

EGYT 1550

- Ethnic Identity in Graeco-Roman Egypt



Oxyrhynchus

Instructor: Dr. Rachel Mairs

Tu Th 9am - 10.20am

Rhode Island Hall Common Room





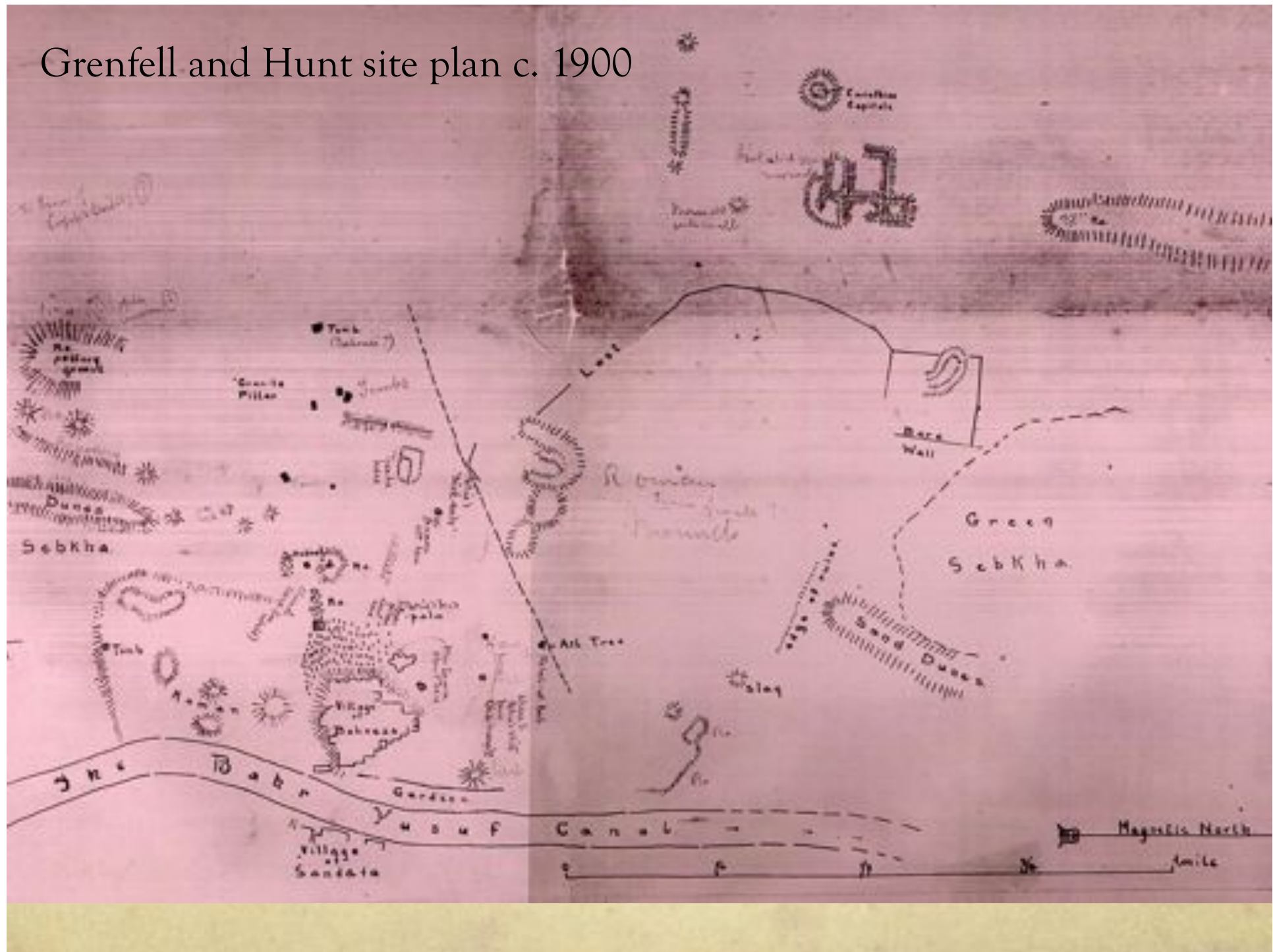
Oxyrhynchus, 1798
(drawings by Baron Vivant
Denon)

B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt

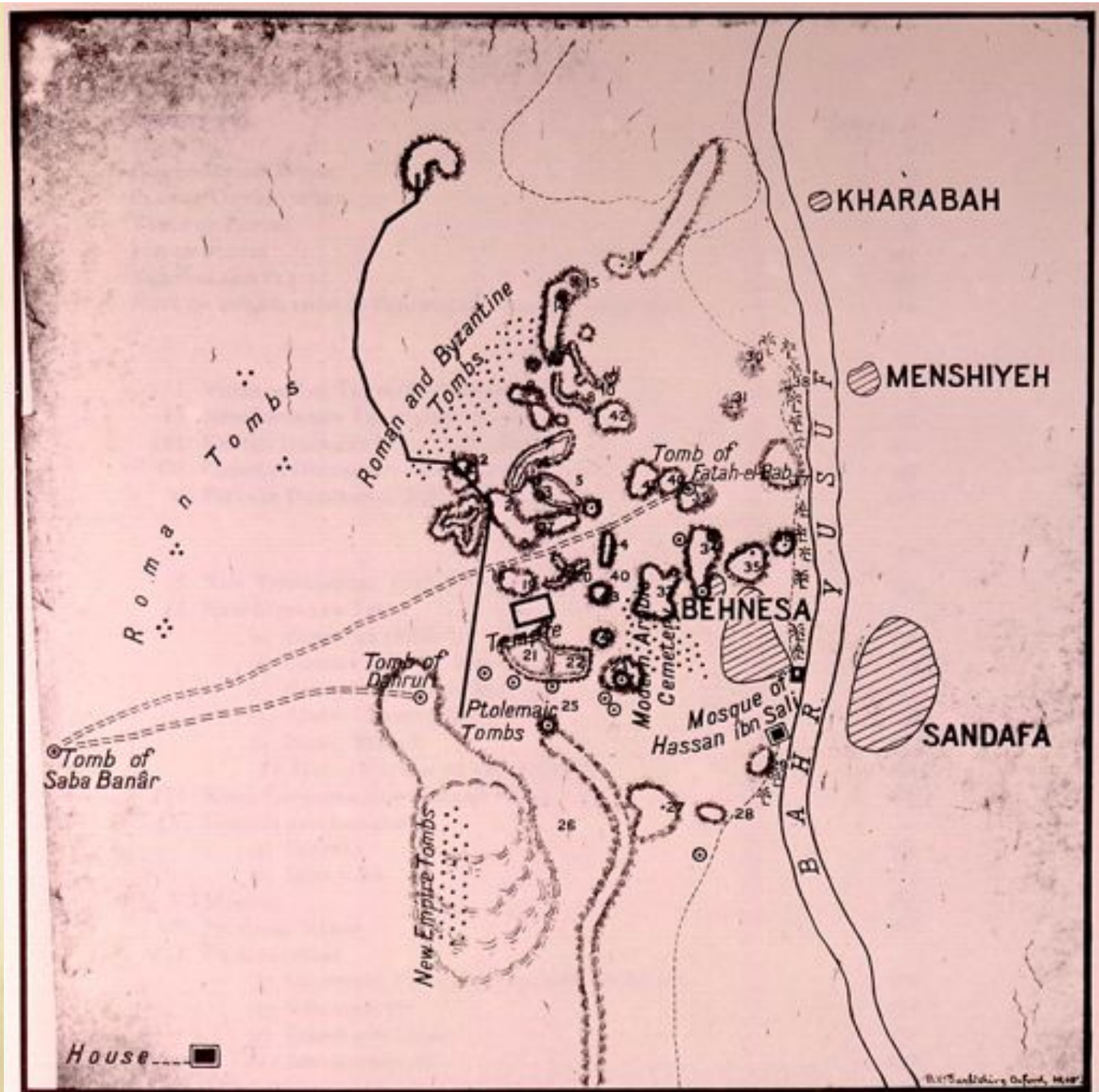
- Scholars at the University of Oxford.
- Excavated at Oxyrhynchus 1896-1906.
- Specific goal of the project was to recover papyri.



Grenfell and Hunt site plan c. 1900



Grenfell and Hunt site plan 1908



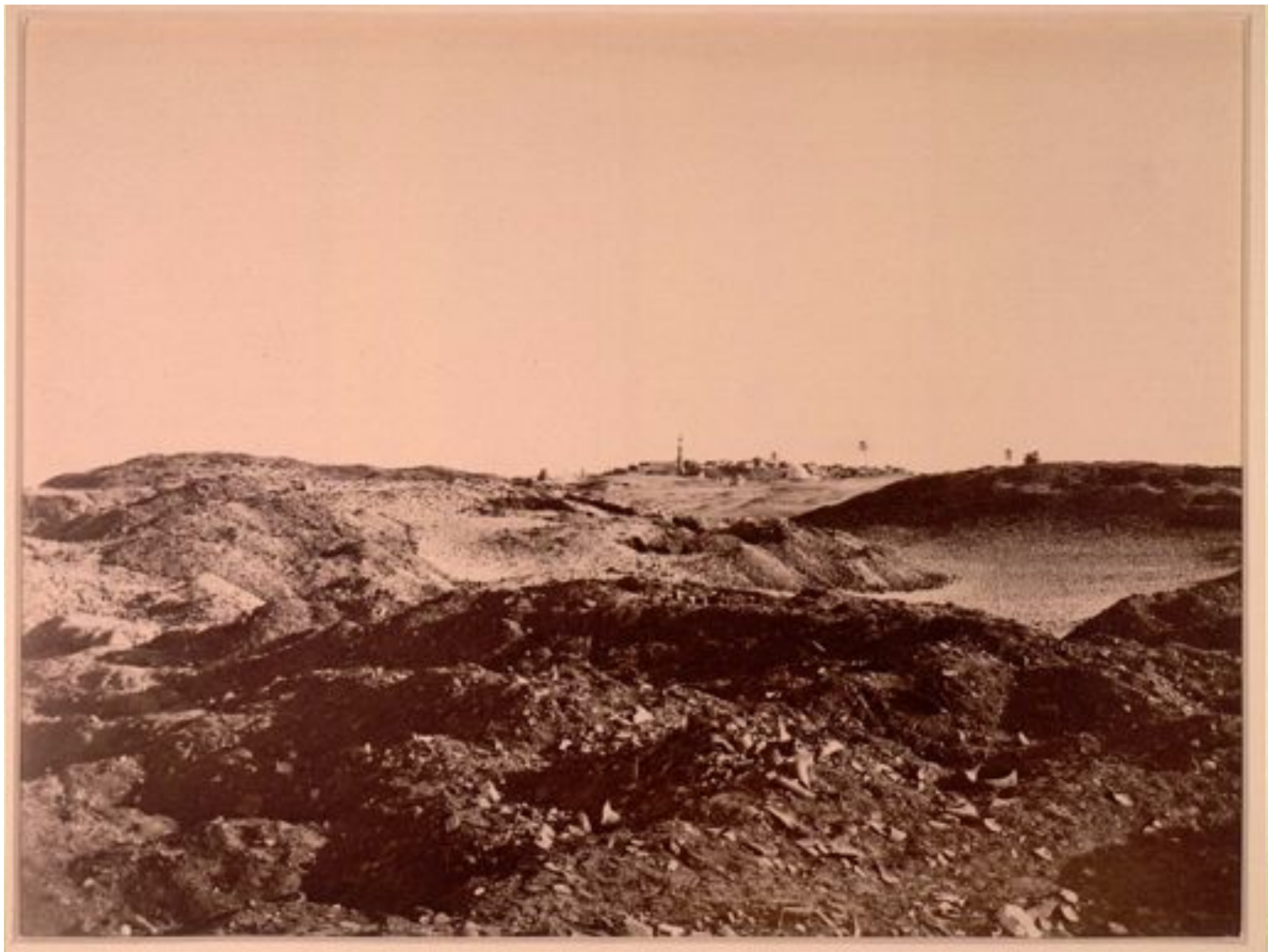
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Excavating papyri

- G & H employed as many as 100-200 local workers at any one time.
 - They excavated to depths of up to 10 metres.
 - Papyri were unrolled, catalogued and packed into boxes to travel back to England (by camel and ship).
- G & H spent 5 winters digging at Oxyrhynchus, and summers in Oxford working with the papyri.
 - The first P.Oxy. volume was published in 1898.
 - P.Oxy. 77 will come out in 2012.



The method of digging a mound on a large scale is extremely simple. The workmen are divided into groups of 4 or 6, half men, half boys, and in the beginning are arranged in a line along the bottom of one side of a mound, each group having a space two metres broad and about 3 metres long assigned to it. At Oxyrhynchus the level at which damp has destroyed all papyrus is the flat ground within a few inches of the surface ... When one trench has been dug down to the damp level, one proceeds to excavate another immediately above it, and throw the earth into the trench which has been finished, and so on right through the mound until one reaches the crest, when one begins again from the other side. The particular mixture of earth mixed with straw and bits of wood in which papyrus is found, and which is to the papyrus digger what quartz is to the gold-seeker, sometimes runs in clearly marked strata between other layers of cinders, bricks or all kinds of debris containing no papyrus, but in many of the mounds at Oxyrhynchus papyri are found continuously down to a depth of five or even eight metres. As a rule the well preserved documents are discovered within 3 metres of the surface; in the lower strata the papyri tend to be more fragmentary, though out trenches in a few mounds have reached 9 metres at the highest parts before coming to the damp level...

B. P. Grenfell (unpublished lecture, 1908).

Most of the larger pieces are found by the men working in the trench, who of course have to use their hands entirely, not the hoes, when it is a question of extricating so delicate a material; but it is inevitable that small pieces should be soemtimes passed over by the man who is actually digging, and each basketful has to be examined carefully when it is emptied.

The clouds of dust and sand, which are quite inevitable when one is digging in very loose dry soil on the edge of the desert, give you an idea of the difficulties under which the excavator for papyri has to work. It is really marvellous how the men manage to keep their eyes open through it all. The brick building on the top of the mound [Grenfell comments on a lantern slide] is a much venerated sheikh's tomb. The large mediaeval and modern necropolis of Behnesa extends over part of the ancient mounds, and in this mound in particular the presence of the tombs on the summit presented considerable obstacles to our work, which however we were, fortunately for science, able to overcome ...

... They will tell you if you go to Behnesa, how when we were digging that mound the spirit of the shekh appeared to me in a dream, after vainly trying to persuade me to desist from our excavations theated me with blindness ... Afterwards however the shekh reflected that the poor people of the village had beene arning very high wages by the work (one gives a bakhshish for each papyrus found in addition to the daily wage, and the luckier workmen were receiving what were for them considerable sums), and that after all we had no intention of disturbing his own tomb; so he repented and appeared to me and consented to restore my sight on the condition that I repainted his tomb

B. P. Grenfell (unpublished lecture, 1908).

Unrolling and conserving the papyri in the field

I use no boards, blotting paper, leaden weights, relaxing boxes, etc: my implements are:

1. Any table of convenient size, the surface of which will not be spoilt by damp;
2. A couple of smooth cloths (worn-out face towels are convenient in size and texture);
3. Three small brushes, one soft, one medium, one hard;
4. A rather blunt pen-knife;
5. Good sized sheets of paper ...

