

# PYLON

## Notes on Papyri from Roman Egypt III

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## 16. ↗ W.Chr. 200a and ↗ 200b: At Home in the *Esenremphieion*

§1 This pair of documents from Theadelphia is often adduced in discussions of the early Roman census (e.g. ↗ [Claytor and Bagnall 2015](#)) and poll-tax (↗ [Rathbone 2019](#)). Submitted in back-to-back years (19 and 18 BCE) by the same public farmer, Pnepheros son of Phanemieus (also spelled Panemeiees), they include information about the declarant's identity, status, and dwelling, but no mention of other household members.

§2 Pnepheros' dwelling place in the first declaration was printed as ἐν δὲ τῷ(ι) [ ]εαγραμφῷ( ) | καταγίνομαι, with Wilcken reading τῷ for the first editor's τῷ and noting, “es liegt wohl eine griechische Ableitung des ägyptischen Wortes auf τεῖον vor, geschrieben ἡ(φ).” Wilcken's inclination was right, and on the image, the name of the sanctuary can be read as Ἐσενρεμφί(ῳ), the first attestation of this term. The farmer was thus living within the sacred precinct of (Isis) Esenremphis, whose temple in Theadelphia was already known from the *asylia* decree ↗ [I.Fay. II 114.16–17](#) (70 BCE): ιεροῦ Ἰσιδος Ἐσερέμφιος θεᾶς μεγίστης.<sup>1</sup> In the next year, Pnepheros is said to be living simply in a “private house,” which is probably a different description of the same dwelling, since houses within sacred precincts, often called παστοφόρια, could be privately owned and alienated (cf. ↗ [P.Aegyptus Cent. 28.7](#) n.).

<sup>1</sup> On Isis Ese(n)remphis, see ↗ [Quaegebeur 1983](#). The female personal name Esenremphis (↗ [TM Nam 178](#)) is found in Theadelphia in ↗ [P.Mich. inv. 4188](#) = ↗ [Claytor and Wegner 2022](#) (62 BCE) and ↗ [P.Cair.Gad 6](#), frag. b.8 (II CE).

