

ΧΜΓ (ϞΘ) in Late Antique Documentary Papyri from the Hermopolites

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A SEQUENCE of three Greek letters, ΧΜΓ, began to appear in Late Antiquity throughout the ancient Mediterranean world on a wide range of media, including papyri, amphora necks, door lintels, brick stamps, graffiti, funerary inscriptions, amulets, and more.¹ The bibliography on this is extensive, but there is little consensus about the interpretation of the letters, and scholars continue to debate their origin and meaning. Over the past 150 years, many proposals have been put forward.² The two leading interpretations regard the symbol as either an acrostic (the initial letters of three names or words) or an isopsephism (a numerical value that corresponds to another word or phrase with an equal numeric value).

Proponents of the view that the letters are an acrostic have suggested several possible meanings, including Χριστὸς Μιχαήλ

¹ B. Nongbri, “The Lord’s Prayer and ΧΜΓ: Two Christian Papyrus Amulets,” *HThR* 104 (2011) 59–68, at 66.

² For an overview of older interpretations see W. K. Prentice, “ΧΜΓ, A Symbol of Christ,” *CP* 9 (1914) 410–416; for the state of affairs in the mid twentieth century see J.-O. Tjäder, “Christ, Our Lord, Born of the Virgin Mary (ΧΜΓ and VDN),” *Eranos* 68 (1970) 148–190. Modern discussions with full bibliographies may be found in Nongbri, *HThR* 104 (2011) 66–68; L. H. Blumell, *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus* (Leiden 2012) 46–48; G. Németh, “Jesus in Ancient Pagan Magic: The Anna Perenna Drawings,” in G. Bąkowska-Czerner et al. (eds.), *The Wisdom of Thoth: Magical Texts in Ancient Mediterranean Civilisations* (Oxford 2015) 43–48; T. de Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian: Artefacts, Scribes, and Contexts* (Oxford 2017) 64–66.

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Γαβριήλ,³ Χριστὸς μάρτυς γένηται,⁴ Χριστὸν Μαρία γεννᾷ,⁵ and most recently Χριστὸς Μονογεννητός.⁶

Those who interpret the symbol as an isopsephism point out that the letters ΧΜΓ have a numeric value of 643 (600+40+3), which corresponds to the numeric value of several Greek phrases. The most widely accepted resolution of ΧΜΓ is θεὸς βοηθός (9+5+70+200+2+70+8+9+70+200 = 643).⁷ As evidence supporting isopsephism, several scholars have noted that it is often paired with ϘΘ (90+9 = 99), a well-known isopsephism equivalent to ἀμήν (1+40+8+50 = 99).⁸

We appear still to be far from reaching a widely accepted interpretation of the meaning of ΧΜΓ, whichever precise significance is attributed to it. There is general agreement, however, that it served as a Christian catchword or marker. Furthermore, a growing number of scholars are open to the interpretation that ΧΜΓ may have held different meanings at different times, in

³ G. B. de Rossi, "D'un singolare bollo di mattone trovato nell'emporio romano," *BACrist* SER. II 1 (1870) 7–32.

⁴ A. Gostoli, "Una nuova ipotesi interpretativa della sigla cristiana ΧΜΓ," *StPap* 22 (1983) 9–14; G. Robinson, "ΚΜΓ and ΘΜΓ for ΧΜΓ," *Tyche* 1 (1986) 175–177.

⁵ Prentice, *CP* 9 (1914) 410–416.

⁶ R. Tomlin, "The Dipinti and Graffiti," in A. Poulter (ed.), *The Transition to Late Antiquity on the Lower Danube: Excavations and Survey at Dichin* (Oxford 2019) 444.

⁷ See e.g. S. R. Llewelyn, "The Christian Symbol ΧΜΓ, an Acrostic or an Isopsephism?" *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* 8 (1998) 156–168; W. Tabbernee, "Epigraphy: Clandestine and Crypto-Christian," in P. Corby Finney (ed.), *The Eerdmans Encyclopedia of Early Christian Art and Archaeology* I (Grand Rapids 2017) 479.