The cloths are dipped in cold water and then wrung out, so that they are left fairly moist. They are then spread out on the table, and the papyri to be flattened or unrolled (after surface dirt has been brushed off so far as possible) are placed between them.

After a few minutes the flattening or unrolling process can be started, and is proceeded with as the papyrus absorbs moisture enough to become soft. It should not be allowed to get really wet.

For smoothing the papyrus, there is nothing like the human thumb...

A. S. Hunt

Unrolling and conserving papyri today:

- Twofold objective: prevent further deterioration of the papyrus itself, and recover legible text.
- “What is required is a steady hand, good nerves, and of course practice.”
- Remove loose soil and dirt.
- Dampen papyrus to make it pliable, and unroll.
- Sandwich between two sheets of dry blotting paper.
- Written and photographic documentation.

J. Frosen, ‘Conservation of Ancient Papyrus Materials’ in R. S. Bagnall (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*.

EGYPT EXPLORATION FUND
GRAECO-ROMAN BRANCH

THE
OXYRHYNCHUS PAPYRI
PART I

EDITED WITH TRANSLATIONS AND NOTES

BY

BERNARD P. GRENFELL, M.A.

FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD

AND

ARTHUR S. HUNT, M.A.

SENIOR DEMY OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD; FORMERLY SCHOLAR OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE

WITH EIGHT PLATES

LONDON:

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THE OFFICES OF THE EGYPT EXPLORATION FUND, 37 GREAT RUSSELL ST., W.C.
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AND HENRY FROWDE, AMEN CORNER, E.C.

1898

THE
OXYRHYNCHUS PAPYRI
VOLUME LXV

EDITED WITH TRANSLATIONS AND NOTES BY

M. W. HASLAM

A. JONES

F. MALTOMINI

M. L. WEST

and

W. E. H. COCKLE R. A. COLES

D. MONTSERRAT J. D. THOMAS

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY

J. L. CALVO MARTÍNEZ D. COLOMO R. HÜBNER

D. HUGHES N. LITINAS K. LUCHNER

U. SCHLAG T. SCHMIDT P. SCHUBERT

I. A. SPARKS J. SPOONER

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THE BRITISH ACADEMY

BY THE

EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY

3 DOUGHTY MEWS, LONDON WC1N 2PG

1998

Selected texts from P. Oxy. 1 (1898)

LXIX: Complaint of a Robbery: AD 190

‘ . . . they broke down a door that led into the public street and had been blocked up with bricks, probably using a log of wood as a battering-ram. They then entered the house . . . ’

The thieves stole ten *artabae* – perhaps 30-40 kilos – of barley, which the plaintiff, Nechthenibis, thinks they dragged away using a rope. The petition ends: ‘I, Diogenes son of Apollonius wrote this down for him [the plaintiff], who is illiterate.’

CXXIX: Repudiation of a Betrothal: sixth century

‘ . . . eleventh indiction. I John, father of Euphemia, my unemancipated daughter, do send this present deed of separation and dissolution to you, Phoebammon, my most honourable son-in-law, by the hand of the most illustrious advocate Anastasius of this city of Oxyrhynchus. It is as follows. Forasmuch as it has come to my ears that you are giving yourself over to lawless deeds, which are pleasing to neither God nor man, and are not fit to be put into writing, I think it well that the engagement between you and her, my daughter Euphemia, should be dissolved, seeing that, as is foresaid, I have heard you are giving yourself over to lawless deeds and that I wish my daughter to lead a peaceful and quiet life. ... ’

Selected texts from P. Oxy. 1 (1898)

A poem by Sappho (third century copy on papyrus)

Translated by G & H into four 'rather literal' verse stanzas, of which this is the first:

*'Sweet Nereids, grant to me | That home unscathed my brother may return, | And every end,
for which his soul shall yearn, | Accomplished see!'*

Report of a Public Meeting: late third / early fourth century

Excerpted here is 'an account of a popular demonstration made in honour of the prytanis at Oxyrhynchus on the occasion of a visit from the praefect':

*'...when the assembly had met, (the people cried) ... "the Roman power forever! Lord Augusti!
Prosperous praefect, prosperity to our ruler! Hail, ... president, glory of the city..."*

LI: Report of a Public Physician AD 173

'To Claudianus, strategus [chief magistrate], from Dionysus, son of Apollodorus, son of Dionysius, of Oxyrhynchus, public physician. I was to-day instructed by you, through Heraclides your assistant, to inspect the body of a man who had been found hanged, named Hierax, and to report to you my opinion upon it. I therefore inspected the body in the presence of the aforesaid Heraclides at the house of Epagathus, son of . . . merus, son of Sarapion, in the Broad Street quarter, and found it hanged by a noose, which fact I accordingly report.'

Oxyrhynchus, the Media and Popular Culture

“The first Egyptological event to create a media circus is often said to be the discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb in 1922. In fact, one might make out a good case for the Egypt Exploration Fund’s digs at Oxyrhynchus occupying a comparable place in the less well-developed media of the decade between 1897 and 1907.”

D. Montserrat, in *Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts* (2007).

The excavations at Oxyrhynchus were funded through the Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF), which relied on private donations (and still largely does). Therefore, good publicity = more donations = support for future research.

Papyrology and Popular Culture pre-Oxyrhynchus



'A Reading from Homer', Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema
(1885)

Based on the 'Banks Homer' papyrus in the British Museum
(BM Papyrus 114) which contains most of Book 24 of the *Iliad*.

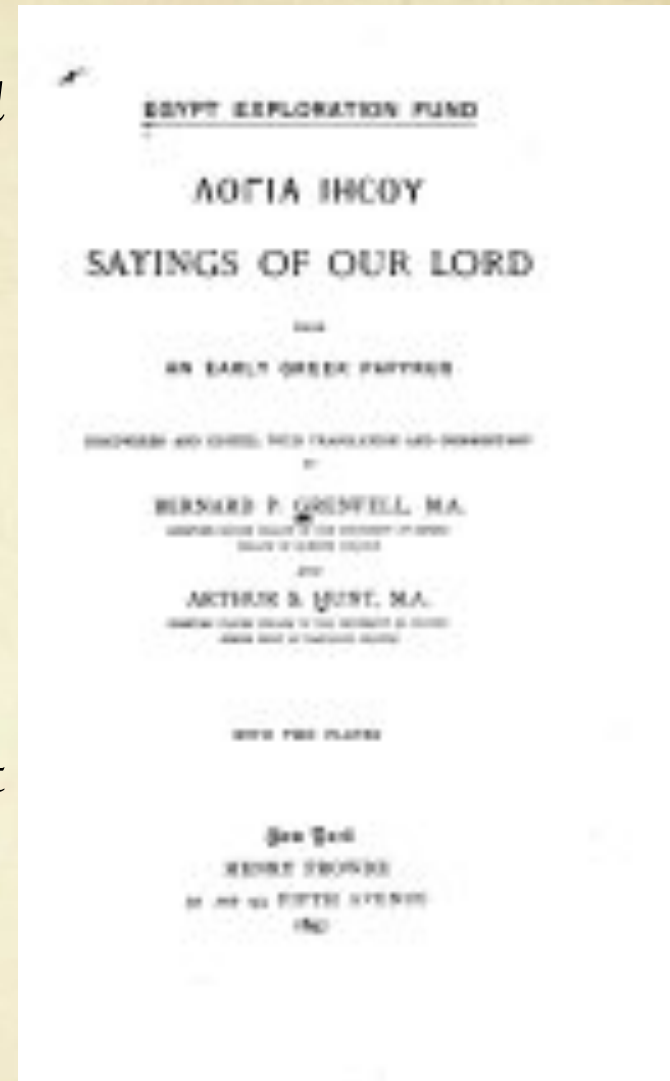


HORRIBLE RESULT OF USING THE "EGYPTIAN FUR-TILISER."

"A cargo of 200,000 uncrushed Cobs has just been landed at Liverpool, to be used as Manure."—Daily Paper.

P.Oxy. 1 1: *Logia Iesou* ‘Sayings of Jesus’:

- Leaf from a codex (bound book) of the *Gospel of Thomas*, second or third century AD.
- Eight quotations in Greek, each beginning “Jesus says...”.
- Some of these sayings are replicated in the canonical Gospels, some are not.
- e.g. *Logion* 6: “A prophet is not acceptable in his own country, nor does a physician work cures on those who know him.” (Matthew 13:57 “Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his won country and in his own house”; cf. Mark 6:4, Luke 4:24, John 4:44).
- Grenfell and Hunt cannily played on the interest of this text for a Christian public to publicise and sollicit funding for the Oxyrhynchus excavations.





TWO LECTURES
ON THE
'SAYINGS OF JESUS'

RECENTLY
DISCOVERED AT OXYRHYNCHUS

DELIVERED AT OXFORD BY OCT. 29, 1892

BY THE

REV. WALTER LOCK, D.D.

CHURCHMAN'S CHURCHMAN OF THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARTIN

AND THE

REV. WILLIAM SANDAY, D.D., LL.D.

CHURCHMAN'S CHURCHMAN OF OXFORD

Oxford

AT THE CLarendon PRESS

1893

But some of the reading public were wise to the EEF's publicity stunt / funding drive:

“I fail to understand why this unique literary discovery has been rushed into print with such unseemly haste ... The notes of the editors strike one as perfunctory and rudimentary. They do not even fix the date of the papyrus with any certainty; yet the editors admit that among their spoils they have a large quantity of documents, as yet unexamined, which may throw considerable light on the fragments. Why, then, was it rushed out in such a hurry before this material was examined? The only hypothesis is – and an enclosed circular appeal lends colour to it – that the Logia were hastily published as an advertisement for the Egypt Exploration Fund. If so, the device is unworthy of Oxford scholarship.”

Pall Mall Gazette, 31 July 1897.

Oxyrhynchus, the Media and Popular Culture

“It is a curious coincidence, not without significance, that last month should have been made memorable by the announcement of two notable discoveries. The topics which absorbed the public attention were the discovery of gold in the desolate wilds of Northern America, and the recovery of a heap of papyri from one of the ruined cities of Egypt. These two events have each impressed the public imagination in its own way, but the attention to the common man is, in both cases, much the same. It is the possibility of the discovery of the unexpected, the chance that something out of the ordinary might happen. Although we are not likely to witness a rush to Egypt such as has taken place at Klondyke, there is no doubt that the probability of finding papyri will give a stimulus to Egyptian exploration. Egypt has always been a land of mystery, and has a strange attraction for men of all time. Its fascination is not likely to be diminished by the discovery of a fragment of the ‘Sayings of our Lord’ by Mr Grenfell and Mr Hunt ... the possibility of recovering forgotten sayings of Christ strikes the imagination of even the man in the street.”

Review of Reviews, Dec. 1897.

Oxyrhynchus, the Media and Popular Culture

“As the papyrus digging was comparatively light work, I had more boys than men diggers, the former being not only easier to manage and more trustworthy, but quite as keen about the work as the men, which is remarkable seeing that all their earnings go to their parents. But I should think that nearly every boy in the district who could walk wanted to be taken on to the work. Some of the tiny applicants really looked as though they had only recently left their cradles, if they had ever known such luxuries, which, of course, they had not. One of the smartest workers of all was also the smallest, a little chap about eight years old, who had a wonderful eye for the right kind of soil for finding papyri. I am afraid some tender-hearted persons would have thought me a very brutal task-master, if they could have seen some of these children lifting and carrying away heavy baskets of rubbish all day...”

Grenfell, ‘The Oldest Record of Christ’s Life,’ *McClure’s Magazine* 1897.

Oxyrhynchus, the Media and Popular Culture

“According to the Egypt Exploration Society some portions of the ‘Iliad’ have been discovered ‘written on the back of an important document relating to the rights of married women, and also a list of winners in the Olympian horse races.’ The Married Women’s Property Act and the ‘All the Winners Speshul’ of our modern metropolis are, then, not so new as some of us have perhaps imagined. But which was the ‘important’ document, the ‘Iliad’, the Women’s Act, or the race reporter?”

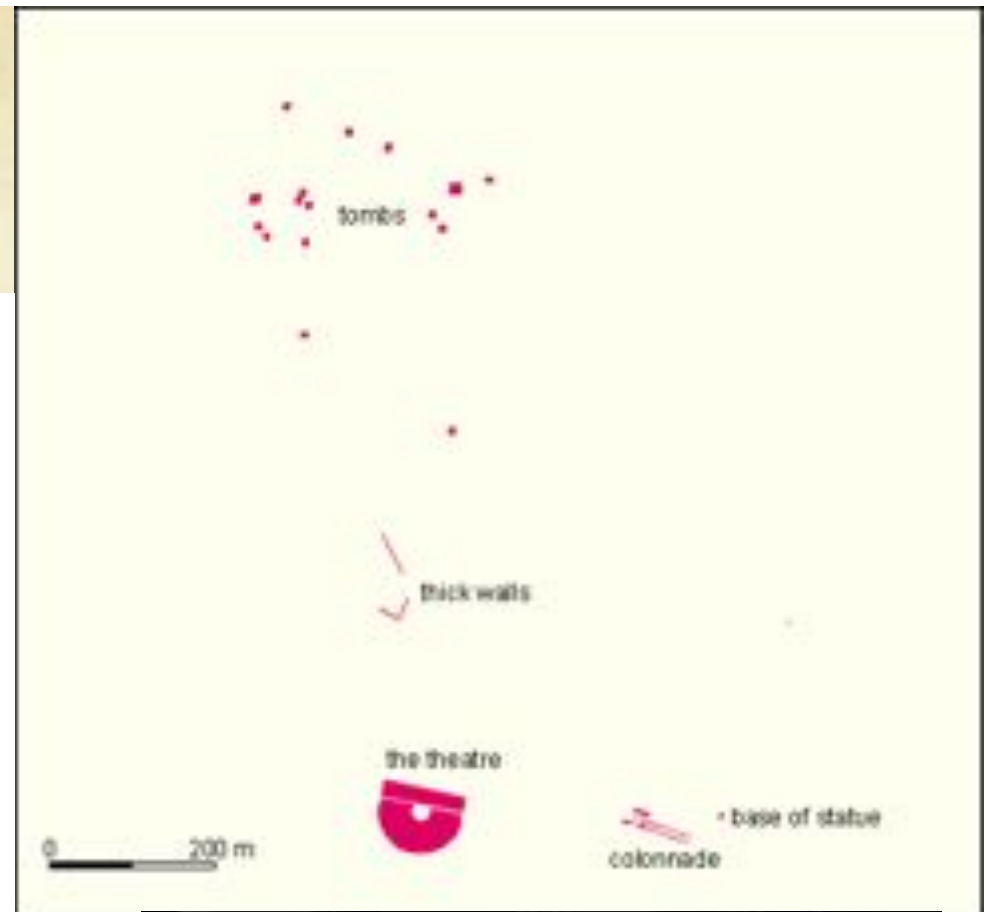
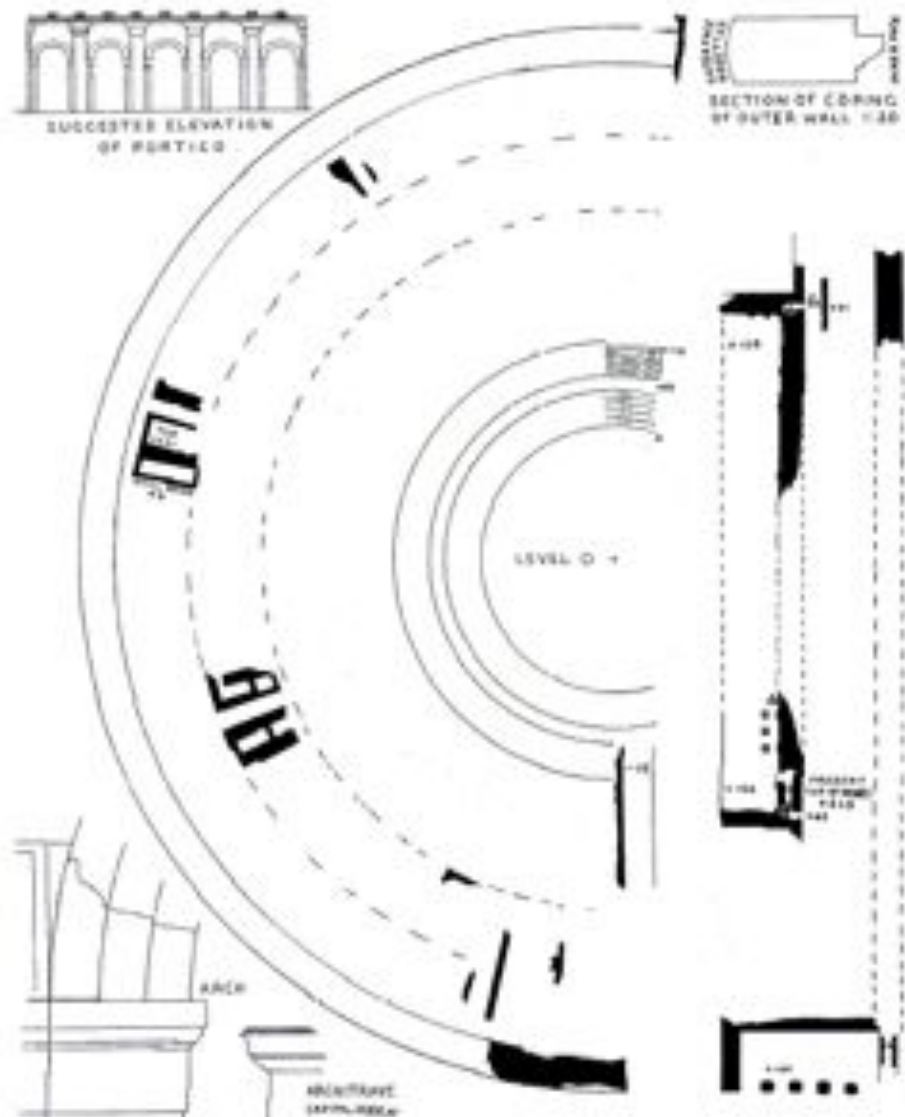
The Globe, 11 Nov. 1898.

