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THREE DOCUMENTS FROM BYZANTINE OXYRHYNCHUS REVISITED

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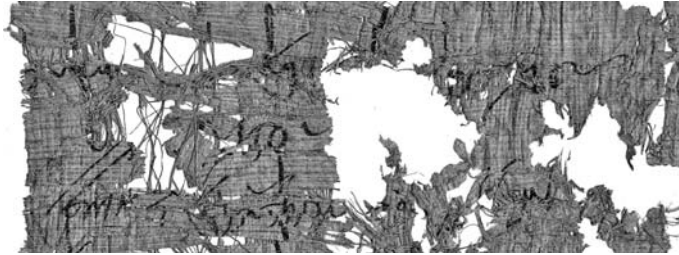
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THREE DOCUMENTS FROM BYZANTINE OXYRHYNCHUS REVISITED

1. SB XII 11023

This is a sworn declaration for the lading of tax grain to a ship destined for Alexandria, dated to 424.¹ It is one of the few of its kind, and the closest parallels date from some sixty years earlier, mostly published in P.Oxy. LXVII and P.Mich. XX. Problems abound; P. J. Sijpesteijn, *ZPE* 19 (1975) 277 n. 2, wrote: ‘After restoration of the text one may be able to decipher lines 2–5 where one expects, besides the names and the titles of the officials to whom this declaration is directed, certainly the name of the shipper who has given this declaration.’ Even in the current state of conservation, progress is possible, though limited by the loss of about twenty letters to the left and the lack of an exact parallel. I reproduce lines 3–5 as presented in SB and the relevant part of the papyrus:

[- - -] - - - [- - -] καὶ τ[- - -]λου
 [- - -] . [- - -] του[vac.
 5 [- - -] ἐπιμελετ[αῖς] αἰτου λαμπροτάτης Ἀλεξ[ανδρίας]



Z. M. Packman, P.Wash.Univ. II p. 103 (= BL IX 272), and *ZPE* 89 (1991) 101, argued that in l. 5 we should probably restore ἐπιμελετ[ῶν] (l. -ητῶν), mainly on the basis of P.Wash.Univ. II 82 (367), now P.Mich. XX 805. Four other such texts have since been published, which confirm the pattern: P.Oxy. LXXVII 4606 (361), 4609 (362), 4613 (363), P.Mich. XX 802 (364), all of them declarations addressed by βουλευταὶ and ἐπιμεληταὶ to an Oxyrhynchite strategus. Thus we should no longer reckon with a skipper in ll. 3–4, but with an official. The latter’s area of authority is given in l. 4. χιτου (or rather ὑγχιτου) looks fairly clear, and nothing was written after that in the line. Ὀξυρυγχιτου seems inescapable, but it is not easy to match the traces after the initial break with what is expected. The lower part of a circular letter such as epsilon or omicron is followed by the foot of a semi-vertical stroke, and then an oblique descending well below the baseline, though that probably belongs to the next line. Then we have the lower part of xi, touched by another large oblique descending below, which however is probably the top of epsilon from the next line. Ὄξ[υρ]υγχιτου will not account for all the ink; ἐξ/[might be preferable, and then [Ὄξυρ]υγχιτου. The fibres need adjustment and the part with υγχιτου has to be moved slightly to the right, which would yield some extra room in the break.

At this date, the official responsible for tax collection at the level of the *civitas* was the *exactor*, and in this exercise he stood between the local ἐπιμεληταὶ αἰτου and the *praefectus annonae* at Alexandria; cf. P.Oxy. XXIV 2408 (397) and SB XXIV 16261 (432), which offer the latest attestations of *exactores* in Oxyrhynchus and Egypt in general (Heracleopolis). But there was probably no reference to this official as such here. A plurality of persons are addressed in l. 3, where in the second part of the line it is possible to read καὶ [. . .], [. . .], Ἡσυχίου. In 432 Oxyrhynchus had no *exactor* as such; PSI Congr. XVII 29 is addressed τῇ μερίδι τοῦ λαμπροτάτου Τιμαγένου διὰ Μαρτυρίου | καὶ Ἀποῦ βοηθῶν ἐξακτορίας (ll. 3–4); it is conceivable that SB 11023 contained a similar formulation, whose second part would have run διὰ *names*

¹ A photograph accompanied the first edition in *Aegyptus* 50 (1970), after p. 120, and another appears in O. Montevecchi, *La papirologia* Tav. 94. I saw the original in May 2006. I am grateful to Professor Carla Balconi for access and for supplying a digital image.

