#articleTitle

Curatores in Two Papyri from Heidelberg

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#acknowledgement

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These two fragments kept in the Papyrussammlung at the University of Heidelberg are connected by the appearance of the Greek transliteration of the Latin curator, a term found in both military and civil contexts. The first document is a receipt addressed to a beneficiarius involving the payment of a soldier’s stipendium and donativum by a military curator, while the second, a rare witness to the short reign of Pupienus and Balbinus, contains the subscription of a curator likely operating in the civil realm.

#articleHeader

**1.** Receipt Addressed to a Beneficiarius

#editionDDB

#metadata

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Located: Place | Ankyronon |
| Dimensions: height | 6 |
| Dimensions: width | 10.3 |
| Material | Papyrus |
| TM number | 987701 |
| HGV number | 987701 |
| ddb-filename | pylon.4.5\_1 |
| ddb-hybrid | pylon;4;5\_1 |
| Descriptive title | Receipt Addressed to a Beneficiarius |
| Date of text | Mitte II - Mitte III |
| Inventory no. | P.Heid. Inv. G. 809 |
| Images: online | <https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/p_g_809> |
| Keywords | Quittung, Benficiarius, Lohn, Geld |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [P.Heid. Inv. G. 809](https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.41831) | 6 (h) × 10.3 (w) | [Ankyron](https://www.trismegistos.org/place/182) |
| Acquired in 1914 |  | Mid 2nd – mid 3rd cent. |

The medium brown papyrus, written along the fibers with black ink, preserves part of the top margin (1 cm) and right edge. The papyrus was rolled, leaving six fold lines roughly equidistant from one another. The sheet broke along the fold line at the left. It is unclear how much is missing at the left, although probably no more than half the sheet, given typical letter widths of 10-20 cm in the Roman period.[[1]](#footnote-1) Accounting for a left margin, then, the majority of each line should be preserved, and possible supplements to lines 3 and 6 would leave only 5-6 letters missing in the first five lines. The text is written in a competent ligatured hand of the middle of the second to the middle of the third century. The back contains traces, perhaps of an address.

The papyrus was acquired by Friedrich Bilabel in the winter or early spring of 1914 while participating in the so-called ‘Badische Grabungen’ at El-Hîbeh, the ancient Herakleopolite village of [Ankyron](https://www.trismegistos.org/place/182).[[2]](#footnote-2) Given the shared provenance, temporal proximity, and military matters, we would not exclude a connection to the Heidelberg papyrus [P.Vet.Aelii 6](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.vet.aelii%3B%3B6) and [7](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.vet.aelii%3B%3B7), which was “found in the ruins of the houses of Ankyron during the ‘Badische Grabungen’ in or about 1914”[[3]](#footnote-3) and is associated with the archive of Aelius Sarapammon ([TM Arch 532](http://www.trismegistos.org/archive/532)). In any case, the receipt probably once belonged to the papers of a soldier who settled in Akyronon after retirement, perhaps from the Legio II Traiana, the unit to which both Aelius Sarapammon and his fellow local veteran Aelius Syrion ([TM Arch 533](https://www.trismegistos.org/archive/533)) belonged.

The document is framed as a letter to a beneficiarius and mentions the receipt of the writer’s stipendium and donativum through a curator (ll. 3-4) and a loan (l. 5). The reference to military pay is tantalizing, as little is known of its administration and the source of funds (see most recently Claytor, P.Jördens 13, introduction);[[4]](#footnote-4) the present document highlights the role played by curatores in distributing funds to soldiers (cf. Mitthof, [P.Bingen 106](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.bingen%3B%3B106)-[107](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.bingen%3B%3B107), introduction, and [106](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.bingen%3B%3B106).1-2 n.). Given the lacuna at the left and lack of parallels, the connection between the soldier’s pay and the loan is unclear, but they ought to be related to one another, as it is difficult to imagine a lacuna large enough to encompass an amount of money in line 4. One possibility is that the soldier took a loan from the beneficiarius to cover expenses before pay day.

#text

<S=.grc

<=

1. [.?]ς̣ Γ̣ε̣[ca.5] β[εν]εφικιαρίῳ πλεῖστα̣

2. χαίρειν.

