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ΕΥΓΕΝΕΣΤΑΤΟΣ

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## ΕΥΓΕΝΕΣΤΑΤΟΣ

For C.J. Ruijgh at his 65th birthday

In the same year the dedicatee of this article was born, O. Hornickel, the author of a small Gießen dissertation still ranking as a standard work in its field: *Ehren- und Rangprädikate in den Papyrusurkunden. Ein Beitrag zum römischen und byzantinischen Titelwesen* (Gießen 1930), wrote in a short discussion of the term εὐγενέστατος (p. 12):

“[Erster Beleg J. 477, SB 7167.4; bzw. 5./6. \*Lond. 1023.1. Letzter Beleg J. 635 \*Flor 306.8. Ehrenprädikat der Frauen; in öffentlichen und privaten Urkunden weitverbreitet. Nur an zwei Stellen auch für Männer gebraucht: \*Ox 1664.15 (III). \*Form 133 [byz.]. Die Anrede εὐγένεια für Männer findet sich aber schon im 4. Jh. (vgl. WB s.v.)”

The new, electronic means of exploring the existing papyrological documentation via the Duke Data Bank on Documentary Papyri allows a late 20th-century scholar to work now with much greater precision and Hornickel’s rather lapidary statement can be brought up-to-date easily. As the etymology and the word formation of the adjective εὐγενής (< εὖ + γένος) seem clear enough and do not need a further, preliminary discussion, I give below a list of all attestations of εὐγενέστατος in documentary papyri from the 3rd century A.D onwards as found through the DDBDP CD-ROM # 6, supplemented by the texts referred to by F. Preisigke, *Wörterbuch III* Abschn. 9 s.v.<sup>1</sup> At the same time I wish to use the opportunity to supplement now a comment I made in a note to CPR X 118.4, written before I got access to the DDBDP: “Eine Adressatin -ια, die Tochter eines Heliodoros und εὐγενεστάτη ist, konnte ich in kontemporären Papyri aus Hermupolis nicht finden”. The fact of the matter is that there *is*, after all, such a person, viz. Aurelia Eutropia, Tochter des Heliodoros.

The attestations of εὐγενέστατος known to date are given per city in Egypt (limiting myself to this country I have left documents from Nessana [Sinai] out of account; fathers’ names are given in the genitive, separated from the εὐγενέστατος or εὐγενεστάτη by a /):

Reference	Name	Date
'Abu Sha'ar		
JARCE 31 (1994) 165.2	Sarah; addressee of letter <sup>2</sup>	V/VI
Antinoopolis		
P.Lond. V 1707.4 (cf. P.Cair. Masp. II 67161.3)	Athanasia/Kyrou x Aleet (from Lykopolis), wife of Fl.Konon <i>pragmateutes</i> ; party in dispute	566
P.Lond. V 1711.F.77	Aur. Maria/Mena: only as witness to marriage contract	566-573
P.Cair.Masp. II 67151.169	N.N., wife of Phoibammon doctor; receives from husb. in testament	570

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to P. van Minnen (Duke University) for kindly providing me with attestations entered into the DDBDP since the production of CD-ROM # 6. R.S. Bagnall read an earlier version of this paper and kindly corrected my English.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting that in l. 6 the phrasing ἡ ὑμῶν εὐγένεια is used for indicating both Sarah and her father, ἄββας Ἰωάννης.

