#articleTitle

**A Document in the Bodleian Addressed to the Governor of Arcadia**

#author

Benaissa, Amin

#affiliation

University of Oxford

#email

amin.benaissa@classics.ox.ac.uk

#editionDDB

#introduction

The upper left-hand corner of a document preserving the beginnings of 16 lines, with intact upper (1.5 cm) and left-hand (c. 1.2 cm) margins. A smaller detached fragment with traces of five lines cannot be placed. The writing runs along the fibres. The back is covered by a sheet within the glass frame and is presumably blank.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The document is addressed by Aurelia Apia, apparently an inhabitant of the village of Ankyron in the Heracleopolite nome, to the office of the governor of Arcadia. It mentions a previous petition to the same authority, a priest, her husband Victor, and a previous judgement. In its phraseology, the body of the document recalls [P.Haun. 3 57](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.haun%3B3%3B57) (412–15?), which is of uncertain provenance but relates to the same province. It is an out-of-court settlement (διάλυσις) of a dispute between a *princeps officii* and a former governor of Arcadia. It opens with a similar reference to a previous petition by the former against the latter submitted to the *praefectus Augustalis*:ἐπειδὴ ἐγὼ ὁ Κύριλλος [ἐνέτυ]χ̣ον τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τοῦ κυρίου μου τοῦ μεγαλοπρ(επεστάτου) ἐπάρχου Αὐγουσταλί(ου) (3–4); cf. 5–6 below. Furthermore, it uses an identical phrase to refer to the initial decision by the *praefectus Augustalis*: ἀποφάσεως δὲ ἐξενεχθείσης (7); cf. 10 below. A crucial difference is that P.Haun. 57 is concluded between the settling parties and is not addressed to the prefect’s or current governor’s office. It is assumed, however, that the prefect would have been subsequently informed of the settlement, perhaps in a document like ours.[[2]](#footnote-2) There are, in fact, three other papyri addressed more specifically to the bureau (τάξις) of the *princeps officii* of the governor which may be cited as parallels.[[3]](#footnote-3) One group is formed of [P.Oxy. 16 1880](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B16%3B1880) (427) and [PSI 10 1114](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/psi%3B10%3B1114) (454, Oxyrhynchus?), both labelled διαλύσεις, which inform the *princeps officii* of the petitioner’s abandonment of legal proceedings against the defendant; the other is [P.Oxy. 16 1881](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B16%3B1881) (427), which declares the defendant’s intention to appear in court and refute the petitioner’s claims (ἀντίρρησις). These documents similarly begin with a reference to the claimant’s previous petition to the governor,[[4]](#footnote-4) and [P.Oxy. 1881](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B16%3B1881) and [PSI 1114](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/psi%3B10%3B1114) also mention the governor’s initial decision in a genitive absolute phrase.[[5]](#footnote-5) The Bodleian papyrus therefore probably notifies the governor’s office either of Apia’s settlement with the defendant or of her intention to proceed to a new stage of the judicial procedure.

The subject of Apia’s original complaint is uncertain. She was probably a widow (cf. 8–9 n.). [Bagnall (2004)](https://papyri.info/biblio/72883) has noted that both the frequency and range of women’s engagement in litigation drop sharply after the fourth century, and that almost all women’s petitions from this period involve either “a woman without a husband or a woman litigating with her husband.”[[6]](#footnote-6) Women’s petitions to governors or Augustal prefects also become rare in this period.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The document must postdate the creation of the province of Arcadia sometime between 386 and 398.[[8]](#footnote-8) The hand is in the so-called “Heracleopolite style” and suggests a date not much later than the middle of the fifth century; cf. e.g. [CPR 10 38](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/cpr%3B10%3B38) (420, Heracleopolis), [SPP 20 123r](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/stud.pal%3B20%3B123r) (445, Heracleopolis; BL 7.263). Characteristic features include epsilon in the shape of two superimposed curves, alpha with a narrow nose, and avoidance of latinate deltas and h-shaped etas.[[9]](#footnote-9)

According to the Bodleian’s handlist of papyri, the papyrus was “[r]eceived in exchange from the British Museum, 1896,” but there are no further details about its provenance and prior acquisition history.

