

XII. An Emendation to *PCol. Inv. 65*

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Under the title "A Lease of an Olive Grove" Dr. Sarah B. Porges published in *TAPA* 92 (1961), 469–80, a papyrus of 300 A.D. in the collection of Columbia University. The document is interesting from several points of view, particularly for its detailed listing of the operations performed in olive culture. The following brief contribution to an improved reading of the text and understanding of the technical terminology is based on a transcript of the papyrus which the late William L. Westermann asked me to make in 1937.

A comparison of the two transcripts made almost a quarter of a century apart reveals once again the loss that is often suffered through physical damage or fading of ink when the publication of papyri is long delayed. Dr. Porges marks as doubtful or damaged a total of 44 letters which are clear in my copy. And she encloses within square brackets, as having disappeared completely, 10 letters of which traces were still visible in 1937; most important of these is the date in the last line, where I was able to read *Μεχέι[ρ]* ι.:

My main point, however, concerns the last word of line 18, about the reading of which Dr. Porges expresses serious doubt before proceeding to a lengthy discussion of what would be implied if the word were (as she gives it) *περισκαλισμούς*. My reading at this point is *περιφαιλισμός*, and this reading is confirmed by Professor J. F. Gilliam, who kindly examined the papyrus at my request in November, 1962. The word *περιφαιλισμός* is new, but the labor it denotes is clear both from its obvious etymology and from two passages in *Geoponica* which describe the work, using—once with *κύκλω*—the simple verb *φαιλόω*, "to excavate in the shape of a *φιάλη*." The two passages, dealing with the planting and care of olive trees, read as follows:

Georponica

Translation

9.5.7:

ἐθήσομεν δὲ αὐτὸ τῇ γῇ ὡς ὑπερέ-
χειν δ' δακτύλους, καὶ ἐνταῦθα τὸν
βόθρον φιαλώσαντες, ὡς προεῖρηται,
πρὸς ὑποδοχὴν τῶν ὀμβρῶν.

And we plant it (i.e. the shoot) in
the soil so that it sticks up four
fingers, and then we scoop out the
basin, as said above, to catch the
rains.

9.10.2:

δεῖ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα εὐθέως ποιεῖσθαι
τὴν τῆς γῆς περίχωσιν, περιχων-
νύοντας ἀπὸ ρίζων δηλονότι ἕως
διπαλαισטיαίου ὕψους, τὰ τε κύκλῳ
τῆς περιχώσεως φιαλοῦν, πρὸς τὴν
τῶν ὀμβρίων ὑδάτων ὑποδοχὴν.

After this one should at once
make a barrier of earth all around,
heaping the earth round to a
height (from the roots, of course)
of two palms, and then scoop out
in the circle of the barrier a basin
to catch the rain waters.

Following Grenfell and Hunt, Dr. Porges accepts (475) the equation *γύρωσις* = *ablaqueatio*. If the various Greek terms for digging, hoeing, etc., did in fact have specific Latin equivalents, *περιφιαλισμός* asserts, it seems to me, the strongest claim to synonymy with *ablaqueatio*. The basic elements of the two words evoke pretty much the same image (*φιάλη*, a basin; *laqueus*, a hollow), and there is a striking concinnity between the descriptions of *περιφιαλισμός* quoted above and the description of *ablaqueatio* in Palladius, *RR* 2.1: “*ablaqueandae sunt vites . . . id est circa vitis codicem dolabra terram diligenter aperire et . . . velut lacus efficere, ut solis teporibus et imbris provocentur.*”