P.Münch. I 7.13	Kakos/Iakybiou, wife of Patermuthis shipper (from Syene): inherited i.a. part of house	583
Aphroditis Kome		
P.Cair.Masp. III 67306.3	Aur.Maria/Eulogiou ex- <i>protokometes</i> : debtor of 5 solidi against hypothec	526
P.Cair.Masp. III 67300.2	Sibylla & Herais/Mousaiou: landowners/ lessors	526
P.Lond. V 1695.4	Sibylla & Herais/Mousaiou Syrionos: landowners/lessors	531
P.Cair.Masp. I 67088.[4]	Stephanous/Abraamiou ex- <i>boethos</i> : landowner	551
P.Michael. 42.B.6	Aur. Rachel/Phoibammonos, wife of Besarion: leases out land given in hypothec	566
P.Cair.Masp. I 67005,17	Sophia: in complaint sent in by widow	566-568
P.Cair.Masp. III 67325.iv <sup>R</sup> .11	Aur.N.N.(fem.)/Ioannou/Korneliou: <i>syntelestria</i> , landowner/lessor	585
Arsinoe		
SB VI 9293.7 + BL VII 206	Maria/[N.N. = ?] Apollo: leases out land	573
SB VIII 9777.8	Theodosia, wife of Menas ex- <i>hypodektes</i> : leases out land	597
BGU II 395.12f. + BL VIII 26	Maria/Apollo: party in contract of uncertain nature	599/600
SB I 4661.a.6, b.17	Kale/[?Pses]eiou <sup>3</sup> : buys land	VI/ VII
SPP XX 243.33	Christodora/Georgiou monk: gives power of attorney to cousin	VII
Gebelen		
SB III 6258.1 = SPP III 133 <sup>4</sup>	Poae, priest: addressee of order	V/VI
SB X 10553.1,4	Ose <sup>5</sup> : creditor of money	V/VI
Herakleopolis		
CPR VII 47A.10	Theodora: buys (landed/house?) property	VII
Hermopolis		
SB III 7167.4 + BL VII 191	[Aur. Eutropia/Heliodorou]: leases out land	477
CPR X 118.4	[Aur. Eutrop]ia/Heliodorou: idem (?)	482
CPR V 16.4	Aur. Eutropia/Heliodorou: leases out land	486

<sup>3</sup> It is a mystery to me why the editor of this text, C. Wessely, chose to restore this father's name; after all, J.M. Diethart's *Prosopographia Arsinoitica* (Wien 1980; = MPER NS XII) lists only 3 attestations (## 5814-5816) of the name Ψεσειός; two of them are the result of restorations and one of these derives from the present text. One wonders how many other names ending in -ειος could be restored.

<sup>4</sup> In this text the full stop should be transferred from before ἔδωκα (l. 2) to the start of this line, before τὴν κουρατορίαν.

<sup>5</sup> The editor reads τῷ εὐγενεῖ ᾧ Ωσε, but one should probably separate after εὐγενεῖ and regard one of the following omegas as superfluous, hence read τῷ εὐγενεῖ ᾧ {ω}σε (a name ᾧ Ωσε is unknown, cf. F. Preisigke's *Namenbuch* s.n. ᾧ Ωσε); the adjective εὐγένειος ('well-bearded') has a meaning completely different from that of εὐγενής. The personal names Εὐγένιος and Εὐγενία are, of course, derived from εὐγενής.

It is worth noting that in this text the simple positivus εὐγενής rather than the superlative εὐγενέστατος is used.

SB XIV 12050.2	Fl. Aphthonia/Hypsistou (?): leases out land	498
P.Lond. III 1023.1 (p. 267)	Aur. N.N. (fem.)/Pinoutionos: leases out part of a house	V/VI
P.Berl.Frisk 5.7	Archontia/--ou: gives land in hypothec	509
P.Vindob.Sal. 9.3	Aur. Eucharistia/Theodorou: leases out land	509
P.Berl.Frisk 5.2	Aur. Kyra=Eustorgia/Abraamiou: leases out land given in hypothec	509
SB XIV 11373.2	Aur. Kyra=Eustorgia/Abraamiou: leases out land given in hypothec	513
SB XVI 13037.14	Dioskourias: gave name to a measure (as owner of landed property?)	522
P.Flor. III 323.4	Georgia/-orou: buys land	525
P.Stras. 481.3	Aur. Eucharistia/Theotimou: receiving party in contract	538
P.Stras. 482.2	Aur. Maria/Ioannou: leases out land	542
P.Stras. 482.7	mother of Aur. Maria/Ioannou: gave land to daughter	542
P.Lond. III 1319.4 (p. 271)	Aur. Nemesilla/Phoibammonos: lends money	544/5
SB XVIII 13583.3	Aurr. Eurasia & Thebais: landowners	547
P.Stras. 338.3	Aurr. Herais & Amaleet/Anoubionos: lease out parts of a house	550
SB VI 9085 inv. 16048.3,10	Aur. Aphthonia/Hypsistou: leases out land	565
SB VI 9085 inv. 16050.4	Aur. Aphthonia/Hypsistou: leases out land	579
SB VI 9085 inv. 16055.5	Aur. Aphthonia/Hypsistou: leases out land	598
P.Laur. III 77.5	Theophile/Biktoros = N.N.: owned landed property	603
SB XVIII 13173.7,17,42,47,72,130,137	Aur. Isidora/Biktoros: buys slave	629?
SB VI 9085 inv. 16166.5	Fl. Eulogia/N.N.: leases out land	643
P.Stras. 655.3	N.N. (fem.): leases out part of a house	V
P.Stras. 656.2	N.N. (fem.): leases out land	506
SPP XX 126.3	N.N. (fem.)/Genn]adiou: leases out land	515
P.Lond. III 994 (p. 259)	N.N. (fem.)/Kollouthou: leases out a pottery	517 <sup>6</sup>
P.Stras. 598.2	N.N. (fem.): leases out land	541
P.Stras. 477.1	N.N. (fem.): leases out land	VI
P.Lond. V 1769.6-7	]a/Sarapionos: co-owner of vineyard	VI
P.Lond. V 1772.6	Aur. N.N. (fem.)/Janou (?): creditor of rent in kind	VI
P.Lond. V 1780.1	Theodora/Apollotos: landowner	VI
P.Flor. III 306.8	N.N. (fem.): leases out house property	635
P.Bad.IV 95.iv.67	Apa Amonios monk: mentioned in list	VI/VII
<b>Oxyrhynchus</b>		
P.Oxy. XIV 1664.15-16	Apion: addressee of letter	III
P.Oxy. XXXIV 2724.3	Fl. Kyria: landowner	469
P.Oxy. XVI 1890.3	Serena/Petrou: leases out bakery + mill	508

