



# Forum Antike

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## **A Forger, his models, methods, and motives: The papyri of Constantine Simonides**

From the so-called "Gospel of Jesus Wife" to the post-2002 Dead Sea Scroll-like fragments, fake ancient manuscripts have been risen to renewed prominence in the past decade. Yet while there is a plentiful supply of fakes to deauthenticate, examples of known papyrus forgers are more rare, as most such figures are anonymous. By far the largest corpus of fake papyri which survive is that produced by Constantine Simonides in Liverpool in the early 1860s. In this case, not only do over 30 fake papyri survive in the World Museum Liverpool, but archival and published material allows a much clearer view of Simonides than is possible with most forgers. By assessing the Simonidean papyri, reflecting on their possible models, the methods Simonides used to forge them, and his motivations in doing so, this paper aims not only to better identify Simonides' techniques and motivations, but contribute to better understanding the sociology of forgery.