⁸ On ϘΘ see e.g. H. Leclercq, "Isopsépie," *DACL* 7.2 (1927) 1603–1606; L. Robert, "Épigrammes de Syrie," *Hellenica* XI–XII (Paris 1960) 310–311; L. Vidman, "Koppa Theta = Amen in Athen," *ZPE* 16 (1975) 215–216; T. C. Skeat, "A Table of Isopsephisms (P.Oxy. XLV.3239)," *ZPE* 31 (1978) 45–54; S. R. Llewelyn, "ΣΔ, a Christian Isopsephism?" *ZPE* 109 (1995) 125–127, and *New Documents* 8 (1998) 156–168; F. Bovon, "Names and Numbers in Early Christianity," *NTS* 47 (2001) 267–288.

various geographical areas, or among different social groups.⁹

While the meaning of the XMF letters has been widely discussed, much less attention has been given to their diachronic and synchronic distribution across various media, including papyri. The present article aims to fill this research gap to a certain degree, by concentrating on the occurrences of XMF in Hermopolite documentary papyri,¹⁰ which were the object of my research in the NOTAE project.¹¹ This nome is particularly well-suited for conducting such an analysis. On the one hand, the papyri from this region are dated to all centuries of Late Antiquity,¹² allowing for a reliable reconstruction of the chronology of symbol use. On the other hand, it provides the largest number of documents with XMF overall.¹³ Additionally, as will be demonstrated below, regional distinctions can be particularly well observed in the Hermopolites.¹⁴

⁹ E.g. P. Perdritz, “Isopséphie,” *REG* 17 (1904) 359–360; Tjäder, *Eranos* 68 (1970) 148–150; T. Derda, “Some Remarks on the Christian Symbol XMF,” *Jfwp* 22 (1992) 27; Nongbri, *HThR* 104 (2011) 68; R. Ast and J. Lougovaya, “The Art of Isopsephism in the Greco-Roman World,” in A. Jördens (ed.), *Ägyptische Magie und ihre Umwelt* (Wiesbaden 2015) 90; Németh, in *The Wisdom of Thoth* 46–47; De Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian* 66.

¹⁰ In the future I hope to extend in-depth research on XMF group to other Egyptian regions as well.

¹¹ See <https://notae-project.digilab.uniroma1.it/>.

¹² Other regions with XMF attestations, such as the Antinoopolites or Aphrodito—known primarily thanks to Dioskoros’ archive (TM Arch ID: 72, www.trismegistos.org/archive/72), dated to the 6th century, and, for Aphrodito, also the archive of Phoibammon son of Triadelphos (TM Arch ID: 193, www.trismegistos.org/archive/193), dated to the late 6th–first half of the 7th century—lack this characteristic. This, in turn, makes it impossible to determine the presence of this symbol in earlier centuries there.

¹³ For details see below and Tables 1 and 2. The second region in terms of the number of XMF attestations, spanning all centuries of Late Antiquity, is the Oxyrhynchites, with 59 Greek documents, 29 of which are securely dated.

¹⁴ In contrast e.g. to the Oxyrhynchites, where no chronological narrowing of XMF use or specific accompanying symbols has been observed.

The analysis presented below is based on both Greek and Coptic papyri from this nome, as both were produced in the same world, often by the same people.¹⁵ It should be noted that the research concentrates primarily on precisely dated documents (mainly contracts, as well as a few receipts) that offer reliable data, which are far fewer in Coptic than in Greek,¹⁶ while account will also be taken of documents dated only to a specific century by palaeography¹⁷ or other internal evidence (e.g. letters, receipts, lists). The analysis is not limited solely to notarial deeds, which are generally dated, as this would have restricted the ability to compare the typology of Hermopolite papyri containing XMT with those from other geographical contexts, as well as to identify the particular ways in which this symbol was used in various types of documents.¹⁸

While this paper does not aim to provide an exhaustive analysis of the occurrences of XMT in documentary papyri—

¹⁵ R. S. Bagnall, *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East* (Berkeley 2011) 75–93; J.-L. Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic: Egyptian versus Greek in Late Antiquity* (Princeton 2020) 20, 82–89.

¹⁶ The majority of published Coptic documents are letters, which are usually undated, whereas legal documents are far less common. Only a small number of the latter date to the second half of the 6th-early 7th century, while the majority originate from after the Arab conquest, specifically from the mid-7th to the end of the 8th century. See T. S. Richter, “Koptische Rechtsurkunden als Quellen der Rechtpraxis im byzantinischen und frühislamischen Ägypten,” in C. Gastgeber (ed.), *Quellen zur byzantinischen Rechtspraxis* (Vienna 2010) 43, 45; Bagnall, *Everyday Writing* 76–77; Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic* 20–21, 24, 40–42, 76–77. For a recent list of early Coptic legal documents see Fournet 162–171.

¹⁷ It is more difficult to place Coptic texts in a temporal framework than Greek ones, due to the challenges of dating based on palaeography. The dates proposed by editors are often very broad, with a range of two centuries. See Richter, in *Quellen zur byzantinischen Rechtspraxis* 43 n.24.