[βοηθ(ῶν)?] ἐξ(ακτορία) [Οξυρ]υγγίτου (see also the note in the commentary below). βοηθοὶ ἐξακτορία deal directly with ἐπιμεληταὶ κύτου in P.Mich. XX 806 (369).

To return to l. 5, after the break the papyrus has]λ/ επιμελ; the right part of the putative λ, reaching well below the line, is followed by an inordinately tall oblique stroke, though it has the same height as the ε immediately following. I take this to be an abbreviation marker, like the one written after επιμελ, even if the latter stroke is shorter. After that, read κύτου τῆς λαμπρο[τάτης Ἀλ]εξανδ[ρείας] (there are traces of some of the letters put in lacuna, but they are of uncertain distribution). We should resolve βου]λ(ευτοῦ) ἐπιμελ(ητοῦ); there is no room for παρὰ Αὐρηλίωv followed by two names and patronymics in the break, let alone that the plural would require restoring ὁμολογοῦμεν ὁμύντες instead of ὁμολογῶ ὁμύνς in l. 6 (see below), which would result in a very long line. This is a novelty; all other texts of this kind refer to more than one ἐπιμελητής. It is more interesting that a βουλευτής-ἐπιμελητής is attested at that date (the latest previous instance comes from P.Münch. III 99 (Herm.; 390); it is unclear whether in P.Stras. VII 654 (Herm.; 425–50) the ἐπιμεληταὶ are also βουλευταὶ).

The remaining part of the text also requires emendation but is less problematic; I append a revised version of the entire text (incorporating the discussion above) with translation and notes.²

[μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν Φλ(αουίωv) Ἀσκλη]πιοδότου καὶ Μαριν[ιαν]οῦ τῶν λαμπρο(τάτων)
[
[c.20] ου Δαγνῆλ καὶ [. . .] [. . .] Ἡσυχίου
[c.15 βοηθ(ῶν)?] ἐξ(ακτορία) [Οξυρ]υγγίτου
5 [παρὰ c.13 βου]λ(ευτοῦ) ἐπιμελ(ητοῦ) κύτου τῆς λαμπρο[τάτης Ἀλ]εξανδ[ρείας.]
[ὁμολογῶ ὁμύνς θεὸν τὸν παν]τοκράτορα καὶ τὴν ε[ὐ]κέβει]αν τοῦ [τ]ὰ πάν[τα]
[νικῶντος δεσπότης ἡμῶν Θεο]δοσίου αἰωνίου Αὐγούστου παρειληφέν[αι]
[καὶ ἐμβεβλήθη] εἰς τὸ ὑπ]οτεταγμένον πλοῖον ἀπὸ κανόνος
[τῆς ὀγδόης ἰνδικτίω]νος κύτου καθαροῦ ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ (ἀρτάβας) ,αφμς,
10 [ἄσπερ ἀποίω] εἰς τὴν λαμπροτάτην Ἀλεξάνδριαν καὶ παρ[α]-
[δῶω ἐν τοῖς θεῖοις θ]ησαυροῖς μέτρῳ πλήρῃ καὶ τῆς τού-
[των παραδόσεως c.15]η[. . .] [c.6] .

‘After the consulship of Flavii Asklepiodotos and Marinianos, *virī clarissimi* (month, day?).

‘To ... (through?) ... son of Daniel(?) and ... son of Hesyehios ... assistants(?) to the office of *exactor* of the Oxyrhynchite (nome) from ..., councillor, overseer of grain for the most splendid Alexandria. I acknowledge, swearing by God almighty and the piety of our all-conquering master Theodosios, eternal Augustus, that I have received and loaded onto the ship specified below, from the canon of the eighth indiction, 1,546 artabas of clean wheat in total, which I shall transport to the most splendid Alexandria and deliver to the sacred granaries by the < > measure in full, and (a receipt?) of their delivery ...’

1–2 *Ed. pr.* had originally restored [ὑπατείας Ἀσκλη]πιοδότου; the correct reconstruction and date is recorded in BL VII 224 (cf. also P.Oxy. LXXII 4908.1–2 n.). It is theoretically possible that this text might also date from 425: the only (post)-consular clause of this year recorded in an Egyptian document comes from P.Stras. VII 639 of 24 December 425, and we cannot tell when the consuls of 425 became known in Middle Egypt. The month and day would have been given in the l. 2, now lost.

λαμπρο(τάτων). *Ed. pr.* restored λαμπρο[τάτων], but there is no text lost to the right. Meyer-Termeer put τάτων in l. 2, which is possible, but it seems more likely that the minute o after λαμπρ indicates an abbreviation.