#metadata

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Located: Place | Herakleopolites |
| Dimensions: height | 11.3 |
| Dimensions: width | 7.5 |
| Material | Papyrus |
| TM number | 987705 |
| HGV number | 987705 |
| ddb-filename | pylon.4.10 |
| ddb-hybrid | pylon;4;10 |
| Descriptive title | A Document in the Bodleian Addressed to the Governor of Arcadia |
| Date of text | 1. Hälfte V |
| Inventory no. | MS. Gr. class. f. 64 (P) |
| Images: online | https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/860776f8-d472-4f2d-ba26-882cf83f619f/ |
| Keywords | Brief, Aurelia Apia an NN, Eingabe, Urteil, Priester |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| MS. Gr. class. f. 64 (P) | 7.5 (w) × 11.3 (h) | First half of fifth century |
|  |  | Heracleopolite nome |

#text

<S=.grc<=

1. τῇ τάξει τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ κ̣[υρίου] [μου τοῦ λαμπροτάτου ἡγεμόνος]

2. ἐπαρχίας Ἀρκαδίας [vac.?]

3. παρὰ Αὐρηλίας Ἀπίας θυγ[ατρὸς] [ca.25]

4. τοῦ Ἡρακλεοπολίτου οἴκου [ca.30]

5. ἐπειδὴ ἐνέτυχον τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ [τοῦ κυρίου μου τοῦ λαμπροτάτου] [ἡγεμό]

6.- νος ἐπαρχίας Ἀρκαδίας Φλα̣[ουΐου] [ca.25]

7. Ἄρωνος Παύλου πρ̣εσβυτέ[ρου] [ca.27]

8. τῆς αὐτῆς Ἀγκυρώνων πρε[ca.30]

9. μένου <:μου(?)|reg|μοι:> ἀνδρὸς Οὐ ί(¨)κτορο̣[ς] [ca.30]

10. ἀποφάσεως ἐξενεχθε̣[ίσης ] [ca.27]

11. αὐτὸν χωρηγῆσαι π̣[ca.34]

12. [.2].2[.1].1ου Φ[ο]ιβάμμ̣[ων] [ca.30]

12. lost.?lin

=>

<D=.2.fragment<=

1. lost.?lin

1. [.?].1[.1].1[.?]

2. [.?][τ]εταγμέ[ν] [.?]

3. [.?]αλεστ.1[.?]

4. [.?] [ἀ]π̣ὸ ὁμο̣λ̣[ογίας] [.?]

5. [.?].1[.?]

5. lost.?lin

=>=D>

#translation

<T=.en<=

“To the office of his Highness [my lord the governor] of the province of Arcadia, from Aurelia Apia daughter [of N.N. from the village of Ankyron (?)] of the Heracleopolite household … Since I petitioned his Highness [my lord the governor] of the province of Arcadia, Flavius [N.N., *vir clarissimus*,] … Aron son of Paulus, priest … from/of the said Ankyron … my late (?) husband Victor … the judgement having been declared … that he provide … Phoebammon …”

=>=T>

#commentary

1 τῇ τάξει. Unlike [P.Oxy. 16 1880](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B16%3B1880), [P.Oxy. 16 1881](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B16%3B1881), and [PSI 10 1114](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/psi%3B10%3B1114), cited in the introduction, our document is broadly addressed to the *officium* of the governor, without specifying an individual addressee within it. Compare [BGU 3 936](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/bgu%3B3%3B936) (426, Oxyrhynchus), a surety addressed [τ]ῇ τάξι τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ κυρίω μου τοῦ μεγαλοπρεπεστάτου ̣ ̣ ̣ ̣ος ἐπαρχίας [Ἀ]ρκαδίας Φλαουίω Ἀριστονίκου Ἀλεξάνδρου (3–4).

1–2 τοῦ λαμπροτάτου ἡγεμόνος] ἐπαρχίας Ἀρκαδίας. For a list of known governors of Arcadia in the fifth century, see F. Mitthof, CPR 23 32.1 n. λαμπρότατος is the expected epithet for a *praeses Arcadiae* at this date; see B. Palme, CPR 24 17.2–3 n. The cap of the final sigma of Ἀρκαδίας is extravagantly extended over 2 cm, which suggests that nothing else is written in this line.

