράμα acquiring the meaning 'nothing', 'naught', e.g. in Achilleis

έγω γαρ καὶ τοὺς ἔρωτες καθόλου δὲν φοβοῦμαι· ποτέ μου οὐδὲν ἐδουλώθηκα εἰς ἔρωτα καὶ εἰς πόθον, καὶ οὐκ οἶδα πόνον ἔρωτος, οὐκ οἶδα ἀγάπης πράμαν· ... (ed. Hesseling, l. 618).

I am not at all afraid of Eros. as I never became slave to Eros and passion, neither did I knew the pain of Eros, nor knew love at all (lit. of love thing).

negative), Phlorius et Platzia Phlora, I. 1514 (indefinite), Zodiologium (e cod. Mus. Hist. Mosq. 186, fol. 144), vol. 12, p. 187, I. 7 (indefinite), Apophthegmata patrum (collectio systematica), ch. 16, 7, l. 4 (indefinite), cf. also Callimachus et Chrysorrhoe, l. 1154 (indefinite). The cooccurrences of πρ $\tilde{\alpha}$ (γ)μα and τἰποτε(ς) in legal texts, such as *Basilica*, vol. 6, title 34, ch. 2 l. 2; vol. 50, title 14, ch. 5 l. 3; ch. 7 l. 8, ch. 9 l. 2, as well as Ecloga vol. 10, title 2, sect. 16.1, l. 6, are irrelevant for this analysis, since the word πρᾶγμα carries there its direct meaning

The peculiarities of Moshe's emphatic constructions are of importance both for Greek historical grammar and dialectology. First, all the texts with reinforcement under discussion which can be reliably dated, are much later than A.D. 961, where Holo assigns the letter. Obviously, this can be due to the loss of earlier Greek texts, or purging of the construction by classicising editors, or editors coming from the regions where it was not widespread. It stands to reason that if Moshe's style indeed reflects the 'true colloquial', its constructions will not be immediately

years. Second, the construction persisted in the southern Greek-speaking zone, and is now considered a dialectal feature of Crete and some islands of the Aegean, e.g. Thera (Kontosopoulos 2008: 166). There is place to ask whether the emphatic use of πράγμα was geographically

In addition to those quoted, TLG furnishes other comparable examples in Imperius et Margarona, II. 147 (indefinite), 150, 808 (both

acceptable and will need some time to penetrate written speech. Yet the process would have taken much less than four hundred

marked already at the time of letter's composition, i.e. can it serve as a proof of Moshe's Cretan or Southern Aegean origin?

`material object', as opposed to χρήματα `money', δίκαιον `right', etc., and is not an emphatic addition.

realized that it would not fit; regardless, he continued on the following line" (2000: 11, n. 57). It is, however, noticeable that the scribe often leaves substantial empty spaces on the left and makes no efforts to justify the left margin. Obviously, the aesthetics of writing was not his primary consideration. Should he indeed have miscalculated the space, he would rather have continued the next line with the same word that he supposedly unsuccessfully started. Instead, line 10 starts with vav, not with alef. Moreover, this vav is not immediately adjacent to the

Let us presume that the end of l. 9, badly preserved, should be read as suggested by Holo, namely אין ואָקריטִיש, or perhaps better וין ו אָקריטִיש. Since no words in the letter are divided between the lines, there should be some kind of morphological boundary after אי \וי . The sequence therefore may have many readings, such as [i|oikritis], [oi|oikritis], [ai|oikritis] [ai|vaikritis], etc. Whatever its precise phonetic shape, it seems to represent a series of interjections: "Oy vey Crete!", which would be an apt exclamation for someone complaining that כאשר היה מקודם

he intended to write down a Hebrew word and not a Greek one or a word of some other language, since interjections can be easily borrowed. Little clarity can be achieved no less because the treatment of interjections in medieval lexicography is notoriously deficient. However, from the viewpoint of Judaeo-Greek syntax the structure is unproblematic, as an interjection can be followed by a nominative or a vocative. A nominative / vocative Κρήτης (sic, with $-\varsigma$) following the article / interjection is well documented in the works of early Cretan literature, e.g.