<sup>6</sup> Despite the editor (cf. his note to l. 3) I tend to believe that the reading εὐγενεστατη (ed. εὐτελεστατη) is possible. Moreover, to date an honorific epithet εὐτελέστατος still has not occurred elsewhere, while the meaning of the adjective εὐτελής (cf. F.M.J. Waanders, *The History of ΤΕΛΟΣ and ΤΕΛΕΩ in Ancient Greek* [Diss. Amsterdam 1983] 178: 'cheap, mean, worthless', and F. Preisigke, *Wörterbuch s.v.: 'wohlfeil, geringwertig, gering'*) excludes its being applied in the context of an address ('To the most worthless ...' makes no sense, of course).

P.Leid.Inst. 70 <sup>Verso</sup> .3	N.N. (fem.): party in agreement	518
P.Oxy. XVI 1887.4,16	Fl. Euethia/Apollotos <i>ex-peri...</i> x Theoprepeia: sends official document	538
P.Oxy. XVI 1965.15	Nonna, wife of Theon: owned house property	553
PSI VI 709.4	Herais/Theonos: leases out house property	566
P.Oxy. I 126.24.32	Stephanous/Ioannou <i>scholasticus</i> , wife of Fl. Markos doctor: promises to pay taxes due by her father	572
P.Oxy. XVI 2020.iii.36	Maria, wife of Kyros <i>scholasticus</i> : delivers 46 artabs of barley	VI
P.Oxy. LVIII 3932.15	Maria: addressee of letter by her son (?) Paul <i>exceptor</i> <sup>7</sup>	VI
Other / Prov. unknown		
P.Stras. 560.19 (Alexandria?) <sup>8</sup>	Heron, Apollonios, officials: witnesses	After Sept. 324 (?)
P.Lond. V 1885.Verso	N.N. (fem.): addressee in private letter	V/VI
P.Cair.Masp. III 67312.44, 87	Herais, grandm. of Fl. Theodoros: mentioned in testament of grandson (cf. sub Aphrodite, P.Cair.Masp. 67300 and P.Lond. V 1695)	567
P.Cair.Masp. III 67314.ii.10	Maria, sister of N.N.: receives rent	566-73
P.Cair.Masp. I 67006.ii.33, 99, 137 (cf. 78, 103)	Biktorine/Ioannou doctor: in marriage contract	VI
P.Cair.Masp. I 67006.ii.69	Theanous, mother of Biktor: donates land	VI
P.Cair.Masp. II 67131.7, 20	Theous, widow of Isidoros <i>tachydromos</i> of the <i>officium</i> : re-pays debt	VI
P.Stras. 279.10,13	N.N. and N.N. (fem.): receive greetings in letter	VI
PSI VII 836.1,2,6	N.N. (fem.): addressee in letter	VI
SPP III 255.1	N.N. (fem.)/Phoibammon: lends money	VI
PSI VIII 889.2	Eudoxia: referred to in letter	VI/VII