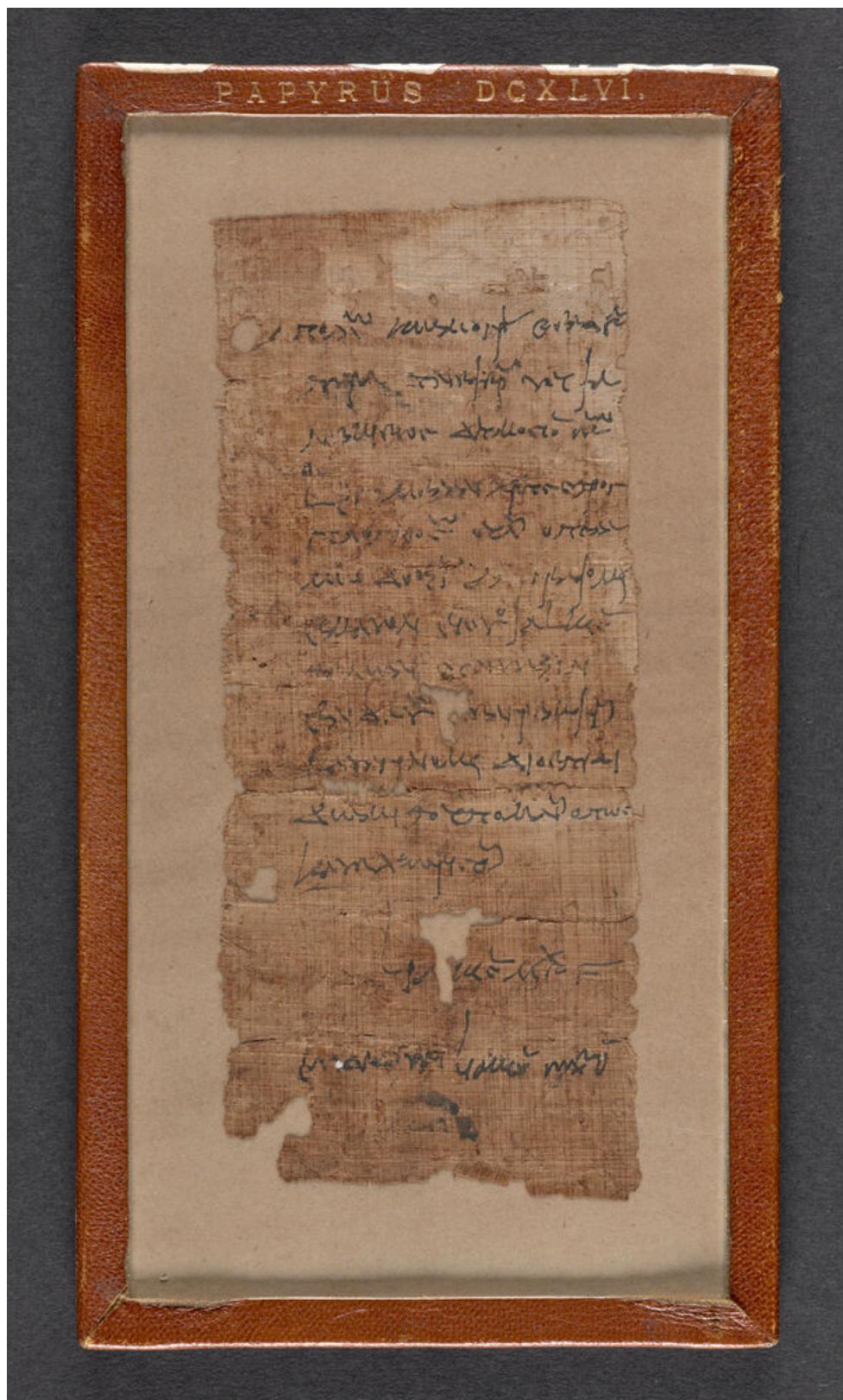


Fig. 1: British Library Board, Papyrus 646.

§3 The image of [W.Chr. 200b](#) also affords some small improvements. Both the first edition and Wilcken's text give the impression that a line containing the addressee is lost, but the papyrus in fact contains traces of ink, amounting to perhaps two letters, which were washed out. In line 7, οἰδίq is

written, either a phonetic spelling of ἴδια and/or in anticipation of the following οἰκία. Under line 8, the papyrus is cleanly broken, and the current placement of the lower fragment is incorrect, since the end of [ἐπιδίδωμ] in line 9 ought to be visible in this case. The lower fragment needs to be moved down to accommodate at least one missing line, or rather two if the declaration ended with the same formula as ↗ 200a: διὸ ἐπιδίδωμι τὸ ὑπόμνη(μα) ὅπως καταχωρισθῇ.

PAPYRUS DCXLVII.

367 10. 10. 10.  
γραπτανεμενος ην  
απορετο επιστολη  
γραπτη διαρρηγη  
εμποτε ηλιασθε

γραπτη διαρρηγη  
εμποτε ηλιασθε

71 επιστολη διαρρηγη

Fig. 2: British Library Board, Papyrus 647.