characteristic feature of the modern Cretan dialect [...]". T-S NS 324.1 certainly predates the 15th century, and may furnish one of the first examples of the island's extended name. It seems that, if only for the sake of Occam's razor, one should avoid postulating Arabic phenomena where Greek suffice. The discovery of

Holton et al. (2019: 547) state that the earliest examples of such extended nominatives are datable to the 15th century. On the other hand, on p. 164 of the same work one reads that "the phenomenon (sc. "movable -s"- J.K.) is attested since the 11th c., in documents from S. Italy

[...], and does not seem to be geographically restricted. [...] Cretan texts are especially rich in attestations, and it does constitute a

10 The earlier recensions H and T also contain similar reinforcements. Translations here and below are mine. References

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Social Media

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length of T-S NS 324.1, as no original margins are visible. The initial text was performed by a confident hand producing large letters with serifs. Eleven or twelve almost illegible lines survived, with only ascenders remaining from the lowest. I am unable to identify the lower text.

morphological marking (e.g., -ς). Being strictly individual, they are not inherited nor transformed into family names. In the Byzantine period such names were also extremely rare, and philologists tend to appreciate "... the important and precious [fact] ... that ... we have one Byzantine evidence of use of the nickname in feminine to the person of masculine gender" (sic, emphasized throughout by the delighted Tsouderos in his commentary on the nickname Μούλα (2001: 75) – J.K.). Identifying the form as masculine is likelier not only for the

Another technically possible etymon for the name Άγγουρας would be the noun ἄγγουρος: εἶδος πλακοῦντος (Hesych.), explained also as τὸ μελίπηκτον 'type of sweet pie' by Zonnaras and Psellus (*Poemata* 6, I. 302). The lexeme is only found in lexicographical sources; no derivatives seem to have existed, neither are there any modern Greek lexemes that continue this form. The preservation of the word by learned Byzantines was therefore an epiphenomenon of traditionally oriented education, rather than an adequate reflection of the actual use of the period. The change of πλακοῦς into μελἰπηκτον can be explained by the fact that honey was a default sweetener, and bakery products

What derivation patterns could have been used with the abovementioned noun roots? Modern descriptive sources refer to derivational models

Κρομμύδας from resp. μαχαίρα, κεφάλα, καββάδα, κρομμύδα. The semantics of more popular oxytonal model is wider (Minas 2004 a & b). If

(a) 'the one who provides / supplies X', e.g. Ἀνεμάς 'maker & seller of anemes', Bρανάς 'maker & seller of ribbons', Ἀποτυράς 'maker & seller

(b) 'the one who possesses an extremely prominent X (usually a body part)', e.g., Κεφαλάς or Καυκαλάς 'big-headed', Γονατάς 'the one with large knees'. This option would be also valid for 'penis', cf. Βολέας 'the one with large testicles', Τσουτσούνας 'the one with large penis' (all –

(c) 'the one who resembles X (usually in body shape)' (e.g. Κολοκυθάς). I do not know Byzantine examples for this semantic type, but their

in -ἀς and -ας. The barytonal model is based on feminine nouns and produces augmentatives, e.g. Μαχαίρας, Κεφάλας, Καββάδας,

X is the meaning of the derivational base, the nouns produced from X with the help of $-\dot{a}\varsigma$ may mean:

