Abbreviations in Late Documents Resolved (II)

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Abstract: Notes on the elucidation of passages in texts from late antiquity obscured by the use of abbreviations and editorial misses, continued from *APF* 66 (2020) 346–58.

25. BGU XVII 2718

This is a sixth-/seventh-century receipt from Hermopolis for the partial re-payment of a debt. It is not easy to read: 'Die Schrift … ist stellenweise verblaßt und hebt sich daher nur wenig von dem braunen und nachgedunkelnten Papyrus ab.' The first line of the text was edited as follows:

> † π(αρὰ) Αὐρ(ηλίου) Πκυλίου γεωργοῦ ἀπὸ Ἑρ(μοῦ πόλεως) Πεσᾷ ἀπὸ
> Ἑρ(μοῦ πόλεως) Π . . . ιου γεωργῷ

The editor understood Π . . . ιου as the name of the father of Pesas, but its position, after Pesas' origin, would be anomalous. Yet there is no anomaly: after ερ there is ink at mid height and a large oblique stroke below, followed by Ἰσακίου. This is surely an abbreviation for διά: δ(ιά). At the end of the line, the papyrus has γεωργꜱ: γεωργ(οῦ).

Another curiosity is the inclusion of the *gentilicium* of Pkylios in a text of this kind, which seems to receive support from the subscription added after the date in l. 4: ἰνδ(ικτιῶνος) δ. Αὐρήλιος Πκύλιος γεωργ(ός). Yet no *genti-*

licium was written in either place. In l. 1, the text begins ϖ^{α}, and there is no trace of υρ: read πα(ρά). In l. 4, it is the number of the indiction that was misread: we have ἰνδ(ικτίωνος) δευτέρας. Πκύλιος γεωργ(ός). To return to l. 1, it may be presented thus:

> † πα(ρὰ) Πκυλίου γεωργοῦ ἀπὸ Ἑρ(μοῦ πόλεως) Πεσᾷ ἀπὸ Ἑρ(μοῦ πό-
> λεως) δ(ιὰ) Ἰσακίου γεωργ(οῦ)

One other problem remains. To quote J. Gascou, *CE* 77 (2002) 331 (= BL XII 28), '[o]n est surpris de noter un *solidus* sujet à une énorme retenue de 12 carats. Le π(αρά) des ll. 3, 4, et 5, est-il sûr? L'écriture est très pâlie et on ne peut vérifier aucune conjecture.' The online image is more helpful than the plate in the print edition, and allows a confident reading in l. 4 (and consequently in ll. 3 and 5): there is no π(αρά) but the large sinusoid that commonly stands for (καί). The sum repaid was χρ(υσοῦ) νό(μισμα) α εὔ-σταθ(μον) (καὶ) κ(εράτια) ιβ.

26. Pap. Congr. XXVII, p. 1021, no. 8

This is an ostracon from the sixth-century archive of the oil-makers of Aphrodito. It contains an order to supply oil τοῖς βουκ(ελλαρίοις) Κόπτου ὑ(πὲρ) Ἀπόλλων(ος) (l. 5). The published photograph shows that what was read as ὑ(πὲρ) is a sinusoid, to be interpreted as (καί). The reference to the *buccellarii* of Koptos and Apollonos confirms that they are mentioned in SB XX 14564.4 Κ[ό]πτου ̣ ̣α ̣ ̣λ ̣ ̣ ̣ ̣ος; the reading (καὶ) Ἀπόλλωνος had already been suggested, but only in a note.[1]

27. P.Amst. 53

This Oxyrhynchite order to pay money, dated to 433, is addressed to someone described as ο̣ἰνουρ(γῷ). The editors note: 'Das Substantiv οἰνουργός ist nicht bekannt, das Verbum οἰνουργέω dagegen wohl.' Study of the plate (Taf. XXXI) has convinced me that we should read οἰνοπρ(άτη), a common word. A contemporary Oxyrhynchite order to a wine seller to pay money is P.Oxy. XVI 1953 (419).

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[1] J. Gascou & K.A. Worp, 'Un dossier d'ostraca du VIᵉ siècle : les archives des huiliers d'Aphroditô', *Papyrologica Florentina* XIX.1 (1990) 238, reprinted in J. Gascou, *Fiscalité et société en Égypte byzantine* (2008) 395.