3. [.?] π̣αρὰ Ἑρμίνου κουράτορος ἐκ̣ τοῦ

4. [.?] ὀ̣ψωνίου καὶ τοῦ <:δωνατίβου|reg|δωνατιβίου:> μ̣ο̣υ̣

5. [.?]ε̣ί̣ληφα π̣αρὰ σοῦ εἰς χρῆσιν ε.1[.2-3]

6. [.?].2[.2] ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς τ̣[.2-3]

6. lost.?lin

=>

#translation

<T=.en<=

“NN to Ge…, beneficiarius, many greetings. (I have received) from Herminos, curator from the … for my stipendium and donativum … I have received from you for an interest-bearing (?) loan of a principal (?) of x silver drachmas …”

=>=T>

#commentary

1 The horizontal stroke just after the break likely comes from the end of sigma, that is, the end of the sender’s name in the nominative. If the reconstruction considered below in ll. 5-6 n. is correct, there would be space for only 5-6 letters; in this case, both sender and recipient would be identified by a single name. The first letter of the beneficiariusʼ name seems to be a gamma but tau cannot be ruled out. The lack of gentilicium Aurelius is not decisive as to a date before the Constitutio Antoniniana of 212.

Beneficiarii were senior soldiers tasked with a variety of administrative duties throughout the provinces: see generally [Ott 1995](https://papyri.info/biblio/14114) and [Nelis-Clément 2000](https://papyri.info/biblio/16112). In Egypt, they are often found as the addressees of petitions, but there are no other examples of their being addressed in a receipt of this sort. For a new receipt addressed to the strategos by a beneficiarius and further discussion of their roles in Roman Egypt, see the introduction to P.Jördens 13.

3 A small lacuna (cf. l. 6 n.) would render [ἀπέχω] or [ἀπέσχον] almost certain, but [ὁμολογῶ εἰληφέναι] cannot be ruled out. For the kappa of ἐκ̣, cf. β[εν]εφικιαρίῳ in l. 1.

A certain Herminos is possibly attested as a κουράτωρ in three ostraka found at [Pselkis](http://www.trismegistos.org/place/1949), in Nubia, which date more-or-less to the same period as our papyrus ([Rom.Mil.Rec. 78, no. 4.5-6](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/rom.mil.rec%3B1%3B78_4), [no. 34.1](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/rom.mil.rec%3B1%3B78_34), and [no. 60.3](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/rom.mil.rec%3B1%3B78_60)), although the readings are uncertain and in two instances the name Herminos is connected with Tyrannos.[[5]](#footnote-5) Although detachments of the Legio II Traiana (the possible unit of the soldier acknowledging receipt here: see introduction) are attested at Pselkis,[[6]](#footnote-6) we do not see any solid grounds for connecting our Herminos with the curator there.

3-4 It is unclear to us whether ἐκ̣ τοῦ should be taken with the title κουράτορος (e.g ἐκ̣ τοῦ | [πραισιδίου], cf. [O.Claud. 2 384](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/o.claud%3B2%3B384).5; [O.Did. 430](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/o.did%3B%3B430).4-5 and [462](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/o.did%3B%3B462).11; [O.Krok. 1 64](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/o.krok%3B1%3B64).9 and [100](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/o.krok%3B1%3B100).10; [Criscuolo 2010](https://papyri.info/biblio/78042), ll. 8-9) or with the next line.

4 ὀ̣ψωνίου καὶ τοῦ δωνατιβίου μ̣ο̣υ̣. The ending of δωνατιβίου was probably influenced by the previous genitive ending; the spelling with beta is found twice elsewhere: δωνατίβον at [O.Claud. 2 258](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/o.claud%3B2%3B258).5 (Raima, mid 2nd cent.) and at [P.Vet.Aelii 10](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.vet.aelii%3B%3B10).11 (Ankyron, 222-255): ἐ]κ̣ χρησιμότητος [ ca. 5 ]ο̣τε δωνατ[ί]β̣ω[ν κα]ὶ ὀψωνίω̣ν κ̣α̣[ὶ τ]ῶν [.