The derivation can be based on an utterance rather than on the lexical meaning of its constituents. The exclamation $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\gamma o\dot{\nu}\rho ia!$ is currently used to mean 'nonsense!', and since the medieval roots of this usage cannot be excluded, one should consider yet another model: (e) 'someone who abuses the remark X', cf. Αλληλούιας 'a nickname of the priest who constantly repeated Αλληλούια!', Ναναϊνάς 'a nickname of a chanter who indulged in singing *vavaïvá*' (both – Tsouderos 2001: 77). Consequently, a nickname Άγγουρᾶς may have, at the very least, the following meanings: 'the one who produces / supplies cucumbers / gourds / etc.', 'the one who likes to eat cucumbers / gourds / etc.', 'the one with large penis', 'the one who likes to eat unripe fruit / vegetables', 'the one who abuses the remark ἀγγούρια!', 'the one who looks like a cucumber / gourd'. Similar sets can be suggested for the

stage of enquiry. The personal name Moshe is known on Crete, e.g. one of the signees of the Kallergi agreement (1299) bears this name. Yet being common

to many naming traditions across the Mediterranean and beyond, it cannot help to pin a particular individual. The womenfolk are easier to locate: there can be little doubt that Ποθητή 'desired' and Καλή 'beautiful' were local Romaniotes. Papponymic practices result in the naming repertoire being stable for centuries, and these very names still occur among the islanders of the Southern Aegean and Cyclades. Apart from

If the primary addressee is Mar Tuvia, why is he listed as (at least) second after Pothiti? A sister's wife might be considered, in a sense, a closer relative than her husband, but one would expect the male to appear first, as 'more important'. Second, why is Kali called אמכם (1. 3), if she is the mother only of Pothiti? Is the wife or another sibling also among the addressees? Does the author generalize in masc. rather than in fem. אמק because of Tuvia or because second person plural in Greek does not have gender distinctions? The editor translates the address in II. 4, 15 and 16 as "my daughter" (Holo 200: 11). Is this 'daughter' an independent person, a form of address to Pothiti by her mother

was read as שמשון by Rosenberg and as שמעון by Cassuto and Hartom. This Shimon / Samson Agura(s) appears without a patronymic or other characteristics showing that Agura was sufficient to distinguish the individual. The Venetian notary in 1321 spelled his name as Angura (Jacoby 2010: 243). The second bearer of the same surname, כ"ר שמריא אגורא נ"ע (חס. 50, II. 6, 53) was a *condestabulo* of the community in 1369. This Joseph obviously belonged to the family occupying the topmost social position, and the taggana shows him as an active leader of the

community (II. 9, 16, 17).

20), but נבוא לשם (l. 24).

שמעתי, the perfective aspect.

7), we find כאשר in l. 10: יאשר היה מקודם לא 'it is no longer as it was'.

resided in the Greek-speaking realm for most of his life.

byzantina (e cod. Brit. Mus. addit. 8241), 14th century:

Any Arabic?

into details.

לא יש עתה.

in *Η συμφορά της Κρήτης*:

following word, but is followed by a space.

Ω Κρήτης, τρέμω να το πω εκείνο που τυχαίνει

Η Κρήτης αποκρίνεται με ταπεινόν το σχήμα

Byzantium's loss of Crete to Venice in 1205.

the options, dating between 9th and 14th century.

πυρῶν πεφρυγμένων καὶ μέλιτι ἀναδεδευμένων.

9 For more examples of this see Outhwaite 2009: 198.

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language.gr/greekLang/modern_greek/tools/lexica/georgakas/index.html

3 The form for illustrative purposes only.

Footnotes

417-476.

"Crete humbly answers..." (l. 179).

Κρήτης, από 'σεν εξέβηκεν στον κόσμον όλη η φρόνα

"Crete, from you came all the wisdom in the world..." (I. 195);

"O Crete, I tremble to tell what is happening..." (ed. Mpoumpoulidis, l. 171);

... and Other Aguras⁸

It is up to historians to establish the links between the personalities above. For linguists and philologists, this information shows: (a) that [agura] became a family name and consequently was not an occasional feminine pro masculine in T-S NS 324.1; (b) that the nasal in the root was correctly reconstructed; (c) that Hebrew-drafted documents followed the same naming practices as contemporaneous Greek-drafted documents, both using asigmatic nominative forms. Moshe's Languages

The onomastic archive of Joseph Siakki mentions two other individuals, Ζοζέφ (possibly the same as above) and Κανά Αγκουρά, appearing in

Chania in 1383. Different spelling here is no more than a fact of orthography, reflecting the same phonetics.