## 17. Kallistratos in ↗ P.Prag. 1 54 (Arsinoite, 19–21)

§4 The opening of this receipt was printed [ ... σ]ιτολόγος τῶν [Κ]αλλιστράτου Τεσενοῦφι Δημάτος | γεγε[νημέ]νη Κ[α]λλιστράτου χ(αίρειν) and translated, “... sitologo del distretto di Kallistratos a Tese- nuphis figlia di Demas originaria di Kallistratos salve.” The unusual γεγε[νημέ]νη Κ[α]λλιστράτου is rather γεωρ[γ(ῷ)] τῶν Κ[α]λλιστράτου, a parallel construction to the circumscription of the sitologos in the previous line.<sup>2</sup> Tesenouphis is a cross-gender name, here referring not to a woman, as the editor thought, but rather to a male tenant.<sup>3</sup> With τῶν Καλλιστράτου the editor understood τόπων, and this supposed toponym has been registered as ↗ TM Geo 982. Kallistratos should instead be taken as an estate owner, with τῶν marking an understood ἐδάφων *vel sim.* Two examples from the archive of the estate manager Athenodoros (↗ TM Arch 26) support this interpretation: παρ’ Ἀθηνοδώρου φροντιστοῦ τῷν Ἀ[σ]κληπιάδοιν [τ]ῶν ἐν τῷ Ἡρακλεοπολίτῃ (↗ BGU 16 2605.1–3 = ↗ Armoni 2018: 129–131) and Ἀθηνόδωρος φροντιστῆς τῶν ἐν τῷ[τ] Ἡρακλεοπολίτῃ Ἀσκληπιάδον (↗ BGU 16 2664.3–4).<sup>4</sup> Both Kallistratos in the Arsinoite nome and Asklepiades in the Herakleopolite were owners of private estates large enough to support permanent staff.<sup>5</sup>

§5 Kallistratos is a common name, but given that his estate employed a σιτολόγος, it reasonable to see a connection with the θ(ησαυροῦ) Καλλιστράτου in the contemporary order ↗ O.Lund. 1 with ↗ BL 8 522 (Euhemeria, 19).<sup>6</sup> Another possible reference to the estate is found in ↗ P.Mich. inv. 4447d (Arsinoite, 3 July, 12: edition in preparation), a brief rent receipt written by Δημήτριος ἐνυκιωλόγος (l. ἐνοικιολόγος) Καλλιστράτου.

§6 Another prominent Kallistratos in the Fayum at this time is the agent working for the estate of Livia and Germanicus as προεστῶς κτηνῶν, who submitted the petition ↗ P.NYU 2 3 in 5 CE against an ὀνηλάτης in his employ. Little is known of the background of these προεστῶτες of imperial properties,<sup>7</sup> but they may themselves have been local landowners of some note (as were the administrators of Appianus’ estate, for instance), so an identification of Kallistratos the landowner with Kallistratos the προεστῶς is not out of the question.<sup>8</sup>

## 18. ↗ SPP 22 1 (Soknopaiou Nesos, II–III)

§7 This summons sent to Soknopaiou Nesos refers to charges brought ὑπὸ Ἀμμ[ωνί]ου πράκτορος ταμι[ακ]ῶν, as the edition has it (ll. 3–4). Such an official is not known elsewhere, and the date (before ca. 240 due to the mention of Soknopaiou Nesos) would be early for the use of ταμιακός. The image shows that there is not enough room for the reading, and in any case the top half of an epsilon (not

<sup>2</sup> The image is not of the highest quality, but τῶν is clear: there is a trace of the tail of tau, a bit longer than that of τῶν in the previous line, which descends nearly to the omicron of ἐκφορίῶν in l. 3. Little remains following γε (it is unclear whether the dark line above and to the right of ε is ink and, if so, whether it is from the previous line), but traces of the expected initial curving stroke of omega can perhaps be made out, followed by what appears to be a faint trace of the descending rho. This reading leaves room for a gamma raised in abbreviation before τῶν.

<sup>3</sup> On such names in Egypt, see ↗ Schentuleit 2025 (with pp. 233–234 on the etymology of the name Tesenouphis and 241–242 on the deified individual behind the name).

<sup>4</sup> Similar examples are found in the later Heroninos archive (↗ Rathbone 1991: 30–31). For other variations of Athenodoros’ title as administrator of Asklepiades’ estate in the Herakleopolite nome, see ↗ Armoni 2018: 123–124. This estate is referred to more specifically in ↗ BGU 16 2601.8 (= ↗ Armoni 2018: 127–129) and ↗ BGU 16 2663.4–5 as τὰ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιάδου ἐδάφη and τὰ ἐδάφη τοῦ οἴκου respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Kallistratos’ tenant Tesenouphis was no ordinary smallholder, but a lessee of 200 arouras (l. 4). Given the names involved (besides Tesenouphis, a Herieus son of Satabous appears in l. 10), the Prague papyrus was likely found in Soknopaiou Nesos, although the large tract of land in question was no doubt located elsewhere.