This listing, however, is not the end of the matter, as in quite a few documents people are addressed in terms of ἡ σὴ εὐγένεια (for this abstract cf. H. Zilliacus, *Untersuchungen zu den abstrakten Anredeformen und Höflichkeitstiteln im Griechischen* [Helsingfors 1949] 47 [‘abstrakte Höflichkeitstitel ... neu im 4. Jh.’], 68 [‘Anrede an Laici und Frauen, bisweilen auch an Geistliche’], and 88 [‘ein Frauen zukommendes Ehrenprädikat’]); it may be assumed, therefore, that these persons belong automatically to the category of the εὐγενέστατοι / εὐγενέσταται. Not included in the following list are those papyri in which *both* the abstract εὐγένεια and the superlative adjective εὐγενέστατος are used for the same person; the following papyri with εὐγένεια have been mentioned already under εὐγενέστατος: JARCE 31 (1994) 165.6; P.Berl.Frisk 5.5,6,7; P.Lond. V 1711.E.23 and 1885; P.Michael. 42.A.4,27; P.Oxy. XVI 1890. 4,7,11,13,15 and XXXIV 2724.12; PSI VI 709.13 and VII 836.5,7,8; P.Stras. 598.5 and 656.7;

<sup>7</sup> Despite the editor of the text I am not certain that Mary is the physical mother of Paul; it is well known that terms like ‘father’ and ‘mother’ could be used simply in an affective sense. One wonders whether this Maria is the same person as the Maria occurring in the preceding entry. It is known that the provincial government employed not only *exceptores* (= ‘secretary able to write shorthand’), but also *scholastici*; father and son could have shared the same employer.

<sup>8</sup> A new edition of this text by B. Sirks is forthcoming.

P.Vind.Sal. 9.5,6,9,12; SB VI 9085 inv. 16048.6,10 and XIV 11373.5,7,13. Besides these texts one finds:

## Antinoopolis

P.Cair.Masp. III 67310.7	N.N. (fem.): money promised in marriage contract	VI
SB XVIII 13298.10 (?)	Anastasia/Doran(tinoou) <sup>9</sup> : lends money	566-570

## Arsinoe

P.Abinn. 9.3,7	Fl. Abinnaios: addressee in letter	c. 350
P.Abinn. 12.14	Fl. Abinnaios: addressee in letter	c. 350
P.Abinn. 30.10	Fl. Abinnaios: addressee in letter	c. 350
P.Abinn. 33.6	Fl. Abinnaios: addressee in letter	c. 350
SB VI 9286.[10]	N.N.: receives greetings in letter	VII

## Douch

O.Douche I 2.3	Father P-; addressee of letter	IV
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## Hermopolis

CPR VIII 28.13	Nearchides: addressee of letter	IV
P.Amh.II 145.13	Paulos: addressee in letter	IV

## Kellis

P.Kell. I 5.4-5,9,19	Pausanias: addressee of letter	ca. 330
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## Oxyrhynchus

PSI IX 1081.6	Limenios: addressee in letter	III/IV
P.Oxy. LV 3821.4,6	Heras: addressee of letter	c.341/2
P.Oxy. XVI 1961.14	Aur. Martyrios & Apphou/Eulogios <i>ex-palatinus</i> : owners of an apartment	487
P.Oxy. XLIX 3512.8,15	Fl. Ioannes/Martyriou, <i>politeuomenos</i> : landowner in contract	492
P.Oxy. XVI 1891.8	Fl. Apphou/Eulogiou, <i>tribunus</i> : lends money	495
P.Oxy. XVI 1959.10,16	Fl. Apphou/Eulogiou, <i>tribunus</i> : owner of house	499
P.Oxy. LIX 4004.10	Kanopos: addressee in letter	V
PSI VII 843.4,8	Eudaimon: landowner, addressee in letter	V/VI
P.Rein. II 108.12	N.N.: owner of bakery + mill	early VI

## Prov. unknown

PSI XIV 1446.2	N.N.: addressee in letter	IV
P.Stras. 180.2	Hermodoros: addressee in letter	IV
SB VI 9135.7	N.N.(male): addressee in letter	IV
SB XVIII 13589.7	Theodoros: addressee in letter	IV
P.Oslo III 162.10,12,14	Dorotheos: addressee in letter	IV
P.Stras. 229.9,13	[?Sam]bas/Theophilou, <i>singularius</i> (Thebaid): addressee in rent contract	502

<sup>9</sup> The editor of the text restores παρασχεῖν τῇ σῆι εὐγενεῖ]α Ἀναστασία Δωραν(τινούου).. In itself, however, a restoration of, e.g., παρασχεῖν τῇ Αὐρηλί]α Ἀναστασία seems conceivable and the word order in the editor's restoration seems a bit unusual.