Mar Tuvia is characterised once as חתני (I. 2) and once as אגיסי (I. 18). The use of the latter term may be facilitated by phonetic similarity with αγχιστής 'relative by marriage, in-law' (presuming the loss of nasal as in [agura]). In Greek, the imperatives are not distinguished as to their gender. The imperatives in the letter are notable for their absence of gender marking. One may argue that the form כתוב in ll. 11 and 12, as well as כתוב לי כתבכם (ll. 22–23) could refer to a male scribe, since a women could be illiterate. Yet even in the sentence including the address בתי, the imperative is invariably masculine: מחול (l. 14).

numerals (εις / ἑνας 'one') (Kiparsky & Condoravdi 2006). Only one of the most recent Jespersen cycles involved the actual noun 'thing': πράγμα / πράμα. Its implementation resulted in a number of medieval texts having both τίποτε(ς) and πρ $\tilde{\alpha}(\gamma)$ μα in negative, indefinite, conditional and other types of sentences, e.g. in the *Chronicle of Morea*: διοῦ τὸν ἐκερδέσασι μὲ τὸ σπαθὶ οἱ γονοί μας ...

According to the editor of T-S NS 324.1, "the author reveals an aspect of contemporary pronunciation through the addition of a prothetic א in the beginning of the word "Crete" in line 10. The א is notable because the use of the prothetic vowel reflects Arabic phonology more than Greek, in which word-initial consonantal diphthongs (sic – J.K.) are common" (2000: 5). Holo quotes the form אַלַקרִיטשִׁי from T-S Ar.18(1).113 (Blau & Hopkins 1985:431, 1. 30) as a parallel example of such an addition. The presence of alef is supposed to be remarkable, since "another occurrence of the word "Crete" from a Greek-Jewish source (sc. T-S 16.289 recto I. 9 – J.K.) has no such vowel" (Holo 2000: 5). The conclusion drawn from these facts is that "the prothetic κ in the word "Crete" points to the Arabic influence among the Greek-speaking, Jewish population of Crete during the period of Arab rule" (ibid.). Outhwaite (2009: 196) believed this explanation to be faulty, but did not go For a start, אַלַקְרִיטשִׁי (T-S Ar.18(1).113) is hardly a good *comparandum* for the word(s) in our MS, since (1) it has an Arabic article preceding the toponym, while ours lacks one; (2) if it were a noun, there would be hardly any reason of inserting shin, as [ti] is a legitimate phonetic sequence in Arabic. אַלַקְרִיטִּשִׁי would be better linked to the adjective Κρητική `Cretan (sc. neighbourhood / market)', with *shin* reflecting the palatalization of the last velar. If JA tsadi was firmly associated with emphatic consonants, shin could be a reasonable spelling choice for a Cretan pronunciation with voiceless alveo-palatal affricate: [krititei]. This would make the lexeme the earliest attestation of the phenomenon, normally invisible in Greek or Latin writing (Holton et al. 2019: 194-198). It is worth taking a closer look at what stands before the toponym 'Crete'. In Holo's words, in l. 9 "the author began the word אָקריטָש and

the document in Fustat cannot in itself prove the knowledge of Arabic or any pre-existing Arabic connections of the scribe, nor even the fact that Fustat was its intended destination. Escapees from Crete are known to have reached almost every island in the Southern Aegean (Kythera, Amorgos, Milos, Paros, Karpathos, Cyprus, etc.), not to mention the mainland, and Moshe's family could have initially arrived to a place without a community and / or a genizah, forcing them to hold to the letter until properly disposed of. A piece of writing about two cm² large could be easily taken anywhere, or even preserved for longer periods as an object of sentimental value. In Lieu of Summary T-S NS 324.1 is a letter addressed by Moshe Agoura(s), of unknown profession, to his relatives and perhaps his wife, whose name did not survive. It exhibits the impact of the author's spoken language (Greek) on his Hebrew, but lacks convincing linguistic proof of his familiarity with Arabic.

