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REMARKS ON PRIVATE LETTERS

aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 119 (1997) 135-147

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P.Graux II 23

This is a second-century letter on business matters. Among other things, Koitonikos advises Heron to beware of a certain woman who has given him trouble in the past: βλέπε οὖν μὴ ἀφῆς ἢ αὐτὴν κεινηθῆναι ἕως ἂν ἀπολάβῃς τοὺς κιθῶνάς μου. οὐ θέλω γὰρ λαλεῖν ὅσα ἔπραξε παρ' ἐμέ (lines 12-15). The editor translates the last period as 'car je ne te dis pas tout ce qu'elle m'a couté (?)', notes that she has not found any other example of such a use of πράττειν with παρά τινα in the papyri, and suggests that perhaps 'le scribe mélange-t-il deux constructions équivalentes, πράττειν τινά τι et πράττειν τι παρά τινα, "faire payer quelque chose à quelqu'un"? Koitōnikos se plaint-il de s'être déjà fait rouler par la cliente?'. The solution is simple, and may be found in the fairly frequent use of παρά + accusative instead of παρά + dative, see Mayser, *Grammatik* ii2 344, and generally the confusion between the dative and accusative of the personal pronouns, see S. G. Kapsomenakis, *Voruntersuchungen* 24, 76 n. 1, 102, 131f. παρ' ἐμοί 'chez moi', is what a schoolteacher would recommend to his pupils. Compare, e.g., P.Haun. II 28.13f. (AD 31) ὧδε παρ' ἡμᾶς [οὐχ] ἢ εὐρηκα αὐτόν, P.Stras. VI 576.14 (c. 300) τὸ οὖν ἀργύριον τὸ παρ' ἐμαὶ ἀπέειχον, P.Rain.Cent. 161.4f. (v?) εὐρέθην τὰ περισκελίδια τῆς ἐλευθέρας σου ἢ παρ' ἐμέ; also the stock phrase εἰς οἶκον παρ' ἐμέ in P.Prag. I 36.10 (88), P.Sarap. 16.6 (105/6), 48bis.18 (123). An interesting case is UPZ I 70.7 (c. 152/1 BC), where in παρὰ εὐθεοί the ε of εε is corrected from coi. Translate thus 'for I don't want to tell you the things she did in my place'. There is a close verbal parallel in another letter, P.Ant. I 43.15f. (iii/iv): οὐ {γ} χρη γὰρ εὐ λαλῖν ἢ ἐποί[η]σέν ἢ εε.

P.IFAO II 30

This is a letter-fragment from the second century addressed to a woman (Ταῖς[ᾶτι]). Lines 3-4 have been presented as follows:

πρὸ μὲν πάν]των εὐχ[ομαί εε
 ὑγιαίνειν καὶ τὰ] ἀβάσκαντ[ά σου παιδία

In the commentary the editor admits the tentative character of his restoration in line 4. The sequence καὶ τὰ] ἀβάσκαντ[ά σου παιδία may receive some support from a single text, SB XIV 11906.3ff. (ii/iii) πρὸ τῶν ὅλων εὐχομαί εε ὑγιαίνειν, καὶ τὴν κύμβιον σου καὶ τὰ ἀβάσκαντά σου τέκνα καὶ ὄλλον σου τὸν οἶκον ἀπάζομαι. But in most of its occurrences the wording of this formulaic greeting is different. Out of the nine other instances I have found, I cite five below:¹

P.Brem. 64.2ff.	(117-31)	πρὸ μὲν παντὸς εὐχομαί εαι ὑγιαίνειν μετὰ Ἀπολλωνίου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου ἢ καὶ τῶν ἀβασκάντων σου
SB III 6263.3f.	(ii)	πρὸ τῶν ὅλων ἐρῶσθέ εε εὐχομαι μετὰ καὶ τῶν ἄβασκάντων μου ἀδελφῶν
P.Würzb. 21.FrA.3ff.	(ii)	πρὸ μὲν πάντων ἢ εὐχομαί εε ὑγιένιν καὶ εὐτυχῖν μετὰ τῶν ἀβασκάντων μου ἀδελφῶν
P.Oxy. XIV 1758.3ff.	(ii)	πρὸ παντὸς εὐχομαί εε ἢ ὑγιαίνειν μετὰ τῶν ἀβασκάντων ἢ σου παιδίων
P.Fuad I Univ. 6.2ff.	(iii)	πρὸ γε πάντων ἢ εὐχομαί εε ὁλοκληρεῖν ἢ ἅμα τοῦ ἀβασκάντου παιδίου.

It is likely that the writer intended something alongside the lines of one of the above examples. Perhaps it is worth adding that the formula is employed by, as well as referred to, both men and women.

* I am grateful to Dr. J. R. Rea, who read an earlier draft of a part of this paper and gave me valuable advice; to Prof. T. Gagos, who checked a number of papyri at Ann Arbor for me and contributed some very helpful remarks; and to Dr G. Poethke for examining a Berlin papyrus at my request and supplying me with a photograph of another.

¹ Cf. also P.Alex.Giss. 59.3ff. (117-38), P.Phil. 35.2ff. (ii), P.Wisc. II 72.4ff. (ii), P.Mil. II 80.3ff. (iii). P.Oxy. II 292.11ff. (c. AD 25) πρὸ δὲ πάντων ὑγιάνειν εε εὐχ[ο]μαί ἀβασκάντως τὰ ἄριστα ἢ πράττων is too untypical to be considered as a parallel.

P.Lond. III 1019 (= SB XX 14727)²

This sixth-century ‘Geschäftsbrief in Geldangelegenheiten’ contains instructions from a certain Alexandros to his ‘brother’ Theodosios. The editor notes that the understanding of the text ‘wird durch zahlreiche orthographische und grammatikalische Fehler (Genetiv anstelle des Dativs)³ zusätzlich erschwert’. Two of these mistakes, which, however, remained undetected, occur in lines 5 and 6. The text reads:

καὶ λαβὲ ἐκοί χίραν παρὰ Φοιβάμωνος καὶ πέμψη τὴν λοιπάδα Γεν^α-
 δίου· μόνον σοὶ λαβὲ χίραν τῶν δεκαενή(α) εὔ(ς)ταθμα ἀπὸ Φοιβάμωνινος.

The translation ‘nimm für Dich einen Handschein’ (line 5; similarly line 6) takes (ἐ)κοί as a dative, apparently a *dativus ethicus*. But here the sense hardly needs one;⁴ and there is nothing else in the text to justify Theodosios’ personal interest in the transaction (he has only to obey Aleaxandros’ orders). All difficulty is removed once we take (ἐ)κού for what it really is: (ἐ)κού in phonetic spelling, cf. F. T. Gignac, *Grammar* i 198f., used in this context to emphasise and better define the imperative λαβέ.⁵

P.Lond. V 1831

This is a fragment of a fourth-century letter. The editor favours the idea of a petition, but this should probably be ruled out; although some official business is implied in lines 4-5, this can hardly determine the nature of the text. Instead, the possibility of a letter of recommendation should be reckoned with (for the introductory pattern in such letters cf. C.-H. Kim, *The Familiar Letter of Recommendation* 37ff.). The text has been presented as follows:

¹[τῷ δεσπ]ότη μου Ἀθανασίῳ ²] Ἀντίοχος ³...]ιτος ὁ ἀπὸ ἀθλητῶν ὁ ἀναδιδοῦς ⁴...] ματα
 ἐντετυχηκῶς τῷ δεσπότη μου ⁵...]ωνι καὶ παραθέμενος τὰ ἑαυτοῦ ⁶[...