¹⁸ E.g. in the Paternmouthis archive from Syene, the XMT group appears among Greek papyri only on *diabysis*, a practice not attested in other regions. See L. Briasco and A. Skalec, *L'archivio di Paternmouthis. Scrivere i documenti nella Syene tardoantica* (Rome 2024) 127–131.

something difficult to achieve in a single article¹⁹—it does not shy away from references to practices in other regions.²⁰

Diachronic analysis

In the Greek documentary papyri from Egypt, XΜΓ appears in one of two contexts: either centered above the first line of documents and letters²¹ or as part of subscriptions (i.e. above, before, or after *hypographai*, witness subscriptions, and *completiones*).²² Additionally, Coptic papyri have made it possible to observe yet another location, namely, as the sole text on the verso of letters (see below). In the Hermopolites, except for one Greek document²³ and Coptic letters, XΜΓ appears regularly at the top

¹⁹ Even a general analysis conducted for the purposes of this article has allowed for the observation of regional differences in the use of XΜΓ. For example, in the Oxyrhynchites it appears at the top of Greek documents from the early 5th century to the early 7th. In the Arsinoites, we do not have Greek notarial deeds that can be definitively attributed to this nome and feature XΜΓ at their opening, but XΜΓ does appear in this region in connection with *completiones*.

²⁰ The author has reviewed all Greek attestations of XΜΓ available on the papyri.info website for comparative purposes. In the case of Coptic documentation, the analysis of the material—hindered by the lack of a database containing all published Coptic documents—was focused on papyri from the Hermopolites. However, for comparative purposes, all volumes of *SB Kopt* as well as a large portion of documents from Thebes were reviewed.

²¹ See e.g. J. Herrmann, *Studien zur Bodenpacht im Recht der gräco-ägyptischen Papyri* (Munich 1958) 46; F. Mitthof, *CPR XXIII* (Vienna 2002) p.217; Nongbri, *HThR* 104 (2011) 47–48; A. Benaissa, “A Lease of Crops by a Soldier of the *Mauri Scrutarii*,” *Tyche* 29 (2014) 17–22, at 19.

²² This issue itself deserves a more in-depth analysis. So far, only XΜΓ accompanying notarial *completiones* has been the subject of interest. Sophie Kovarik has demonstrated that this element typically appears in Arsinoite and Herakleopolite notarial subscriptions, while it is basically absent in Oxyrhynchite *completiones*: “The Evolution of the Notarial Signature in Late Antique Egypt: A Diachronic Comparison of the Middle Egyptian Evidence,” in A. Ghignoli et al. (eds.), *Segni, sogni, materie e scrittura dall’Egitto tardoantico all’Europa carolingia* (Rome 2023) 71–118, at 91–92.

²³ *BGU XII* 2194, a sixth-century receipt, features XΜΓ in line 5, placed

of the documents, and it is on this position that this article will focus in the first place.

In total, 68 Greek documentary papyri from the Hermopolites feature the letters ΧΜΓ at their top. Of these, 38 are precisely dated (contracts and a few receipts), while the remaining 30 lack exact dates (letters, accounts, lists, and receipts). To this list, five Coptic papyri can be added, of which only one is dated.

A detailed division of these documents, categorized by the certainty of their dates, is provided in Table 1 (certainly dated) and Table 2 (not certainly dated). The instances of ΧΜΓ significantly outnumber other Christian symbols found at the top of precisely dated Hermopolite documents.²⁴ This observation supports the thesis that the ΧΜΓ symbol was a typical marker for the top of contracts and other documents in Late Antiquity, at least in the Hermopolite nome.

Diachronic analysis suggests that ΧΜΓ began to appear in the Hermopolites in the early fifth century. Although two papyri featuring ΧΜΓ at the top have been dated by their editors to the fourth century—*BGU XVII 2727*, an order of payment, and *SB XVI 12244*, of uncertain nature²⁵—palaeography points instead

above the subscription of the issuer, *lamprotates* Anatolios, whose origins are not stated. However, since the rent payer was from Hermopolis, it is likely that Anatolios was from there as well.

²⁴ Among certainly dated documents, we have only 3 with a staurogram at the top and 34 with a cross (see below).

²⁵ Probably legal, sent by Flavius Demeas son of Heraklammon, town councilor and *devotissimus tribunus*, to the heirs of Sostratos. Valérie Schram suggests that this papyrus may have been a contract: “Artefact ID 1099,” 4CARE database - Fourth-Century Christian Archaeological Record of Egypt, 2001, <https://4care-skos.mf.no/artefacts/1099>. According to the editor, the Sostratos mentioned in *SB XVI 12244* may be identified with Sostratos Ailianos, *strategos* and *exactor* of the Hermopolite nome, frequently found in the Vienna papyri: P. J. Sijpesteijn, “Vierzehn Wiener Papyri,” *Aegyptus* 61 [1981] 79.

to a (possibly early) fifth-century date.²⁶ Despite the letter forms of both papyri, they originated in an official context, perhaps at a higher level, from where the practice of applying XMF at the top might have spread.²⁷