Oxyrhynchus after Grenfell and Hunt

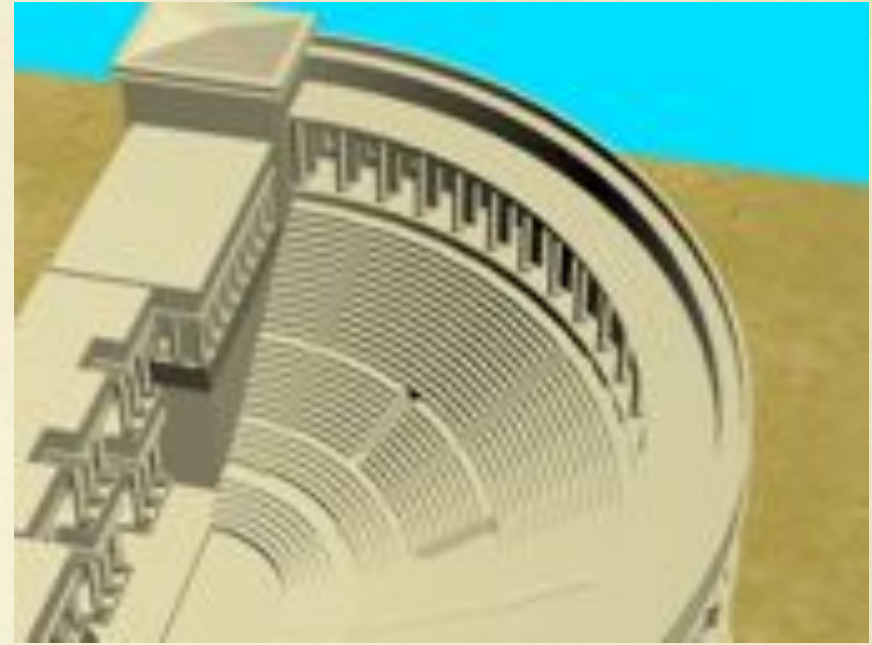
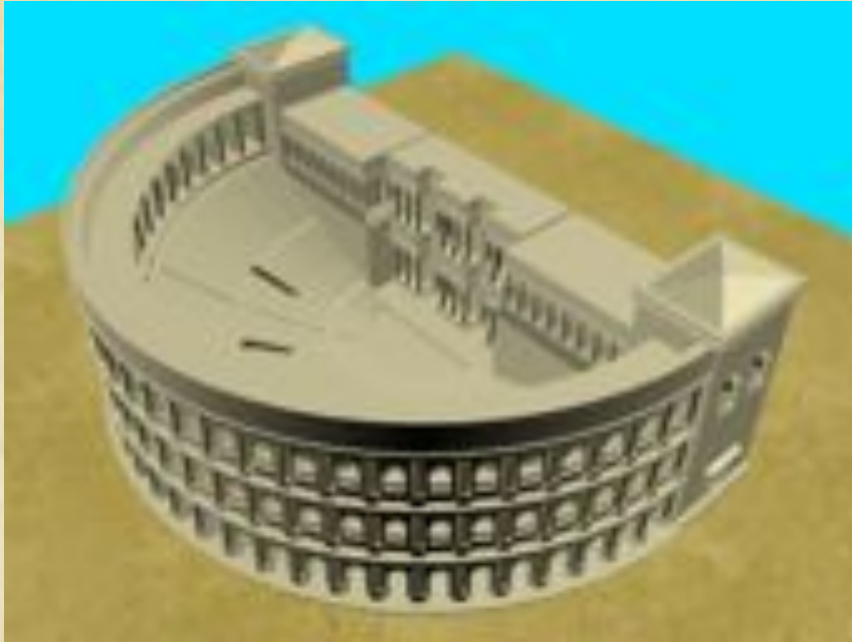
- Visited by the Biblical scholar Rendel Harris in 1922-23. He acquired some papyri and presented them to the Selly Oak Colleges Library in Birmingham (UK, not Alabama).
- Sir William Flinders Petrie excavated there in 1922, paid more attention to architectural remains than Grenfell and Hunt did, and also acquired papyri.
- Italian excavations under Pistelli (c. 1909-1913) and Breccia (1927-1934). Texts from the latter excavation went to Florence.
- Egyptian Antiquities Service (1982-).
- Kuwait National Museum (1985-87), mediaeval town.
- Catalan Institute of Classical Archaeology (1992-), necropolis.

Flinders Petrie excavations, 1922:

- Theatre (seated 11,000)
- Colonnade



Reconstruction of the theatre, Oxyrhynchus



We have been here three weeks, after clearing some hundreds of 1st dynasty tombs at Abydos.

'We are in the old palm grove [no doubt the setting for the excavators' house], immensely change by a railway running across the Bahr Yusuf, & a seabkh line going around the back of the town, with shrieking trains going out in the dark before dawn.

'Sebakh has been curried enormously, & much papyrus found. I am buying up all I can get, especially every scrap of uncial literary; feeling my way as to values by not always offering enough for Byzantine accounts &c. There are three or four literary pieces of 100 words or so. As these are bought, we shall have all to London. Would you be open to looking over all the pieces & giving us – as a matter of business – a report on them in June? There is St. Louis University rampant to get some to edit, but if you wish to publish any piece specially I hope you would do so.

'I am trying here to get some idea of the place, planning it, and working out the great colonnade (over 27 columns long) and the immense abbey, to get some sense of it; also the mound-tombs of III-VIth cent. away to the north.

'I hear that the best papyri are found about 20 ft down in the high mounds. We shall not try to do anything exhaustive, but rescue a little of the architecture & plans before they all vanish. I am waiting to hear some reports on sites further south, which might be more in my line.'

Flinders Petrie to Hunt, 1922.

T. E. Lawrence on digging with Petrie

“A Petrie dig is a thing with a flavour of its own: tinned kidneys mingle with mummy-corpses and amulets in the soup: my bed is all gritty with prehistoric alabaster jars of unique types – and my feet at night keep the bread-box from rats. For ten mornings in succession I have seen the sun rise as I breakfasted, and we come home at nightfall after lunching at the bottom of a 50-foot shaft, to draw pottery sihouettes or string bead-necklaces. In fact if I hadn't had malaria today I could make a pretty story of it all: - only then I wouldn't have time.

“To begin with the Professor is the great man of the camp – he's about 5' 11” high, white-haired, grey-bearded, broad and active, with a voice that split when excited and a constant feverish speed of speech; he is a man of ideas and systems, from the right way to dig a temple to the only way to clean one's teeth. Also he only is right in all things: all his subs have to take his number of sugar lumps in their tea, his species of jam with potted tongue, or be dismissed as official-bound unprogessists. Further he is easy-tempered, full of humour, and fickles to a degree that makes him delightfully quaint, and a constant source of joy and amusement in his camp.”

“...what P. wants is a pedestrian intelligence to do the hackwork for him, while he does the fine things. Am awfully glad I went to him. But what a life!”

The (non-Papyrological) Archaeology of Oxyrhynchus

- The modern town is on top of the ancient one, but even on the outskirts of town little now remains.
- According to the papyri the city had a theatre, gymnasium, hippodrome, public baths, many temples (and later churches).
- Among the papyri, Grenfell and Hunt also found numerous artefacts, but these tend not to get as much attention: ceramics,

including a stamped amphora handle, imported from Italy; clay moulds and terracotta figurines; bits and pieces of stone architecture; a comb (see left).





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Figure 9.2. Map showing the excavated sites in Bahnasa. Site 'B', the mosque of Hasan ibn Salih is not shown here since it is much further to the East, close to the left bank of the Bahr Yousuf.



Figure 9.11. Paper fragments; fragment of a muezzin's pay slip, dated 643 AH/AD 1245 (exc. no. 86-1013; excavated at site 'D').



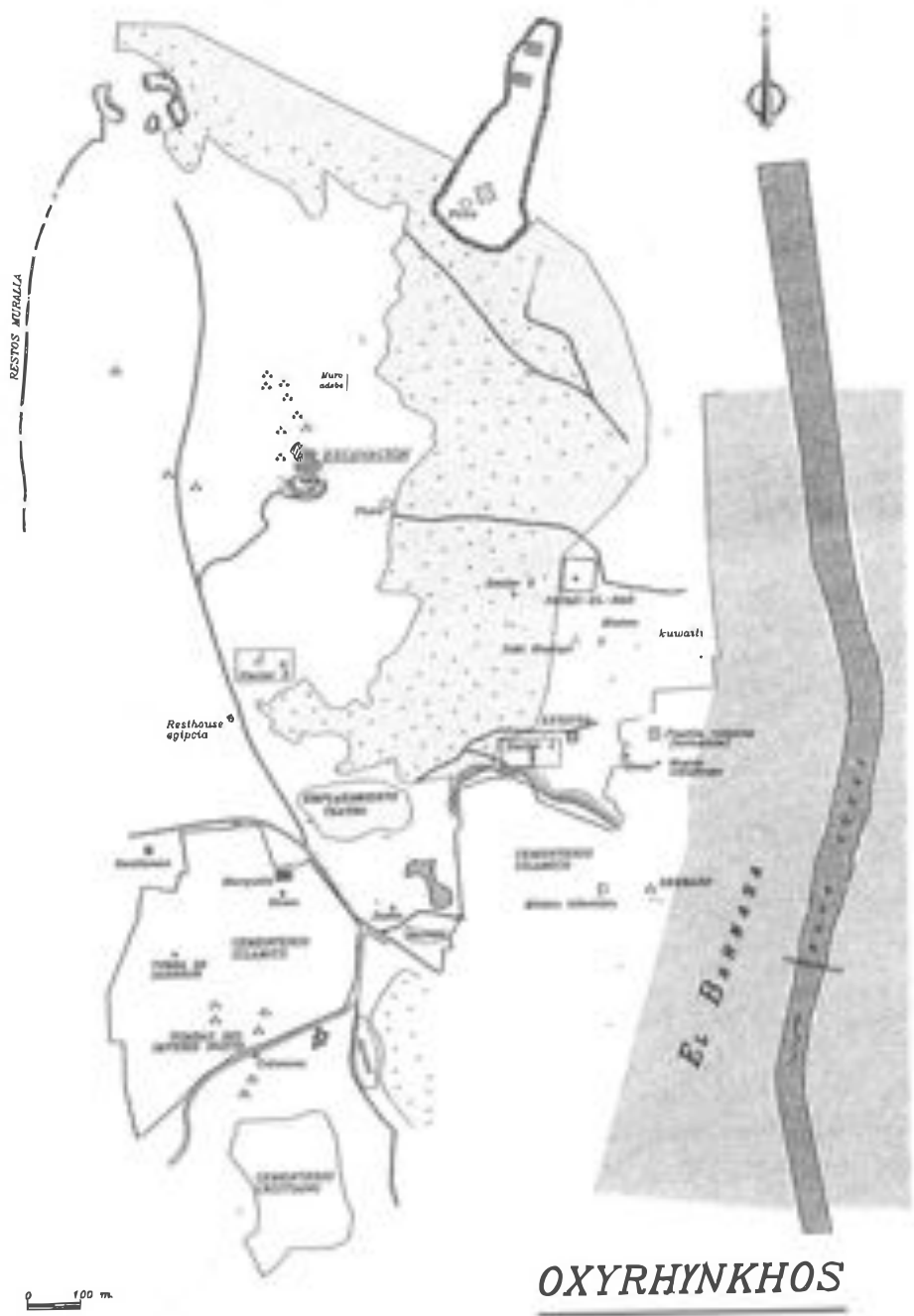


Figure 10.1. Topographical plan of the site.

Catalan-Egyptian Project, 1992-



Figure 10.4. Paintings in Tomb no. 3.



Figure 10.5. Paintings in Tomb no. 3.

Tomb painting from the Upper Necropolis,
Roman period



OXYRHYNCHOS

Figure 10.8. Hypothetical reconstruction of the topography of ancient Oxyrhynchus: (1) Hippodrome(?). (2) North-west gate(?). (3) West rampart. (4) Upper necropolis, in course of excavation. (5) Necropolis of the Greco-Roman period. (6) Theatre. (7) Colonnade photographed by Petrie. (8) Base of hieroglyphic column and tetrapylon(?). (9) Walls and columns at Fatah-el-Bab, possibly belonging to a temple(?). (10) Eastern gate at Zain al-'Abidin. (11) Corner of Doric peristyle, possibly belonging to a gymnasium(?). (12) Necropolis of the New Kingdom(?).