The editor notes that in line 4 ‘probably not ὑπομνήματα, but γράμματα is possible’. Inspection of the original proves him right; but we may go a little further, and venture a reconstruction of the broken beginning of line 4. Line 1 gives the length of the lacuna, which must be about 7 letters long; on this basis, I propose to restore ὁ ἀναδιδοῦς [σοὶ τὰ γρά]μματα, a common collocation (for example, it appears in P.Oxy. XX 2275.5 and P.Princ. II 101.7f. discussed below).

P.Oxf. 18

This is a short letter of the second or, more likely, third century. Its first three lines may be presented as follows (in line 3 the corrections reported in BL have been incorporated⁶):

Μελ[κ]άλιος Ἀρείωνι τῷ πατρὶ χάρειν.
 ὁ ἐπ[ε]τείλω μοι περὶ τῶν κ[ε]ραμίων τῶν γλυ-
 [κελ]εῶν, ἠγόρακα [τ]ὰς ἐλαίας καὶ κίνται.

‘Melcalius to Areion, his father, greetings. As to the order you gave me about the jars of sweet olives, I have bought the olives and they are stored’.

The name of the sender is not known from any other source. On the published photograph the reading appears very uncertain, and on inspection of the original (kept in the Bodleian Library at

² First published in *Tyche* 7 (1992) 203ff.

³ In a sixth-century text this can hardly be branded a mistake, inasmuch as it is a phenomenon of the Greek spoken at that time, which was to become established in Medieval and Modern Greek; cf. Kapsomenakis, *Voruntersuchungen* 114 n. 2.

⁴ For the contexts in which such datives occur see H. Ljungvik, *Aegyptus* 13 (1933) 159ff., H. Steen, *C & M* 1 (1938) 125f., H. Koskeniemi, *Studien zur Idee und Phraseologie* 130, 134, 153.

⁵ For a similar misunderstanding of σοὶ in P.Bour. 23.7 see Kapsomenakis, *Voruntersuchungen* 23.

⁶ κίντα [. . .] ed. pr., κίνται [ὠδε] H. C. Youtie (BL IV 47), κίνται [vac.] P. J. Sijpesteijn (BL VII 95). The latter suggestion has been confirmed on the original. The translation combines that of the editor and Youtie’s (= *Scriptiunculae* ii 887).

Oxford) Μελ[κ]άλιος turns out to be impossible: there is nothing that would admit a lambda before the break; it is also not clear whether an entire letter has been broken away, while very little survives of the epsilon and alpha to justify the absence of sublinear dots. It has not been possible to restore any known name. H. Solin, O. Salomies, *Repertorium nominum gentilicium et cognominum Latinorum* (1994) record the *gentilicia* Macal(ius) and Magal(ius), and one might think of the otherwise unattested *Μεγάλιος. Either way, *faut de mieux* I would be inclined to print Με []άλιος, without excluding Μεάλιος.

Line 2 exhibits two unusual linguistic features. First, the construction ὁ ἐπ[ε]τείλω ... ἡγόρακα is good classical Greek, but strikes one as odd in a text of this date and type; second, ‘to order someone about something’ is a very unusual meaning for ἐπιτελλομαι, and this papyrus is in fact the only text attesting the form ἐπετείλω. ὡς ἐνετείλω μοι would be less exceptional, cf. SB XII 11148.5f. (iii/iv, cf. BL VIII 367), P.Oxy. III 527.2 (ii/iii), PSI IX 1080.3 (iii), XII 1247.17 (ii), P.Warr. 15.12 (ii) (most of these texts have καθὼς ἐνετείλω); cf. also the phrase ὡς ἐνετειλάμην vel sim. which occurs in many other papyri. This has actually been confirmed on the original, and we should read ὡς [ἐ]ν[ε]τείλω μοι κτλ. There is a further noteworthy detail: the juxtaposition of the incorrect γλυ[κελ]ῶν with the correct ἐλαία. But in effect the papyrus has γλυ[κελ]ῶν; for the spelling see Gignac, *Grammar* i 196f.

There are more problems in the final sentence (lines 6-8). It was printed thus:

ἀσπάζεταί σε Σαραπίων καὶ
[. . .]ητρι καὶ Τριμέας.
ἐρρωσθαί <σε> εὐχομ(αι).

For the beginning of line 7 the editor tentatively suggested restoring [Δημ]ητρι = Δημήτριον. This is not credible; further, καὶ cannot be read in the previous line. The traces admit κύ[v], and I am thus inclined to supplement κύ[v] | [τῆ μ]ητρι. After that comes the proper name Τριμέας, an *unicum*. But this is a ‘ghost’: the papyrus has Τημέας. This should be either an idiosyncratic spelling of the common name Δημέας (for the interchange δ > τ at the beginning of a word cf. Gignac, *Grammar* i 80), or an orthographic variant of the rare name Τιμέας, attested only in O.Tait 144 (215? BC). Finally, as regards the supplemented <σε> in the last line, it should be noted that the omission of the personal pronoun is well attested, cf. F. Ziemann, *De epistularum Graecarum formulis sollemnibus quaestiones selectae* 336 n. 1, and F. X. J. Exler, *The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter* 70f., and cannot be regarded as an accidental omission (the phenomenon is not as rare as Exler states).⁷ In conclusion, I propose that the end of the letter be edited as follows:

ἀσπάζεταί σε Σαραπίων κύ[v]
[τῆ μ]ητρι καὶ Τημέας.
ἐρρωσθαι εὐχομ(αι).

‘Sarapion along with his mother, and Timeas greet you. I pray for (your) health’.

P.Oxy. XX 2275

In this letter, assigned to the first half of the fourth century (but the late third should also be considered), Theonas asks his ‘brother’ Timotheos to ‘buy carpets on his behalf’. His request starts thus (lines 4-7):

[καλῶς ποι]ήσις, κύριε, περὶ [πο]λλοῦ σοι γενέσθαι Πα-
5 [σίωνι τῷ ἀ]ναδιδούντι σοι ταῦτά μου τὰ γράμματα
[.] φίλω ἡμῶν συνωνήσασθαι
[.] ταπήτια κάλλιττα κτλ.

The lacunae at the start of lines 5-7 cause some difficulty. In line 5 the restoration Πα[σίωνι] is arbitrary; although we find Πασιώνος in P.Oxy. XX 2273.5, the two texts are not related, and there is

⁷ I draw the opportunity to note that P.Princ. III 162.14 (89) has ἐρρωσθαι [εὐχο]μαι, but the break might have carried the personal pronoun away; also in P.Princ. III 189.19 the editor prints ἐρρωσθα[ι εὐχο]μαι, but obviously it is preferable to supplement ἐρρωσθα[ί σε εὐχο]μαι.

no good reason to admit Πα[ρίωνι here. For the beginning of line 6 the editor offered no supplement, but the length of the break allows supplementing [όντι καὶ] φίλω ἡμῶν (on the original I see nothing of the trace reported after the lacuna), which would match ἀ]ναδιδούντι and φίλω; cf. P.Oxy. XXXVI 2768. 14f. (iii) ὄντι καὶ προκτῆτορι. For line 7 the editor considered supplying 'μοι or ἡμῶν i.e. 'on my behalf'. Spacing is inconclusive, but in the text there is nothing to justify the plural (ἡμῶν in 6 is not relevant). All this result in the following text for lines 5-7:⁸

5 [±5 τῷ ἀ]ναδιδούντί σοι ταῦτά μου τὰ γράμματα,
[όντι καὶ] φίλω ἡμῶν, συνωνήσασθαι
[μοι ταπ]ήτια κάλλιστα κτλ.

'... that you buy together with Pa..., who is delivering you this letter of mine (and is) a friend of ours, the most beautiful carpets for me, etc.'⁹

P.Oxy. XXXIV 2728

This is an interesting business letter of the early fourth century.¹⁰ Close to the end of it the writer asks for the dispatch of various eatables (pepper, pickled mullet, honey). His last requests have been presented in the following words:

ἀπόστειλον καὶ ἡμίχουον
35 μέλιτος· πάντα τ[ῆς τ]ιμῆς μὴ ὀκνήσῃς πα . . .
γράψαι μοι περὶ πάντων.