The earliest securely dated Hermopolite papyri featuring XMF at the top date to the first half or mid-fifth century. In this period, we find the monogram on three Hermopolite *cheirographa*,²⁸ dated to 439, 425–450, and 455 (see Table 1). In the case of all of them, we are dealing with fairly atypical content for the Hermopolites. Among them, we have: a land sale (*SPP XX* 121); a document in which some people from a village in the Hermopolites confirm to a woman that they have received the tax amount that was levied on the land she owned in the village area (*P.Münch.* III 102); a surety deed issued by Aurelius Horos, commander of a private vessel, to two *curatores* of the grain to be sent to Alexandria (*P.Strasb.* VII 654). It is difficult to explain why the symbol is present in these three documents, while no Christian symbol is found in other, more common types of contracts, such

²⁶ Valérie Schram has already suggested that the palaeography of *SB XVI* 12244 and the use of XMF point to the late 4th or early 5th century (“Artefact ID 1099”), as well as the presence of XMF on *BGU XVII* 2727 to the early fifth century (“Artefact ID 1194,” 4CARE database - Fourth-Century Christian Archaeological Record of Egypt, 2021, <https://4care-skos.mf.no/artefacts/1194>). The former document, written in a cursive minuscule with a clockwise ligature, should most likely be dated to the 5th century. For *BGU XVII* 2727, written in cursive majuscule, the 5th century also seems plausible.

²⁷ I thank the anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

²⁸ On *cheirographon* see U. Yiftach-Firanko, “*Cheirographon*,” in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (Malden 2013) 1446–1447, and “Evolution of Forms of Greek Documents of the Ptolemaic, Roman, and Byzantine periods,” in J. G. Keenan et al. (eds.), *Law and Legal Practice in Egypt from Alexander to the Arab Conquest* (Cambridge 2014) 46–49; S. Richter, “Byzantine Sales: Some Aspects of the Development of Legal Instruments in the Later Roman and Byzantine Period,” in *Law and Legal Practice* 84–89; S. Kovarik, “Die byzantinischen Tabellionenurkunden in Ägypten,” in *Quellen zur byzantinischen Rechtspraxis* 27–37.

as leases,²⁹ from the same period. It seems, however, that the document type may play a role here as in *CPR* VI 6, which is a *dialysis* written by the same scribe as *SPP* XX 121 and stipulated between the same parties, without XΜΓ at the top.³⁰

Dating the first certain attestation of XΜΓ in the Hermopolites to the 430s is consistent with other regions, such as the Oxyrhynchites or Herakleopolites, where the earliest securely dated occurrences come from the same decade,³¹ indicating a general new practice in the redaction of notarial deeds.

At this point, it should be noted that the first *protokolla*—small, separate first sheets of the papyrus roll bearing an inscription that includes the name and title of the official (κόμης) under whose department the papyrus roll monopoly fell³²—featuring the XΜΓ group at the top³³ are also dated to the 430s. The majority of these *protokolla* have been found in the Hermopolites³⁴ and the Herakleopolites,³⁵ although they do not reflect the

²⁹ E.g. *P.Berl.Zill.* 5 (417), *BGU* XII 2137 (426), *PSI* III 245 (429), *BGU* XII 2138 (430), *BGU* XII 2141 (446), *SB* XVI 12948 (448).

³⁰ Unfortunately, the upper fragments of other real estate sales contracts that date to the 5th century (*SPP* XX 110, *P.Bad.* IV 91a, *P.Prag.* II 156) and could confirm such a hypothesis have not survived.

³¹ Herakleopolites: *JJP* 38 (2008) 56 (439, land lease); Oxyrhynchites: *P.Köln* XI 459 (436, division contract), *APF* 56 (2010) 276 no. 2 (437/8, top of document), *P.Harr.* III 275 (437, settlement of dispute); however, a papyrus whose origin from Oxyrhynchus is uncertain features XΜΓ at the top as early as 415 (*P.Oxy.* LXXII 4902).

³² On *protokolla* and their evolution see J. M. Diethart, D. Feissel, and J. Gascou, “Les *protokolla* des papyrus byzantins du V^e au VII^e siècle. Édition, prosopographie, diplomatique,” *Tyche* 9 (1994) 9–40.

³³ It was a general practice to place XΜΓ at the top of *protokolla* until 491/2. This custom fell into disuse during the 6th century, when the format of *protokolla* changed. See Diethart, Feissel, and Gascou, *Tyche* 9 (1994) 11–17, 29–30.

³⁴ *CPR* IX 41 (431–435 or 439–443), 42 (436–438), *BGU* XVII 2690 verso (436–438).