This latter passage is the only parallel for the pairing of ὀψώνιον and δωνατίβον, where ὀψώνιον must be a Greek rendering of Latin stipendium, the regular salary that soldiers received on 1 January, 1 May, and 1 September;[[7]](#footnote-7) later, [P.Panop.Beatty 2](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.panop.beatty%3B%3B2) (300) makes frequent use of the transliteration στιπένδιον and at col. iii.54-55, we find the equivalent pairing, δω]νατίουων καὶ στιπενδίων. Donativa were initially irregular payments to groups of soldiers on special occasions, such as imperial birthdays or anniversaries, which over the course of the third century became a regular form of remuneration.[[8]](#footnote-8) They were certainly given to the Praetorian Guard from the beginning and likely to legionaries as well, but it remains debated whether and when auxiliary soldiers received them before the third century.[[9]](#footnote-9) References in papyri are rare, especially before the Tetrarchy: besides [P.Vet.Aelii 10](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.vet.aelii%3B%3B10) and [P.Panop.Beatty](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.panop.beatty%3B%3B2) 2 cited above, we find reference in [O.Claud. 2 258](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/o.claud%3B2%3B258).5 (middle 2nd cent.); [SB 22 15794](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/sb%3B22%3B15794).7 and 10 (301, restored in both lines); [P.Oxy. 31 2561](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B31%3B2561).14 (305); [P.Oxy. 7 1047](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B7%3B1047).4 (after 324); and [P.Oxy. 63.4367](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy%3B63%3B4367).4 and 6 (325-337).

5-6 The phraseology in these lines does not find precise parallel, as εἰς χρῆσιν is a fairly rare collocation, but cf. [P.Leid.Inst. 1 26](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.leid.inst%3B1%3B26).4-6 (1st cent.), ὁμολογῶι ἔχειν π̣αρὰ σοῦ εἰς χρῆσιν ἀργυ̣ρ̣ί̣ο̣υ δραχμὰς …, and [P.Neph. 32](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.neph%3B%3B32).7-9 (344), ὁμολογῶ ἐ̣σ̣χ̣η̣κέναι παρὰ σοῦ εἰς χρῆσιν ἀργυρίου Σεβαστῶν ν̣[ο]μίσματος κεφαλαίου τάλαντα… Here, we have the perfect indicative of ἔχω (perhaps prefixed). The epsilon following χρῆσιν suggests the possibility that it was defined as ἔντοκον, an adjective that would have extended into the next line, e.g. ἔν̣[το|κον … ], given the space. At least one more word came before ἀργυρίου in l. 6, whose remnants are the top of a curved stroke and the top of a hasta. Putting these clues together, we consider εἰς χρῆσιν ἔν̣[το|κον κεφαλ]α̣ί̣[ου] ἀργυρίου δραχμάς a reasonable supplement, which would mean some eight letters are missing at the left of l. 6 and five or six at the beginning of the previous lines.

#articleHeader

# 2. Document with a Subscription by a Curator

#editionDDB

#metadata

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Located: Place | unbekannt |
| Dimensions: height | 7 |
| Dimensions: width | 11 |
| Material | Papyrus |
| TM number | 987702 |
| HGV number | 987702 |
| ddb-filename | pylon.4.5\_2 |
| ddb-hybrid | pylon;4;5\_2 |
| Descriptive title | Document with a Subscription by a Curator |
| Date of text | Ende Juni – Mitte September 238 |
| Inventory no. | P.Heid. Inv. G. 175 |
| Images: online | <https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/p_g_175> |
| Images: printed |  |
| Keywords | Datierung, curator |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [P.Heid. Inv. G. 175 recto](https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.66834) | 7 (h) × 11 (w) | Provenance unknown |
| Acquired in 1897 from K. Reinhardt Late June – mid September, 238 CE |  | Late June – mid September, 238 |

The medium brown papyrus preserves the lower left part of a document with generous margins at the left and bottom, written along the fibers with black ink. A kollesis runs down the left margin. The first three lines are more fragmentary than the last two, which are approximately half preserved based on the reconstruction of the dating formula in the previous lines. The back contains traces of one line ending in η̣ topped by an overstroke, in addition to a trace below this line and traces at the top and right.