3 Δαγνῆλ is difficult but I do not see what other name this could be.

4 At the start of the line there either stood another name with patronymic or a blank space.

The reading ἐξ(ακτορία) [Οξυρ]υγγίτου may only be a stopgap: besides the palaeographical problems described above, the putative presence of a drastic abbreviation next to a word written out in full is not reassuring.

6 θεὸν τὸν after *ZPE* 89 (1991) 101 (anticipating *ZPE* 105 (1995) 251 = BL XI 212) : τὸν θεὸν τὸν *ed. pr.*

ε[ὐ]κέβει]αν τοῦ [τ]ὰ πάν[τα] : [εὐ]κέβει]αν τοῦ [τὰ πάντα] *ed. pr.*

8 εἰς τὸ ὑπ]οτεταγμένον : τὸ] τεταγμένον *ed. pr.* : τὸ πρ]οτεταγμένον BL VII 224, followed by Meyer-Termeer. There is no reference to the ship earlier in the text, hence the choice of preposition; cf. P.Oxy. LXVII 4610.8 (363).

9 [τῆς ὀγδόης ἰνδικτίω]νος : [τῆς αὐτῆς ἰνδικτίω]νος *ed. pr.* (ἰνδικτίω]νος *ZPE* 19 (1975) 277, but there is no trace of nu.) Such texts generally date from the second half of the Julian year; if SB 11023 dates from 424, this ought to be indiction 8

² The text has been reprinted with translation and notes in A. J. M. Meyer-Termeer, *Die Haftung der Schiffer* (1978) 249–50.

hard to tell whether a tenure of office extending to seven years is exceptional.⁹ We may also reckon with the possibility that κοφώτατος was an appellation of the *praeses Arcadiae* that was in vogue in this period, but I think this is less likely. Nonetheless, this ‘clue’ alone does not suffice to clinch the date; but a date in 532 should be ruled out, as we shall see.

We may now turn to line 3, which as restored suggests a break about 36 letters long. This seems short: lines 6–12, which are fully preserved, suggest that the length of the breaks in lines 1–4 will have been *c.*45 letters. Furthermore, the restoration τοῦ κοινοῦ [τῶν λευκαντῶν] is not beyond objection. In documents of this date, the collocation τὸ κοινὸν τῶν + *occupation* was no longer the term normally used to designate a guild, but a more elaborate formulation was employed: τὸ κοινὸν τῆς ἐργασίας τῶν κτλ.¹⁰ Compare the following passages, all of which refer to Oxyrhynchite guilds: SB XVIII 13916.4–5 (386) τὸ κοινὸν τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐργασίας τῶν γνα[φ]έ[ω]ν; XX 15134.3 (483) [τὸ] κοινὸν τῆς ἐργασίας τῶν ἐργατῶν (or ἐργουργῶν ?) ταπηταρίων; 14964.6–7, cited below.¹¹ In this light, we may restore παρὰ τοῦ κοινοῦ | [τῆς ἐργασίας τῶν λευκαντῶν τῆς αὐτῆς Ὀξυρυγχιτῶν πόλεως] (47 letters missing).

The crux is the lost beginning of line 2: who was the addressee of this document? This was someone described in connection with the city of Oxyrhynchus, and at this date a liturgical nomination would have been submitted to the *curator civitatis* (λογιστής). Φλαουίω + name + λογιστῆ would not have occupied the full length of the lacuna; πολιτευομένω πατρί (cf. e.g. CPR XXIII 32.2), would be longer but not ideal. An exact parallel is not available, but comparison with SB XX 14964 (517), a nomination to a liturgical post by the guild of sausage-butchers, is instructive (ll. 3–7): [μερίδι τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ τῆς] περιβλέπτου μηνίης Τιμαγένους | [δι’ ὑμῶν τῶν μεγαλοπρεπεστάτων κομίτων Φοιβάμμωνος καὶ Καμουηλίου | [λαχόντων τὴν λογιεῖαν καὶ π[α]τριάν καὶ προεδρίαν ταύτης | [τῆς λαμ(πρᾶς) Ὀξυρυγχι(τῶν) πόλεως διὰ Σερήνου διαδόχου τὸ κοινὸν τῆς | [ἐργασίας τῶν¹² ἱερακιομαγί(ων) δι’ ἡμῶν τῶν παρόντων κτλ. The *comites* Phoebammon and Samuel are responsible for these combined offices on behalf of the οἶκος of Timagenes, in the same fashion as the *patricia* Gabrielia in P.Oxy. XXXVI 2780 (553) and Apion II, also a *patricius*, in SB XII 11079 (571). In all these cases, persons of senatorial rank are said to have been ‘allotted’ (λαχόντες) the offices of λογιστής, πατήρ (πόλεως), and πρόεδρος, and to discharge their function through deputies. There is no room to restore such an elaborate formulation in P.Oxy. 3987.2; it is reasonable to assume that this text predates the transition from the *curator civitatis* embodied by a single person to those ‘allotted’ the office on behalf of an οἶκος, but that it already attested a combination of the offices into a single holder.¹³ I suggest that this is what we should probably restore in the lost part of P.Oxy. 3987.2. λογιστῆ καὶ πατρί καὶ προέδρω is 25 letters long; adding Φλαουίω + name, we could easily fill the *c.*42-letter break before ταύτης.