<sup>6</sup> On this type of order, specific to the Fayum and mentioning private granaries, see ↗ Youtie 1950: 102 and ↗ O.Lund. 1 introduction.

<sup>7</sup> See ↗ Broux 2024: 76–77, with reference to this Kallistratos προεστῶς κτηνῶν.

<sup>8</sup> The NYU petitions gives his father’s name, likewise Kallistratos. I note two other contemporary texts in which a Kallistratos son of Kallistratos appears: ↗ P.Mich. 14 677 (6 BCE), a rent receipt for land around Herakleia, and ↗ P.Mich. inv. 4232 (1 BCE; edition in preparation), a receipt for taxes on land around Philadelphia and Hephaistias.

alpha) follows tau. *τειμῶν* is possible palaeographically but also entails an otherwise-unattested remit, and the mu would also have an unusually-tall peak to its first stroke. Probably we are dealing with the omission of a syllable with haplography, *πράκτορος* (σι) *τεικῶν*, although this solution runs against the Lex Youtie. In any case, the *πράκτωρ ταμιακῶν* can be discarded.

## 19. **BGU I 98 (Sonopaiou Nesos, 211)**

§8  **Worp 2009**: 148 pointed to this text as the only example of a woman described by an οὐλή on her thigh and suggested on the basis of gender roles that μηρῷ in l. 26 was a phonetic variant of μήλῳ, thereby moving the mark to her cheek. The image now available in  **BerlPap** shows that it was there all along: the papyrus has μήλῳ.

## 20. **BGU 7 1683 = **Kolveris 2025 (Philadelphia, III–IV)****

§9 The new edition, made from a digital image, provides an improved text of this third or fourth century business letter excavated at Philadelphia by Viereck and Zucker. The first line is badly smudged but should contain the names of the correspondents (or at least the recipient), since χαίρετιν follows in the next line. The new edition prints Εὐ...ι...γε..... where the first edition had Εύγε..... ἀδ[ε]λφῷ.

§10 Examination of the original in Warsaw with the aid of a digital microscope shows that the sender's name is Εὐνοῦς, which is otherwise not found in Egypt after 109 ( **TM Nam 3048**). Fig. 3 contains infrared images of the ending -νοῦς, with a wide nu whose final hasta starts with a hook, as elsewhere in the text, followed by a small omicron filled with ink, a V-shaped upsilon starting above the omicron, and finally a sigma in two parts.