The date is secured by Καιλίου Καλ̣[ουίνου in the first preserved line, pointing to the short reign of the Senate-appointed emperors Pupienus and Balbinus, together with Gordian Caesar, the future emperor Gordian III. The last attestation of Gordian I and II, dates to 20 June, 238 ([SB 18 13153](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/sb%3B18%3B13153)), while the elevation of the new emperors is known as far as Thebes a month later on 21 July ([O.Leid. 259](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/o.leid%3B%3B259)). Pupienus and Balbinus are still recorded on 8 September ([SPP 20 51](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/stud.pal%3B20%3B51))[[10]](#footnote-10), while the first indication of Gordian III’s sole rule dates to 21 September ([P.Vindob. G 25765](http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/RZ00014300) published in [Wessely 1887](https://papyri.info/biblio/96519?q=Die+Daten+griechischer+Papyrus+aus+r%25C3%25B6mischer+)). Our papyrus therefore dates to sometime between late June and mid September, 238 and joins the short list of papyrological attestations of what tradition holds to be a 99-day period of rule in the tumultuous Year of the Six Emperors.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Little remains of the document itself, but it appears to have been a submission of some sort (cf. l. 5), which was signed by a curator (l. 7 with n.).

#text

<S=.grc

<=

1. lost.?lin

1. [((ἔτους)) <:<#α=1#>|alt|<#β=2#>:> Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Μάρκου Κλωδίου Πουπιηνοῦ]

2. [Μαξίμου Εὐσεβοῦς Εὐτυχοῦς Σεβαστοῦ καὶ Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Δεκίμου]

3. Καιλίου Καλ̣[ουίνου Βαλβείνου Εὐσεβοῦς Εὐτυχοῦς Σεβαστοῦ καὶ Μάρκου]

4. Ἀντω̣[ν]ί̣[νου Γο]ρ̣[διανοῦ τοῦ ἱερωτάτου Καίσαρος] [.?]

5. $m2 ἐπιδ.1[.1].1κ̣.2ε̣.1το̣.1[.1].1[.?]

6. $m3 (Αὐρήλ(ιος)) Μῶρος ὁ καὶ Λεωνίδης [.?]

7. $m4 ὁ καὶ Ἀσκληπιάδης κουράτωρ ἐπηκολού̣[θηκα][.?]

=>

#translation

<T=.en<=

“(…) in the first/second year of the Emperor Caesar Marcus Clodius Pupienus Maximus Pius Felix Augustus and Emperor Caesar Decimus Caelius Calvinus Balbinus Pius Felix Augustus and Marcus Antonius Gordianus the most sacred Caesar (month, day) … Aurelius Moros alias Leonides … I, NN alias Asklepiades, curator, have concurred.”

=>=T>

#commentary

1-4 The reconstruction here is exempli gratia, based on [O.Leid. 259](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/o.leid%3B%3B259). For the titulature of Pupienus, Balbinus, and Gordian III, see [Bureth 1964](https://papyri.info/biblio/6514): 112 with updated readings and discussion in [Rea 1972](https://papyri.info/biblio/49082?q=Rea+1972), especially p. 3, ad ll. 2-3.

4 Ἀντω̣[ν]ί̣[νου Γο]ρ̣[διανοῦ: only the descenders of the last two dotted letters are preserved, crossing into the following line.

5 Possibly ἐπιδε̣δ̣ώ̣κ̣α̣μ̣ε̣ν̣ τὸ̣… The vertical, partially-abraded stroke following the first delta appears to be the descending iota of Ἀντω̣[ν]ί̣[νου in the previous line. A clearer descender is then found before the kappa, which we assign to the rho of Γο]ρ̣[διανοῦ. The rounded letter after the lacuna has a similar shape to the epsilon at line beginning.

6 An Aurelius Moros alias Leonides is otherwise unknown. On double names in Roman Egypt, at the peak of their popularity in this period, see [Broux 2015](https://papyri.info/biblio/85205?q=broux+2015).