2 ἐπαρχίας Ἀρκαδίας. This nomenclature of the province is typical of the late fourth and fifth centuries before it was replaced by Ἀρκάδων ἐπαρχία in the sixth; see [Palme (1997)](https://papyri.info/biblio/66365) and [Benaissa (2007)](https://papyri.info/biblio/76295).

4 τοῦ Ἡρακλεοπολίτου οἴκου. I have not found other instances of *nome adjective* + οἶκος. In connection with a nome, οἶκος ought to designate a large estate (cf. *WB* s.v., nos. 6, 7) that presumably also included areas in other nomes. The reference here is most likely to the *domus divina*, i.e. the imperial estates, though in the fifth century the usual designation is (θειοτάτη) οἰκία; see [Azzarello (2012)](https://papyri.info/biblio/84497) 6. The terms, however, were later interchangeable. For the *domus divina* in the Heracleopolite nome, cf. [CPR 5 18](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/cpr%3B5%3B18) (538(?), Heracleopolis), relating to the estate of Theodora, wife of the emperor Justinian, and referring more generally to τῶν ὑπὸ τὴν Ἡρακλέους κτημάτων διαφερόντων τῷ θειοτάτῳ οἴκῳ (5–6, 7–8). Since τῆς αὐτῆς Ἀγκυρώνων in line 8 implies that the village was previously mentioned, it is tempting to restore ἀπὸ κώμης Ἀγκυρώνων *vel sim.* at the end of line 3. This would imply that the village was wholly part of the imperial domains in this period.

7 Ἄρωνος: [TM Nam 8275](http://www.trismegistos.org/name/8275). There do not seem to be any viable alternative names with such a termination in this period.

8 τῆς αὐτῆς Ἀγκυρώνων. This is one of the latest papyrological instances of this Heracleopolite village ([TM Geo 182](http://www.trismegistos.org/place/182)) along with [P.Rain.Cent. 101](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.rain.cent%3B%3B101).10 (457).[[10]](#footnote-10) SPP 3 453.2 (7th/8th cent.) should be excised from [Falivene (1998)](https://papyri.info/biblio/84497) 41: see the re-edition of this text in [SPP 3 2.5 453](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/stud.pal%3B3%3B453).

8–9 ]|μένου μοι ἀνδρός: e.g. τοῦ ἀπογενο]|μένου μοι (*l*. μου) ἀνδρός, which would imply that Apia is a widow. For the confusion of dative and genitive pronouns in the papyri, see Stolk (2015) and Stolk (2017) 185–187, 190–194.

3 ]αλεστ ̣[: probably τὸ ἀσφ]αλὲς τ ̣[. The trace before the break, a short upright (η?), excludes ἀσφ]αλεστε̣[ρ- or ἀσφ]αλεστα̣[τ-.

#bibliography

[Azzarello, G.](https://papyri.info/biblio/84497) (2012*).* Il dossier della ‘Domus divina’ in Egitto. Berlin–Boston. (<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110247190>)

[Bagnall, R.S.](https://papyri.info/biblio/72883) (2004) “Women’s Petitions in Late Antique Egypt,” in D. Feissel and J. Gascou (eds.), La pétition à Byzance. Paris: 53–60.

[Benaissa, A.](https://papyri.info/biblio/76295) (2007) “The Date of SB XII 10939 and Bishop Timotheus,” Tyche22: 216–217. (<https://doi.org/10.15661/tyche.2007.022.00>)

[Falivene, M.R.](https://papyri.info/biblio/84497) (1998). The Herakleopolite Nome. Atlanta.

(<http://sites.dlib.nyu.edu/viewer/books/isaw_asp000037/1>)

[Fournet, J.-L. and Gascou, J.](https://papyri.info/biblio/73111) (2004), “Liste des pétitions sur papyrus des Ve-VIIe siècles,” in D. Feissel and J. Gascou (eds.), La pétition à Byzance. Paris: 141–196.

[Harrauer H. and Rom, B.](https://papyri.info/biblio/96483) (1984) “Drei byzantinische Papyri,” ZPE 54: 95–100.