³⁵ *SB* XX 15573 (ca. 429–431), 15574 (436–438), 15577 (436–438), 15578 (436–438), 15579 (433–546).

practices of these regions; rather, they represent those of the places where the scrolls were produced, which remain unknown. Furthermore, as use of the XΜΓ monogram reflects in this context a practice at a much higher administrative level than the nome, it cannot be ruled out that its placement at the top of *protokolla* may have gradually filtered down into Egyptian notarial documents and beyond.³⁶

Only starting with years 470s³⁷ are the letters XΜΓ regularly found on various kinds of Hermopolite contracts (lease, sale on delivery, or loan), receipts, or accounts (see Table 1). This timeline coincides with the first evidence of a cross at the top of precisely dated Hermopolite documents,³⁸ indicating a new convention in document redaction in this nome.

In the first half of the 6th century, occurrences of XΜΓ in Hermopolite documents written in Greek are frequent, but after the mid-6th century there are only four known instances, the latest dating to 562/3 (Table 1). There is, admittedly, one document,³⁹ *P.Köln XIV 591*, featuring XΜΓ at the top and dating to 602, but its origin from Hermopolites is highly doubtful.⁴⁰

³⁶ I thank the anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

³⁷ The 460s cannot be excluded as a potential turning point. However, we lack documents from this decade with their upper margins fully preserved, as would be necessary for verification.

³⁸ *BGU XII 2151* (476), *XII 2155* (481), *XII 2163* (493/4), *XVII 2709* (496/7), *XII 2168* (497/8).

³⁹ Additionally, Alia Hanafi reconstructs the sequence χ[μ[γ ᾠμή]ν at the top of *Pap. Congr. XXVI* (Geneva 2012) 315 no. 1, a sale on delivery from the monastery of Apa Apollon at Bawit, dated to 611. The suggested reconstruction appears highly implausible. Firstly, the word ᾠμήν is never written in full at the top of documents but is consistently abbreviated as ϠΘ. Secondly, the traces visible on the upper margin look more like a cross, a symbol still found in this position on certain Hermopolite papyri from the 7th century.

⁴⁰ While the editor of the papyrus, Sophie Kovarik, notes that the provenance is unknown, she suggests that several elements—such as the dating formula, the presence of certain signs and symbols (including two dashes, XΜΓ, and a *chi-rho* at the endorsement)—might indicate the Hermopolites as the

Consequently, based on the available sources, XMF does not appear in any Hermopolite contract in Greek that can be dated with certainty after 563. This absence seems particularly notable given the presence of this group in Greek papyri from Aphrodito,⁴¹ Antinoopolis,⁴² as well as Syene,⁴³ the Herakleopolites,⁴⁴ and the Oxyrhynchites,⁴⁵ dating from the 570s onward, with some examples even from the 7th century.⁴⁶

A chronological limit to the use of XMF in Greek Hermopolite contracts does not, however, imply with absolute certainty that all undated documents from this nome bearing XMF at the top must necessarily predate the 560s. While the analysis of contracts suggests a decline in the use of this symbol, it cannot be conclusively stated that it had been entirely abandoned in the Hermopolites. It remains plausible that XMF was occasionally

place of composition: *P.Köln* XIV (2015) pp.202–204. However, the circumstantial evidence is not particularly strong, especially given that the double dash sign (//) does not appear in Hermopolite dating formulas after the 550s. The papyrus could just as likely have originated from nearby Antinoopolis, where XMF frequently appears in contracts from the second half of the 6th century, and where the double dash sign in dates and a *chi-rho* monogram on endorsements are also attested. On the double dash see Briasco and Skalec, *L'archivio di Paternouthis* 130; L. Briasco, “Qualche riflessione sulla questione dell'identificazione grafica nei papiri documentari: il caso di Markos figlio di Apa Dios (Syene, VI secolo),” in L. Buzzegoli et al. (eds.), *Testo, supporto, sistema comunicativo* (Rome 2024) 179 and n.59. On *chi-rho* see A. Monte, “Le abbreviazioni monogrammatiche chi-iota e chi-rho per χειρόγραφον nei papiri greci di epoca bizantina,” in M. Bocuzzi (ed.), *Mani e scritture, simboli e testi. Ricerche su testi documentari ed epigrafici tardoantichi* (Rome 2024) 195–211, at 204–205.

⁴¹ *P.Michael* 47 (570), 48 (572), *P.Cair.Masp.* I 67096 (573).

⁴² *P.Lond.* V 1714 (570). In Antinoopolis, numerous documents dated to the years 568–570 also have XMF at the top.

⁴³ *P.Münch.* I 1 (574), 7 (583), 14 (594). See Briasco and Skalec, *L'archivio di Paternouthis* 127–131.

⁴⁴ *CPR* VIII 62 (575), X 129 (594/5).

