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Textual Remarks on Two Receipts concerning Replacement Parts for Irrigators

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- §1 The receipts for replacement parts for irrigators are notarial documents that originate from the Oxyrhynchite and date to the 5th–7th centuries.¹ Most of them belong to the dossier of the Apiones.² As a by-product of recent studies on the topic,³ I present in this article a few textual remarks on two receipts, including the transcription of lines which have not yet been published in full.

P.Oxy. 16 1982

- §2 This receipt, dated to 497, is addressed by a *colonus adscripticius* named Aurelios Ioseph, son of Abraamios and Anna (ll. 6–7) and coming from the hamlet Papsaou (ll. 7–8), to Fl. Strategios II. It was issued in the office of the notary Sarapammon who released a digraphic *completio* which includes a date (ll. 27–28)⁴. As the editors report, the *subscriptio* was written by a certain Aurelios Menas, son of Ioulios, but neither the *hypographe* nor the end of the main text (l. 22 after γραφεΐσα), which was written by the scribe who issued the rest of the document,⁵ have been transcribed in full⁶. In what follows, a transcription of lines 21 (end) – 26 will be proposed, based on the digital image available at [Oxyrhynchus online](#).

κυρία ἡ χειρο-
 γραφεΐα ἀπλῆ γραφεΐσα καὶ ἐπερ(ωτηθεὶς) ὠμολ(όγησα). (m2) Αὐρήλιος
 Ἰωσήφ υἱὸς Ἀβρααμίου
 ὁ προγεγραμμένος ἐναπόγραφος πεποίημαι τὴν χειρογραφ(ίαν)
 ὑποδεξάμενος τὸν καινὸν ἄξονα καὶ συμφωνῆ μοι πάντα τὰ προγεγραμ-
 25 μένα ὡς πρόκειται καὶ ἐπερ(ωτηθεὶς) ὠμολ(όγησα). Αὐρήλι[ο]ς Μηνᾶς Ἰουλίου
 ἀξιωθεὶς ἔγραψα
 ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ γράμματα μὴ εἰδότης.

21–22 *l.* χειρο|γραφία 24 ὑποδεξαμενος papyrus *l.* συμφωνεῖ 26 ὑπερ papyrus

- §3 22–23 On the left there is a mark consisting of a kind of S written to the left of -γραφεΐα (l. 22), ending at the bottom with a horizontal stroke going rightwards until it reaches the top of ὁ (l. 23):

1 Cf. [Tacoma 1998](#) with a list of documents on pp. 128–129; updates can be found in N. Gonis, P.Oxy. 70 4780, intro. (4615 is a slip of the pen for 4616); 4783. 8 n.; P.Oxy. 83 5365, intro. Cf. also the writing exercise P.Capasso 6 (second half of the 6th c., Oxy.?).

2 On this family see [Mazza 2001](#), and [Hickey 2012](#); in the last years, new texts have been published by N. Gonis, P.Oxy. 83 5365–5400, and A. Benaissa, P.Oxy. 84 5453–5474, maybe 5475; see also [Azzarello and Reiter 2020](#).

3 Cf. [Azzarello 2021](#); Le note riepilogative nelle ricevute di pezzi di ricambio per le macchine di irrigazione (in preparation); Ἄξων ε αὐξων: ipotesi su una strana variante grafica (in preparation); Oxyrhynchite Byzantine Receipts for Replacement Parts for Irrigators, *Tyche* 2021 (accepted for publication).

4 Cf. the thorough discussion of dates in notarial signatures by N. Gonis, P.Oxy. 83 5367, comm. to l. 8, esp. p. 114.

5 The scribe is the same as in the other Sarapammon's contract, [P.Oxy. 19 2237](#).

6 The same applies to the *verso*, which features two lines, the second one of which is almost fully abraded; of the first line, the editors transcribe the beginning (χειρογραφία) and the end (ἐναπογράφου): the shape of the letters suggest that the docket was written by the main scribe of the document (hand 1), cf. in particular the sequence απο (on the recto, l. 5). Based on the traces and on the parallels, a possible transcription of the whole l. 1 is: [†] χειρογραφ(ίαν) Ἰωσήφ υἱοῦ Ἀβρααμίου ἀ[πὸ] ἐποικίου Παψαου ἐναπογράφου; as for l. 2, it should have contained at least ὑποδοχῆς ἄξονος ἐνός, cf. e.g. [P.Oxy. 16 1983](#) (535) † χειρογραφ(ία) Βίκτορος υἱοῦ Ἀνουθίου ἀπὸ ἐποικ(ίου) Μικρ(ᾶς) Τερύθωος Ἀετίου ὑποδοχ(ῆς) | [στρροβίλλου καὶ] καλάθου ἐνός (the ed. marks a line change after Τερύθωος, but the image available online shows that this happens after ὑποδοχ(ῆς)).



On the hypothesis that this sign marks the end of the main part of the document and not the beginning of the *hypographe*, see S. Kovarik, P.Köln 14 583.20 n.