28. P. Harr. I 100

The text is an Oxyrhynchite account of payments in wine, assigned to the fifth century. The entry in 1. 4 runs Ἰουλιανοῦ υἱοῦ Ἀ[ ]τες στρατ(ιώτου) ἐπιτρ(όπου). The last word, in a different case and form, recurs in 1. 12, ἐπι-τρό(ποις) γ [. Here are clippings of the relevant passages:

(l. 4)   (l. 12)
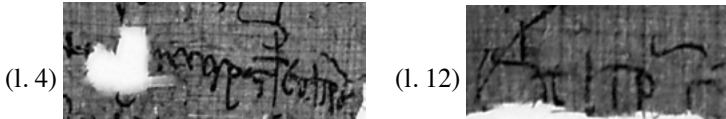
The name of Ioulianos' father is Ἀπφ[οῦ]τος, but more interesting is what is written at the end of the line: ἐπιτρυγ[, with υ raised. In l. 12 we have επιτρυγ΄ [, i.e. ἐπιτρυγ( ). This is a word or phrase of uncertain articulation and meaning, attested with wine payments in Oxyrhynchite documents of this period: ἐπιτρυγ(ῆς), ἐπὶ τρυγ(ητικά), ἐπιτρυγητ(ής), and ἐπὶ τρυγητ(αῖς) have been suggested;[2] ἐπὶ τρυγητ(οῦ) would be another possibility. Here the reference is to the function of a person, and a compound seems preferable. A quantity of wine would have followed ἐπιτρυγ( ) [in l. 12; cf. P.Wash.Univ. II 105 ἐπιτρυγ( ) σηκ(ώματα) ι, or P.Eirene III 21.4 τοῖς β ἐπιτρυγητ( ) δι(πλᾶ) λη.

29. P.KRU 24

This is a division of inheritance of house property at Jeme, couched in the form of a sale. According to the edition, it was written on Π(αυν)ι ε, ἰ(ν)δ(ι-κτίωνος) α, a date converted to 30 May 763 (BL XII 182, on SB I 5567). Crum read the name of the month as π̅ι̅, but his horizontal is a superscript υ: read Π(α)υ(νι) ιε. The date corresponds to 9 June 762.[3]

The transaction is summarized in the endorsement. Crum offered a semi-diplomatic transcript in the main text and appended a fully articulated one, which he credited to Schubart:

ὥ(νη) γεγαμ(ένη) κωμ(?) (ὑπὲρ) αὐλ(ῆς) (καὶ) οἰκ(ίας) ἑτέρω(ν) ηλθ(..)ἀπὸ
κλ(ηρονομίας) τῶ(ν) μακαρίω(ν) Ἀβέα(α) Ἀзαεία) (ὑπὲρ) μέρο(υς) +

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[2] See F. Morelli, 'Il vino del padrone. P.Eirene III 21, P.Wash.Univ. II 105 e P.Laur. IV 185', *Tyche* 29 (2014) 89–93, at 90–92.

[3] The dating to 763 is Till's, and stems from his belief that the indiction began in Thoth, but it has since been established that the change of the indiction happened in Pachon.

Preisigke reproduced the articulated transcription in SB I 5567 with some small but unwarranted changes: κ(αί), ὑ(πέρ), ἄβεσ(σα) instead of (καί), (ὑπέρ), Ἀβέσ(σα). The last change had lexicographic implications. Preisigke recorded ἄβεσσα in *WB* III, p. 395 (Abschnitt 21: Christlicher Kultus); more recently, the word entered the *Diccionario Griego-Español*. English 'abbess' stems from French *abbesse*, which goes back to Latin *abatissa*; an eighth-century papyrus from Egypt would offer a direct link, if it were not false.[4] Preisigke only engaged with the Greek parts of the document and missed that this is a personal name, mentioned in the main text as Abesa (ⲁⲃⲉⲥⲁ), the daughter of Zacharias (ll. 1, 73). We could also write Αβεσ(α). As for Ἀζα-ρί(α), it must be an error for Ζαχαρί(α).