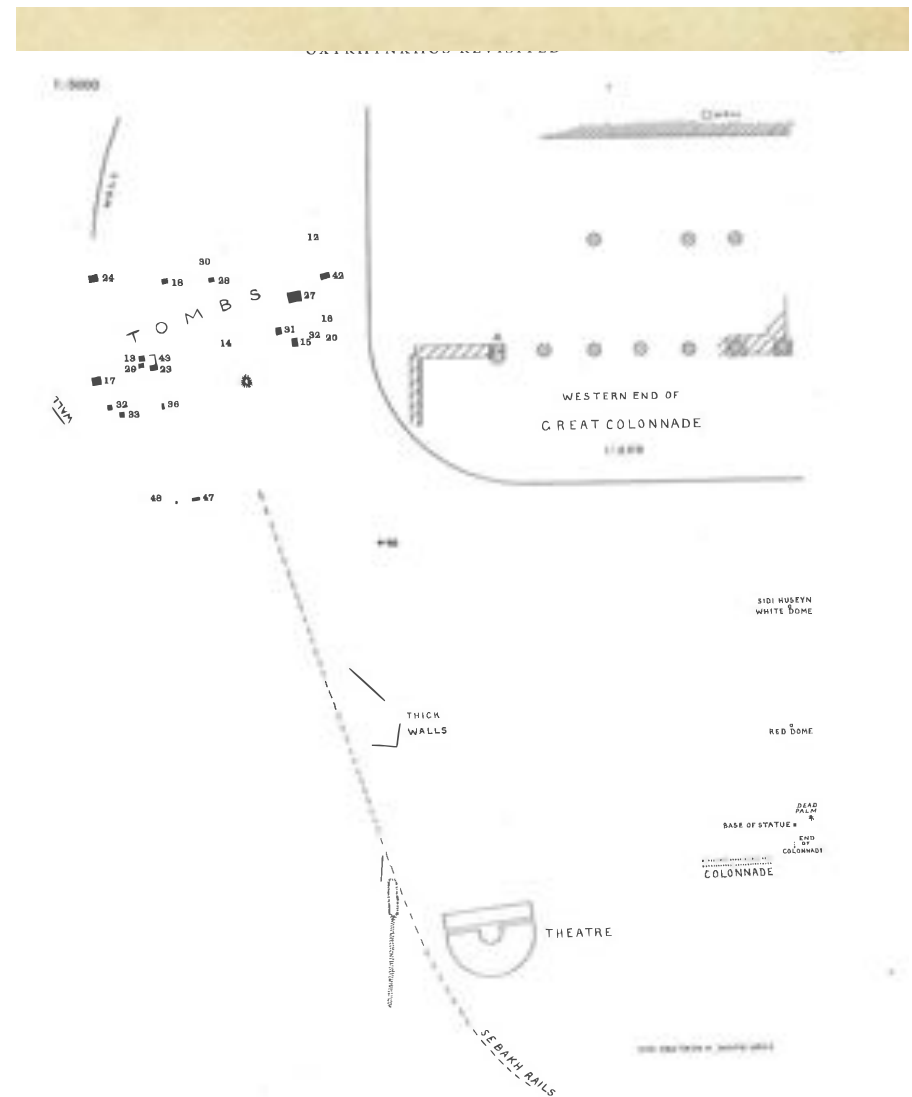


Figure 5.5. Oxyrhynchus: plan by Flinders Petrie.

The most recent reconstructed plan of Oxyrhynchus, contrasted with Petrie's.

Next class:

Find the following texts through the *Checklist* and *papyri.info* and tell the class what they're about:

- Chr.Wilck. 474
- P.Oxy. 24 2406
- P.Oxy. 2 241
- P.Oxy. 20 2272

Read *City of the Sharp-Nosed Fish* Chapter 7 'Markets', Chapter 10 'Bureaucrats' and Chapter 8 'Family and Friends'.

Class on the following dates will be in the Wilbour Hall seminar room:

- February 16
- March 6
- March 15

Assignment 1 (methodology paper):

Spend some time exploring the 'Ancient Lives' project website (http://www.papyrology.ox.ac.uk/Ancient_Lives/). As a non-papyrologist and/or not knowing ancient Greek, how user-friendly do you find it? Do you think it succeeds in making papyrology accessible to non-specialists? If so, why?/If not, why not? (You may illustrate with screenshots if you find it helpful.)

2 pages (single-spaced), by email to me by 5pm on Monday Feb 20.

Working with Papyri

Papyrus conservation:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RGsnWDy7kg>

Imaging papyri:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=li_sEvxgWg8

Making papyrus:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2Jtz1ETByc>

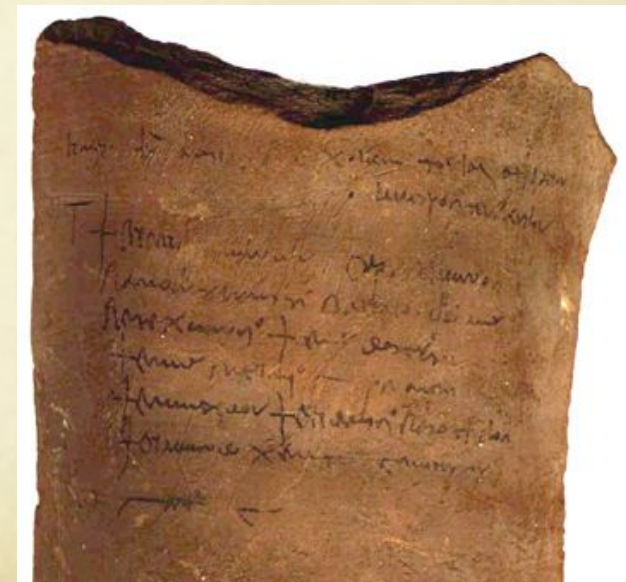
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxNQLr4xls4>

Chr. Wilck. 474 = P.Oxy. 1 43 verso, Watchmen of Oxyrhynchus, after 16 Feb. AD 295:

- List of watchmen stationed at or in various public and private buildings.
- The recto has a separate list of military supplies – mostly animal fodder.
- Features temples of Sarapis, Isis, Thoreris (T3 wrt) and Caesar; two churches, the north and the south, which give their names to two streets; theatre, Capitolium, three sets of public baths, Gymnasium, Nilometer, gates of Pesor and Pses, north and south gates.
- Streets were commonly named by some prominent building which they adjoined.

O.Heid. 399, 27 Nov. – 26 Dec. AD 126,
Thebes:

Ostrakon with list of 'day guards' for the
month Khoiak in Year 11 of the Emperor
Hadrian.



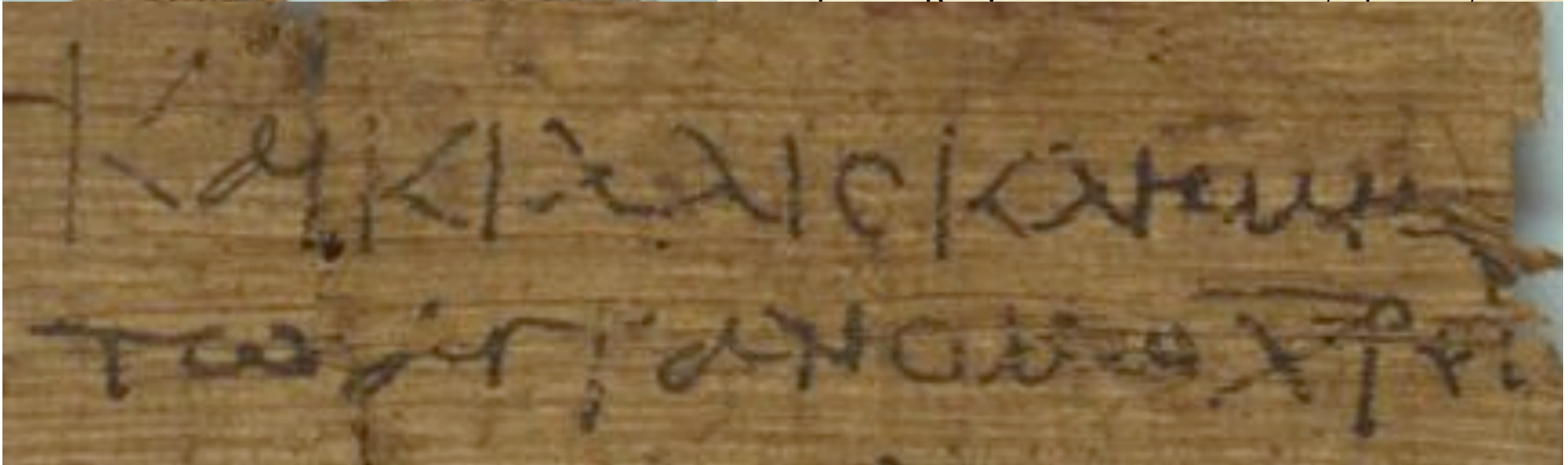


P.Oxy. 24 2406, Ground plan of a house, AD second century:

- Three main areas, possibly courtyards rather than rooms;
- The central one is an atrium, with a staircase descending to a cellar, possibly vaulted;
- Also a possible water tank, or staircase well leading to an upper floor.

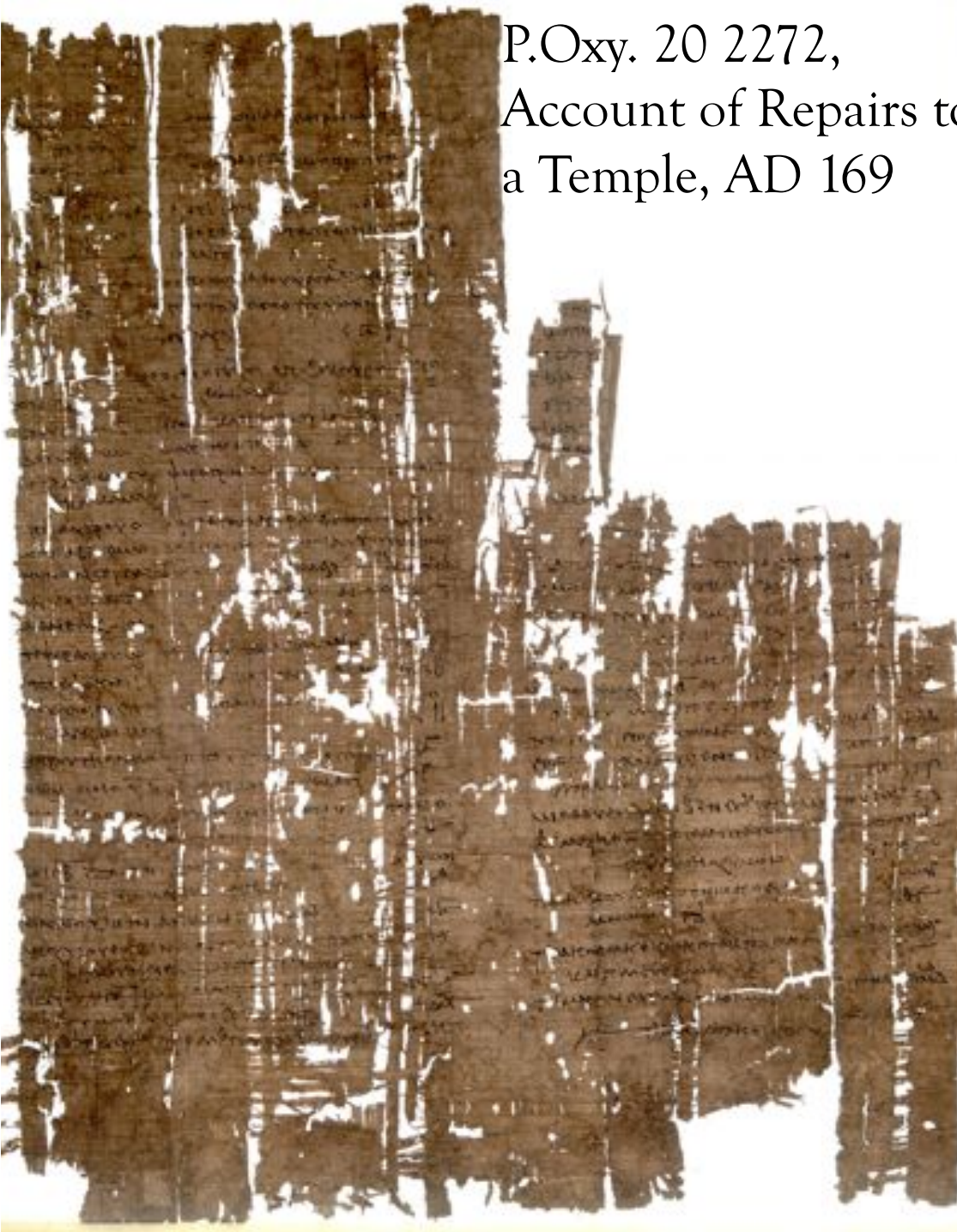
P.Oxy. 2 241, Registration of a mortgage, c. AD 98-99:

Caecilius Clemens to the agoranomus,
... ..



situated in the Gymnasium square quarter by
the temple of Osiris and the treasury, which
was mortgaged to him by his full brother
Thomphuas in return for an accommodation
in accordance with a note of hand and a
payment through a bank of 400 drachmae...,
and...





P.Oxy. 20 2272,
Account of Repairs to
a Temple, AD 169

(Excerpt):

To the mason, for dressing and fitting stones for the corner above the foundation - 6 dr.

To the stonecutter, for cutting 100 stones for the corners of the gateway colonnade - 10 dr. 3 ob.

To hire of five donkeys to bring the lime from the harbour of Bousiris to the city - [] dr.

Cost of gravel, including transportation from the harbour to the kiln - 6 dr.

For carrying the fired gravel from the kiln to the work site - [] dr.

Freight charge of the boat bringing sand for mixing with the lime - 2 dr.

For bringing the sand from the harbour to the work site - 2 dr.

To plasterers, for stuccoing - 16 dr.

Cost of chaparral wood bought from the government, needed for the work on the doors of the Isis temple - 50 dr.

Cost of carpenter's glue for the door of the gateway, 3 ¼ minae [weight] - 19 dr. 4 ob.

The community of Oxyrhynchus: Some themes

- Education, literacy and illiteracy;
- 'The arts';
- Gender;
- Greek, Roman and Egyptian identities;
- The gymnasium and other arenas for the display of culture and ethnicity.

P.Oxy. 74 4994, Registrations of Children, AD 254:

1 (5th hand) 34 2 (1st hand) To Aurelius Heras, phylarch of the city of the Oxyrhynchites for the current 1st year, from Aurelius Dioscorus son of Antonas, his mother being Isarion, and his wife Sarapous daughter of Harmiysis son of Heraclides, her mother being Diogenis, from the city of the Oxyrhynchi. 9 We wish to register for the first time, in the house that belongs to me, Dioscorus, in the quarter of Plateia, our son Aurelius Artemidorus, who was born to us from one another, a payer of twelve drachmae and a member of the gymnasium, and who in the current 1st year is 2 years old, as is fitting, and we swear by the fortune of our lords Valerianus and Gallienus Augusti not to have lied.

20 Year 1 of Imperatores Caesares Publius Licinius Valerianus and Publius Licinius Valerianus Gallienus Pii Felices Augusti, Payni 1 (or 30).