⁴⁵ *P.Oxy.* LXXI 4835 (574), 4836 (578), XX 2283 (586).

⁴⁶ *P.Oxy.* LVIII 3957 (611 or 612, Oxyrhynchos), *P.Lond.* II 483 (615/6, Apollonopolites Heptakomia), *P.Naqlun* II 22 (623, Naqlun).

still included at the top of letters or receipts, some of which editors have dated as late as the 7th century. This persistence might reflect the personal preferences of the issuers or distinct conventions in the drafting of these types of documents. Unfortunately, the absence of precise dating for letters and receipts makes it unlikely that this issue will ever be resolved with certainty.

The most plausible explanation for the disappearance of ΧΜΓ is a change in the convention for drafting documents (e.g. contracts) in the Hermopolites. This shift, of a distinctly regional character, could be connected to the introduction of a Christian symbol, such as a cross or staurogram, at the opening of the dating formula at the beginning of the document. While such symbols occasionally appear in Hermopolite material from the 470s onward, they become standard only in the 6th century. Their routine use may have rendered additional symbols at the top of documents unnecessary. The prominence of the cross as the most significant Christian symbol during the second half of the 6th century, both in the Hermopolites and elsewhere,⁴⁷ may have played a pivotal role in this development.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ By the 6th century, the use of the cross had become increasingly prominent across various material artifacts, establishing itself as a defining feature of manuscript culture during this period. See I. Garipzanov, *Graphic Signs of Authority in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford 2018) 95–96. On Christian symbols in the Hermopolites see e.g. A. Skalec, “Witness Subscriptions in the Late Antique Hermopolite Papyri,” in *Mani e scrittura* 90–92, and “Monogram and Compendium Form of the $\mu\acute{\iota}\sigma\theta\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$ Abbreviation in the Endorsements of the Late Antique Papyri,” *Pylon* (forthcoming); Briasco and Skalec, *L'archivio di Paternmouthis* 209, 214, 244–245.

⁴⁸ Among the Hermopolite documents dated with certainty to the first half of the 6th century, we find ΧΜΓ attested 18 times (see Table 1), alongside three instances of a staurogram (*P.Lond.* III 1313 [p.256] [507], *P.Coll.Youtie* II 90 [513], *P.Sta.Xyla* I 10 [543]), and six instances of a cross (*P.Vind.Sal.* 9 [509], *SB XVI* 12488 [538], *P.Lond.* III 1001 [pp.270–271] [539], *P.Strasb.* VI 597 [541], *P.Lond.* III 1319 [pp.271–272] [544], *SB XVIII* 13583 [547]). In the second half of the century, however, the landscape shifts markedly: only 4 occurrences of ΧΜΓ (all from the 550s–560s), no staurograms, and 13

Moreover, it is worth noting that while Greek Hermopolite documents from the first half of the 6th century more often feature some form of Christian symbol at the top, the opposite is observed in the second half of the century. A similar pattern is evident in the 7th century, where a cross appears at the top of only ten securely dated papyri, most of which pertain to taxes.⁴⁹ The remaining documents lack any Christian symbols in this position.

The disappearance of ΧΜΓ from the top of Hermopolite documents in Greek thus aligns with broader shifts in the use of Christian symbols in this position and a general decline in their use over time.

This picture is well complemented by Coptic papyri, a large number of which originate from the Hermopolites.⁵⁰ Among the hundreds, only five have ΧΜΓ at the top (see Tables 1 and 2). As with Greek papyri, imprecisely dated documents do not allow for far-reaching conclusions regarding the chronology of ΧΜΓ use in Coptic papyri. This makes the only securely dated instance all the more interesting.

instances of a cross in the securely dated papyri: *CPR XXIII* 33 (550), *P.Strasb.* VI 580 (553), *P.Lond.* V 1765 (554), *BGU XVII* 2684 (555), *P.Lond.* V 1766 (559), *P.Strasb.* IV 248 (561); *P.Lond.* V 1774 (570); *SB* VI 9085 inv. 16050 (579), *P.Lond.* V 1755 (584/5), *BGU XVII* 2685 (585), *P.Lond.* V 1756 (585/6), *P.Herm.* 29 (586), *P.Lond.* V 1757 (586/7), *P.Sorb.* II pp.49–50 (594/5 or 609/10).

⁴⁹ *P.Lond.* V 1899 descr. (600), *P.Laur.* III 77 (603), *P.Bodl.* I 41 (604), *P.Amh.* II 151 (610–619 or 629–641), *SB* XVI 12999 (611 or 626), *P.Lond.* V 1758 (612/3), *P.Lond.* III 996 (p.248) (622/3 or 637/8 or 652/3), *SPP* XX 216 (624), *P.Lond.* III 995 (p.248) (626/7 or 641/2 or 656/7), *CPR XXII* 2 (628/9 or 643/4).