τῶ(ν) μακαρίω(ν) is more difficult to explain, but the online image shows something else: τ̅ μακαρ̅, i.e. τῆ(ς) μακαρ(ί)α(ς); Ἀζαρ(ί)α is abbreviated in the same fashion. Here is a clipping of the endorsement:
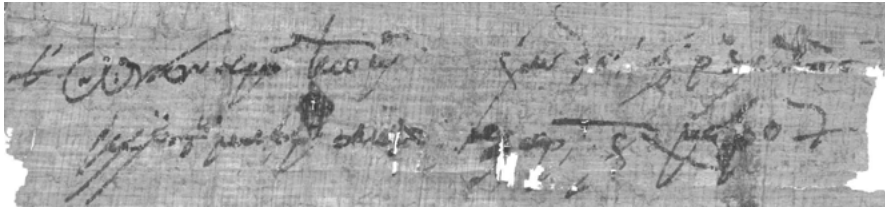
At the beginning of this line, the papyrus has κλλ̅: an abbreviated word in the plural, a form of κληρονόμοι. The resolution depends on what was written at the end of the previous line, which is uncertainly read: ἑτέρω(ν) ηλθ( ) ἀπό. The papyrus does not have ετε but ει, which belongs with οικ before it: read οἰκεί(ας). Then comes ρ and something written high, probably not ω, followed by ελθ. The same abbreviation occurs in the summary written at the top of the sheet on the front: ⲡⲏⲓ ⲛⲁⲃⲉⲥⲁ ⲧϣⲉⲉⲣⲉ ⲛⲍⲁⲭⲁⲣ(ⲓⲁⲥ) | ⲣⲛ ⲉⲗⲑ ⲧⲁⲅ(ⲁ)ⲡ(ⲏ) ⲑⲩⲅ(ⲁⲧⲏⲣ) ⲧⲥⲉⲣⲕⲁⲍ ⲙⲁⲣⲑⲁ ⲑⲩⲅ(ⲁⲧⲏⲣ) ⲍⲏⲛⲱⲛ, 'the house of Abesa daughter of Zacharias … Tagape daughter of Tserkah, Martha daughter of Zenon'. Here is a clipping from the start of l. 2:

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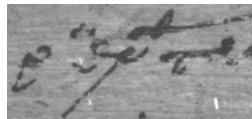
[4] This erroneous interpretation earned Abesa a place in a list of female ascetics, as pointed out by C.T. Schroeder, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 19 (2011) 309.

It is not easy to confirm whether the raised letter is π, but there should be little doubt that we are dealing with an abbreviation of περί. There are several examples of ρ´ or ρ^π = περί in papyri from Aphrodito; see P.Lond. IV, p. 607. Aorist forms of περιέρχομαι, especially the participle, are common in texts that mention inheritance; cf. e.g. P.Bodl. 45.7 (Apollonopolis; *c*.610) περιελθόντα εἰς ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ γονέων κληρονομίας. We may thus read (πε)ρ(ι)ελθ(ουσῶν), which describes αὐλ(ῆς) (καὶ) οἰκεί(ας). At the end of the line, it may be possible to discern τοῖς, to be taken with κλ(ηρονόμοις) in the next line.

To return to the beginning of the endorsement, ὤ would be a peculiar way of abbreviating ὠνή, but there is no abbreviation: the clerk wrote a large ω and then added a small ν and a small η inside each loop. κωμ( ) is more difficult; it surely refers to κώμη, presumably meaning that the sale was made in the village, but I cannot explain how it fits in the syntax.

To conclude, I propose to read the endorsement as follows:

✝ ὠνὴ γεναμ(ένη) κωμ( ) (ὑπὲρ) αὐλ(ῆς) (καὶ) οἰκεί(ας) (πε)ρ(ι)ελθ(ουσῶν) τοῖς
κλ(ηρονόμοις) τῆ(ς) μακαρ(ί)α(ς) Αβεσ(α) Ἀζαρ(ί)α (ὑπὲρ) μέρου(ς) ✝

'Sale made in the village (?) for a courtyard and a house that came down to the heirs of the blessed Abesa daughter of Azarias for a part.'

30. P.Lond. III 996

This is a *lemmatismos*, a certificate for the payment of wheat, from late sixth- or early seventh-century Hermopolis. The total of wheat paid is given in l. 10, σίτ(ου) κ(ανὼν) (ἀρτάβαι) ζ ιβ´, in the editor's reading. BL XII 103 records the proposal to read κ(αγκέλλῳ) instead of κ(ανών). This would be acceptable but for the fact that the *cancellus* measure is not attested in any other Hermopolite document of this period. Given that the text refers to δημοσίου σίτου καθαροῦ (l. 5), we may consider resolving σίτ(ου) κ(αθαροῦ). For another mysterious κ( ) followed by artabas, see J. Gascou, P.J. Sijpesteijn, *ZPE* 97 (1993) 122.