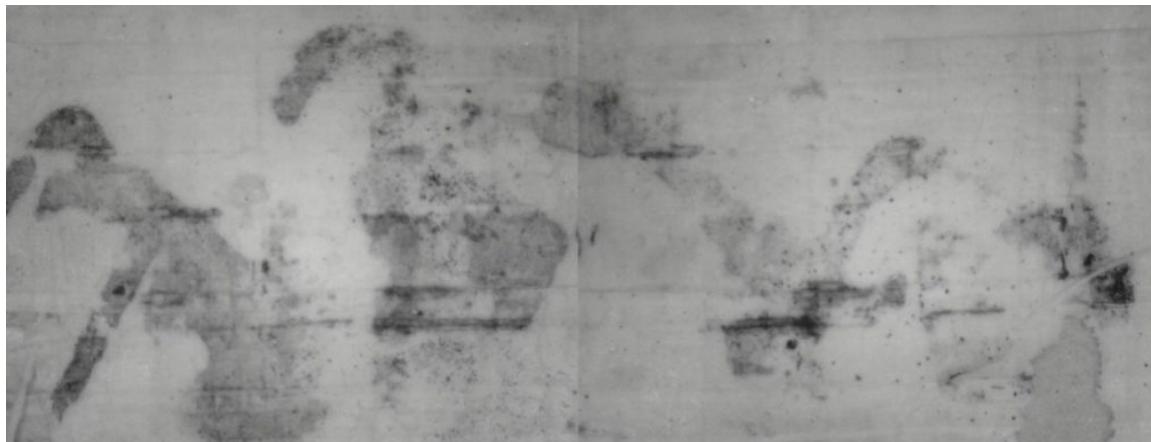


Fig. 3: Infrared section of BGU 7 1683 line 1.

§11 What follows is more difficult, but if the original editors' ἀδελφῷ is retained, the recipient's name must be short. In this case, 'Ολ works: the omicron is small, and the lambda is just cut off by the break (part of the ink in between could be the "wind up" of the second stroke of lambda, as in ἀμελήσης, l. 7): see Fig. 4, with the beginning of the following alpha.

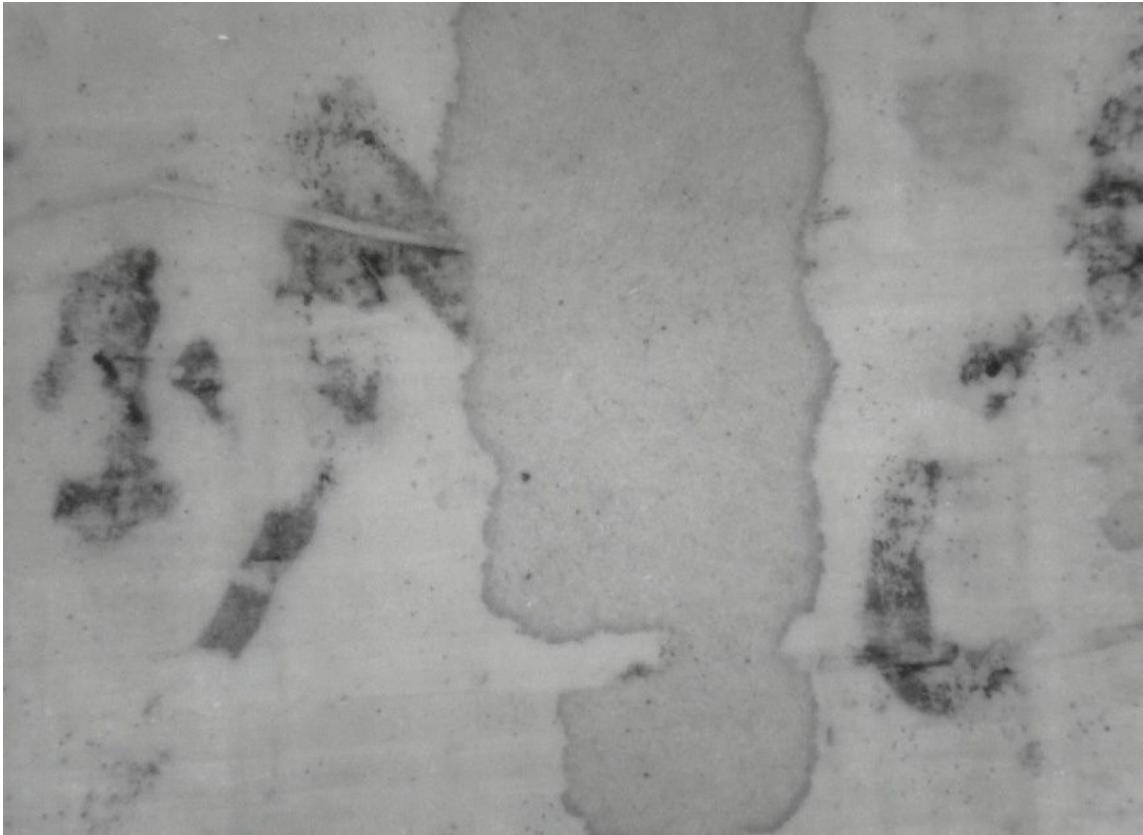


Fig. 4: Infrared section of BGU 7 1683 line 4.

