

PAYMENT OF A FINANCIAL OBLIGATION FROM TEBTYNIS¹

P. Tebt. 2. 523 descr. inv. 1454
Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley

H x W = 23.5 x 15.7 cm.

Tebtynis161/162 and 164

Margins: top: 2 cm.; bottom: 2,6 cm.; left: 2 cm.; right: 6,6 cm.

Light brown papyrus leaf of rectangular shape. The papyrus is complete at the bottom and on the right side. The left side is broken at the central portion of the leaf, with up to 10 letters missing on line 14. The upper part has numerous wormholes and breaks which render the reading of the first two lines difficult. A very broad right-hand margin was left, maybe to allow the document to be integrated into a τόμος συγκολλησίμος, or as additional space for writing. The text is written in dark black ink along the fibers (→) in one column of 25 lines. Each line contains an average of 21-25 letters (line 20 contains only 6 or 7 letters). The verso (↓) is blank.

This papyrus was found during the 1899 - 1900 Tebtynis excavations conducted by B.P. Grenfell and A.S. Hunt and was assigned number T162 (written in black ink on the verso), indicating that the piece was found in the town of Tebtynis. The exact place of the find is however unknown². P. Tebt. 523 was briefly (and incompletely) described in the second volume of the Tebtynis papyri³, but has never been published.

The hand is a rapid well-executed second-century cursive with an upright axis. The initial letter of the first and second lines (π in Πτολλαρίων and c in Καραπάμ[μω]νι) is bigger. Ligatures are abundant, especially with α, ε, ι, κ and c. Some deforming ligatures can be seen: ει in Ἄντωνίνου and αι in καὶ (l. 9), εc in ἐπεκομένων (l. 17) and ἔcχον (l. 21). Noteworthy is the presence of letters traced with a slower *ductus*, such as the ν written with three strokes (Παχών, l. 23) and the triangular δ (Ἄδρ[ια]νοῦ, l. 12). Two forms of κ can be seen: one cursive (e.g. τριακο[ρί]ας, ll. 14-15; κεφαλαίων, l. 16), and one in two strokes in which the semicircle is detached from the vertical stroke (καί, ll. 11, 16, 17); υ is written in two strokes (like the modern “v”) when detached from other letters (e.g. Ἄδριανοῦ, l. 12; ἐλαττουμένου, l. 17), and in a more cursive manner, with a curve to the right, when in ligature (κυρίων, l. 19). Horizontal hastae of final ν sometimes extended into the right-hand margin (ἐπεκομένων, l. 15; Σεβατῶν, l. 19). The horizontal stroke extending into the margin at the end of line 3 is interpreted as belonging to the final c of ὀφείλε[ι]c. The beginning of the third line (Ἐc[χ]ον...) is slightly ἐν ἐκθέσει.

The handwriting of P. Tebt. 523 seems to correspond to the first of the two tendencies observed by Cavallo⁴ in the common cursive hands of the second and third centuries: rounded letter-forms, and some deforming ligatures, which can give the written surface an uneven aspect.

¹ The present text was edited during the ASP Papyrological Summer Institute held at the Brigham Young University in 2011. I would like to thank the BYU team, Roger Macfarlane, Stephen Bay, Lincoln Blumell and Thomas Wayment, for their efforts in organizing the seminar, as well as all the visiting professors for their instruction and encouragement. I am especially grateful to Peter Van Minnen, Roger S. Bagnall, Nikos Litinas and Klaas A. Worp for helping me decipher and interpret the text, to Arthur Verhoogt, Rodney Ast, Jean Straus and Marie-Hélène Marganne for agreeing to read the first draft of this paper, and to Todd Hickey and Maryline Parca for their valuable advice. I would also like to thank the Bancroft Library for permission to publish the text.

² T162 is not included in any of the “T-Number groups” of texts likely to have been found together in the temple enclosure or in the town, cf. E.R. O’Connell “Recontextualizing Berkeley’s Tebtynis Papyri”, in J. Frösén, T. Puroila, E. Salmenkivi (edited by), *Proceedings of the XXIVth International Congress of Papyrology, Helsinki 1–7 August 2004* (Helsinki, 2007): 816.