On the basis of the preceding lists the following observations may be made:

(1) The earliest attestation of a female εὐγενεστάτη is P.Oxy. XXXIV 2724 from the year 469, the latest is SB VI 9085 inv. 16166 from the year 643; the masc. εὐγενέστατος occurs already in the 3rd century, P.Oxy. XIV 1664. Likewise, the abstract εὐγένεια may also have been used already in the late 3rd century, cf. the date of PSI IX 1081 (Oxyrhynchos, III/IV).

(2) While the number of females bearing the epithet εὐγενεστάτη is much larger than the number of males bearing the epithet εὐγενέστατος (only 5 attestations, viz. SB III 6258 = SPP III 133; SB X 10553; P.Bad. IV 95.iv.67; P.Oxy. XIV 1664 and P.Stras. 560), the number of males addressed in terms of ἡ σὴ εὐγένεια is considerably larger than the number of females; in other words, the adjective is seen to be predominantly applied to females,<sup>10</sup> the abstract predominantly to males.

3) There are far more Αὐρηλίου/-ία than Φλάουιου/-ία bearing this honorific epithet (for these names as status-indicators in the papyri cf. J.G. Keenan in ZPE 11 [1973] 33-63 and 13 [1974] 283-304). Generally speaking 'Flavius' is a kind of 'upper-class' status-indicator ('upper-class' in a relative sense), but it would be wrong to infer that 'Aurelius/-lia' automatically points to a 'lower-class' person: from the papyri listed above we learn about the social standing of the εὐγενέστατοι Αὐρηλία that these women themselves often owned land or house property and that they were able to give credit to other people.<sup>11</sup> As far as the sources tell us something about the parents, husbands or sons of these women, we find educated people like doctors, *scholastici* (= 'advocates') or *exceptores* (= 'stenographer/secretary'), holders of some kind of local office (e.g.: a village headman or a tax-collector) and shippers. Male εὐγενέστατοι / εὐγενεῖς could belong to the military, to the clergy, or held some municipal or provincial office. We may conclude that male and female bearers of the epithet were at least 'middle-class' people who were not entitled to a specific honorific title or indication of rank (e.g.: ἐνδοξότατος, κράτιστος, μεγαλοπρεπέστατος, ὑπερφυέστατος), but who at the same time formed part of the municipal aristocracy.<sup>12</sup> It is probably in keeping with this that in two marriage contracts, P.Lond. V 1711 F. 37 and P.Cair. Masp. III 67310.16, 'decent behaviour' (a 'middle-class' virtue) is required for an εὐγενεστάτη future wife (for a similar requirement, cf. the 4th-century personal letter PSI I 41, l. 13). Finally, it seems of some interest that the author of SB I 6000 choose the epithet εὐγενεστάτη for the description of a female party in his transaction; apparently this epithet occurred so frequently in the practice of this scribe that he treated it as a more or less fixed element in the phrasing of his text.

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<sup>10</sup> J. Beaucamp, *Le Statut de la femme à Byzance (4<sup>e</sup>-7<sup>e</sup> siècle), II. Les pratiques sociales* (Paris 1992; Travaux & Mémoires du Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, Monogr. 6) does not pay specific attention to the epithet εὐγενεστάτη (called by her [p. 130 n.21]: 'simple qualificatif honorifique') in her 'Annexe V: Titres et dignités attestés pour des femmes' (pp. 401-407) in which she lists bearers of epithets like λαμπροτάτη, ἐνδοξοτάτη and μεγαλοπρεπεστάτη.

<sup>11</sup> To be sure, there are some cases of a marriage between a male Φλάουιος and a female Αὐρηλία, e.g. SPP XX 117 (Flavius Horigenios x Aurelia Horigeneia) and P.Münch. I 12 and 13 (Flavius Patermouthios x Aurelia Kako). On social mobility of women as a consequence of marriage cf. J. Beaucamp, *op. cit.*, 35.

<sup>12</sup> In a few cases (cf. P.Oxy. XXXIV 2724 [Oxyrhynchos] and SB XIV 12050 [Hermopolis]) one finds the epithet combined with λαμπρότατος, an epithet which in the later 5th century had lost much of its old splendor (cf. 'vir clarissimus') and was also used for indicating members of society who did not belong to 'the street'. Cf. Beaucamp [fn.10] 131 n. 22.