⁹ The only somewhat comparable case I have found is that of Fl. Theodorus Menas Iulianus Iacobus, who served as governor of the Thebaid for at least six years (543–8; see J.-L. Fournet, *AnTard* 6 (1998) 80). One might also compare the case of Theodotus, *comes Aegypti* (PLRE II Theodotus 4), who held office for seven years or more: he is attested in office in 435 (CTH VI 28.8; SPP XX 143, with BL VI 196), and in 427/8 or 442/3 (SB VI 9598, with BL X 201).

¹⁰ A discussion of the implications of this change in terminology is beyond the scope of this note; the reader may be referred to I. F. Fikhman, *ZPE* 103 (1994) 24 n. 19 = *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im spätantiken Ägypten* (2006) 307 n. 19.

¹¹ Further examples are cited in J.-L. Fournet – J. Gascou, *ZPE* 135 (2001) 141 n. 1. 2; add SB XVIII 13882.1 (421) and 13883.2 (429), with BL IX 307; cf. also P.Rain.Cent. 117.2 (533). There is one exception, however: P.Oxy. XVI 1943.3 π(αρά) τ[οῦ] κοινοῦ τῶν ετιπποκογχιτ(ῶν).

¹² τῶν ἐνθάδε ἱερακιομαγί(ων) *ed. alt.*, but ἐνθάδε is unparalleled in this place and too long for the space. (P. J. Sijpesteijn, *ZPE* 71 (1988) 125 (*ed. alt.*) had noted: ‘It should be stressed that the (partial) reconstruction given above is only *exempli gratia*.’) Another problematic reconstruction occurs in l. 8: for (καὶ ἐξῆς |) [ἐγγεγραμμένων] κεφαλαιωτῶν ἀναδεχομένων read [ὑπογραφόντων ἀναδεχομένων (cf. P.Oxy. 3987.3). A few other corrections to this text may be recorded here. In ll. 12–13, for ἐπὶ τῆς εὐτυχεστάτης ὑμῶν | [μεγαλοπρεπείας] read ἐπὶ . . . | [λογιστείας (cf. P.Oxy. 2780.11). In l. 15, for εὐπορον τὸ[ν] read ἱκανὸν ὄντα (anticipated in *ZPE* 171 (2009) 179). In l. 16, for κ[α]ὶ ἀνύειν read] ἐξανύειν (ἐξανύει in P.Oxy. 3987.12). In l. 17, for ἐμφαν(είας) καὶ παρανομῆ(ς) read] καὶ παραμονῆ; there is no parallel for this expression but presumably the dative is part of a prepositional construction. In l. 18, ἐν τῇ δη]μοσίᾳ is awkward; 3987.13 has ἐν δημοσίῳ τόπῳ, a common expression; I have considered restoring ἐν τόπῳ δη]μοσίῳ, but this word-order is unattested, and alpha is preferable to omega; perhaps just δη]μοσίᾳ?

¹³ A handful of Oxyrhynchus papyri currently being edited for publication (summarily presented at the papyrology congress of 2007) suggest that this combination goes back to the fifth century.

This transition will have taken place between 502 and 517, which would exclude a date in 532 for P.Oxy. 3987. If it dates from 502, it will have contained a postconsular formula of Pompeius and Avienus coss. 501, rather than a consular clause of Probus and Avienus coss. 502;¹⁴ this would have run [μετὰ τὴν ὑπατεῖαν Φλαουῖων Πομπηίου καὶ Ἀβιηνοῦ τῶν λαμπροτάτων. 46 letters will have been lost in the break, which is about right for the lacuna. The line may have started with a *chrismon* written in *ekthesis*.