31. P.Wash.Univ. II 96

The text is an Oxyrhynchite order to pay dated to 431 (HGV). It concerns two ore more sums of money: νο(μίσματα) δ καὶ ḍ´ [　]γ[　] καὶ διὰ σοῦ τὰ λοιπὰ νομ[ίσματα (l. 3). καὶ ḍ´ is problematic: numbers of solidi and fractions are not normally linked with καί, while it would be unusual to find a reference to ¼ solidus in the early fifth century. I propose to read καὶ δι(ὰ) [(δι/ pap.; cf. Plate XXIIb), which parallels καὶ διὰ σοῦ later in the line.

32. SB XVI 12492

This is a sale of wine on delivery from Hermopolis, dated to 638. The endorsement (l. 40) was read thus:

ὁμολογ(ία) γεναμέ(νη) δ(ι') Δανιήλιο`ς´ Ἐνὼχ γεωργ(οῦ) ἀπὸ Ἑρ(μοπό-
λεως)

Apart from the peculiar δ(ι') Δανιήλιος, we may note that the description of the document as ὁμολογ(ία) and the absence of any reference to wine are unusual. Contemporary Hermopolite texts of this kind are endorsed differently:

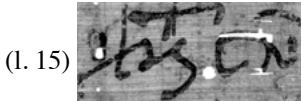BGU XII 2207v.1 (606) χ(ει)ρ(όγραφον) οἴ(νου) μέτρ(ων) σμ . . . . . [
BGU XVII 2695.35 (608) χι(ρόγραφον) οἴ(νου) μέτρ(ων) π γενόμ(ενον)
    [π(αρὰ)] Θωμᾶ Παμουνίου ἀμπελου[ργοῦ] ἀπὸ κώμ(ης) κτλ.
BGU XII 2209v.1–2 (614) ✝ χ(ει)ρ(όγραφον) οἴ(νου) μέτρ(ων) ρκ γενόμ(ενον)
    πα(ρὰ) Ἀβρα[α|μ]ί[ου] Ἀνδρέου ἀμπελ(ουργοῦ) ἀπὸ ἐποικ(ίου) κτλ.

The sale concerns 250 *metra* of wine, summarized as οἴ(νου) μ(έ)τ(ρα) σν in l. 15 of the contract. The same summary appears in the endorsement, but the writing is very abraded. On the online image, of which clippings are reproduced below, it is possible to make out the top of a stroke intersecting a vestigial ι, the contours of μ, with the remains of τ written over it, and then σν.

(l. 15)   (l. 40)

I propose to read the endorsement as follows:

[✝ χ(ει)ρ(όγραφον)] οἴ(νου) μ(έ)τ(ρων) σ̅ν̅ γενάμε(νον) δ(ιὰ) Δανιηλίου
    Ἐνὼχ γεωργ(οῦ) ἀπὸ Ἑρ(μοῦ πόλεως)

The text of the parallels cited above may be improved slightly. At the end of BGU XII 2207v, the image shows that we may read γενόμ[ενον; there is also a staurogram at the beginning, not reported in the edition. The staurogram is omitted from the transcription of BGU XVII 2695.35 too, and we may supply [δ(ιά)] instead of [π(αρά)]. δ(ιά) should be read also in BGU XII 2209v.1.

33. SB XX 14505

The papyrus contains a list of payments in wheat, doubtfully assigned to the sixth century. It was said to be of unknown provenance, but the names of the payers, one of them the recurrent Apa Hol, point to the Fayum. Another name found in this region is Harotheos (cf. P.Prag. II 136, with *BASP* 56 [2019] 287f.): in l. 10, for Ὡροθέου read Ἁροθέου.

The text is headed (καὶ) ὁμοί(ως) οἶ(κ-) Φοιβάμμ(ωνος) κομοκατ(οίκου). The commentary queries what this 'οἶκος of Phoibammon' might be, but there is no οἶκος: what was read as οι is delta, with its long tail drawn separately from its bowl. Read δ(ιὰ) Φοιβάμμ(ωνος).