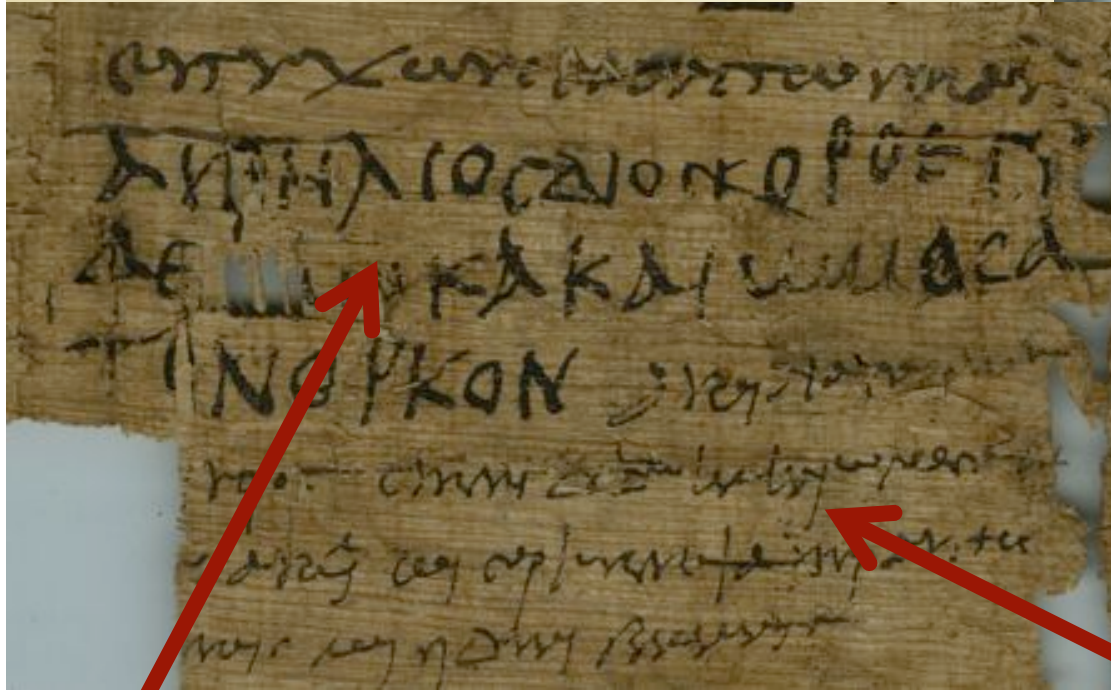
26 (2nd hand) I, Aurelius Dioscorus, have presented (the notification) and have sworn the oath.

28 (3rd hand) I, Aurelia Sarapous daughter of Harmiysis, have joined in presenting (this notification) and sworn the oath. I, Aurelius Besarion, wrote on her behalf since she claims not to know letters.

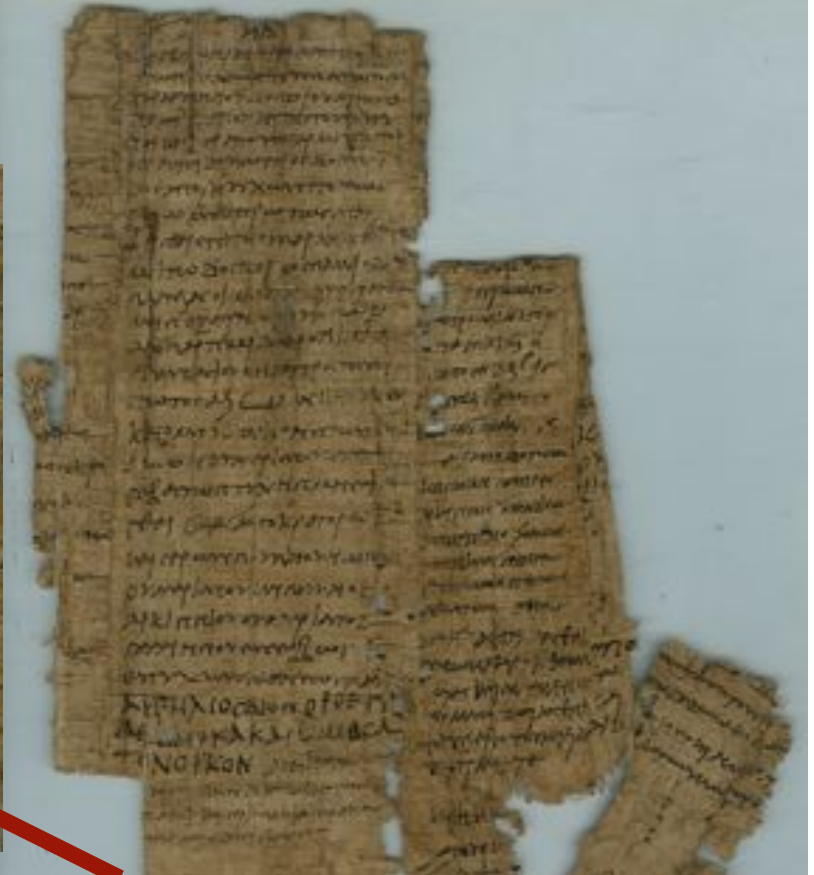
32 (4th hand) The quarter of Plateia. Artemidorus son of Dioscorus son of Antonas, his mother being Sarapous daughter of Harmiysis son of Heraclides, two years old, a payer of twelve drachmae (and) a member of the gymnasium. (5th hand) 34

37 (6th hand) . . . kollema 148.

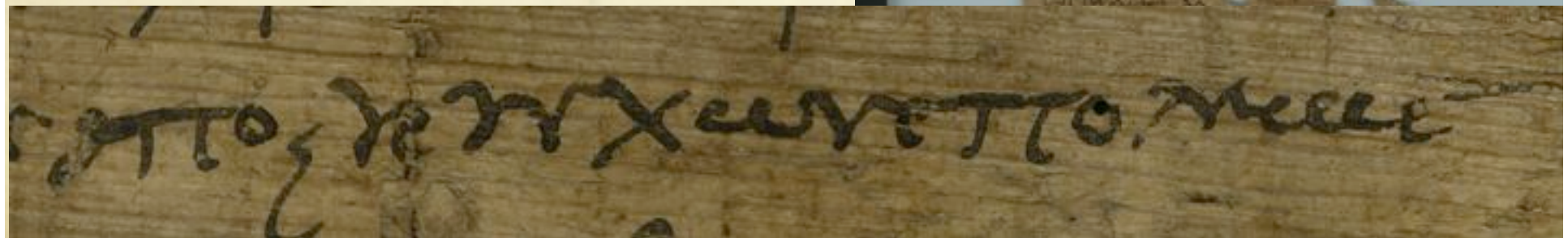
P.Oxy. 74 4994, Registrations of Children, AD 254:



Aurelius Dioskoros writes (inexpertly) for himself

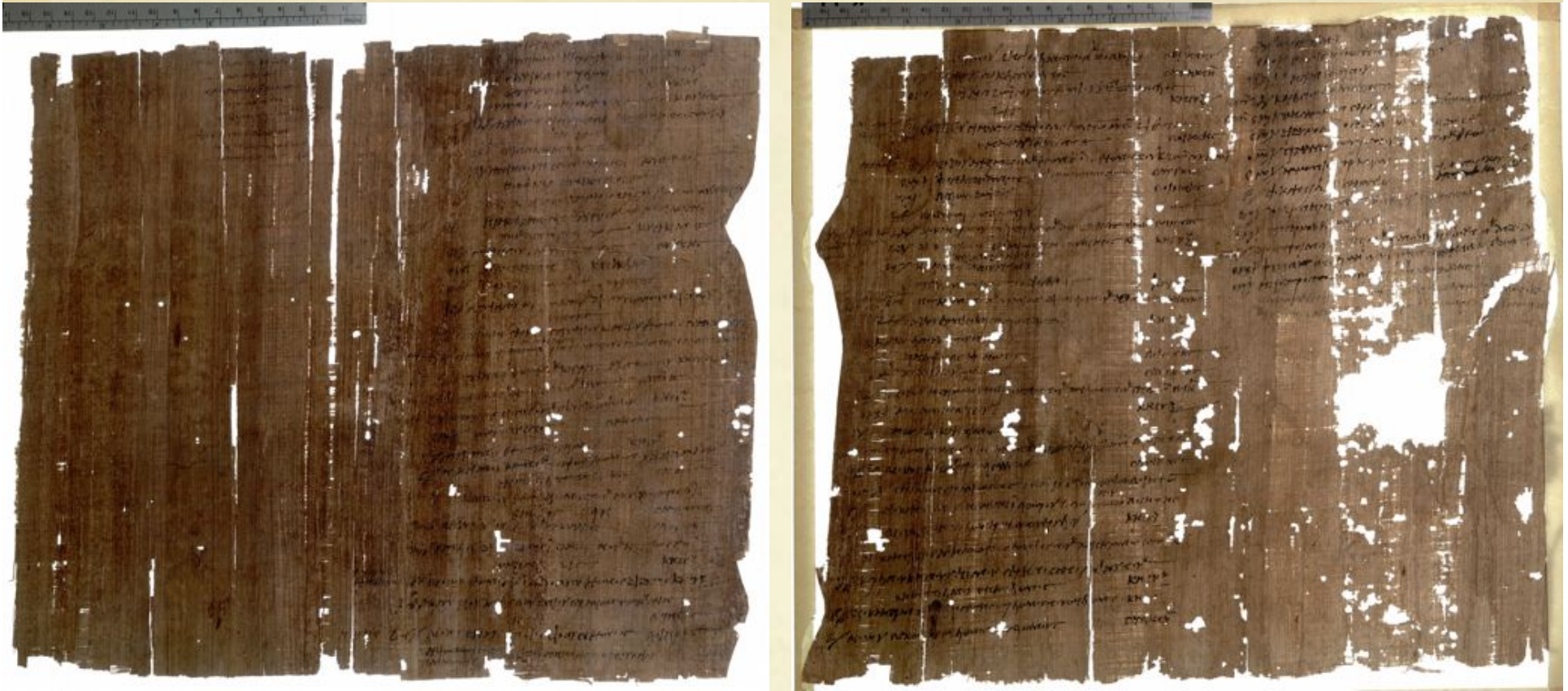


Aurelius Besarion writes for Aurelia Sarapous, because she is illiterate



'from the city of the Oxyrhynchites'

P.Oxy. 22 2338, list of poets, trumpeters and heralds, after AD 289:



‘Tax exemptions gained in the city games’:

There follow the names of more than 70 people who won this exemption between AD 261 and 289 for their victories in the classes ‘trumpeters, heralds and poets’.

The majority have purely Greek names, 20% Egyptian, 12% Roman and 12% mixed

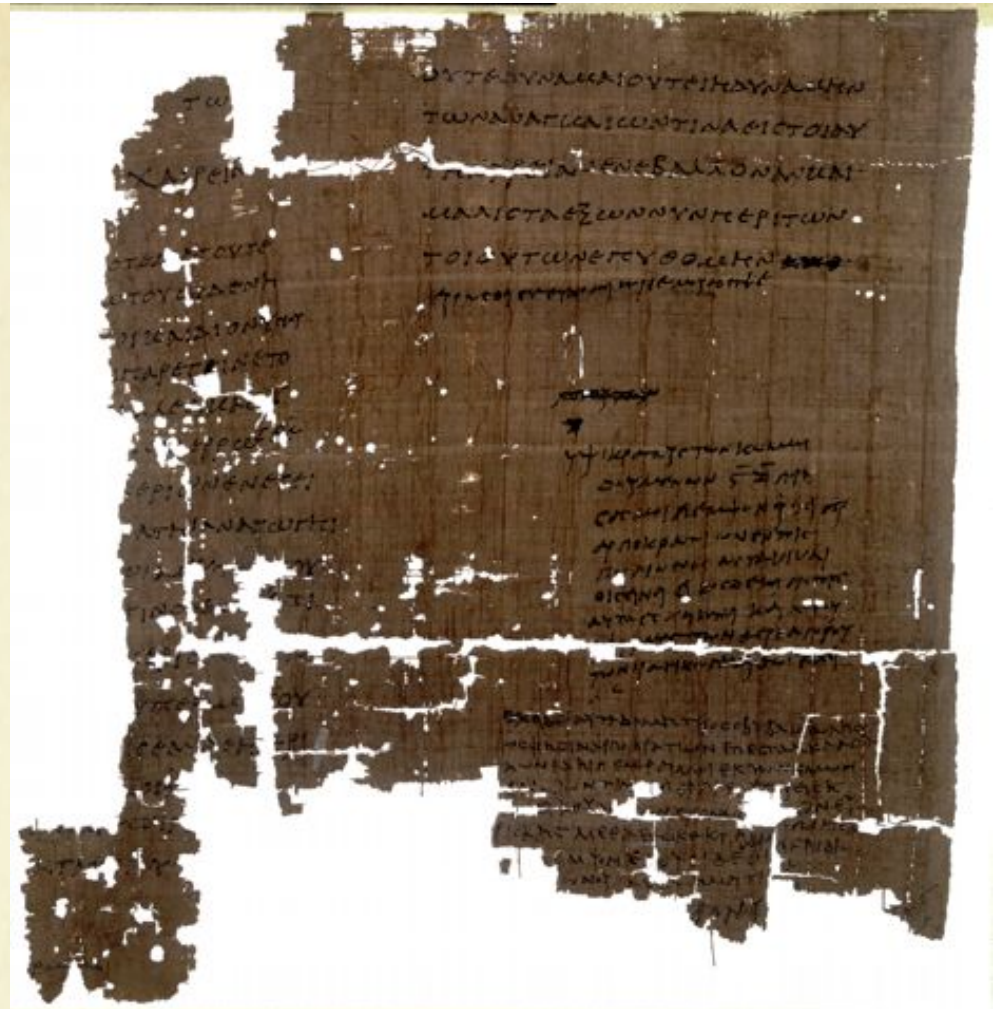
P.Oxy. 18 2192, A private letter with postscript about books, AD second century:

“I am not able to, nor were I able, would I put any relation of mine in such a position, especially after what I have just learnt in such cases.”

Hand 2: “I pray for your health, my lord brother.”

“Make and send me copies of Books 6 and 7 of Hypsicrates’ *Characters in Comedy*. For Harpocration says they are among Polion’s books. But it is likely that others too have got them. He also has prose epitomes of Thersagoras’ *Myths of Tragedy* 71.”

Hand 3: “According to Harpocration Demetrios the bookseller has got them. I have instructed Apollonides to send me some of my books, which you will hear about from him. And of Seleucus’ work on the *Tenses* make copies and send me as many (books) as you find, apart from those I possess. Diodorus also has some that I do not possess.”