The editor translates: 'And send off half a *chous* of honey. As for all the details of the price, do not hesitate ... to write to me about everything', and comments on line 35: 'Read πάντα <τὰ> τ[ῆς τ]ιμῆς?'. This is not so. τ[ῆς τ]ιμῆς means 'at the current price', and πάντα, which sums up what the writer has asked for, should go with ἀπόστειλον. Compare, e.g., SB III 7572.5f. (ii) πέμψεν μοι τὰ λοδίκια τῆς τιμῆς, P.Wisc. II 72.22 (ii) ἀγόρασόν μοι τῆς τιμῆς, or SB XIV 11901.12f. (iii) ἀγόρασόν μοι καλκίον καλὸν τῆς τιμῆς, with the note ad loc. of the ed. pr. (= G. M. Parássoglou, *Ἑλληνικά* 26 (1973) 281). τῆς τιμῆς is a brachylogy: cf. P.Fouad 35.7f. (48) πωλεῖν τοῖς προσελευσκομένοις ἢ τῷ ἀγορασμῷ, τῆς εὔρεθη[co]μένης τιμῆς, τὰ ὑπάρχοντα κτλ.; cf. also BGU IV 1080.18ff. (iii?) c]υναπόστειλόν μοι σιπίλου ... λίτρας δέκα ... τῆς οὔσης παρὰ σοὶ τιμῆς, or the shorter τῆς οὔσης τιμῆς: P.Oxy. LVI 3854.5f. (iii) πωλήσῃς τὰ {c} δώδεκα σπατία τῆς οὔσης τιμῆς.¹¹ A final point: at the end of line 35 πάλιν, which has been suggested in place of πα . . . (see BL VII 152), has now been confirmed on the original. One should thus modify the text's punctuation, and read:

ἀπόστειλον καὶ ἡμίχουον
μέλιτος, πάντα τ[ῆς τ]ιμῆς. μὴ ὀκνήσῃς πάλιν
γράψαι μοι περὶ πάντων.

'Send off also half a *chous* of honey, all these at the current price. Do not hesitate to write to me again about everything'.

P.Princ. II 101

This is a Christian letter of recommendation from the fourth century, reprinted in M. Naldini, *Il Cristianesimo in Egitto* as no. 70. Only the upper part survives. Lines 7-9 were edited thus:

⁸ One more minor correction: in line 17 for ὑμῶν read ἡμῶν.

⁹ I am doubtful as to whether in συνωνήσασθαι one has to recognise the practice of *coemptio*, for which cf. P.Oxy. LX 4060.86n.

¹⁰ R. S. Bagnall has calculated the date of the text as 308-12, or rather 312-8 in *Currency and Inflation in Fourth Century Egypt* 57, 66 (= BL VIII 261).

¹¹ Similarly P.Graux II 10.16 (i), SB XII 11127.12 (88), BGU V 1210.10.230 (c. 150), P.Graux II 23.9f. (ii), PSI XIII 1333.9 (iii), P.Heid. II 216.8f. (iii), SB XVIII 13593.22f. (iii/iv).

[. . . ὁ] ἀναδιδούς σοι τὰ γράμ-
[ματά] μου οἰκίος τοῦ πατρὸς
[τοῦ C]τεφάνου τυγχάνει κτλ.

The name of the person recommended does not survive: the lacuna at the start of line 7 has probably carried it away. As the editor noted, it must have been very short.¹² What will concern us here is the way line 9 has been restored. The editor opted for τοῦ. Letters of this kind display a fairly fixed pattern of presenting the details of the recommendation. C.-H. Kim, *The Familiar Letter of Recommendation* 48f. notes that ‘the identification of the [recommended] person is usually expressed in terms of the family relationship to the writer or the degree of intimacy with the recommended’, and lists the phrases used for identifying this relationship: ἀδελφός μου, τῆ[ς γυ]ναικὸς οἰκεῖος, ἡμῶν οἰκεῖος, ἡμῶν ἴδιον, ἡμῶν ἀδελφοῦ καὶ οἰκ[εῖος] καὶ κτλ., μου ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας, οἰκιακὴν μου, οἰκεῖόν μου, and οἰκίος τοῦ πατρὸς [τοῦ C]τεφάνου. It is evident that the last example, furnished by our papyrus, does not show the same degree of intimacy as the others. Naturally, what was clear to the recipient of the letter may not be obvious to us, and Stephanos may have been a close friend; cf. P.Cair.Zen. I 59042 (257) (= no. 5 Kim) τῶν φίλων τινὸς τῶν [ἐμ]ῶν ἐστὶν οἰκεῖος. But since we are dealing with a supplement, I see no reason why we should not seek to emphasise the closeness of this person to the writer, and restore τοῦ πατρὸς [μου C]τεφάνου ([σου] is another possibility, but I think it much less likely). We find a similar idea in another letter of recommendation, P.Brem. 7.3f. (ii): Ἐρμαῖον φίλον ὄντα τοῦ πατρὸς μου ἢ παρατίθεμαί σοι, ἄδελφε (for the construction τοῦ πατρὸς μου + name in genitive cf. PSI XIII 1322.7 (118), P.Oxy. XXXI 2596.9 (iii), etc.)

PSI I 95, P.Fay. 109

PSI I 95 is a third-century letter written by a woman called Ptolemais to a certain Ammonios. Ptolemais gives him instructions about various agricultural matters. This is how lines 7-15 are printed:

ἐὰν ἢ δὲ μὴ ἐν τούτων γείνηται, κἄν σε δη βαδίσει ἢ εἰς . . . τέταρτον ἢ ἀποστεῖλαι τὴν ἐκεῖ
περὶ ἰσχυρῶν μοι φάσιν ἢ χίμαιρον καὶ τίνες τόποι παρέστηκαν πρὸς κατασποράν.

The note on 9ff. shows the editor’s uneasiness: ‘Forse κἄν σε δη (...) βαδίσει εἰς . . . τέταρτον <nome di luogo?> ἢ ἀποστεῖλαι <cioè τινά> τὴν ἐκεῖ etc.’. However, things are not so difficult. First we have to remove the problem caused by what was unread in line 10. The original (kept in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana at Florence), clearly shows that we should read τόν. τὸν τέταρτον must refer to a τόπος, as we may deduce from the occurrence of the word τόποι a few lines below. I have found two relevant parallels: P.Bour. 15 fr.3.57 (ii) τόπου τετάρτου, and PSI X 1126.11 (iii), where τετάρτου τ[ό]πος(ου) is securely restored.¹³ Then with regard to the syntax, ἀποστεῖλαι goes with φάσιν,¹⁴ while βαδίσει and ἀποστεῖλαι, which convey orders, are either imperatival infinitives (for imperatival infinitives parallel to imperatives cf. B.G. Mandilaras, *The Verb* §§ 756ff.), or genuine imperatives (cf. Gignac, *Grammar* ii 349f.; Modern Greek has στείλε, βάδισε). κἄν σε δη is an elliptical conditional clause.¹⁵ A parallel to the conditional here is P.Oxy. LXII 4340.11f. (late iii): ἂν ἢ δεῖ γράψον ἡμεῖν

¹² Naldini does not rule out the possibility that ‘il periodo poté per es. iniziare nel r. 7 con [ἐπεὶ ὁ] ἀναδιδούς ecc.’. But this is highly unlikely: there are very few letters of recommendation which do not mention the name of the person recommended, cf. Kim, op. cit. 41ff., and none of them starts with ἐπεὶ or the like.