³ B.P. Grenfell, A.S. Hunt, E.J. Goodspeed *The Tebtynis Papyri II* (London, 1907): 316: “Acknowledgement of the repayment of a loan. Dated in the second year of Marcus and Verus (AD 161-2). Incomplete. 25 lines”.

⁴ G. Cavallo, *La scrittura greca e latina dei papiri. Una introduzione* (Pisa – Rome): 79-81.

An interesting parallel for this script can be seen in another papyrus from Tebtynis: *SB* 14.11488 (= *P. Tebt.* 2. 524 descr.) dated to 146-147.

The abbreviations and symbols present are fairly common and attested in many documentary papyri: [γε]γυμ (line 1, with the μ written as curvy stroke over the υ) for γεγυμνασιαρχηκός, δραχ' (lines 10 and 14, with a supralinear χ) for δραχμάς, ς (lines 8, 12, 23) for ἔτους, < (lines 22, 24, 25) for δραχμάς, λ (lines 22 and 25) for γίνονται, λογ^ο for λόγου (l. 24) A supralinear stroke can be seen over the ι indicating the 10th day on line 23 (and probably over ιδ on line 21, but the upper part of the letters is lost). In line 14 the scribe first wrote the symbol for δραχμάς before writing out δραχ' (the delta is written over the symbol).

The text is an acknowledgment of a series of payments of money from a priest and his brother (who was perhaps also a priest) to a man called Ptollarion. The sum was paid on the account of the *philanthropā*⁵: . λόγον φ[ι]/[λα]νθρώπων (l. 5-6). When used in reference to priests or temples, φιλόανθρωπον or φιλόανθρωπα usually signifies a revenue perceived by the priest, or a donation made to him⁶. Is the fact that a priest is in question connected to the use of the word φιλόανθρωπων? Since the priest Sarappamon is the payer, the term seems to allude to some sort of financial obligation the priest and his brother had towards Ptollarion. It is however impossible to determine with certainty the exact nature of this obligation.

In documents from Roman Egypt, the term φιλόανθρωπον can have different meanings when concerning amounts of money: administrative fees, donations, pecuniary compensations, tips, gratuities, money loans (as in *P. Stras.* 5. 386, unknown provenance, March 26th 196 [TM 18793], l. 6: ὑπὲρ φιλόανθρ[ώ]που ἐπὶ λό(γου) ἀργυρίου) and bribes (as in *SB* 14.576, Philadelphia, January 14th 43 [TM 14887]). The presence of [εἰς] λόγον “on account” could suggest that φιλόανθρωπα refers to a loan of money from Ptollarion to the two brothers⁷. Another possible interpretation is that Sarappamōn had pledged his *philanthropa*, i.e. the perquisites from his priestly duties, as a security for the payment of his debt to Ptollarion⁸.

Contrary to a common practice in this type of document, the text does not begin with the date, but with the names of the people involved in the transaction⁹. Following the order attested in parallels, we seem to have the name of the creditor in the nominative in the first line (Πτολλαρίων) and that of the debtor in the dative in the second line (Cαραπάμ[μω]νι). The central part of the first line, including the last part of the creditor’s name, is illegible, but based on [γε]γυμ(νασιαρχηκός) at the end of the same line, we could restore it as Πτολλαρίων¹⁰. The creditor, Sarapammon, is a priest. Curiously, neither one of the names seems to be followed by a patronymic. Since the debtor’s name is in the dative, we could also expect a greeting, likely χαίρειν¹¹, but it does not seem possible to read this at the end of line two.

The information concerning the payments begins in line three. We learn that Sarapammon and his brother Pa...., who has died, owed money to Ptollarion, and that the priest has fulfilled the payment obligations (or at least partially) in installments. From November/December (Ἀδριανοῦ) of the twenty-third the year of Antoninus Pius (κ[α]ρ[α] Τίτου Αἰλίου) to October/ November of the twenty-fourth year of the same emperor (161 AD), which is also the first year of Marcus Aurelius

⁵ The term φιλόανθρωπα has a very concrete meaning in this text. H.J. Bell, “Philanthropia in the Papyri of the Roman Period”, in *Hommages à Joseph Bidez et à Franz Cummont* (Brussels, 1949): 31-37, offers a survey of the concept of φιλόανθρωπία and of the various usages of φιλόανθρωπον/φιλόανθρωπα in Roman Egypt.