7 ὁ καὶ Ἀσκληπιάδης κουράτωρ ἐπηκολού̣[θηκα: [PSI 15 1561](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/psi%3B15%3B1561) (Oxy. [?], 287-299 CE), a fragmentary record of proceedings before the prefect, affords the only exact parallel: κο]υ̣ρά̣τωρ ἐπηκολούθηκα (l. 25). Given that this case involves a refused nomination to the liturgical office of kosmetes, a cessio bonorum, and a curator (l. 21), the editors are surely right to see the individual signing at the bottom to be a civil-law curator rather than a military official (l. 25 n.). In our papyrus, the clues are fewer, but since double names are rare in the military sphere ([Broux 2015](https://papyri.info/biblio/85205?q=broux+2015): 97-100), we rather expect a civil context here as well. On civil curatorship, see [Taubenschlag 1955](https://papyri.info/biblio/5279): 157-181 and on the various uses of the verb ἐπακολουθέω, found in both administrative and private subscriptions, see Neues Fachwörterbuch, [s.v.](https://www.organapapyrologica.net/nfwb/*%25E1%25BC%2590%25CF%2580%25CE%25B1%25CE%25BA%25CE%25BF%25CE%25BB%25CE%25BF%25CF%2585%25CE%25B8%25CE%25AD%25CF%2589)

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1. [Sarri 2018](https://papyri.info/biblio/95860?q=sarri): Appendix II. On the format of letters, see [Sarri 2018](https://papyri.info/biblio/95860?q=sarri): 115-120. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See [Habermann and Fuchs 2014](https://papyri.info/biblio/95278?q=habermann+and+fuchs) for a detailed account of the excavations. On the village of Ankyron and its name (generally called Ankyronon in our period), see [Falivene 1998](https://papyri.info/biblio/15230): 39-43. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [Sänger 2013](https://www.trismegistos.org/arch/archives/pdf/532.pdf): 1. For another military papyrus recently published from these excavations, though earlier in date, see [P.Heid. G. 826](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/pylon%3B3%3B1) published in [Deac 2023](https://papyri.info/biblio/96393?q=pylon). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For other recent documents involving military salary and other payments, see the Latin receipt [P.Mich. inv. 3890b](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/zpe%3B224%3B253) published in [Bernini and Claytor 2022](https://papyri.info/biblio/96317) and [P.Lund. inv. 213](https://papyri.info/ddbdp/pylon%3B1%3B12r) published in [Deac 2022](https://papyri.info/biblio/96113?q=pylon). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. On this group of ostraka, see [Mitthof 2001](https://papyri.info/biblio/70337): 307-313 and [Cuvigny 2021](https://papyri.info/biblio/95999): 329, 334-335. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. E.g. [I.Dakke 28](https://www.trismegistos.org/text/106293). On the units stationed in Nubia, see [Speidel 1988](https://papyri.info/biblio/59527?q=speidel+ANRW), who also notes (p. 777) the centurions of the Legio II Traiana attested as curatores of the cohors I Flavia Cilicum, one of the three cohorts that made up the garrison of the southern border. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [Speidel 2009](https://papyri.info/biblio/78341?q=Roman+army+pay+scales) [1992]: 349-350; [Speidel 2014](https://papyri.info/biblio/96516?q=Roman+Army+Pay+Scales+Revisited): 53; generally on stipendia: [Phang 2008](https://papyri.info/biblio/96471?q=phang+2008): 166-174. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [Hebblewhite 2017](https://papyri.info/biblio/96472?q=hebblewhite): 72-84. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. [Haynes 2013](https://papyri.info/biblio/96046): 47 and [Campbell 1984](https://papyri.info/biblio/10418): 168. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. This papyrus has deteriorated since publication, but a high-quality plate can be consulted in [Wessely 1887](https://papyri.info/biblio/96519?q=Die+Daten+griechischer+Papyrus+aus+r%25C3%25B6mischer+): Tafel 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. On the chronology of 238, see [Rea 1972](https://papyri.info/biblio/49082?q=Rea+1972) and now the thorough analysis of [Strasser 2016](https://papyri.info/biblio/96509?q=La+Chronologie+de+la+crise+de+238) building on earlier discussions (Annexe 3 contains papyrological attestations of regnal dating from this year). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)