¹³ It might be worth considering whether in P.Col. VIII 212, a short letter of AD 49, one may restore [τέταρτ]ον in the lacuna of line 7, so that the sentence should run τὰς [μη]χανὰς μετὰθεε ἢ εἰς τ[ὸ]ν [τέταρτ]ον τόπον ‘move the *sakijeh* to the fourth *topos*.’ When this letter was first published, the editor noted that there are many possible restorations of the lacuna in line 7, and *exempli gratia* suggested [πρότερ]ον. But [τέταρτ]ον at least has a parallel.

¹⁴ There are numerous examples of φάσιν construed with ἀποστέλλω or πέμπω.

¹⁵ For a similar misunderstanding and mistaken punctuation in P.Oxy. XVII 2153.19 see Kapsomenakis, *Voruntersuchungen* 52.

ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ ‘write us about him, if necessary’; the personal pronoun is absent, but the sense is the same.¹⁶ The text should therefore be arranged as follows:

ἐὰν δὲ μηθὲν τούτων γείνηται, κἄν σε δῆ, βαδίσει εἰς τὸν τέταρτον ἢ ἀποστείλει τὴν ἐκεῖ
περὶ πάντων μοι φάσιν. σήμανον κτλ.

‘If none of these things takes place, and if you have to, go to the fourth (topos), or send me word about everything there. Notify me also ...’

To the best of my knowledge the personal pronoun occurs in the same phrase only in one other text, P.Fay. 109, a letter from the archive of Gemellus (early i). In the edition lines 2-6 of this text appear thus:

καὶ νῦν | παρακληθεὶς τοὺς τρεῖς στατήρες οὐκ εἴρηκέ | σοι Κέλευκος δῶναί μοι ἤδη δὸς
Κλέωνι, νομίμας ὅτι κυχρᾶς μοι αὐτοὺς, ἐὰν σε δ(έ)ῃ τὸ εἰμάτιόν | σου θεῖναι ἐνέχυρον κτλ.

The editors translated the conditional sentence in lines 5-6 as ‘even if you have to pawn your cloak’, that is as if it were a concessive clause—which it is not. Olsson’s translation (the letter is reprinted under no. 69 in his *Papyrusbriefe aus der frühesten Römerzeit*) runs along the same lines: ‘auch wenn es notwendig ist, Dein Gewand als Pfand zu geben (?)’. The question mark betrays his doubts, rightly, as it seems: the only way to do justice to the Greek is to take θεῖναι as the apodosis of the conditional. That is:

ἐὰν σε δῆ,¹⁷ τὸ εἰμάτιόν σου θεῖναι ἐνέχυρον

‘If necessary, put your cloak in pawn’.¹⁸

P.Wash. I 31, 35, 44

The first of these three Washington papyri is a scrap of a letter which the editor placed in the third century. In the introduction the editor noted: ‘If γεν[ε]θλ[ε]ία[ν] Ἀλεξάνδ[ρου] refers to the emperor, a date between A.D. 222 and 235 can be assigned to the letter, the lack of θεός with the name indicating a living ruler.’ But γενεθλία Ἀλεξάνδρου, ‘the birthday of Alexander’, may refer to the birthday of any person with this name, and not necessarily to Alexander Severus, who, at any rate, would not have been mentioned simply as ‘Alexander’, cf. e.g. *W.Chr.* 41.3,8 (232); for this usage there are numerous parallels within a wide time-span. There is a further point which rules out the possibility of any mention to this emperor: lines 3-5, as now read and restored (cf. BL IX 371), point to a later date: [πρὸ μὲν πάντων]ν εὐχομαι τῷ [κυρίῳ Θεῷ ὑγι]αίνοντα[ς] ὑμᾶς [ἀπολαβεῖν τὰ πα]ρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα. This formula, typical of fourth-century (or slightly later) letters,¹⁹ makes a third-century date for our text appear unlikely. ‘The initial greeting ‘in the lord god’ has every appearance of being a Christian one, although it has been argued that ‘the lord god’ is not specific to Christianity” (POxy LIX 3998.4-5n.).

The third of the Washington texts was assigned to the sixth century, but the presence of χαίρειν in line 1 rather speaks in favour of an earlier date. A correction on line 3 has already been proposed (cf. BL IX 372), so that lines 2-3 run thus:

¹⁶ Compare also SB I 3924.16f. (AD 19) ἐὰν γὰρ δέῃ, αὐτὸς Βαίβιος | ἐκ τοῦ ἴσου καὶ δικαίου τὰς ξενίας | διαδώσει, especially in contrast with SB XVI 12555.2.28f. (iii) καὶ ἐὰν δέῃ λογοθέτην δοῦναι, δάσι; also P.Tebt. I 58v.2.55ff. (111 BC) ἐὰν | δεῖ σε συνπεεῖν τῷ | Ἀνικήτῳ, σύνπεσαι; P.Oxy. III 525.5ff. (ii) ἐὰν δέῃ τῷ ἀδελφῷ τῆς μητρὸ[ς] τῶν υἱῶν Ἀχιλλῶ δοθῆναι | σο[υ]δάριον, καλῶς ποιήσεις δούς κτλ. For the expression ἐὰν δῆ cf. also R. C. Horn, *The Use of the Subjunctive and Optative Moods in the Non-Literary Papyri* 60.

¹⁷ δῆ was proposed by Mandilaras, *The Verb* § 791.1 to replace the editors’ δ(έ)ῃ, but never made its way into the *Berichtigungsliste*.

¹⁸ I take the opportunity to note that in line 1 Olsson’s interpretation of πρὸς ἀνάγκην as πρὸς ἀνανκαῖν = πρὸς ἀνανκαῖον instead of πρὸς ἀνάγκην with the ed. pr is erroneous: for the interchange η > αι see Gignac, *Grammar* i 247f. — but its meaning is ‘for some need (of yours)’, and not ‘from necessity’, as the editors translate. Likewise his change of εὐθὺς σε οὐ κρατῶ to εὐθὺς σε οὐ κρατῶ (line 2) is unwarranted.

¹⁹ Cf. P.Abinn. 22.2ff., 23.2ff., 31.4f. (all 342-51), P.Haun. II 25.4ff., P.Lips. 111.3ff., P.Oxy. XIV 1683.3ff., LVI 3859.3ff., 3860.2ff., LIX 4000.3f. (all iv), P.Ross.Georg. III 10.4ff. (iv/v), P.Bour. 25.4ff., P.Oxy. 3864.5ff. (all v), et al.

πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί [σε ὑγιαίνειν
παρ' ἑμοῦ προσηγ[ο]ρίαν

The amount of text lost between lines 2 and 3 cannot be specified, but we can form an idea of what it was about from the following passages:

P.Ross.Georg. III 10.4ff.	(iv/v)	π[ρὸ] μὲμ [πα]ντὸς εὐχομε τῷ πανελεήμονι θεῷ ὅπως [ὑ]γιένοντός σου καὶ εὐθυμῶντός μοι ἀπολάβῃς τὴν παρ' ἑμοῦ προσηγ[ο]ρίαν.
P.Batav. 21.3ff.	(v) ²⁰	πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχ[ο]μαι τῷ παντοκράτορι θεῷ ὡς ὑγιενούσῃ καὶ εὐθυμούσῃ ... ἀπολάβῃς τὴν παρ' ἑμοῦ προσηγ[ο]ρίαν.
P.Iand. VI 128.2f.	(v)	ὅπως ... πρ[ο]σδέ]ξῃ τὴν παρ' αἰμοῦ προσηγ[ο]ρίαν.
P.Iand. VI 103.1ff.	(vi)	πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομε τὸν πανελεήμονα θεόν, ὅπως ὑγιένων ἀπολάβῃς τὴν παρ' ἑμοῦ προσηγ[ο]ρίαν
P.Wash. II 108.1f.	(vi)	[εὐχομαι τὸν] πανελεήμονα θεόν, ὅπως [ὑ]γι[α]ίνουσα ἀπολάβῃς διὰ γραμμάτων τὴν προσηγ[ο]ρίαν
P.Köln II 111.2f.	(v/vi)	ὅπως ὑγιένων καὶ τῷ α . . . [... ἀπολάβῃς] τὴν παρ' ἑμοῦ προσηγ[ο]ρίαν.