§12 The proposal for line 1 is thus: Εὔνους Ὄλ ἀδελφῷ. As mentioned, the name Eunous is rare, but since he is the sender of the business letter, he might not belong to the community of Philadelphia. Hol, on the other hand, a variant of Horos, is well established in the village (and the Fayum generally) from the end of the third century.<sup>9</sup>

## 21. Compensation for the Work of Slave Girl

§13 In my edition of the *eiromenon* [P.Fay. 344 recto], I described the abstract in ll. 23–24 (labeled with the letter 1) as a “loan of 60 drachmas with παραμονή of slave girl in exchange for interest” (Claytor 2013: 82). Line 23 contains the receipt of the loan, while the next line contains the end of the clause regarding the girl’s work, the penalty clause for absence, and the return clause. This last was printed: μετὰ τὸν χρό(νον) ἀποδότο ἀργυ(ρίου) ⟨(δραχμὰς)⟩, καὶ δώσει ὁ Δι...ο( ) τῇ παιδ(ίσκην)..ο( ) καὶ [. A reexamination of the image (excerpted in Fig. 5) has produced some new ideas.

§14 Following ἀργυ(ρίου), the expected (δραχμὰς) ξ should be read: the ligature between the overstroke of αργ and the drachma sign is damaged but otherwise resembles the others, even if the drachma sign is less wavy than elsewhere. It is difficult to distinguish between the xi and the beginning of καὶ, but the figure is not much in doubt, since the amount is spelled out in the previous line: ἔχιν παρ’ αὐ(τοῦ) δ[ι]ὰ χε(ιρὸς) ἀργυ(ρίου) (δραχμὰς) ἔξηκοντα.

§15 The name following the article is certainly Δίδυμο(ς), with the base of the second delta and the low undulations of mu clearly visible. The name is added because the two verbs have different subjects: at the end of the contract, the first party must return (ἀποδότο, l. ἀποδότω) the 60-drachma principal,

<sup>9</sup> Four different men of this name are found in [BGU 7 1628 (Philad., IV), for instance. An Aurelius Hol is also the protagonist of TM Arch 35 (late IV).

while Didymos, the lender, must give something to the slave girl. The article before Δίδυμο(ς) is anaphoric, since he was already introduced in the lost beginning of the abstract.

§16  PSI 6 710.9–10 (Oxyrhynchos [?], II), another *paramone* contract for a slave (but based on lease, not a loan), provides a parallel: δώσει δὲ ὁ Διόσκορος τῷ παιδὶ πληρώσαντὶ τ[...] | χιτῶνα ἄξιον δραχμῶν δέκα καὶ δραχμὰς δεκαδύ[ο...]]. As the editor already considered, line 9 can be supplemented πληρώσαντὶ τ[ὸν χρόνον] (the equivalent of μετὰ τὸν χρόνον). Dioskoros, the lessee of the slave, must, in addition to the regular wages, provide a *chiton* worth 12 drachmas at the conclusion of the contract. This parallel suggests that clothing might have supplemented the compensation package in the Fayum contract as well, but the papyrus is bunched up here, and little besides the raised omicron is legible.

§17 The proposed reading is:

§18 μετὰ τὸν χρό(νον) ἀποδότο ἀργυ(ρίου) (δραχμὰς) ξ καὶ δώσει ὁ Δίδυμο(ς) τῇ παιδὶ(ίσκη) θ..ο( ) κ...[

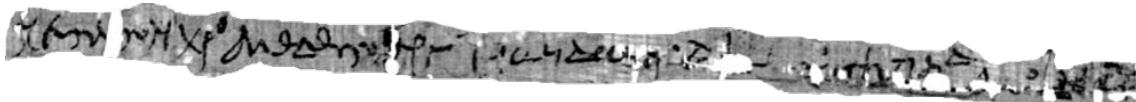


Fig. 5: P.Fay. 344 recto line 24.