⁵⁰ Three Egyptian locations, in particular, have yielded substantial dosiers of Coptic documents: Thebes, the Hermopolites, and Aphrodito: see Richter, in *Quellen zur byzantinischen Rechtspraxis* 44–45.



Figure 1: CPR IV 90 recto: XMF at top

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CPR IV 90 (596) is one of the oldest dated Coptic legal documents.⁵¹ XMF, placed at its top, is written cursively and appears squished (*fig.* 1), suggesting that it was added later,⁵² possibly to comply with the Greek model, which generally is followed by Coptic documents.⁵³ In his act, Joseph appears to recall an earlier practice evident in Hermopolite contracts featuring XMF—a model that, as we have seen, was abandoned in Greek

⁵¹ This bilingual document has been identified as a notarial deed (R. S. Bagnall and K. A. Worp, “Dating the Coptic Legal Documents from Aphrodité,” *ZPE* 148 [2004] 248 n.7; J.-L. Fournet, “Sur les premiers documents juridiques coptes,” in A. Boud’hors et al. (eds.), *Études coptes XI* [Paris 2010] 125–137, at 133) or most recently by Fournet (*The Rise of Coptic* 79, 164) as “pseudonotarial private acts” or “nonnotarized *cheirographon* with pseudo-*completio*,” as according to Fournet it bears the writer’s subscription modelled on a notarial *completio*, not however being signed by the notary *stricto sensu*. In my opinion, the first interpretation seems more accurate. It is true that Joseph does not state his function in the writer’s subscription. However, acting as *hypographeus* in this document is Joseph *nomikos* (notary), who should most likely be identified as the author of the *completio*. This is supported by palaeographic analysis, particularly of the term ἐγρ(άφη).

⁵² This hypothesis is further supported by the fact that the letters of the monogram do not overlap in any way with the text below, including the diacritical marks in line 1.

⁵³ Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic* 78; J.-L. Fournet, H. Förster, and T. S. Richter, “Une misthōsis copte d’Aphrodité (P.Lond. inv. 2849): le plus ancien acte notarié copte?” *ArchPF* 58 (2012) 345 n.2.

documents in the 560s.⁵⁴ However, it should be emphasized that in all published Coptic legal documents that date to the 6th century and have a fully preserved upper margin, XΜΓ appears at top.⁵⁵ This may point to a broader trend in the redaction of Coptic legal documents in the second half of this century.⁵⁶

Besides five Coptic papyri with XΜΓ, a cross is found at the top of a small number of Coptic documents,⁵⁷ while the remaining hundreds lack any symbol in this position. The Coptic material from the Hermopolites thus aligns with the Greek papyri in its discontinuation of XΜΓ and the very limited placement of the cross at the top of documents.



Figure 2: *JJP* 32 (2002) 21 verso line 1: XΜΓ ϣΘ [] † XΜΓ ϣΘ † †
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Furthermore, in Coptic letters from the Hermopolites we observe a particular use of XΜΓ:⁵⁸ it appears on their verso (*fig. 2*),

⁵⁴ Indeed, in 23 Greek contracts with a preserved upper margin, dated between 563 and 596, XΜΓ is never found.

⁵⁵ XΜΓ ϣΘ appears in *P.Lond.* V 1709 (566/7) and *P.Cairo.Masp.* III 67353 recto (569), both from Dioskoros' archive, as well as in *ZPE* 216 (2020) 243, from Paternouthis' archive, with an uncertain date—possibly 584, 599, or 614. It should be noted that, as we have seen, XΜΓ is also attested in Greek documents from the second half of the 6th century originating from these geographical contexts.

⁵⁶ In the 7th century this is no longer the case, as XΜΓ is not attested in any securely dated Coptic legal document.

⁵⁷ Only one of the Coptic papyri, *P.Heid.Kopt.* 17, has a certain date (645).

⁵⁸ *P.Ryl.Copt.* 305 (6–7 cent.), 308 (6–7 cent.), *P.Sorb.Copt.* 28 (6–7 cent.), *JJP* 32 (2002) 21 (7 cent.), *BKU* III.1 335 (6–8 cent., Hermopolites?), 336 (6–8 cent.), *O.Crum ST* 172 (4–8 cent.), *P.Moscow Copt.* 13 (8 cent.). Since all

which, according to Hans Förster, serves “as support for a positive response to the letter.”⁵⁹ This convention is not attested in Greek letters from this region, nor, based on my analysis, in Coptic ones from other Egyptian nomes. This suggests, on the one hand, a distinctly Coptic epistolographic practice and, on the other, its regional character. The latter implies that other letters of unknown provenance bearing the XΜΓ group on the verso most likely also originate from the Hermopolites.⁶⁰

XΜΓ in combination with other symbols

A closer examination of the XΜΓ monogram form and its accompanying symbols is now in order. When not followed by any additional signs, the XΜΓ found at the top of Hermopolite documents is typically written in cursive letters, with the *gamma* featuring a distinctly long horizontal stroke (*fig. 3*). This symbol is generally centered at the top of the document, though exceptions exist. Notably, in the earliest known contract containing this monogram, *SPP XX* 121, the three letters are not centered at the top but instead are aligned with the left margin, consistent with the alignment of the rest of the text (*fig. 4*).