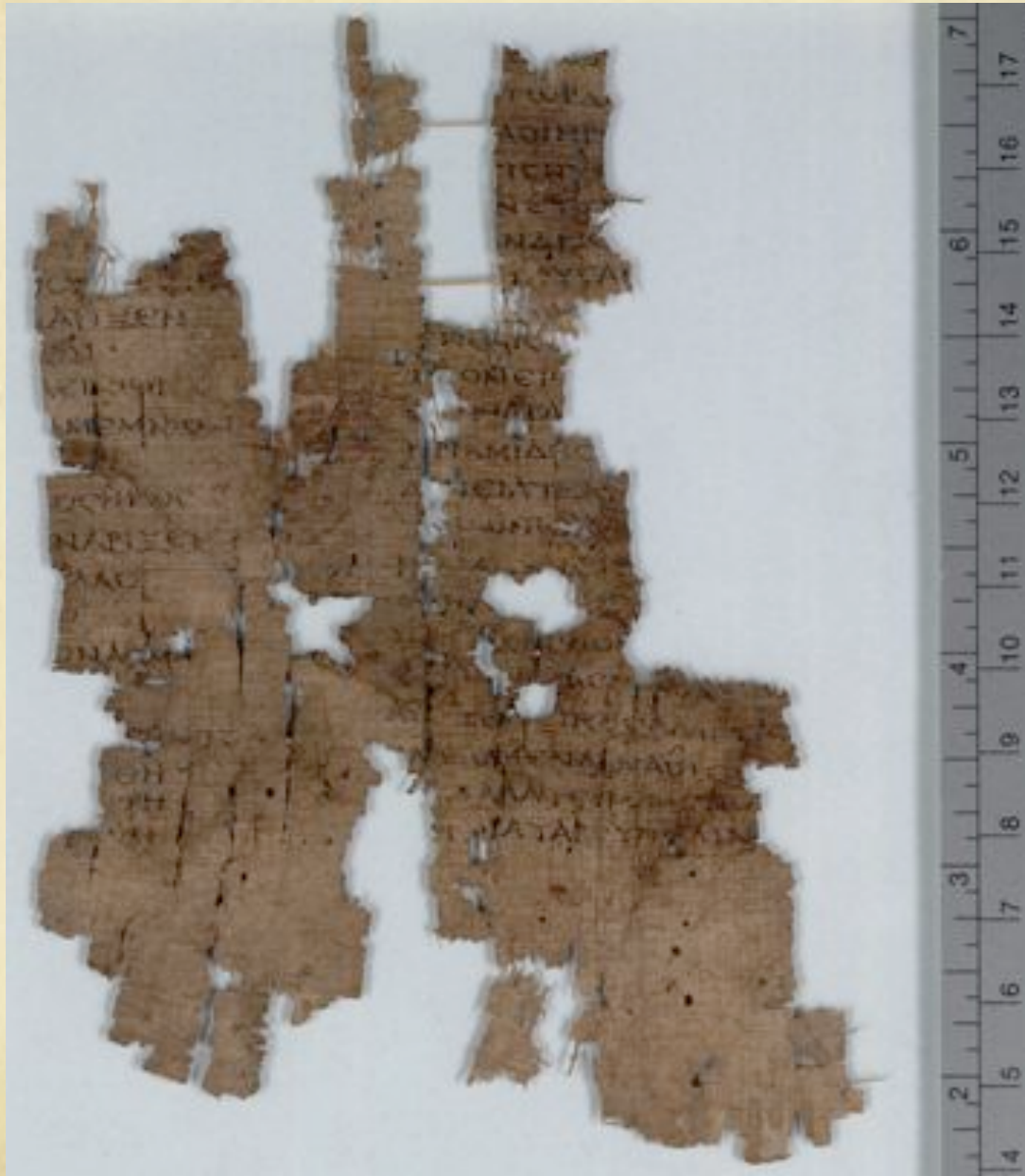
P.Oxy. 6 930, 2nd-3rd century AD, a
mother writes to her son:

“...do not hesitate to write to me also about whatever you need from here. I was grieved to learn from the daughter of our teacher Diogenes that he had sailed downriver, for I was free from care about him, knowing that he would look after you as far as possible. I took care to send and enquire about your health and to learn what you were reading. And he said the 6th book, and he testified a great deal concerning your paidagogos. So now, child, you and your paidagogos must take care to place you with a suitable teacher. Your sisters and the children of Theonis, whom the evil eye does not touch, and all our people greet you individually. Greet your esteemed paidagogos Eros.
... [Address] ... to her son Ptolemaios.”

P.Oxy. 6 930, 2-3 century AD, a mother writes to her son:

- The boy has moved to Oxyrhynchus (where the letter was found) to advance his education.
- ‘paidagogos’ = family slave who accompanies the boy to school.
- The ‘6th book’ = Book 6 of the *Iliad*.
- Was this letter written by the mother herself? The handwriting and written Greek are competent, but perhaps not good enough to have been written by a professional scribe.
- See further Bagnall, R. S. and R. Cribiore (2006) *Women's Letters from Ancient Egypt, 300 BC-AD 800*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.





Homer, Iliad
IV, P. Oxy. 44
3154, first
century AD.

Homer and Greek Education in Graeco-Roman Egypt

- Homer is by far the best represented author among Greek literary papyri.
- About a thousand papyri containing Homeric texts.
- The playwright Euripides is the second most popular author, but with only about a tenth of the number of Homeric papyri.
- The *Iliad* is more popular than the *Odyssey*.

Bibliography: Cribiore, R. (1996) *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt*. (American Studies in Papyrology 36.) Atlanta: Scholars Press. Cribiore, R. (2001) *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*. Princeton, NJ; Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Festivals and Performances

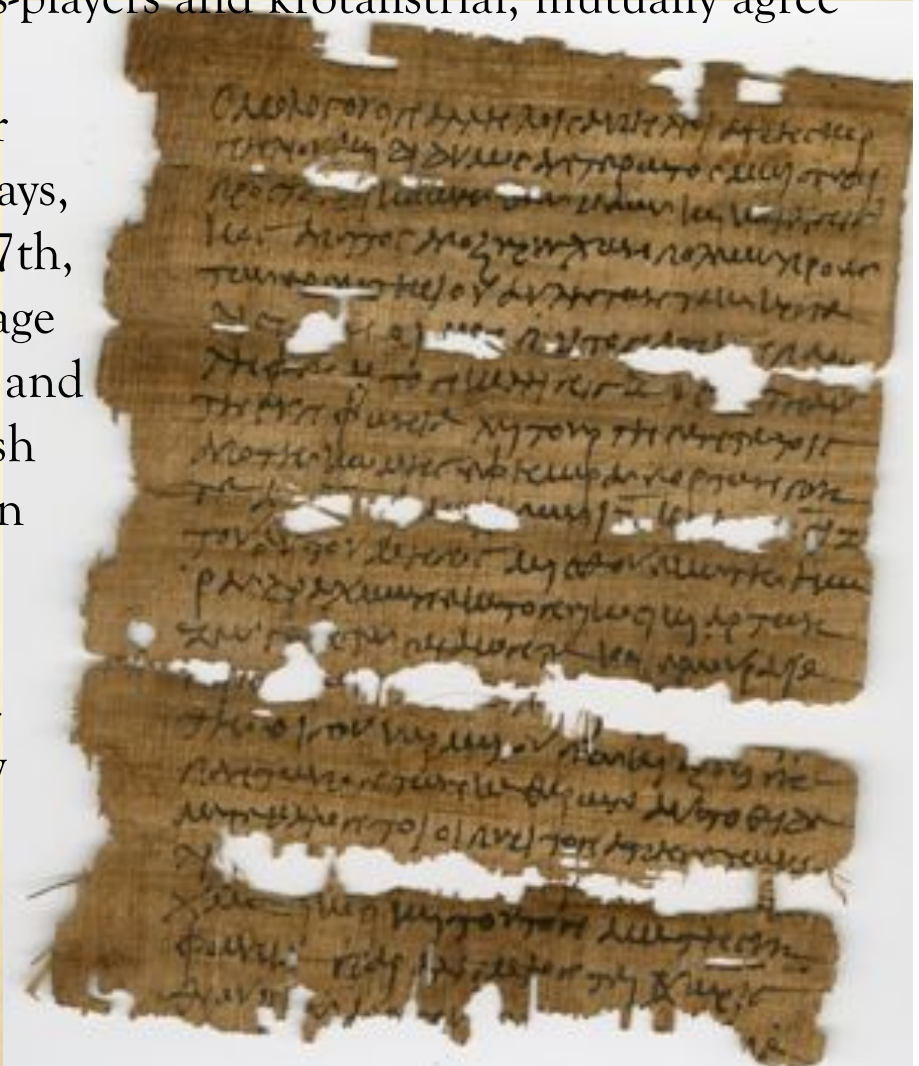
P. Oxy. 7 1025, engagement of performers, late third century AD:

“Aurelius Agathos, gymnasiarch, prytanis in office, and Aurelius Hermanobammon, exegetes, and Aurelius Didymos, chief priest, and Aurelius Coprias, cosmetes, of the city of Euergetis, to Aurelius Euripas, actor, and Aurelius Sarapas, Homeric reciter, greeting. Come at once, in accordance with your custom of taking part in the holiday, in order to celebrate with us our traditional festival on the birthday of Cronus the most great god. The spectacles will begin tomorrow the 10th and be held for the regular number of days; and you will receive the usual payment and presents. Signed. I, Hermanobammon, exegetes, pray for your health.” [Similar signatures of Didymos and Coprias follow.]

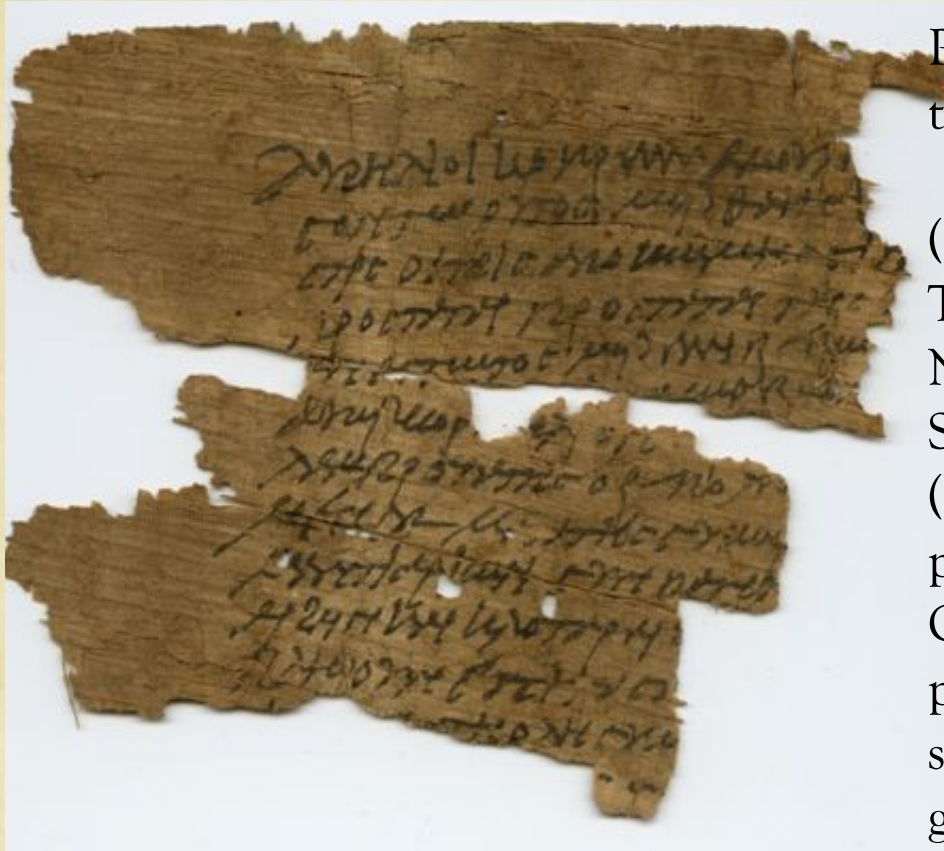
Festivals and Performances

P. Oxy. 74 5015, contract of performers, third century AD:

“1 Aurelius Hatres son of Cornelius and Aurelius Didymus son of Anteros, both presidents of the village of Thosbis, and Callinicus son of Apeis from the city of the Oxyrhynchi, the head of an ergasterion of aulos-players and krotalistriai, mutually agree that on the one hand Hatres’ party has invited Callinicus and the said company to perform for those who reside at the village, for five festive days, beginning from the 13th of Phaophi until the 17th, including the 17th of the same month, at the wage each day of one hundred and twenty drachmas and Forty pairs of loaves and eight(?) kotylai of radish-oil, (and for all the festive days(?)) one keramion of wine and one of vinegar, all free from encumbrances. 16 On the other hand, Hatres’ party has remitted on the spot to Callinicus . . . (for earnest money?) twenty drachmas, and they will receive him with the company, act of God apart, from (anywhere within) the Oxyrhynchite nome . . .”



Festivals and Performances



P. Oxy. 74 5016, contract of performers, late third – early fourth century AD:

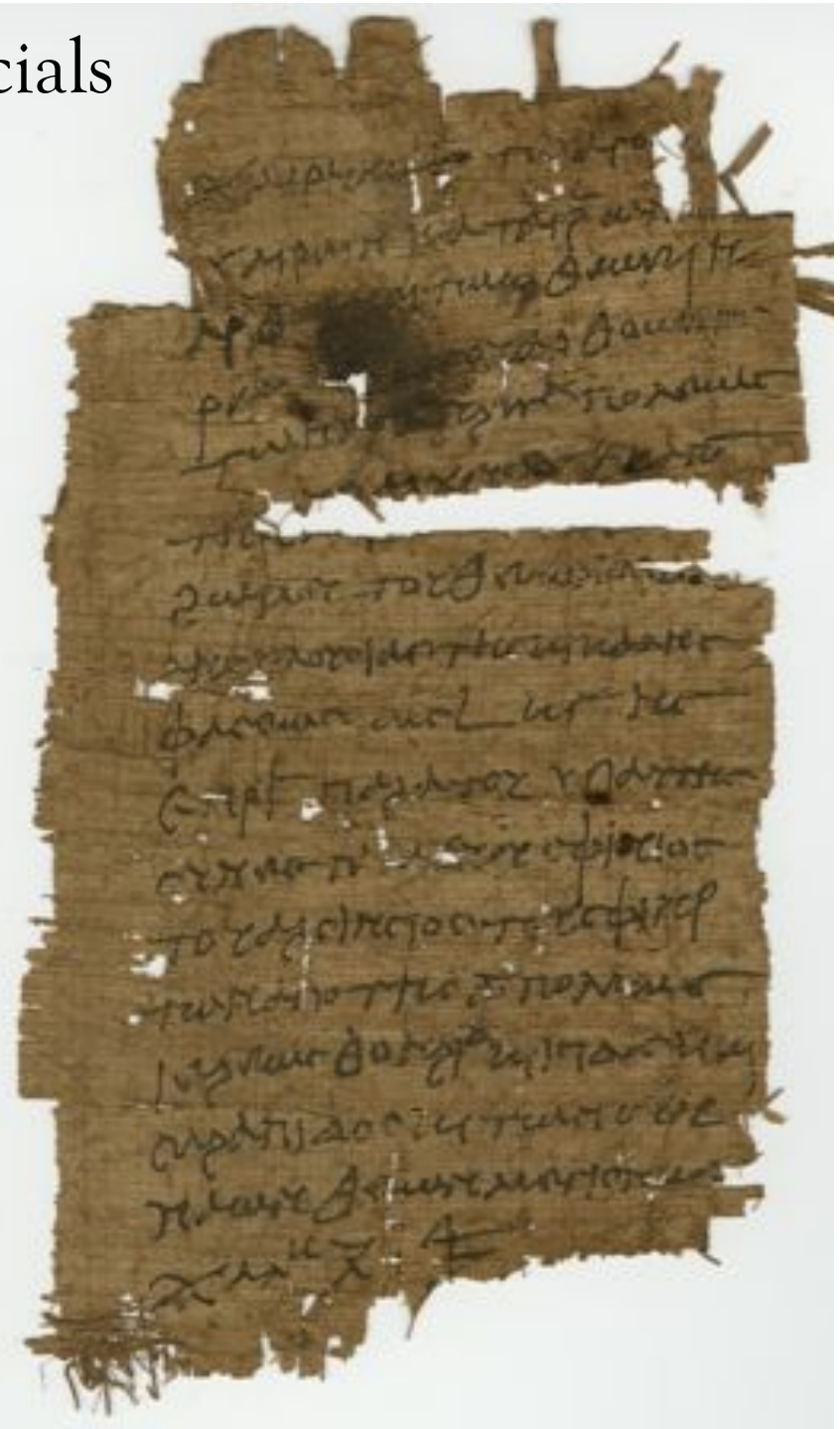
“1 Aurelius Copreus son of Amuni(u)s (and NN, Aurelius NN son of) Sontous and Thaeisis, (Aurelius NN, son of NN and NN), the three from the village Sincepha . . . presidents of the same village (celebrating?) (from the?) 17th of the present month Tybi until . . . , to Aurelius Corneli(an)us the head(?) of a group of performers from the splendid and most splendid city of the Oxyrhynchites, greetings. We have engaged you with your group . . . to take part in the festivities . . . to entertain and to play the krotala . . . (We agree?) to pay for the (days?) . . . for the whole group . . .”