The other side contains two blocks of text. The first was read thus:

(καὶ) ἀπὸ ζ πάγου δι(ὰ) κλ(ηρονόμων) Ἰαν( ) ὀνό(ματος) Ἡρ( ) ὑπὲρ
      οὐσ(ίας) καλουμένης Κυρίου̣ [   ] ̣φου (ἀρτάβαι) ροη

δι(ά) is written in the same way as δ(ιά) in the heading of the account. What comes after it should be read as Ἠλ(ία) προνοητ(οῦ):
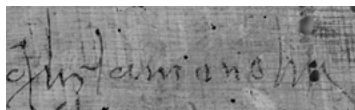

This is followed by a blank space or abrasion. (ὑπὲρ) οὐσ(ίας) (*ed.pr.* missed the abbreviation of ὑπέρ) starts a new line. It is tempting to read Κυρίλλο̣υ̣; cf. SPP VIII 1247.2 οὐσί(ας) Κυρίλλ(ου), which refers to an Arsinoite magnate attested between 596 and 618 (see *ZPE* 166 [2008] 208). Although what could be taken as part of the first λ may be illusory, the reading cannot be disproved either. The same estate is mentioned in the second text block on the back, οὐσ(ίας) Κυρ[.

34. SPP VIII 1121v

J. Banaji, *Agrarian Change in Late Antiquity* (2001) 144, refers to an estate in the Arsinoite village of Herakleonos which 'had several *mēchanai* (*sāqiyas*) and a group of employees called μηχανάρ(ιοι).' He adds (n. 62):

'The verso of *SPP* VIII 1121 (7c.) has the tantalizingly incomplete specification,] (ὑπὲρ) ἀποτριβ(έντων) διαφόρ(ων) μηχαν(ῶν) τῆς ο[ὐσίας? /] ἀποτριβ( ) μηχαναρ( ) χωρ(ίου) Ἡρακλέ[ω]νος. John Rea has suggested (ὑπὲρ) ἀποτριβ(ῆς) διαφόρ(ων) μηχαν(ικῶν) τῆς ο[ὐσίας /], with, possibly, μηχανικ(ῶν) instead of μηχαναρ( ) in l. 2.'

These suggestions, excerpted in BL XIII 245, were made without vision of the papyrus and may be upheld only in part. ἀποτριβ(ῆς) yields better Greek than ἀποτριβ(έντων), but there is no need to abandon μηχαν(ῶν) in l. 1. The same word is to be read in l. 2, since the abbreviation is the same in both lines: μηχαννς, indicative of the plural. Here is a clipping from l. 2:
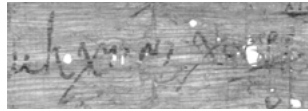

These were *sāqiyas* irrigating vineyards (χωρία) at Herakleonos: the papyrus does not have χωρ(ίου) but χωρρ^ω, i.e. χωρ(ί)ω(ν).

35. SPP XX 256

This is a tax receipt from the area of Memphis, assigned to the sixth century but probably of the early seventh. It records a payment of 5 carats. The endorsement was read as follows:

Φαρμ(οῦ)θ(ι) κϛ ἰνδ(ικτίονος) ιβ κ(ατ)’ ἐπι( ) τῶ(ν) ἀπ’ Ἀκανθώ

P.J. Sijpesteijn, *ZPE* 71 (1988) 118, tentatively suggested reading κ(ατ)’ ἐπί(σταλμα). This was recorded in BL IX 350, with N. Kruit’s comment that SPP XX 228v, which he read as Φαρμ(οῦ)θ(ι) λ ἰνδ(ικτ.) ιβ νο(μ.) γ κ(ερ.) δ ∠ τ(ῶν) ἀπ’ Ἀκανθ(ῶνος) (BL IX 349), makes one expect ‘statt κ(ατ)’ ἐπι( ) eher κερ(άτια) ε und viell[eicht] μ(όνα)’. Kruit was right about κερ(άτια) ε; I append a clipping of the passage:
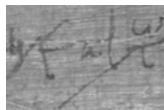
This leaves us with πι( ), which I propose to resolve as πι(ττάκιον) or rather πι(ττακίου): this is a ‘chit’ (receipt) of the people of Akantho(n).