⁶ W. Otto, *Priester und Tempel in hellenistischen Ägypten* (Leipzig – Berlin, 1908) II : 25; H.J. Bell (n. 5): 35; F. Preisigke, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden* II (Berlin, 1925): 692-692: “Spende an die Priester”, “Priesterbezüge”.

⁷ Bell (n. 5) : 35 mentions *P. Fouad* 54 (unknown provenance, 141 – 142 [TM 20995]), in which a yearly payment of a debt is referred to as φιλόανθρωπον καθ’ ἔτος.

⁸ As pointed out by Otto (n. 6) : 25 regarding *SB* 1.5245, Soknopaiou Nesos, 13-15 (TM 9921).

⁹ Examples of repayments of loans which begin with a date: *BGU* 2. 394 (October 10th 137, Nilopolis), *P. Amh.* 2.111(August 8th 132, Herakleia), *P. Fam. Tebt.* 9 (November 22nd 107), *P. Lips.* 1.7 (January 12th 107 BC, Krokodilopolis). Some documents, however, begin directly with names of the creditor and the debtor: *BGU* 7. 1656 (August 29th – October 27th 213, Philadelphia), *P. Oxy.* 1.98 (141-142), *P. Oxy.* 14.1715 (June 25th 292).

¹⁰ See page 4, note 1.

¹¹ Attested in documents of this type, e.g.: *BGU* 7. 1656, *P. Tebt.* 2. 396 (June 25th – July 24th 396).

and Verus ([Ἄ]θῦρ τοῦ εἰκοστοῦ τετάρτου (ἔτους) / [καὶ τοῦ] πρώτου Ἀ[ντ]ωνεῖνου καὶ Ο[ὐ]ρήρου), five hundred seventy six drachmas were paid. From November / December of the first year of Marcus Aurelius and Verus, three hundred drachmas or more were paid.

The creditor demands that he not suffer any decrease in respect to the principal, interests and other amounts (ἐπεσομένων) still owed. The first part of the document is dated to the second year of Marcus Aurelius and Verus in lines 18-20 (161/162). Lines 20 to 25 were added later by the same hand: on the 14th of Pharmouthi in the second, third or fourth year (April 9th), the creditor received three hundred drachmas. On the 10th of Pakhon of the fourth year (May 5th 164)¹², he received four hundred eighty drachmas. It seems likely that the creditor kept the document and had the acknowledgements written every time the debtor paid another installment. Every installment is introduced by the adverb ὁμοίως, which refers back to the opening formula of the acknowledgement (Ἐσχ[ο]ν [π]αρά [σοῦ...]) The ink of the last line is paler, but it does not seem that the line was added later or by a different hand. Perhaps the scribe, knowing that there were only a few words left to write, did not tip his pen in the ink one more time.

The series of payments can be presented in chart form:

	Ancient Date	Modern Date	Amount
1	From Ἀδριανός of the 23 rd year of Antoninus Pius to Ἀθῦρ of the 24 th year of Antoninus (= 1 st year of Marcus Aurelius and Verus)	From November/December 160 to October/November 161	576 drachmas
2	Ἀδριανός of the 1 st of Marcus Aurelius and Verus	November/ December 161	300 drachmas
3	14 th of Φαρμουῦθι of the 2 nd , 3 rd or 4 th year of Marcus Aurelius and Verus	April 9 th 162, 163 or 164	300 drachmas
4	10 th of Παχών of the 4 th year of Marcus Aurelius and Verus	May 5 th 164	480 drachmas

As regards the third payment, it could logically be assigned to any of the three years (162, 163 or 164). However, the third date is not very probable, for it would mean that Sarapammon (and maybe his brother Pa...) would have come up with 300 drachmas in less than a month. The most likely date for the third installment would be the 9th of April 163, inasmuch as the debtor(s) would have had one year and five months to collect the necessary amount.