Something alongside the lines of these passages should be restored in P.Wash. I 44.2-3; in the break between the two lines we have to posit one or two participles (e.g. ὑγιαίνων, εὐθυμῶν) and a verb (most likely ἀπολάβῃς), but the exact wording evades us. At any rate, σε ὑγιαίνειν should no longer stand in the text.

In the passages cited above προσηγ[ο]ρία is virtually equivalent to γράμματα (cf. P.Köln II 111.3n.), which is better attested.²¹ One of these words is to be supplemented in P.Wash. I 35.2f., a fourth/fifth-century letter from a husband to his wife, where what remains from the formula has been read as εὐχο]με ὅπως ὑγιένοντός σου ἀπολ[άβῃς (cf. BL IX 372): restore πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχο]με ὅπως ὑγιένοντός σου ἀπολ[άβῃς τὰ παρ' ἑμοῦ γράμματα /τὴν παρ' ἑμοῦ προσηγ[ο]ρίαν.²²

SB III 6222

This is an interesting third-century letter (for its date see BL VIII 324), translations of which have appeared in two collections of texts.²³ Only a textual point will concern us here. It is contained in the period which runs from line 7 to line 8, and has been edited as follows:

κᾶν νυνεὶ | [δοκ]ῆι σοι, ἀ[ν]τίγραφον ἡμῖν πε[ρὶ τ]ῆς [c]ωτηρεία[c] σο[υ].

Two words invite suspicion: νυνεὶ (l. νυνί), which normally occurs in different contexts,²⁴ and [δοκ]ῆι with iota-adscript, cf. Gignac, *Grammar* i 183 n. 3. But the main objection to the published text is that the conditional clause seems to be an implausible conflation of two expressions that often qualify commands or requests in the papyri:

(a) κᾶν νῦν, a widely attested colloquial 'expression d'intensité', which accompanies imperatives or equivalent expressions (Steen offers no discussion in 'Les clichés épistolaires', *C & M* 1 [1938] 153ff.); for the sense see LSJ s.v. κᾶν I 3 'now at any rate'. It is attested from the third to the sixth/seventh century, mainly in private, as well as official correspondence (very few times in petitions). Its earliest occurrence in a dated document is in P.Bub. I 1.6.5 (and 3.Fr3.8) (224); two texts *may* be earlier:

²⁰ The editor assigned the papyrus to the sixth century, but palaeography (see pl. XV), format and wording point to an earlier date.

²¹ P.Abinn. 22.4f. (342-51), P.Haun. II 25.6f., P.Lips. 111.4, P.Oxy. XIV 1683.8, LVI 3859.4f., 3860.3f., 4000.4, 4001.6f. (all iv), P.Giss. 54.5 (iv/v), P.Bour. 25.5, P.Oxy. LIV 3863.7f., 3864.7f. (all v).

²² It may only be a coincidence that P.Abinn. 22.4f. has [ὄ]π[ω]ς ὑγιαίνοντί σοι μετὰ τοῦ ὑλικου ἀπολάβῃς τὰ παρ' ἑμοῦ γράμματα.

²³ W. Schubart, *Ein Jahrtausend am Nil* no. 67; AA. VV., *Sport und Spiel bei Griechen und Römern* (Berlin 1934) no. 32 (the quality of the published photograph, Taf. 38, is very poor).

²⁴ I have found only one secure example of the collocation κᾶν νυνί, P.Mich. VIII 492.14f. (ii), but the context is different: κᾶν νυνεὶ (l. νυνί), εἰ μὴ ὅτι ἐγενόμην ἐν Ἰ' Ἀλεξανδρία, ἤμελλεν τὰ σὰ καὶ τὰ ἐμὰ καὶ τὰ τῆς μητρὸς ἡμῶν ἰπάντα πωλῆσαι.

P.Princ. III 164.3 (ii) and P.Dubl. 15.26²⁵ (ii/iii), but note that in both cases the dating is made on the basis of the hand. The latest examples are CPR XIV 49.2, P.Iand. II 20.2, P.Fouad 85.9 (all vi/vii). Often the expression is followed by the particle οὖν.²⁶ An interesting variant is provided by SB VI 9138.6 (vi): θελήσει οὖν ἢ ἐν ἀρετῇ κἄν ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος δηλωσέ μοι κτλ.²⁷

(b) εἰ [δοκ]ῆι σοι, a common ‘expression d’urbanité’, treated by Steen, loc. cit. 152.

The subjunctive [δοκ]ῆι that would construe with εἰ might make one uneasy. It may be explained away as an iotacism; but the dot below eta may suggest that the latter was restored to produce a subjunctive, and thus make the verb agree with κἄν. I submitted my query to Dr G. Poethke, who kindly checked the original for me and replied (letter of 26.9.1996): ‘Z. 8 gibt es zur Beginn nur Tintenreste, Iota ist sicher; es scheinen mir sowohl [δοκ]ῆι wie auch]εἰ möglich.’ It seems thus safe to present the following text:

κἄν νῦν, εἰ [δοκ]εἰ σοι, ἀ[ν]τίγραφον ἡμῖν πε[ρὶ τ]ῆς [c]ωτηρεία[c] σο[υ].

‘Immediately, if you think fit, write back to us about your well-being.’

SB III 7243 (= VIII 9746)

The text of this papyrus (P.Berol. 13897) has appeared four times in print: originally published by G. Manteuffel in *Eos* 30 (1927) 211f., it was reprinted in the *Sammelbuch* twice, and was included as no. 36 in M. Naldini, *Il Cristianesimo in Egitto*. It contains a letter, assigned to the early years of the fourth century, which is addressed by a certain Didyme and her ‘sisters’ to another woman named Sophia. Half-way through the letter Didyme informs Sophia that she has sent (the governing verb is ἀπέειλα, from line 17), among other things,

20 καὶ διὰ τοῦ Ναυτησιφάρου τοῦ Πλου[κίο]υ
νύμφη Πανσοφίου οἰδὸν <ε>τρουθ[ίου] μέγα
καὶ κυριδίον μικρόν. ἔχωσι ῥάκουσ
φύνικας.

(The text is that of Naldini.) The first noticeable feature in the passage is the proper name Ναυτησιφάρου in line 20 (Foraboschi’s *Onomasticon* takes it as the genitive of Ναυτησιφάρης), which appears alone in the papyrological documentation: it is the sole example of a compound name in which ναύτης is its first component.²⁸ This singularity disappears once we articulate διὰ τοῦ ναύτη Σιφάρου. Σίφαρος is not a common name: it has hitherto occurred only twice, in CPR VII 54.15 (ii) and P.Oxy. XXIV 2421.42 (c. 313-23, cf. BL VIII 257). For the genitive form ναύτη cf. Gignac, *Grammar* ii 14. The texts in which sailors appear as carriers of letters and various other objects are numerous.²⁹ Sipharos’ patronymic, Πλου[κίο]υ, is also problematic. A photograph, kindly supplied by Dr. G. Poethke, shows that the final]υ is an impossible reading. After the break there are traces of two letters; the first is inconclusive, the second may be sigma. Papyrological onomastica offer various possibilities,

²⁵ The editor prints καννῦν, as also did the editor of P.Princ. III 170.2 (vi), but in both cases one should articulate κἄν νῦν.

²⁶ This has not been recognised in P.Stras. IV 270.3 (c. 200), where the editor prints]καν. νῦν οὖν τὸ ἔργον γενέσθω; read instead] κἄν νῦν οὖν τὸ ἔργον γενέσθω.