## 22. Reflections of Hadrian's Tax Relief Edict of 136

§19 Following two dangerously low inundations, Hadrian ordered a moratorium on the payment of ἀργυρικὸς φόρος by the γεωργοί of Egypt: payments due for the 20th year (135/136) could be spread over five years in the hard-hit Thebaid, four years in the Heptanomia, and three years in Lower Egypt.<sup>10</sup> Herbert Youtie first identified signs of the implementation of this edict in the payment of (πέμπτον) μέρος γεομετρίας, that is, an annual installment of  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the land-survey tax, in several Theban ostraka between 136–140, and the evidence base has since expanded to include a range of money taxes from Thebes and Elephantine, recently examined by Andrea Jördens.<sup>11</sup>

§20 The Fayum, I believe, also offers a reflection of the edict.  P.Prag. 1 62a is a garden-tax receipt dated to Pauni 17 of Hadrian's 22nd year (11 June, 138),<sup>12</sup> which opens with payments for the previous 21st year. Since garden taxes were normally settled the year following, the payment is routine and can be taken as the full set of dues on what amounts to just under two arouras, as the editor noted. The receipt then takes an unusual turn in that it backtracks to garden taxes of the 20th year, with amounts corresponding to about  $\frac{1}{2}$  an aroura according to the editor, "quindi circa un quarto della prima serie" (). The quarter payment for the 20th year is a significant clue: rather

<sup>10</sup> The edict was published in Alexandria on 31 May, 136 and has been transmitted in four fragmentary copies: three are printed under  (= , no. 88A–C), the fourth as .

<sup>11</sup>  334–337, drawing on  854–856;  227; Heilborn,  pp. 94–97;  214–216;  228–229.

<sup>12</sup> The letter "a" refers to the first receipt on the papyrus, which is followed in a second column by a receipt for the φόρος προβάτων (b) and two poorly-preserved receipts (c–d).

than pertaining to a smaller plot of land, it likely represents a *τέταρτον μέρος* of the full payment on the same plot, just as Hadrian's edict permitted in the Heptanomia.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> There follows an installment of the *γεωμετρία* for the 20th year, about half the full amount. The amount is usual, but such late payment is not. The *γεωμετρία* was due every four years and generally settled in two installments, one the year of, one the year following (☒ P.Col. 5, pp. 272–275); the payment in the 22nd year was thus either one or two years late depending on which installment it was. The laxness with the deadline fits the spirit of the edict, even if the taxpayer should have been allowed to disperse payment of the *γεωμετρία* over four annual installments. Cf. Jördens 2019: 336–337, remarking on the various methods of implementing Hadrian's edict: "Dies läßt zugleich darauf schließen, daß das kaiserliche Zugeständnis erneut die Prinzipien vorgab, den lokalen Behörden hingegen relativ freie Hand darin gelassen war, diese Vorgaben in konkrete Maßnahmen zu überführen. Dadurch wurde es möglich, flexibel auf die jeweilige Situation vor Ort zu reagieren und allfälligen Besonderheiten gerecht zu werden, so daß es in den verschiedenen Steuerbezirken zum Teil zu erheblichen Abweichungen bei der Umsetzung kam. Doch war es möglicherweise nicht zum geringsten eben dieser Flexibilität zu danken, daß das Verfahren auf so große Akzeptanz der Bevölkerung stieß und sich letztlich auch als solches bewährte." Indeed, the *τέταρτον μέρος γεωμετρίας* later became institutionalized as a method of payment for dues on ousiac land (☒ P.Col. 5, pp. 274–275): while not a direct result of Hadrian's edict (which concerned taxes for 135/6 only), it may nevertheless have been inspired by it. I plan on returning to the topic of garden taxes in the Fayum via editions of the receipts P.Lond. inv. 2708 and 2712 in a future volume of P.Lond.

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