The payment of money loans in installments could be stipulated already in the loan agreement, as shown in P. Mert. 1.25, a loan of money from Oxyrhynchus, dated to 214 CE (TM 21299). An interesting parallel to P. Tebt. 2.523 is P. Oxy. 1.98 (141-142; TM 20757), an acknowledgement of the payment of the second and last installment (168 drachmas) of a loan of 700 drachmas¹³. A more concise witness of payments in installments is P. Col. 8. 210 (TM 17624), a receipt from the year 3 CE of unknown provenance.

There is no signature, nor is there mention of circumstances surrounding the writing of the document (if, for example, it was written in a γραφεῖον, by a professional scribe). It is possible that it was written by Ptollarion himself or by his personal secretary. In fact, the absence of information such as the name of the city or town where the document was written, the patronymics of the persons involved, mention of a register's office, and the concise nature of the text suggest that it is a personal transaction between people who knew each other and maybe did not feel the need to validate the document in a more official manner.

Except for a forgotten ι in Φαρμουῦθι (l. 21), there are no scribal errors or spelling peculiarities. Iotacism accounts for the ει in Ἀντωνεῖνου, a spelling attested very often in documents from Egypt.

¹² B.P. Grenfell, A.S. Hunt, E.J. Goodspeed seem to have failed to notice this dating.

¹³ Fifty monthly payments of 15 drachmas are also mentioned in this papyrus, but the relationship of these payments to the 700-drachmas loan is not clear.

Text:

→

1. Πτολλαρίων [vac. γε]γυμ(νασιαρχηκός)
2. Σαραπάμ[μω]γι ἱερεῖ ο . . .
3. Ἔχ[χ]ον [π]αρά [κοῦ ἀ]φ' ὧ[ν ὁ]φείλε[τι]ς
4. ἐμοὶ καὶ ὁ τ[ε]τελ[ευτ]ηκός σου
5. ἀδελφός Πα [c. 4][vac.][εἰς] λόγον φ[ι]
6. [λα]νθρώπων τ[ῶ]ν ἀ[π]ὸ μην[ός]
7. [Ἀδ]ριανοῦ τοῦ κ[γ] (ἔτους) Τίτου Αἰλίου
8. [Ἀντ]ωνείνου ἕως . [Ἀ]θὺρ τοῦ κδ (ἔτους)
9. [καὶ τοῦ] πρώτου Ἀ[ντ]ωνείνου καὶ
10. Ο[ὕ]ηρου δραχ(μάς) πεντακοσίας ἑβδο-
11. μή[κο]ντ[α] ἕξ, ὁμοίως καὶ τῶν
12. ἀπὸ μ[η]νός Ἀδρ[ια]νοῦ τοῦ α (ἔτους)
13. [Ἀντωνείνου] καὶ Οὕηρου τῶν κυρ[ίω]ν
14. [Σεβαστῶν ἐπὶ] λό[γ]ου [(δραχμάς)] δραχ(μάς) τριακο-
15. [σίας c.4] μὴ ἐλαττουμένου
16. [μου ὑπὲρ τ]ῶν κεφαλ[αί]ων καὶ
17. [τῶν τόκω]ν καὶ ἐπεσομένων
18. . . . (ἔτους) β Ἀντωνείνου καὶ
19. [Ο]ὕηρου τῶν κυρίων Σεβαστῶν
20. [Ἀ]θ[ύρ c.2] vacat
21. Καὶ ὁμοίω[ς] Φαρμοῦθ<ι> ἰδ ἕχον
22. ἄλλας ἐπὶ λό[γ]ου (δραχμάς) τρια[κ]οσίας (γίνονται) (δραχμαὶ) τ.
23. Καὶ ὁμοίως δ (ἔτους) Παχῶν ἰ ἕχον
24. [ἄ]λλας ἐπὶ λόγο(ν) (δραχμάς) τετρακοσίας ὀγδο-
25. ἦκοντα (γίνονται) (δραχμαὶ) υπ

3. Ἔχ[χ]ον slightly in *ekthesis* pap. 10. δρα^λ pap. 14. δρα^λ pap.
22. [..]γ^ου pap. 24. λογ^ο pap.