²⁷ Occasionally καὶ νῦν is used with exactly the same meaning as κἄν νῦν. Compare also the rare collocations τὰ νῦν οὖν (P.Oxy. LXIII 4361.4 (iii/iv), P.Michael. 29.12 (iv?) only), and καὶ οὖν (P.Oxy. LIX 3997.20 [iii/iv], O.Douch III 284.4 [iv]).

²⁸ P.Laur. III 84.7 as edited read ἄπα Ναειναύτου; this has been corrected to ἄπα Ναει (but perhaps read Ἀπαναει, cf. T. Derda, E. Wipszycka, *JJP* 24 (1994) 53) ναύτου (= BL IX 121).

²⁹ Cf., e.g., P.Gron. 15.A2 (ii), P.Oxy. XII 1488.4 (ii), XLIX 3517.4 (260/282), P.Meyer 20.41 (iii), P.Oxy. X 1294.14f. (iii), PSI XIII 1331.10f. (iii), PSI Cong. XI 12.2 (iii), P.Oxy. XXXIV 2729.8 (iv), PSI IX 1042.15 (iv), P.Heid. IV 333.7 (v), P.Apoll. 12.3 (706).

but I have not been able to match the remains with any known name. But I would not rule out the possibility that we are not dealing with a patronymic.

Πανσοφίου (line 21) also attracts attention. This is the sole instance of the name Πανσόφιος in the papyri, otherwise known only from non-papyrological sources. But it may well be that Πανσοφίου refers to a woman. P.Oxy. LIX 3984.7 (340) attests a woman named Πανσόφιον; and in line 30 of our letter Παν[σό]φιον seems to be a woman.³⁰ There is also a palaeographic difficulty. The photograph indicates that after the eta of νυνφη there is a hole which is likely to have taken one letter away. I have thought of νύνφη[ς] Πανσοφίου. By comparison with P.Wash. I 56.18 (ν/νι) τῆς νύμφης Ἡραείδος, a lady called Πανσόφιον is perfectly imaginable. At any rate, a νύμφη Πανσοφίου could also be ‘Pansophon’s daughter-in-law’.³¹ But if a genitive were in fact written, its syntactic position would be unclear. The uncertainty over what stood at the end of line 20 makes matters worse. All in all, an obscure point.

In line 22 Naldini takes ἔχωσι as an idiosyncratic version of ἔχουσι. Phonologically this is not impossible, cf. Gignac, *Grammar* i 209, but there is a great difficulty: the sentence ἔχωσι ῥάκουσ φόνικακ is awkwardly placed within the run of the text, and it is not clear which is the subject of ἔχωσι. Moreover, if ῥάκουσ φόνικακ stands for ῥάκεα φοινίκεα, as the apparatus criticus of SB VIII 9746 asserts (Naldini adduces Hdt. 7.76 ῥάκεσι φοινικέοισι),³² it is hard to understand why the writer of the letter chose such a morphology; even if in ῥάκουσ we were to see a change of gender (τὸ ῥάκος > *ὀ ῥάκος),³³ it would be difficult to understand the choice of φόνικακ.

All difficulty can be removed if we opt for a different articulation (and punctuation): σφυρίδιον μικρὸν ἐχω κυριακοὺσ φονικακ, that is, in normalised spelling, σφυρίδιον μικρὸν ἔχον κυριακοὺσ φοίνικακ ‘a small basket containing Syrian palm-dates’. This text may receive support from the following considerations:

(i) The dispatch of baskets is mentioned in a great number of private letters. Sometimes the contents of the baskets are denoted with words very similar to those in our text. Three examples (there are more) will suffice to illustrate the usage:

P.Oxy. XXXI 2596.6f.	(iii)	σφυρίδιον ἔχων ταρίχουσ ε̅ κτλ.
SB XVIII 13593.8ff.	(iii/iv)	σφυρίδιον ἔχων μάτιον ἐλαιῶν καὶ πλακοῦδιτιν φονικῶν
P.Oxy. XIV 1658.6ff.	(iv)	μικρὸν σφυρίον ἔχων κάτω μαχαίρια β

In all three examples the spelling of ἔχον with omega is noticeable; for the interchange ο > ω see Gignac, *Grammar* i 277. Our text presents a further phonological idiosyncrasy, the omission of the final nu; for other examples of such omissions before words beginning with a sibilant see Gignac, *op. cit.* 112.

(ii) Some of the baskets that we find in the papyri contain palm-dates. One such example, SB XVIII 13593.8ff., is cited above; other examples include P.Cair.Zen. IV 59692.2.20 (iii BC), O.Stras. 599.9f. (ii/i BC), SB VI 9025.25f., 33f. (ii), (καλάθιον) P.Mich. VIII 476.7 (ii), P.Oxy. I 116.9 (ii), XXIV 2424.13, 32 (ii/iii), PGenova I 49.8 (iii/iv).³⁴

(iii) Some of the palm-dates attested in the papyri are of Syrian provenance: see P.Aberd. 57.19n., P.Mich. XII 630.24n., P.Yadin 16.19n.³⁵ The spelling without iota here can be paralleled by BGU XIII 2280.1.3, 2.12 (276), which has [C]υρακῆ; the omission of unaccented iota before a back vowel is well

³⁰ Naldini has misunderstood the passage, but cf. the text of SB VIII 9746, which rightly has Λουκίλα instead of Λουκίλα in line 29.

³¹ Cf. LSJ s.v. I.3; Moulton-Milligan s.v.; Bauer-Aland-Aland s.v. 2.

³² Naldini interprets ῥάκουσ φόνικακ as ῥάκη φοίνικα, but φοίνικα must be a misprint.

³³ For this phenomenon cf. N. G. Hatzidakis, *Einleitung in die neugriechische Grammatik* 354ff., W. Crönert, *Memoria Graeca Herculaneensis* 174ff., Maysner, *Grammatik* i2 45ff.

³⁴ For palm-dates in the papyri see P.Dubl. 16.3n.

³⁵ That in all other texts the adjective used for ‘Syrian [date]’ is κύριος (or κύρος, as in more than one instance in P.Yadin) should not affect the argument. Cf. κύριος/κυριακὸσ πυρόσ (for which see P.Heid. VII 407.12n.).

documented in the papyri, cf. Gignac, *op. cit.* 304. $\epsilon\iota$ - for $\epsilon\upsilon$ - would be an easy iotacistic mistake; for $\upsilon > \iota$ in unaccented syllables see Gignac, *op. cit.* 267.³⁶ (I would rule out the possibility that the adjective derives from the noun $\epsilon\iota\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$, for which see G. Husson, *OIKIA* 252f.)

A word also about $\langle\epsilon\rangle\tau\rho\upsilon\theta[\acute{\iota}\omicron\upsilon]$ in line 21. Manteuffel printed $\tau\rho\upsilon\theta[\dots]$, and suggested that this may be interpreted as $\langle\epsilon\rangle\tau\rho\acute{\omicron}\theta[\acute{\iota}\omicron\upsilon]$. Wilcken (*APF* 9 (1930) 97) suggested instead $\langle\epsilon\rangle\tau\rho\upsilon\theta[\omicron\upsilon]$ or $\langle\epsilon\rangle\tau\rho\upsilon\theta[\acute{\iota}\omicron\upsilon]$. Shortly after the appearance of Wilcken's note there came the corroboration of Manteuffel's proposal: P.Mich.Zen. 9.2 (257? BC) has $\omicron\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu \tau\rho\acute{\omicron}\theta\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$. In LSJ the latter passage and Manteuffel's suggestion are juxtaposed. In conclusion, I suggest that the passage in question is to be presented as follows:

20 καὶ διὰ τοῦ ναύτη Cιφάρου τοῦ Πλου[±3] ἔ
 νύμφη[()] Πανσοφίου οἰεὶον τρούθ[ιων] μέγα
 καὶ κυρίδιον μικρὸν ἔχω Cιρακοῦς
 φύνικας.