3. PSI VI 695

Published under the title ‘Frammento di ricevuta’, this document seems to have received little attention. I give below a revised text on the basis of the on-line image, and append a translation and notes (minor changes in the use of brackets and dots are not signalled). The monetary terms in l. 3 point to the area of Oxyrhynchus as its origin, and probably the Apion estate. The first edition dubiously assigned the document to the fifth century, but it belongs to the sixth, probably its first half: the rate of deductions of carats suggests a date around 500 (see below, 4 n.), but there is no reference to the term *ρόπή* from earlier than 535 (P.Oxy. I 143, SB XXII 15366).

It is impossible to tell how much was lost to the right, but the receipt seems to record two different payments. The first concerns farmland sowed by the payee. We hardly have any texts of this kind from Oxyrhynchus, though the large accounts of the Apion estate such as P.Oxy. XVI 1911 or LV 3804–5 refer to numerous cash payments by those farming lands; P.Oxy. 3805.72 (after 566) offers a close verbal parallel: δ(ιὰ) Ἀπολλῶ καὶ κοιν(ωνῶν) ἀπὸ Μικρ(ᾶς) Παρορίου ὑ(πὲρ) τῶν σπειρομ(ένων) παρὰ) αὐ(τῶν) γηδίων. Here we have a payment by a single person and not a group of farmers, but the basis of the exercise is the same.

+ ἐδόθ(ησαν) δ(ιὰ) τοῦ εὐλαβεστάτου Γεωργ[ίου]
 (ὑπὲρ) τῶν σπειρομένου παρὰ σοῦ γηδίο[υ]
 χρ(υσοῦ) ἰδ(ιωτικῶ) ἐκ(τὸς) ροπ(ῆς) νομισμάτια δύο παρὰ κ(εράτια) [τρία(?)]
 νομισματίου ἐγὼς παρὰ κ(εράτιον) ἐν ἡμῖν []
 5 ἀκολουθός < > γεναμένη παρὰ σοῦ. ἐγρ[άφ](η) []
 + δι’ ἐμοῦ Μουσαίου σεσημ(είωμαι) []

‘Paid through the most pious Georgios ... for the land being sown by you ... two solidi minus three(?) carats of gold on the private (standard) exclusive of *rhope* ... one solidus minus 1 ½ carat ... in accordance with <> made by you. Written ...

‘Through me, Mousaios—I have signed.’

1 ἐδόθ() (ὑπὲρ) τοῦ εὐλαβεστάτου Γεωργ[ίου] *ed. pr.* δ(ιὰ) is after BL X 243.

2 σοῦ γηδίο[υ] (or γηδίω[υ]) : τοῦ . αδι. [*ed. pr.* Either τῶν is a mistake for τοῦ or σπειρομένου has to be corrected to σπειρομένων. παρὰ σοῦ is also problematic in view of the third-person construction in l. 1, but there is little doubt that the payer is the person who cultivates the land.

3 χρ(υσοῦ) ἰδ(ιωτικῶ) ἐκ(τὸς) ροπ(ῆς) : χρ() *ed. pr.* On the term *ρόπή*, see K. Maresch, *Nomisma und Nomismatia* (1994) 35f. *et passim*. The term has occurred almost exclusively in documents associated with the Apion estate.

παρὰ κ(εράτια) [τρία(?)] : παρὰ κ(εράτι-) [*ed. pr.* For the deduction cf. l. 4, though it is not guaranteed that the same rate was in use.

4 1 sol. minus 1.5 car. probably refers to a different payment; it is too low to represent the sum mentioned in the previous line 3 after *ρόπή* was included. This rate of deduction is not attested after the fifth century in Oxyrhynchus (min. 1.75 in 496; min. 2 in 505); see Maresch, *Nomisma und Nomismatia* 160f.

5 ἀκολουθός, l. -θως : ἀκολουθας *ed. pr.*, with ‘ἀκολουθός (τῆ) γεναμένη ?’ mentioned in the note. We lack a noun in the dative, governed by ἀκολουθός and qualified by the participle.

ἐγρ[άφ](η) [: ε . . .] *ed. pr.* What is rendered as (η) is a low oblique trace, presumably part of an abbreviation stroke intersecting φ. (I owe this observation to A. Benaissa.) This would have been followed by the date.

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¹⁴ See Bagnall–Worp, *ibid.* The consular formula is to be restored in CPR XXIV 18.1 (see *CSBE*² 202), which confirms that Avienus (cos. 501) was disseminated in the east.