Gods, Temples and Temple Officials

P. Oxy. 75 5051, Registration of Sale of a Slave, c. 81-100 AD:

“1 Chaeremon to the agoranomus, greetings. Register the sale to Harthoonis alias Theon, son of Herac— son of Harthoonis, from the city of Oxyrhynchus, of the slave Plousia alias Kale Phasis, about 23 years of age, who belongs to Serapous, daughter of Zoilus son of Theon, (and) whom he bought from her representative Sphinis, son of Harsiesis son of Sphinis, from the same city, priest of Thoeris and Isis and Sarapis and the others who share their temple, most great gods, for 10 talents 5,000 drachmas in bronze.”

- Note the diversity of personal names, and of a Greek and an Egyptian name linked by ‘alias’.



P. Oxy. 12 1449, Return of Temple Property, 213-217 AD:

“List of offerings for year 2[.] of [Marcus Aurelius Severus] Antoninus Parthicus Maximus Britannicus Maximus Germanicus Maximus [Pius Augustus] as follows:
Objects in the temple of Neotera [= Isis]: [A painted portrait of our lord] emperor Marcus Aurelius Severus Antoninus Felix [Pius Augustus] and Julia Domna thw lady Augusta [and his deified father Severus] – some of the offerings being inscribed with the names of the dedicators, ... while in other cases we are ignorant of the [dedicators because the offerings] have been in the temple from antiquity – a traditional statue of Demeter, [most great goddess, of which the head] is of Parian marble and the other parts of the body of [wood - ... was not] disclosed to us. And in regard to other offerings which were dedicated in accordance with ancient custom for vows or for pious reasons, ... dedicated by Phragenes(?) son of Horion, a small bronze statue of Neotera; 5 rings [dedicated by ...] son of Didymos; a green robe dedicated by the mother of An[...]; [...] dedicated by Kastor son of Asklepiades; a small [...] on which is a statuette of Neotera [...]; a stone [...] of well-cut stone; a rudder [reresenting Neotera; a statue of ...] of which the head is of Parian marble and the amulets are of plaster; a statue of Typhon [= Seth], part of which [...] is glued together in the middle, and the [...] in a casket; 2 small [gold lamps] full of brimstone(?) dedicated by Sara [pion son of] Sarapion; another small gold l[amp] full of brimstone(?) dedicated by Saraeus daughter of Achill [... another lamp full of bromstone(?)] dedicated by Ptolemais wife of [...] of which the] weight is described in the periodical lists; 10 children’s armlets and 1 child’s ring [...]”

Gods, Temples and Temple Officials



P. Oxy. 14 1627, Appointment to a Liturgy, 12 August AD 342:

- From the edition: This papyrus throws an interesting light on the method of appointment to public duties. Usually persons were appointed, whether by the senate or by an official, to some definite liturgy; but in the present case a citizen of Oxyrhynchus and his son had been selected to perform an unspecified liturgy for eight months, and they make a contract with the systates, the official in question, whereby in return for receiving a very light duty, i.e. that of guarding the temple of Thoãris, they agree to perform it for a whole year. The body of the contract seems to have been drawn up by the agent of a professional writer of contracts, who appends his signature.

Oxyrhynchus: Final Class

- Romans and Roman authority at Oxyrhynchus.
- Christianity and Oxyrhynchus.

... and then on (and back) to Tebtunis!



(The mummified crocodile gods of Tebtunis hunt the fish god of Oxyrhynchus.)

What was Roman about 'Roman' Oxyrhynchus?

P. Oxy. 12 1453, Declaration of Temple Lamplighters, 30-29 BC:

- This document is much earlier than most of those we have looked at from Oxyrhynchus so far.
- It is dated by the 'first year of Caesar' (i.e. Augustus, after his defeat of Cleopatra).
- It is a copy of a declaration by four lamp-lighters to service the maps and provide oil for them in two temples in Oxyrhynchus.
- Three have Egyptian names and one a Graeco-Egyptian one.
- At least two were illiterate.

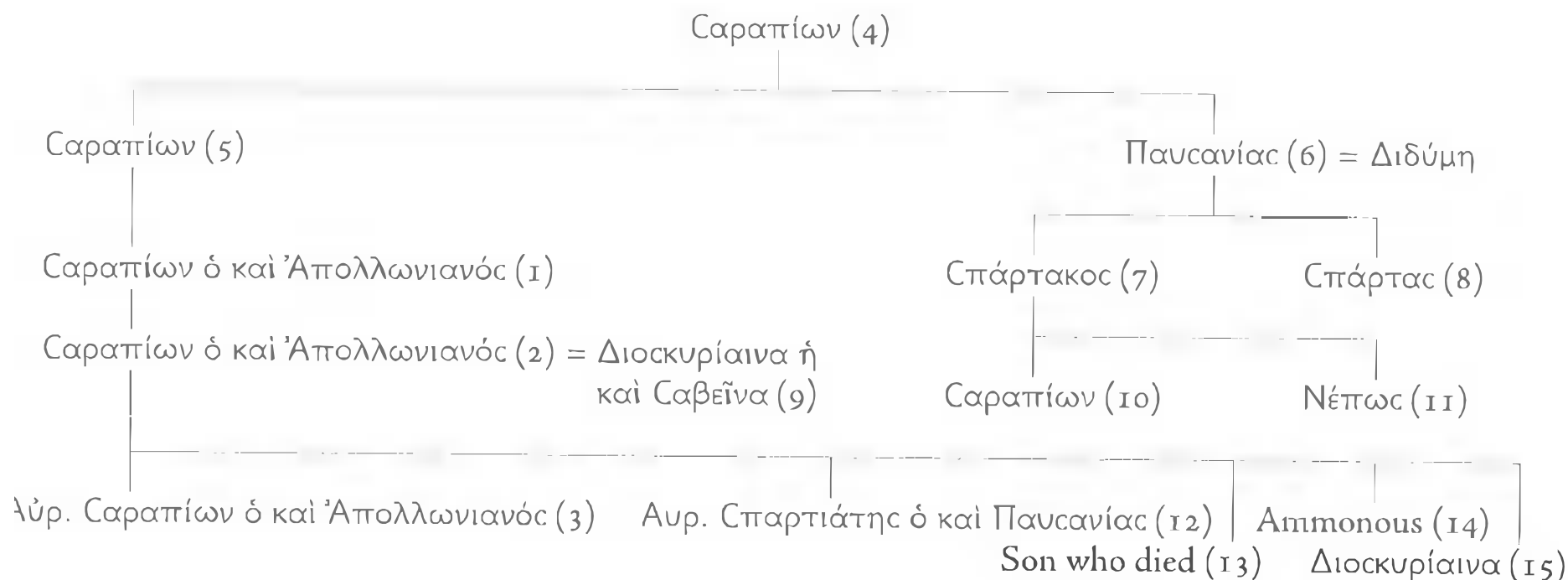


What was Roman about 'Roman' Oxyrhynchus?

150

E. G. TURNER

Figure 11.1. THE FAMILY OF ΚΑΡΑΠΙΩΝ Ὁ ΚΑΙ ἈΠΟΛΛΩΝΙΑΝΟΣ



...we'll be seeing a lot more complicated family trees like this.

What was Roman about 'Roman' Oxyrhynchus?

- Roman rule brought new social structures and administrative practices to Egypt, and to Oxyrhynchus.
- (Official) Greek identity was defined differently by the Ptolemies and the Romans.
- In Ptolemaic Egypt, a 'Greek' (Clarysse and Thompson, *Counting the People*, use the useful term 'tax-Greek') was someone with a Greek father, or someone in a privileged professional or ethnic category (schoolteachers, Jews, etc.).
- This was too messy for the Romans.
- 'Greeks' were the citizens of a restricted number of 'Greek cities'; and everyone else was an 'Egyptian'.
- But there was a middle category of 'metropolitans': residents of towns, who self-defined as 'Greek' and imposed conditions on e.g. membership of the gymnasium. Defining – and proving – maternal as well as paternal 'Greekness' also became important.

Greek and Latin, Greeks and Romans

- Around 100 Latin papyri from Oxyrhynchus (compared to hundreds of thousands of Greek).
- This figure includes bilingual Greek-Latin texts.
- Of the Latin texts, 40 or so are literary.
- There are some word lists and glossaries, indicating that people were learning Latin and/or Latin literacy at Oxyrhynchus.
- Even before Caracalla's universal grant of Roman citizenship in AD 212, there were plenty of Roman citizens living in or visiting Oxyrhynchus.

Greek and Latin

P. Mich. 3 165, 236 AD, Request for appointment of a guardian:

“To Mevius Honoratianus, prefect [of Egypt, from Aurelia Diodora. I ask you, my lord, to give me] as guardian according to the [Julian and Titian] law [Aurelius Theon. Dated] on the XII of the Kalends of December, in the consulshop of our lord [Verus Maximinus Augustus and Pupienius Africanus].;(2nd hand) I, Diodora, have presented [this] petition, [requesting that] Aurelius Theon alias Asklepios [. . .] should be appointed as] my [guardian. I, . . .], son of Isidoros, wrote for her as she [is illiterate. I, Aurelius Theon alias] Asklepios, consent to the petition. Year 3 of the Emperor [Caesar Maximinus Augustus, Hathyr 24].;(1st hand?) As you have wished, [I give you Aurelius] Theon [as guardian according to the Julian and Titian law and to the senatus consultum (?)]”

M e v i o H o n o r a t i a n o p r a e f (e c t o)

Μεβίο Ηονορatianο πραιοφ(εκτο)

Μεβίο Ηονορatianο πραιοφ(εκτο)

Διοδωρα επιδοδωκατα...

Διοδωρα επιδοδωκατα...

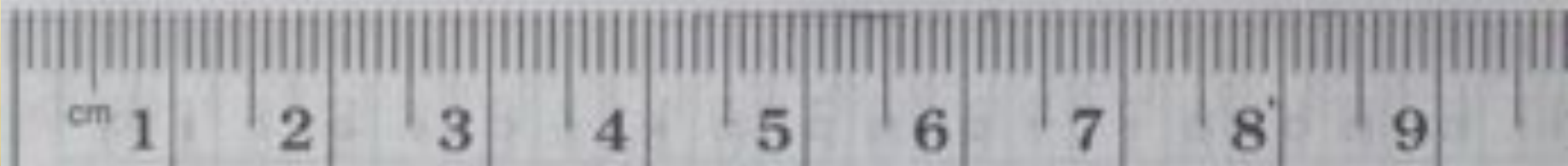
Διοδωρα επιδοδωκατα...

Διοδωρα επιδοδωκατα...

Διοδωρα επιδοδωκατα...

Διοδωρα επιδοδωκατα...