The analysis of the effects of language interference suggests that the terminus post quem of the letter should be moved at the very least to the end of the eleventh - beginning of the twelfth century, perhaps even later. The misfortune lamented by Moshe might have been therefore

1 Possible evidence for such could be spellings with γκ, remarks of grammarians or transcriptions into the languages that distinguish between

4 See Hesych. μελιτοῦντας· πλακοῦντας (Ar. Av. 567 v. l.); κηρίον· τὸ τῶν μελισσῶν. καὶ εἶδος πλακοῦντος; πυραμοῦς· εἶδος πλακοῦντος, ἐκ

5 Here and below wherever possible the illustrations are given from Byzantine sources chronologically close to the Genizah document. More

6 Georgius Monachus, Chronicon breve, vol. 110, p. 1061; Georgius Monachus Continuatus, Chronicon, p. 832 and Symeon Logothetes,

7 Sarantakos (2021) informs that in the modern argot of actors the nickname Αγγούρης is given to someone whose scenic moves are stiff and unnatural ('cucumber-like'), cf. LKNE s.v. αγγούρι 2 β 'ἀχαρος, σαχλός, ανόητος' ('clumsy, silly, goofy'). It may be impossible to verify, how old this argotism is, as such vocabulary is normally poorly documented. However, its semantics fall neatly under the category (c).

8 Agoura's relatives were discovered by me in 2008. Approximately at the same time the connection with *Taqqanot* must have been made independently by D. Jacoby, who published it in 2010, but the publication remained unknown to me until 2019. There Jacoby mentions only one Agoura, reading his name as Shimon and dating the relevant ordinance to 1228. He also adds the data about the Venetian spelling of the

Chronicon, p. 246. Here and below the editions of Byzantine and Early Modern Greek sources are those of TLG, see the references.

2 For more examples of code-switching between Greek and Hebrew in the Genizah see Krivoruchko 2011.

surname, something I would have never learnt without him. His scholarship will be missed by many.

details and examples can be found in Koukoules (1948: v. 6, 452–466, 469–504).

caused by the Karykes rebellion (1090-1092) or any lesser known event, such as a particularly atrocious pirate raid or, ultimately, even

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justify [o] > [u] (ibid.) is not helpful, because the vowel change in the papyri may be due to the influence of Coptic. Raising of the vowels adjacent to velars indeed occurs (Holton et al. 2019: 74-75), but requires establishing the accent location, and this cannot be postulated a The standard Greek spelling for the form contained in the letter would be Ayyoupa with nasal deletion. Nasal deletion before stops occurs in

Similarly, ורוב שלומות קבלו ממני suggests ἀπὸ (ἐ)μἑ(να), Μοσἑ Ἁγγουρα. Provided the name is masculine, it could be Ἅγγουρας / Ἅγκουρας, Άγγούρας / Άγκούρας / Άγγουράς / Άγκουράς. Despite being the most probable, these options are not the only ones possible. Feminine and neuter forms do occur as nicknames for male individuals, albeit very infrequently, and the phenomenon seems to be geographically limited, with most known material originating from Karpathos. The nicknames ending in [-a] are unusual for Greek syntax and pragmatics, as they do not bear any overt masculine

Etymology / derivative morphology

containing honey were glossed through πλακοῦς in lexicography. 4

Tsouderos 2001: 71), Καυλέας 'the same' (ibid: 78);

existence cannot be denied a priori.

In lieu of conclusion

this, few things can be certain about the particular family.

Kali, or perhaps 'my house' as a polite reference to wife?

of apotyron'. In modern Pontic, ἀγγουρᾶς means `cucumber-seller' (ILEG s.v.);

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Moshe's Name