Translation:

“Ptollarion... former gymnasiarch, to Sarapammon, priest... I received from you from what you and your dead brother Pa... owe me on the account of the *philanthropa* ... from the month of Hadrianos of the 23rd year of Titus Aelius Antoninus to Hathyr of the 24th year, which is the 1st year of Antoninus and Verus, 576 drachmas, likewise from the month of Hadrianos of the 1st year of Antoninus and Verus, the lords Augusti, 300 drachmas on account...with no prejudice to me concerning the principal sums, the interests and the other amounts. In the second year of Antoninus and Verus, the lord Augusti, on the... of Hathyr.

And likewise on the 14th of Pharmouthi I received on account another 300 drachmas, and likewise on the 10th of Pakhon of the 4th year, I received on account another 480 drachmas”.

Notes :

1. Πτολλαρίων [vac. γε]γυμ(νασιαρχηκός): two gymnasiarchs by the name of Ptollarion are attested in papyri from Tebtynis from the mid-second century: Ptollarion son of Pauleinos¹⁴ cited in 20 papyri dated to the mid-second century (approximately from 144 to 176), and Ptollarion son of Ptollarion¹⁵, mentioned in SB 6.9370 from Tebtynis and dating from ca. 150 (TM 14164), who is perhaps the same gymnasiarch attested in P. Mil. Vogl. 3. 140¹⁶ (Tebtynis, May 1st 176; TM 12383). In every occurrence, they are referred to as “former gymnasiarchs” (γεγυμνασιαρχηκός).
2. Καραπάμ[μω]γι̅ ἱερεῖ: a priest named Sarapammon is attested in one document from Tebtynis: P. Tebt. 2. 390, dated to 167 (TM 13546), an acknowledgment of a loan on mortgage from Helene, daughter of Zoilos, to three brothers, Pakebkis, Sarapammon and Onnophris, sons of Onnophris, all of them priests of Tebtynis.
After ἱερεῖ, the indication of the god or the place where Sarapammon is a priest could be expected, as well as a greeting formula, most likely χαίρειν, since the name is in the dative.
3. Ἐσ[χ]ον: according to Kühnert¹⁷, ἔχειν is used in the loan agreements referring to the debtor (who has received money from the creditor), while the compound ἀπέχειν appears in documents concerning the return of loans, where it is the creditor who receives the money. This distinction however is not always made in the papyri, since ἔσχον is attested in a number of repayment documents, e.g.: BGU 1.115 (Ptolemais Euergetis, June 4th 189; TM 8887), BGU 7. 1659 (Philadelphia, third century; TM 30952), P. Fam. Tebt. 36 (June 20th 156; TM 20965).
ὀφείλε[ις]: unlike δανείζειν or παρατίθεσθαι, ὀφείλειν is not a specific term referring to a particular type of loan. The verb has the neutral meaning of “to owe” and can be used in documents concerning any type of money transaction¹⁸. Here, the traces would fit better the second person singular of the present tense, though a second person plural would be expected with the compound subject (σὺ καὶ ὁ τ[ε]τ[ε]λ[ε]υ[ε]τ[η]κός σου / ἀδελφὸς Πα . . .).
5. Πα : *exempli gratia*, Πακῆβκις: if it the person in question is Pakebkis, son of Onnophris from P. Tebt. 2. 390, the reading of τετελευτηκός on line 4 is invalidated, since Pakēbkis was still alive in 167, when P. Tebt. 2. 390 was written.
- 5.6. [εἰς] λόγον φ[ι]/[λα]νθρόπων: reading suggested to me by Rodney Ast, to whom I express my sincere thanks.
7. κ[γ] (ἔτους): probable, if not certain restoration. A one-year time period seems to be in question, since there is a twelve-month interval between the months of Ἰουλιανῶν and Ἀθύρ.
8. ἔωσ . : difficult reading. There seems to be a ligature between the lunate c and the illegible letter before [Ἄ]θῶρ. A diagonal stroke descends towards the left and finishes under the ω of ἔωσ. It could be a prolonged left leg of a λ, which could then be interpreted as the numeral 30 (“on the 30th of Pharmouthi”). It does not seem very common to note the day before the name of the month in papyri. In P. Wisc. 2.72 (TM 26687), a letter from Caecilius Gemmelus to his sister dated to the II century, we read (l. 9-10) τῆ κ/Φαρμουῦθι: “on the 20th of Pharmouthi”. The parallel may not be relevant due to the

¹⁴ P. J. Sijpesteijn, *Nouvelle liste des gymnasiarques des métropoles de l'Égypte romaine* (Zutphen, 1968), no.93.

