

CONDITION REPORT AND ESTIMATE

DATE: March 21, 2003

ACCESSION: 03.005

OWNER: Lafayette College
Skillman Library
Easton, PA 18042
Attn: Diane Shaw

MEDIUM: Black writing inks; black and colored drawing inks (brown, red, green, blue, white, pink/purple)

SUPPORT: Papyrus

SIZE: 11 2/2" x 71" (irregular)

MAT	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MOUNT	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
FRAME	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
GLAZING	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

DOCUMENTATION: For the Center's records, the condition of the object will be documented photographically prior to and following treatment.

CONDITION OF OBJECT UPON RECEIPT

The papyrus was first examined in the frame, using a raking light, to determine the extent to which the surface of the papyrus is adhered to the glazing. Areas of cleavage were detected in the central portions, particularly in areas that show prior water/moisture damage. In these areas, it appears that thin layers of the papyrus support and some media layers have already separated and are fully adhered to the glazing.

The papyrus was unframed by the conservator in order to investigate these areas further. In order to have visual access to the verso and to keep the papyrus completely stationary, the framed papyrus was placed face down on a padded surface. Paperboard spacers were used to fill the void between the face of the wood frame and the glass. With these spacers in place, the screws and wood rails were removed. The wood backing was gently lifted.

An 11"x 15" portion of the left edge is broken into multiple fragments, many of which are quite small (1/2" - 1"). These small fragments are loose and have become dislocated in some areas. Given the scattering of the small fragments, it is not possible to fully ascertain the extent of loss in this area. There are several moderate (1-2") losses along the top edge and at all corners. There are numerous minor (1/2") losses found randomly throughout the papyrus. There is a 20" row of very small losses along the bottom edge, left. There are numerous long cracks, perpendicular to the bottom and top edges, across the entire surface of the papyrus. The cracks occur at regular intervals and are likely the result of prior rolling.

Areas of the papyrus that appeared adhered to the glass were gently probed using a spatula made of glassine paper. This rounded strip of glassine paper was carefully inserted between the glass and the media layer in order to map areas of adhesion. Only one area is still fully adhered to the glass. This area is approximately 5" x 5" and is located 2" from the top edge and 28 1/2" from the left edge, verso. Other



CONDITION REPORT AND ESTIMATE

Page 2 of 3

DATE: March 21, 2003

ACCESSION: 03.005

areas, particularly in the central portions of the object, have already sheared -- likely due to the expansion and contraction of the papyrus with changes in temperature and humidity. In these areas, thin layers are completely detached from the primary papyrus support (note attached illustration) and are adhered to the glass.

There is an overall medium warm tan coloration. The general color varies, with lighter striations throughout, due to the composite nature of the papyrus. There are five large (6-8") brown liquid stains, most of which are on the left side of the papyrus. There are small liquid stains found throughout, with a series of stains along the bottom edge, left side. There are random areas of dark gray discoloration, primarily in the central portion. There are random accretions.

The design and text appear, through the glass, to be in fair condition. There are losses of media associated with the losses of the papyrus support. There are moderate-to-severe surface losses of media in places, particularly in areas of the blue medium (which appears powdery). There is minor abrasion of all media associated with cracks and distortions in the papyrus. The white medium is largely lost, with residues found in the whites of eyes, robes of some of the smaller figures, and the pedestal on the left side. The white medium appears very chalky and fragile. The manuscript text is generally in good conditions, with minor losses on the left side. The text is rendered primarily in black writing inks, with selective use of the light purple/pink pigment. Much of the text is very clear and distinct. The media will be examined further, pending removal of the glass.

After examination, the object was placed back into the client's frame. Barrier sheets of 20 lb. Alkaline buffered paper and clear polyester were placed behind the object to prevent direct contact with the wood backing board.

PROPOSED TREATMENT

Test the media and support for stability during treatment. Testing will include the use of controlled, indirect applications of moisture (ultrasonic humidity, Gore Tex®, dry ice, and methylcellulose) to facilitate separation of the papyrus and glass.

Remove the object from the glazing using controlled applications of moisture, as indicated by testing.

Secure the media as necessary, using an ultrasonic application of the appropriate consolidant (methylcellulose, wheat starch paste).

Wash the object on wet blotters (not water immersion), using calcium-enriched deionized water, to reduce acidity and discoloration in the support to the extent possible.

Repair tears, breaks, and losses in the papyrus using acrylic-toned Japanese paper and wheat starch paste applied to the verso. Fragments and loose areas will be realigned using a light table.

Remove fragments adhered to the glazing using controlled applications of moisture. Reattach these fragments, as possible, using wheat starch paste. Some fragments may be too small and/or thin to remove intact. Extraneous fibers and fragments will be returned to the client.

CONDITION REPORT AND ESTIMATE

Page 3 of 3

DATE: March 21, 2003

ACCESSION: 03.005

Dry the object under restraint using blotters, under glass and heavy weight.

HOUSING

Hinge the papyrus to a Tycore® panel (an alkaline paperboard with an interior honeycomb structure) using multiple wrap hinges of acrylic-toned Japanese paper and wheat starch paste. The white Tycore® will be toned with acrylic paint to provide a more compatible background for the papyrus.

Place the mounted papyrus in a sealed package. The sealed package consists of ultraviolet filtering acrylic glazing, the mounted object, acrylic spacers covered with acrylic-toned rag paper, alkaline backing materials, and MarvelSeal® (a flexible moisture barrier film, made from a sandwich of polyethylene, aluminum, and polyester). The MarvelSeal® will be sealed to the glazing with 3M™ Double Coated Tape 415 and heat. The sealed package protects the artifact from particulate matter and helps mitigate against environmental changes. It must be supported by a frame for exhibition. The papyrus will require a new frame, to accommodate the depth of the sealed package.

Secure the sealed package into a new, custom made mahogany or walnut frame.

Examination and Report Prepared by Joan Irving