- §4 **22** It is noteworthy that the last word of the clause, ὁμολ(όγησα), written by the first hand, is in darker ink than the preceding words, showing that the scribe had to dip the pen into the ink in order to accomplish his task. The next signature, written by Menas, is written in even darker ink.
- §5 Ἄβρααμίου: υ is written on the right over the preceding ο: though abraded, some traces of it are still recognizable under the ρ of χειρο- in l. 21, which is written in darker ink.
- §6 **23–26** The lines are written in *eisthesis*.
- §7 **23** τὴν χειρογραφ(ίαν): for the reading see the following clipping:



P.Oxy. 16 1982.23: τὴν χειρογραφ(ίαν)

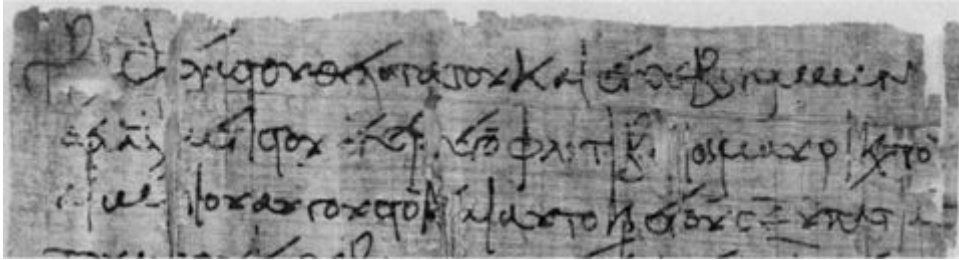
- §8 **26** This expression, which indicates the illiteracy of the contracting party, normally occurs in the fifth century; see Kovarik, P.Köln 14 583.24 n.

P.Oxy. 16 1987⁷

- §9 The date clause at the beginning of this receipt of 587 corresponds to a characteristic Oxyrhynchite formula of the emperor Mauricius; cf. **Bagnall and Worp, CSBE²**, pp. 260–261, no. (3). A revision of the papyrus based on the digital image leads to the discovery of a graphical feature within the regnal formula, which has escaped the attention of scholars so far. Such a feature might be significant to determine the way in which scribes employed by notaries used to work.

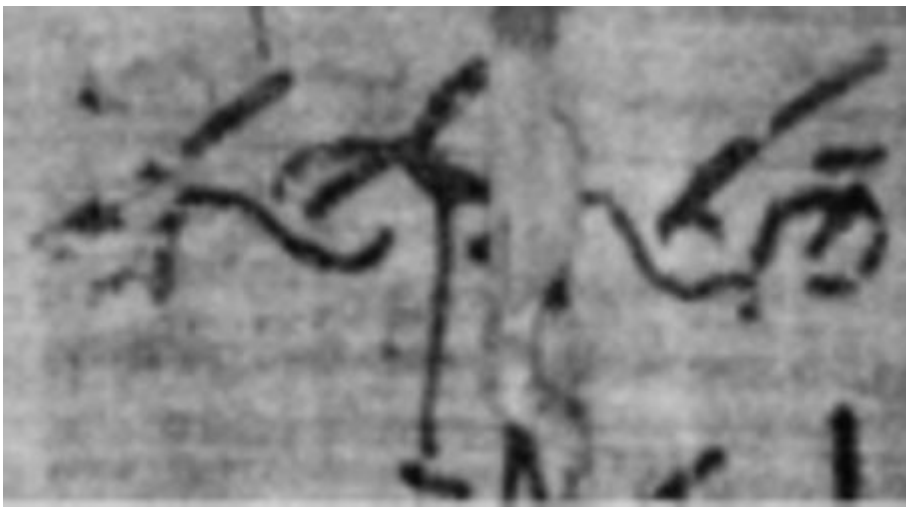
⁷ Edited in full by N. Gonis and T.M. Hickey in P.Oxy. 70, pp. 135–136.

- §10 The regnal formula in ll. 1–3 reads as follows: † βασιλείας τοῦ θειοτάτου καὶ εὐσεβ(εστάτου) ἡμῶν | δεσπό(του) μεγίστου εὐεργέτου Φλ(αοῦ) Τιβερίου Μαυρικ(ίου) τοῦ | αἰωνίου Αὐγούστου καὶ Αὐτοκρ(άτορος) ἔτους ε:



P.Oxy. 16 1987.1–3.

- §11 However, the second ε of εὐεργέτου in l. 2 is clearly corrected out of σ, cf. the following scan:



P.Oxy. 16 1987.2: εὐεργέτου (alt. ε ex σ)

- §12 Such a feature, though apparently insignificant, gives interesting insights into the working methods of notarial clerks, since it is possible that our scribe at this point had the adjective εὐσεβεστάτου in mind and therefore wrote σ instead of ε. Such a confusion might have been due to a *saut du même au même* occurring during the scribe's copying the formula, since the first part of the date contains such an epithet; cf. l. 1: † βασιλείας τοῦ θειοτάτου καὶ εὐσεβ(εστάτου). If this is correct, we should imagine that in the model the beginnings of the two epithets were written one under the other. Admitting that the model featured the same abbreviations as our document, we could therefore reconstruct the model's layout: the first two lines contained 24 letters (by tallying each of the abbreviation marks in l. 2 as equal in length to one letter); see the following reconstruction (the epitheta under discussion are given in bold):

† βασιλείας τοῦ θειοτάτου καὶ
εὐσεβ(εστάτου) ἡμῶν δεσπό(του) μεγίστου
εὐεργέτου κλπ.

- §13 Such a reconstruction would not only imply that the scribe made use of a model to write the dating formula, but also demonstrate that such a model was not much larger than a modern post-it. This might

even suggest that it was a strip of papyrus or even an ostrakon, not a wooden tablet.⁸ The scribe, whose papyrus sheet was larger than the model, could therefore not follow its exact layout.

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⁸ On possible model contracts written on papyrus see Cl. Gallazzi, P.Bastianini 6, p. 59, n. 41.