20 l. ναύτου 21 l. νύμφη-, ὄν, τρούθειον 22 l. ἔχον, Κυριακούς 23 l. φοίνικας

‘[I sent...] and through the sailor Sipharos, ?the son of Plou... ?bride (or: ?daughter-in-law of) Pansophion a big ostrich egg and a basket containing Syrian palm-dates.’

The same text contains another name otherwise unknown, Φιλοσόφιος. The photograph suggests that in line 29 Φιλοσόφιος is a misreading for φιλόσοφος; the presumed second iota is part of the loop of phi, which is elongated and open to the right. The context in which the word occurs is ambiguous (the reading of the first part of the line is very uncertain, but this will not concern us here); it could be a personal name, but I would not care to rule out a noun. For the name Φιλόσοφος, attested in a number of Oxyrhynchite documents from the late third and early fourth century, see P.Oxy. XXXVI 2796.3n., and P. Pruneti in M. S. Funghi (ed.), *OLIOI AIZΗΣΙΟΣ: Le vie della ricerca* (1996) 399ff.³⁷

SB XIV 11538

This papyrus preserves the beginnings of the first six lines of a Christian letter assigned to the fifth century; lines 1-4 have been printed as follows:

Κυρία μου θηγα[τρὶ ---]
 ἐν κυρίῳ χαίρειν [--- παν]-
 τωκράτωρα θεῶν [---]
 καθὼς ἀπέκτης [---]

The collocation παν]τωκράτωρα θεῶν (l. παντοκράτορα θεῶν) catches the eye: when it occurs close to the prescript of a letter, it always belongs to a formulaic prayer in which the sender wishes that the addressee receives the letter in good health, or simply that he/she is in good health; the prayer can also be directed to τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ, τῷ/-ὸν πανελεήμονι/-α θεῷ/-όν, τῇ θεῖα προνοία. The use of the expression is a strong indication that the letter comes from a Christian milieu, cf. Naldini, *II*

³⁶ The photograph does not prove the text of the ed. pr. wrong. The iota after sigma has its upper part broken, but I think that iota is the best reading. Perhaps I ought to add that there is a small hole before sigma that has taken away most of the right-hand loop of omega, but it does not seem very likely that it took away another letter such as nu.

³⁷ This name may occur in P.Oxy. XXIV 2421.40 κλη(ρονόμοι) Σώτου Φιλοσόφου. However, it is not entirely clear whether we are dealing with a personal name or a noun. The papyrus mentions the heirs of various individuals, and in some cases the professions of the deceased persons are given. Pruneti, *op. cit.* 401 favours the idea of the personal name, but her main argument, the absence of the article, does not rule out the opposite. (But note that in line 19 of the same papyrus, where the edition has κλη(ρονόμοι) Δί[ο]υ Κωμαστοῦ, κωμαστοῦ probably denotes Dios' profession, and is not his patronymic, cf. P.Oxy. LXI 4125.7-8, 14-16n.; a further ghost-name can be eliminated!) As we saw above, P.Oxy. XXIV 2421 also attests the name Cίφαρος; this may not be entirely accidental. Note also that the ladies who authored SB III 7243 are the senders of another letter which was unearthed at Oxyrynchus, P.Oxy. XIV 1774 (= Naldini no. 37).

Cristianesimo 22f., and G. Tibiletti, *Le lettere private* 112f., 113 n. 8. Three examples will suffice to see the epithet in context:³⁸

- P.Abinn. 22.2ff. (342-51) πρὸ μὲν π[άν]των | εὐχομε τὸν παντοκράτ[ο]ρα θεὸν | [ὄ]π[ω]ς ὑγιένοντί και μετὰ τοῦ ἕλκου ἀπολάβης τὰ παρ' ἐμοῦ γράμματα.
 P.Neph. 10.3ff. (iv) προηγουμένως εὐχομαι τῷ παντοκράτορι θεῷ περὶ τῆς ὀλοκληρίας σου | ὅπως ὑγιαίνοντί σοι καὶ εὐθυμοῦντι | ἀποδοθεῖ ταῦτά μου τὰ γράμματα
 BGU III 948.3ff. (iv/v) πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομε τὸν παντοκράτορα θεὸν τὰ περὶ τῆς ὑγίας σου | καὶ ὀλοκληρίας σου χαίριν.

In the light of these passages we may restore [εὐχομαι τὸν παν]τοκράτορα θεὸν [in our text, perhaps with πρὸ μὲν πάντων or the like preceding εὐχομαι, and ὅπως (or ἴνα) following θεῶν. But there is no means of being certain about the exact wording of what followed, since the versions of the formula are numerous, cf. P.Oxy. LVI 3860.2-3n. and LIX 4000.3-4n.³⁹ At any rate, the greeting ended with line 3; the informative part of the letter begins with καθὼς ἀπέστης (line 4), as in, e.g., P.Oxy. LVI 3859.4 (iv) (cf. also the note ad loc.).⁴⁰

SB XVI 12245

This is a third-century letter dealing with agricultural matters. The sender, whose name is Demetrius, communicates to a certain Chariton various orders. According to the edition this is what he says in lines 10-18:

λαβὲ | τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ χόρθου | παρὰ Εὐλογίου καὶ ἐὰν | εἰδῆς ὅτι ἐνὶ περισσᾶ | πώλησον ὡς
 δέκα ἀρούρας | καθὼς δὲ ἐνετιλάμην σοι. | θέλω ἢ κοπὴν ὡς δέκ[α] | ἀρούρας. μόλις γὰρ
 αὐτὰ | ἀρκέει ἡμεῖν.

The editor translates 'Kassiere den Preis des Heus von Eulogios und, wenn Du weißt, daß sie für eine Person zuviel sind, verkaufe ungefähr zehn Aruren, wie ich Dir aufgetragen habe. Ich wünsche zur Abmähung ungefähr zehn Aruren zu haben, weil die kaum für uns ausreichen' (*Aegyptus* 61 (1981) 81). This makes tolerable sense, but there are some difficulties. First in line 13 the writer apparently did not intend ἐνί, but ἔνι, for which see Mandilaras, *The Verb* § 106, and Gignac, *Grammar* ii 401f.⁴¹ Then καθὼς δὲ ἐνετιλάμην σοι should start a new period; the presence of δέ leaves no room for doubt. One is thus compelled to punctuate (and accentuate) differently:

λαβὲ τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ χόρθου παρὰ Εὐλογίου καί, ἐὰν εἶδης (= ἴδης) ὅτι ἐνὶ περισσᾶ, πώλησον ὡς δέκα ἀρούρας. καθὼς δὲ ἐνετιλάμην σοι, θέλω κτλ.

'Take the price of the hay from Eulogios, and, if you see that there is a surplus, sell about ten arouras (of hay). As I instructed you, I want etc.'

SB XVIII 13110

This is a fragmentary fourth/fifth-century letter. The beginnings of lines 14-15 are broken off; the first editor did not suggest any supplements, but the run of the text seems to permit an hypothetical

³⁸ Cf. also P.Haun II 25.4ff. (iv), and P.Batav. 21.3ff. (v) (the latter cited above, p. 141).

³⁹ Considerations of space may suggest the following text for lines 1-3, which should be taken as an *exempli gratia* reconstruction only:

Κυρία μου θηγα[τρί τῆ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα]
 ἐν Κυρίῳ χαίρειν. [πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαι τὸν παν-]
 τοκράτορα θεῶν [ὅπως ὀλοκληροῦσάν σε ἀπολάβω.]