[Harrauer, H.](https://papyri.info/biblio/20986) (2010) Handbuch der griechischen Paläographie. Stuttgart.

[Palme, B.](https://papyri.info/biblio/66365) (1997) “SB VI 9239 und der Name der Provinz Arcadia,” Tyche 12: 258. (<https://doi.org/10.15661/tyche.1997.012.00>)

[Palme, B.](https://papyri.info/biblio/67733) (1998) “*Praesides* und *correctores* der *Augustamnica*,” AnTard6: 123–135. (<https://doi.org/10.1484/J.AT.2.300879>)

[Stolk, J.V. (2015)](https://papyri.info/biblio/96485) “Dative by Genitive Replacement in the Greek Language of the Papyri: A Diachronic Account of Case Semantics,” Journal of Greek Linguistics 15: 91–121. (<https://doi.org/10.1163/15699846-01501001>)

[Stolk, J.V. (2017)](http://www.apple.com/uk) “Dative and Genitive Case Interchange in Greek Papyri from Roman-Byzantine Egypt,” Glotta93: 182–212.

1. I thank Nikolaos Gonis for comments. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. the editor’s introd., p. 53: “Man muss annehmen, dass auf den vorliegenden Vergleich zwischen Kyrillos und Serenianos eine Mitteilung an das Gericht folgte, die darauf hinausging, dass die beiden Prozessparteien sich miteinander verständigt hätten und der Kläger (in diesem Falle beide Parteien) demgemäss die Klage fallen lasse. Damit hat allem Anschein nach jedes Gerichtsverfahren aufgehört.” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. On these and other texts with a similar address, see B. Palme, CPR 24 17 introd. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [P.Oxy. 1880](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B16%3B1880).7–8 προσελθὼν τῇ αὐτῇ ἐξουσίᾳ διὰ [λι]βέλλου δόσεως ἤτοι ἐντυχ̣ίας; [P.Oxy. 1881](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B16%3B1881).8–10 Κύρου … διὰ λιβέλλου δόσεως προσελθόντος τῇ αὐτῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τοῦ αὐτοῦ κυρίου μου τοῦ λαμπροτάτου ἡγεμόνος; [PSI 1114](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/psi%3B10%3B1114).5–6 προσελθὼ̣ν τ̣ῇ̣ ἐ̣ξ[ουσ]ί[ᾳ τοῦ αὐτοῦ κυρίου μου (?)] ἄρχοντος ᾐτιασάμην κτλ. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. P.Oxy. 1881.11 καὶ τῆς ἀποφάσεως ἐμφανισθείσης ἡμῖν τῆς βουλομένης; [PSI 1114](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/psi%3B10%3B1114).7 καὶ ἀποφάσεως [. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [Bagnall (2004)](https://papyri.info/biblio/72883) 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Of the 118 post fourth-century petitions catalogued in [Fournet and Gascou (2004)](https://papyri.info/biblio/73111), only two are addressed by women to governors, viz. P.Cair.Masp. I [67005](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.cair.masp%3B1%3B67005) and [67006r](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.cair.masp%3B1%3B67006r) (c. 568, Antinoopolis, BL 11.52), both directed to the *dux Thebaidis*. [P.Münch. 3 79](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.muench%3B3.1%3B79) (6th/7th cent., unknown provenance) is addressed to an official with the titles of *gloriosissimus* and *illustris*, who must be a pagarch (this was probably a model text). [P.Oxy. 63 4399](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B63%3B4399) (before 539, BL 13.166) implies a prior petition to the Augustal prefect. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See [Palme (1998)](https://papyri.info/biblio/67733) 127–128, 130. Arcadia is first attested in the papyri in 398 ([P.Flor. 1 66](http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.flor%3B1%3B66).2). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. On this style, see Harrauer and Rom (1984) 95–96 and [Harrauer (2010)](https://papyri.info/biblio/20986) 77–78. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. To judge from a digital image of the papyrus kindly provided by Sophie Kovarik, the editor’s anachronistic [πό]λ̣ε̣ω̣ς̣ cannot be read after Ἀνκυρ(ώνων), nor for that matter can [κώ]μ̣η̣ς̣. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)