¹⁵ Sijpesteijn (n. 14): no. 110.

¹⁶ Sijpesteijn (n. 14) : no. 202.

¹⁷ H. Kühnert, *Zum Kreditgeschäft in den hellenistischen Papyri Ägyptens bis Diokletian*, diss. (Freiburg, 1965): 141.

¹⁸ Kühnert (n. 17) : 146.

presence of the article in the dative. In SB 14. 11958 (TM 15481), a part of a billing for the works on a temple from Oxyrhynchites, dating from after November 17th 117, one reads ἕως λ' Ἀθύρ... “until the 30th of Hathyr”. In P. Münch. 3.94 (TM 12477), a contract for a money loan from Ptolemais Euergetis, dated to 98-102, the numeral of the day precedes the name of the month without preposition or article: κ Φαρμούθι “on the 20th of Pharmouthi”

9. τοῦ κδ (ἔτους) / [καὶ τοῦ] πρώτου Ἀ[ντ]ωνείνου: dating formulae in which the last year of one emperor is identified with the 1st year of another are attested, e.g., in P. Oxy. 1.98 (141-142 CE): [τοῦ] δευτέρου καὶ εἰκοστοῦ ἔτους θεοῦ Ἀδριανοῦ ὃ ἐς[τ]ι πρώτον ἔτος Ἀντωνίνου Κ[αίσαρος] τοῦ κυρίου. [καὶ τοῦ]: possible if not certain restoration, given the available space. Another possibility would be [τοῦ καὶ].
15. [cίac c.4]: One possible, but not certain restoration for the lacuna would be: [cίac (γίνονται) (δραχμαὶ) τ]. μὴ ἐλαττουμένου. This formula is often used in documents concerning money transactions, as a “protection clause” for the creditor (see Häge¹⁹ [1970]: 195-205).
16. ὑπὲρ : either περί or ὑπὲρ are suitable with the verb ἐλαττοῦμαι.
17. ἐπεσομένων: the future participle of ἐπεῖναι (Preisigke [1925] II: 534, ἔπειμι : “da sein”) is mostly attested in reference to people (e.g., τὰ ἐπεσομένα μοι τέκνα, P.Oxy. 3.495 (181-184; TM 20631); τοῖς ἐπεσομένοις ἐξ αὐτῶν δουλικοῖς ἐγγόνοις, P.Mich. 5.322a (Tebtynis, 1/11/46; TM 12132). In one occurrence the term is applied to animals (βόες δύο καὶ τὰ ἐπεσομένα τούτοις, SB 18.13168 [Pathyris, 23/03/123 BC, TM 468]) and in another, to time (τῶν ἐπεσομένων χρόνων, P.Ryl. 2.157 [Hermopolites, 18/06/135; TM 19511]). There are however some occurrences of the word referring to objects or money, including *philanthropa*, in PSI 9.1018, dated to 110: ἀγνευτικῶν καὶ πάντων λοιπῶν καὶ καρπεῶν καὶ ἐπεσομένων φιλανθρώπων. If the reading ἐπεσομένων is accepted, the word would probably refer to the installments that were still to be paid.
20. [A]θ[ῶρ c.2] : possible, if not certain restoration.
22. ἄλλας ἐπὶ [λό]γου (δραχμας) : formula attested in many receipts (e.g.: P. Oxy. 12.1522 V [after 222; TM 21898], SB 12.10895 [Diospolis Magna or Koptos, March 11th 118 BC; TM 4382]), but not in personal money loans.

¹⁹ G. Häge, “Die μὴ ἐλαττουμένου-Klausel in den Griechischen Papyri Ägyptens”, in D.H. Samuel (edited by), *Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Papyrology. Toronto, 12 – 17 August 1968*, (Toronto 1970):195-205.

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