For the supplement in line 3 I rely on SB XII 10841.2ff. (iv) πρὸ μὲν [π]άντων εὐχομαι τῆ(v) | ὀλοκληρίαν σου παρὰ τῷ κυ(ρίῳ) θ(ε)ῷ ὅπως ὀλοκληροῦ(ντά) | σε ἀπολάβω; alternatively, we may supplement [ὅπως ὀλόκληρόν σε ἀπολάβω], cf. P.Oxy. XIV 1773.4f. (iii). But at this date we would expect a statement about the receiving of letters; this, however, does not seem to fit into the available space.

⁴⁰ Line 5 has λεσα . ce . ια τοὺς ορ[]; read perhaps -κα]λέσας σε διὰ τοὺς ορ[.

⁴¹ This confirms that the papyrus has περισσᾶ at the end of the line. (The editor noted that 'auch unter den Mikroskop läßt sich nicht entscheiden, ob die Bindung am Ende des Wortes nicht ας ist.')

restoration of what has been lost. I communicated my tentative conjectures to Prof. T. Gagos of the University of Michigan, where the papyrus is housed. Prof. Gagos kindly examined the original for me, and made some new readings, which necessitate a reprint of lines 9-15. This is presented below, accompanied by a translation and minimal commentary:

	θέλησον δὲ		τῷ συμμάχ(ω),
10	παραχεῖν τὸν		[καὶ] ἔτι (?) φάειν
	ἕνα χρύεινον	15	[πέμψα]ι Θεοδώρ(ω).
	Φοιβάμμωνι		

‘Please provide the one gold *solidus* to Phoibammon, the *symmachos*, and also send word to Theodoros’.

- 9 δέ. This word was not transcribed in the ed. pr.
 10 χρύεινον: χρυεῖον ed. pr.
 13 συμμάχ(ω): συμμάχω ed. pr. This *symmachos* is included in A. Jördens’ supplementary list in *ZPE* 92 (1992) 230. So far as I am aware he is not known from any other source.
 14 [καὶ] ἔτι (?): [. . . τῆν φάειν ed. pr., which had originally made me think of [καὶ τῆν φάειν. [προς]ἔτι would do as well for sense, but I have not found an exact parallel.
 15 [πέμψα]ι: [.] ed. pr. Numerous parallels suggest that [πέμψα]ι is very likely to be the verb that governs φάειν. Prof. Gagos tells me that the surviving trace is compatible with iota.
 Θεοδώρ(ω): Θεοδωρ() ed. pr.

SB XVIII 13114

This papyrus bears the upper right-hand part of a letter which the editor assigned to the fifth century. Although the subject-matter is impossible to recover, some improvements of the published text are possible. First, in the prescript, which has been presented as follows:

] ὡς τιμιωτάτῳ
] Εὐάγγελος

The two words in line 1 are never so juxtaposed in similar contexts. Numerous parallels show that the passage should be restored as ὡς ἀληθῶς τιμιωτάτῳ;⁴² for this type of intensification in fifth-century letters see R. Camps, *Stud. Pap.* 2 (1963) 55f. Regrettably, there can be no certainty about what preceded.⁴³

Some more minor changes may be suggested. In line 4 in place of]της μου ὁ γεοῦχος supplement ὁ δεσπότης μου ὁ γεοῦχος (τῷ δεσπότη μου in line 10 may not be irrelevant); cf. P.Oxy. XLVIII 3400.25, 35 (359-65), P.Princ. II 104.1f. (v), PSI VII 843.1 (v/vi), P.Vind.Worp 23.2 (vi/vii), P.Wash. II 105.5 (vi/vii), and particularly P.Prag. II 193.3f. (v) τοῦτο γὰρ μοι προέταξεν γράψαι σοὶ ὁ δεσπότης μου ὁ γεοῦχος. In line 6 ἐπ]ι should perhaps be preferred to the printed κα]ι; ἐπ]ι πολὺν παραπέμπειν looks attractive enough.⁴⁴

⁴² Cf. P.Haun. II 25.2ff. (iv), SB XIV 11882.1 (iv/v), P.Oxy. LVI 3864.2f. (v) (all three have ὡς ἀληθῶς κατὰ πάντα (μοι) τιμιωτάτῳ), P.Laur. IV 191.1 (v) (cf. BL VIII 168), P.Prag. II 194.1f. (v) (see ‘Notes on two epistolary conventions’ on p. 151), P.Ross.Georg. V 8.2 (v) (cf. BL III 158), CPR V 23.1 (v?), P.Oxy. XVI 1873.1 (v), SB V 7635.1 (v/vi), P.Iand. VI 102.1f., 129.1 (both vi), and possibly SB XVI 12573v.6 (vi). In P.Oxy. LIX 4004.1, 24 (v) ὡς is omitted.

⁴³ Line 5 might provide a clue. There the editor restored ἀδελφ]ότητα; the supplement is not certain; θαυμασι]ότητα or even τιμι]ότητα, as Prof. Gagos reminded me, are also possible. But if it is right, it offers a good hint that the addressee of this letter was styled as ἀδελφός. If this is so, and bearing in mind the overwhelming presence of δεσπότης in the prescripts of letters of that time (see I. Suñol, *Stud. Pap.* 4 (1965) 39ff. — but τῷ κυρίῳ μου is possible too), one may venture the following hypothetical reconstruction of the prescript of our letter:

τῷ δεσπότη μου ὡς ἀληθῶς τιμιωτάτῳ
 ἀδελφῷ τῷ δεῖνι] Εὐάγγελος.

⁴⁴ Also in line 9]τος μου γὰρ εἰς may be compared to P.Oxy. XLVI 3314.8 (iv) μέλλοντός μου γὰρ στραφῆναι εἰς ἄλλο μέρος (but of course there are various possibilities for restoring]τος).

SB XVIII 13598

The papyrus preserves the right-hand part of a letter written some time in the sixth or seventh century. Its closing line (11) was printed thus:

[- - λαβὼν τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τα]ύτην τῆς ὥρας καταξίωσον γράψαι μου, δέσποτα †

The restoration is problematic: it would be unusual to find the expression λαβὼν τὴν ἐπιστολὴν in a letter of this date; instead, we would expect something like δεξάμενος τὰ γράμματα vel sim.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the syntactic position of τῆς ὥρας is unclear; taken alone, τῆς ὥρας would make no sense in this context (this rules out restoring τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τα]ύτην). But τῆς ὥρας provides a good clue to lead us out of the impasse. The collocation αὐτῆς ὥρας ‘immediately’ (for the expression cf. G. M. Parássoglou, *Ἑλληνικά* 29 (1976) 59) occurs before imperatives or other imperatival phrases in many private letters. Once we find the definite article added before ὥρας (without any semantic change): P.Abinn. 8.13f. (342-351) (ἵνα ---) αὐτῆς τῆς ὥρας ἀπολύσει αὐτοῦ.⁴⁶ In our passage α]ύτῆς instead of τα]ύτην would remove the anomaly; I submitted my conjecture to Professor Gagos (the papyrus belongs to the collection of the University of Michigan), who kindly confirmed that in line 11 the papyrus reads:

[- - α]ύτῆς τῆς ὥρας καταξίωσον γράψαι μου, δέσποτα. †

‘Please do write to me immediately, my lord’.

Wolfson College, Oxford

Nikolaos Gonis

⁴⁵ For similar constructions see my ‘Notes on some private letters’, *Istituto Papirologico ‘G. Vitelli’: Comunicazioni* 2 (1997) (forthcoming).

⁴⁶ This is the latest example of the collocation. Other late texts offer the semantically equivalent κατ’ αὐτὴν τὴν ὥραν: P.Oxy. LVI 3861.22 (iv/v), XVI 1871.2 (v), SPP X 254.2 (vi), P.Oxy. XVI 1844.1, 1852.3, LVI 3873.2, SB III 7036.3f. (all vi/vii), P.Lond. IV 1346.12f., 1348.6, 1370.7 (all three date from 710); for the expression see T. Gagos, *ZPE* 79 (1989) 275.