Back to Latin

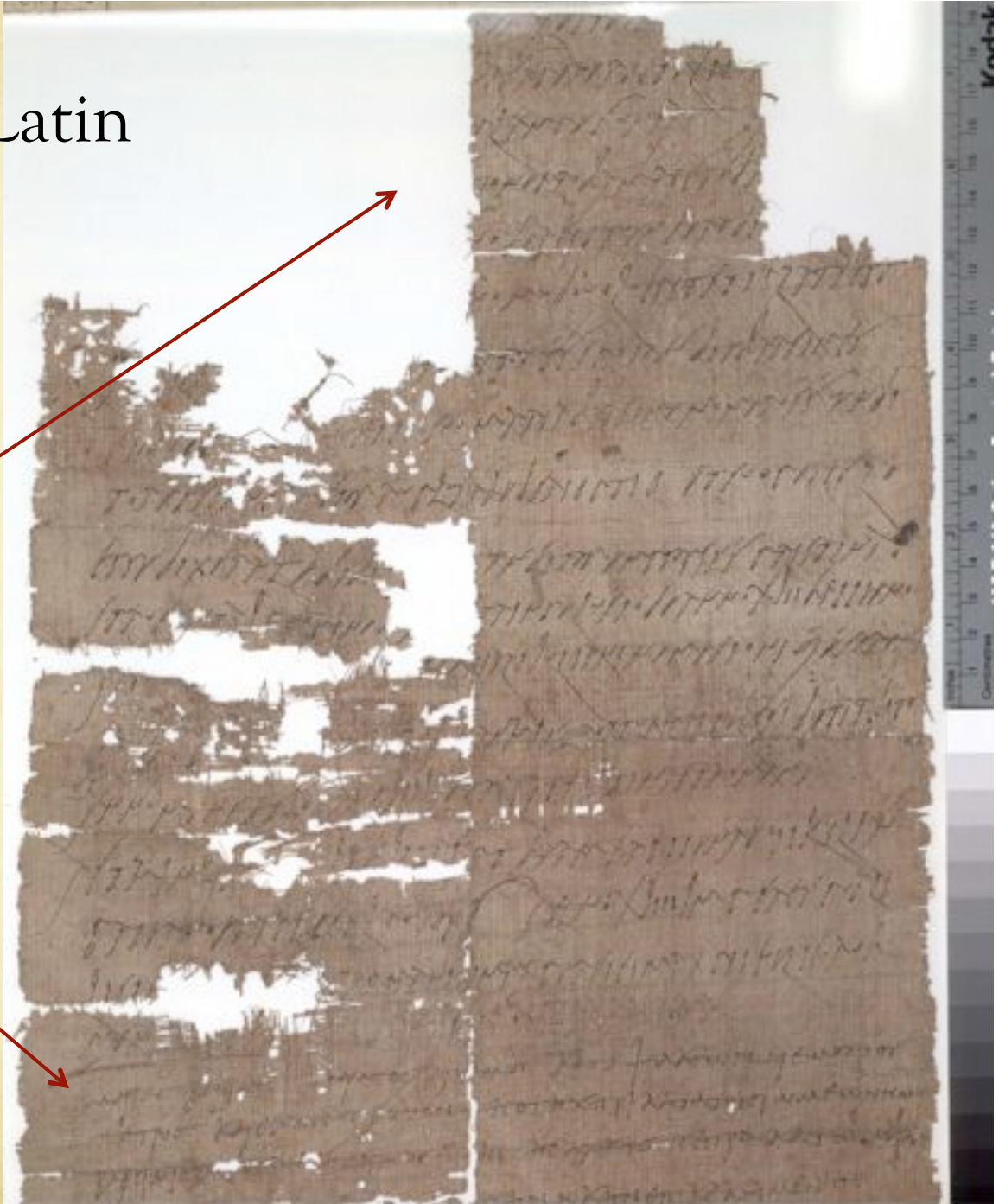


Greek and Latin

P. Oxy. 41 2951, 26 May
AD 267, Latin sale of a
slave (a girl named Nike,
aka Metethes, Arab by
birth):

Latin

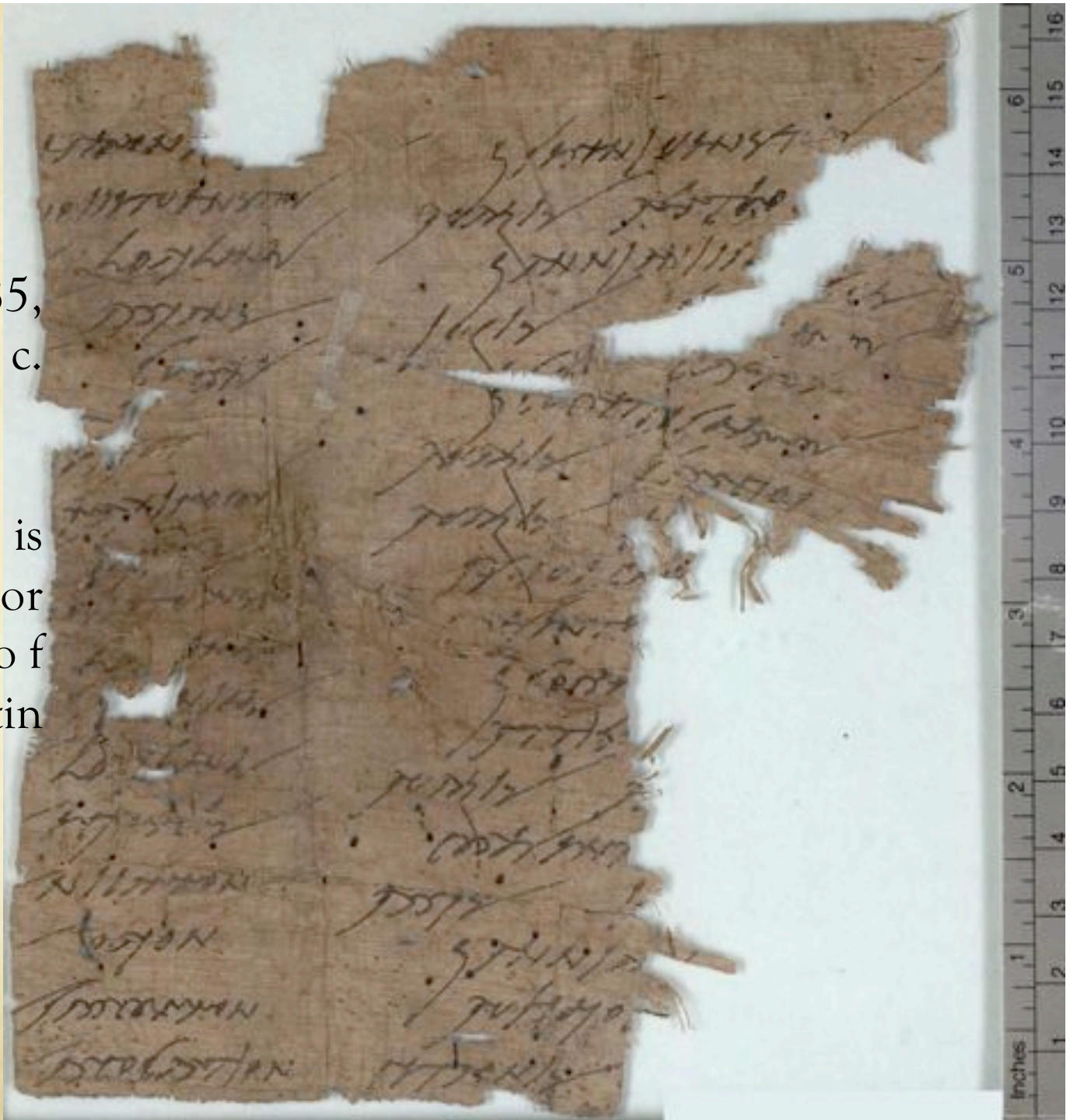
Greek



Greek and Latin

P. Oxy. 55 3785,
Latin military list, c.
AD 250.

The Roman army is
one of the major
generators of
paperwork in Latin
in Egypt.



Sometimes it all gets very complex – P. Thomas 20, Sept.-Oct. AD 270, Latin-Greek:
“Col. I (latin) (m.1) [To X, most illustrius] prefect of Egypt, [from Aurelius Thonius, son of Thonius(?)], his mother being Thais, from [the illustrious] Oxyrhynchus. [I beg you], my lord, to grant to me and my [kindred] brothers, [Aurelii Thonius and Theoninus, alias Petronas, from the same, [aforesaid father, their mother being Hieraciaina], possession of the property of Aurelia Saraheus, [our kindred sister], who died childless and intestate, [in accordance with the part of the edict in which] it is promised to be given [to the lawful heirs]. Dated [in the consulship of Claudius and Paternus;(Greek) (m.2) I, Aurelios Thonis, ask for myself and my kindred] brothers the possession of the property of our sister [Saraheus, as aforesaid. I, Aurelius Dioskoros], wrote for him because he does not know letters.;(latin) In accordance with the edict; I have read it] (Greek) (m. 3) Column 48, volume 1.;Col. II (Greek) (m.4) [To X. most illustrious prefect of Egypt from Aurelius Thonis, son of Thonius(?), his mother being Thais, from the illustrious] city of Oxyrhynchus. I beg you, my lord, to grant to me and my kindred brothers, Aurelii Thonis and Theoninos, alias Petronius, from the same and aforesaid father, their mother being Hieraciaina, possession of the property of Aurelia Saraheus, our kindred sister, who died childless and intestate, in accordance with the part of the edict in which it is promised to the lawful heirs. Dated in the consulship of Claudius Caesar Augustus and of Paternus;(m.5) I, Aurelios Thonis,son of Thonis(?), have presented (this petition). I, Aurelius Kopres, wrote for him because he does not know letters. Year 3, [month, date].”

Fragment of a papyrus scroll with several lines of handwritten text in a cursive script. The text is mostly illegible due to the fragment's condition and the angle of the image. Some faint characters and line structures are visible.

Fragment of a papyrus scroll with several lines of handwritten text in a cursive script. The text is mostly illegible due to the fragment's condition and the angle of the image. Some faint characters and line structures are visible.

Language mediators

- Interpreting and translation, and interpreters and translators, are mentioned very infrequently in the papyri.
- But Egypt was a very multilingual society – why might this be?
- Some examples from Oxyrhynchus.
- See e.g. Mairs, R. (forthcoming) "Interpreters and Translators in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt," in Paul Schubert (eds.), *Actes du 26e Congrès international de papyrologie (Genève 2010)*, 117-122. Geneva. [Available online.]

Language mediators

Some examples from Oxyrhynchus:

- P. Oxy. 64 4435, third century AD, ruling on the legal rights of minors: “Chapter from the lex Laetoria translated as well as possible.”
- P. Oxy. 19 2231, 1 Jan. AD 241, notification of succession: “copy translated into Greek letters as far as possible.”
- P. Oxy. 91201, 24 Sept. AD 258, succession to an inheritance: “Translation from the Roman [letters].”
- P. Oxy. 12 1517, 6 March 272/278?, account of taxation: “Theon the interpreter, x drachmas...”
- P. Oxy. 42 3074, AD third century, Day-book of a strategos: “... translated from the Arab...”

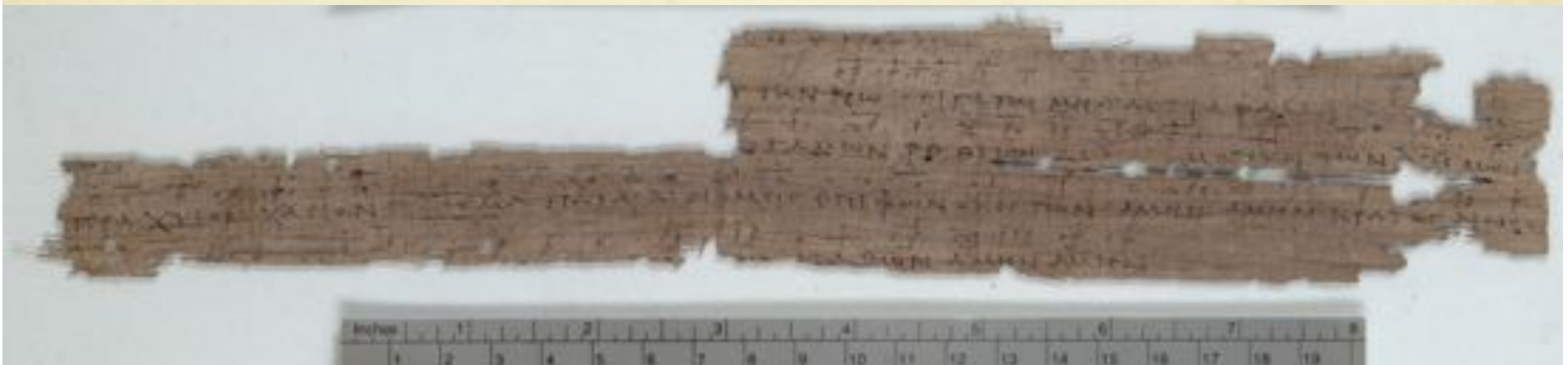
Christianity and Oxyrhynchus

P. Oxy. 15 1786, late third century AD.

The Oxyrhynchus Hymn:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLYfLEZW3bc>

- Oldest known manuscript of a Christian hymn with both lyrics and musical notation.
- “...Let it be silent / Let the Luminous stars not shine, / Let the winds (?) and all the noisy rivers die down; / And as we hymn the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, / Let all the powers add ‘Amen Amen’ / Empire, praise always, and glory to God, / The sole giver of good things, Amen Amen.”

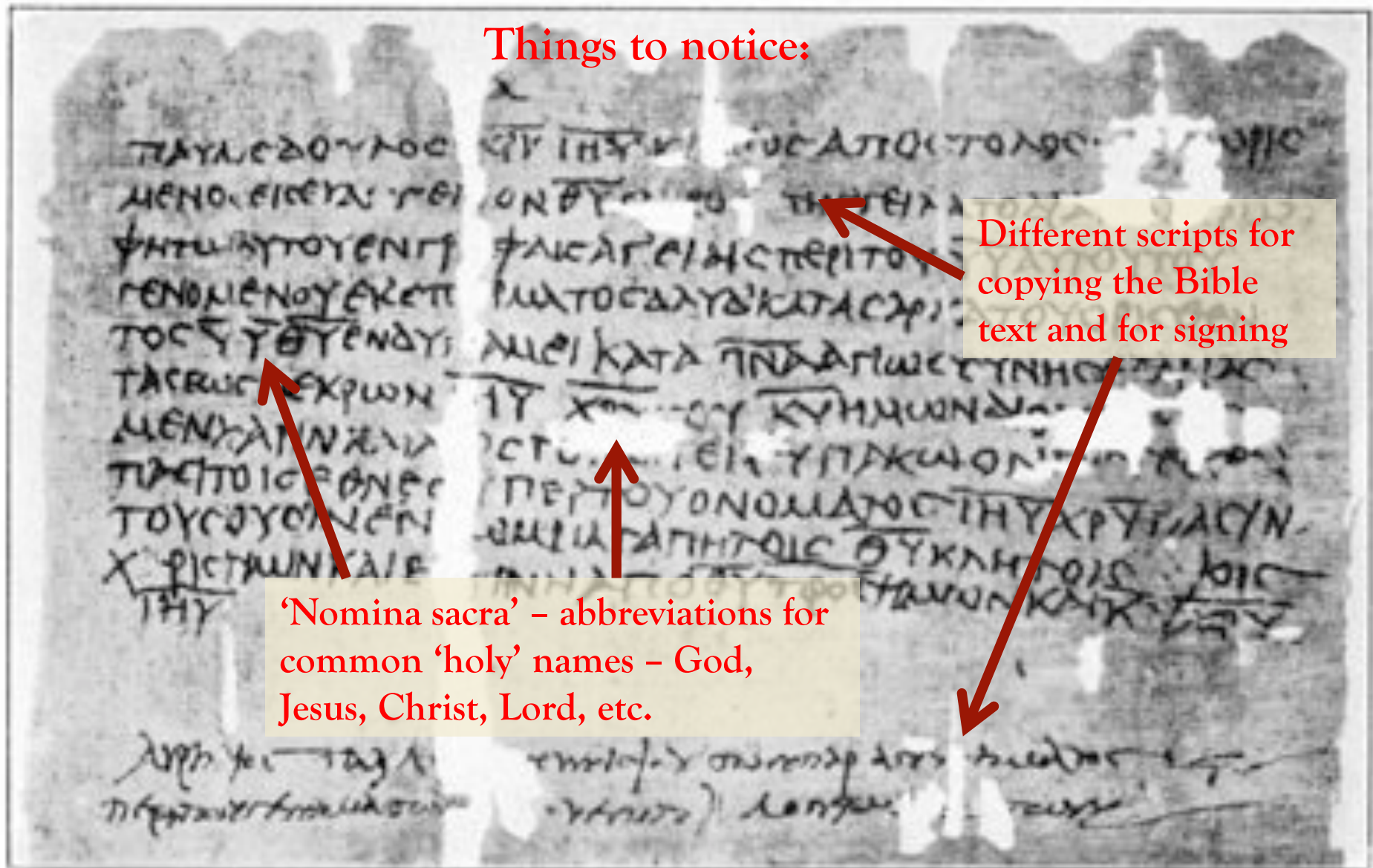


Christianity and Oxyrhynchus

- There were several early Christian martyrdoms at Oxyrhynchus ... and later there were heretics, too.
- Numerous Greek Biblical manuscripts from Oxyrhynchus.
- It used to be thought that there were few Coptic texts from Oxyrhynchus, but this impression comes more from comparative neglect in study and publication – they remained uncatalogued for many years.
- See S. Clackson ‘Coptic Oxyrhynchus’ in A. Bowman et al. *Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts*.
- Oxyrhynchus = Coptic ΠΕΜΧΕ (Pr-mD).
- Oxyrhynchus was the seat of a bishopric by the beginning of the fourth century.
- By the fifth century AD, there were a dozen churches and numerous monasteries in and around the city.



Things to notice:



Different scripts for copying the Bible text and for signing

‘Nomina sacra’ – abbreviations for common ‘holy’ names – God, Jesus, Christ, Lord, etc.

PLATE I—HARVARD PAPYRUS

An attempt to copy the letters of St. Paul (Romans counts as A = first letter) giving the text only unto Romans 1 : 7; late third or early fourth century.

P. Oxy. 2 209, St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans I, AD fourth century

Next class (Thurs 23, RI Hall):

Visit the website of The Center for the Tebtunis Papyri (UC Berkeley): <http://tebtunis.berkeley.edu/> and their 'On-line Exhibits'. Find the answers to the following questions:

- A fragment of which tragedy by Sophocles, presumed lost, was found at Tebtunis?
- The main temple at Tebtunis was dedicated to the crocodile god Soknebtunis. Which Egyptian fertility goddess, assimilated to Isis, had a smaller temple just outside?
- Roughly what percentage of the surviving papyri from Egypt are in Latin? Which Roman author's work appears in a student's writing exercise from C2-3 AD Tebtunis?
- What implements would a scribe typically use to write Greek and Demotic, respectively?