By the final years of the 5th century, the XΜΓ symbol typically appears alone on Hermopolite papyri, with only a few exceptions where it is combined with other signs or symbols. In two documents, a horizontal superlinear stroke accompanies the group. In *P.Münch.* III 102 (dated to 455), the stroke extends above all three letters, whereas in *SB XVI* 12486 (470), it is placed solely above the *gamma* (*fig. 5*). As suggested by Hermann Harrauer,⁶¹ the presence of this stroke might be linked to its use

are undated, it is not possible to determine when this practice emerged; however, it seems likely that it may have replaced writing XΜΓ at the top of letters—a position attested in two letters from the Hermopolite region.

⁵⁹ H. Förster, “Dringliche Bitte um Steuerzahlung in Geld statt in Naturalien. Edition von P. Vindob. K. 1223,” *JJurP* 32 (2002) 27.

⁶⁰ *P.Ryl.Copt.* 329 and 297 (6–7 cent.).

⁶¹ H. Harrauer, “Sechs byzantinische Weinkaufverträge aus dem Her-

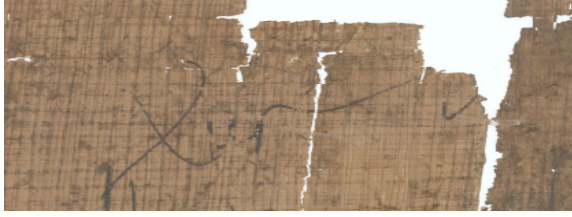


Figure 3: BGU XII 2156 recto: XΜΓ at top

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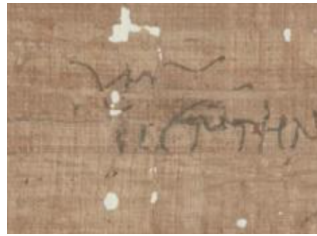


Figure 4: SPP XX 121 recto: XΜΓ at top

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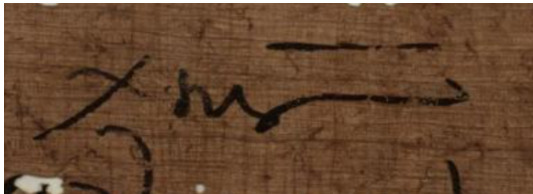


Figure 5: SB XVI 12486 recto, XΜΓ at top

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G 13239 + G 17808 + G 20703 + G 29647

mupolites,” in R. Pintaudi (ed.), *Miscellanea Papyrologica = Papyrologica Florentina* VII (Florence 1980) 111. *Nomina sacra* are contractions of certain words consisting, in most cases, of the first and last letter of a word with a supralinear stroke above them: see e.g. L. W. Hurtado, “The Origin of the Nomina Sacra: A Proposal,” *JBL* 117 (1998) 655–673; AnneMarie Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord: Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (Cambridge [Mass.] 2008) 57–62. On numbers and names as theological tools see Bovon, *NTS* 47 (2001) 267–288.

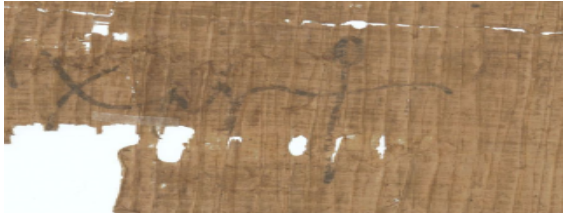


Figure 6: *BGU XIX 2818* recto: XΜΓ at top

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above *nomina sacra* or numbers. Indeed, such strokes are frequently observed in amulets featuring the XΜΓ monogram.⁶²

In the first half of the 6th century, XΜΓ occasionally appears alongside a cross or staurogram in the Hermopolite papyri. Among the documents with precise dates, a staurogram with its horizontal stroke extending from the *gamma* appears only once, in *BGU XIX 2818* from 511 (*fig. 6*). Though still limited in number, a few additional instances of XΜΓ accompanied by a cross or staurogram are found in documents that lack precise dating (see Table 2).⁶³ Relatively often the cross or staurogram accom-

⁶² See e.g. J. Franek and D. Corral Varela, “Apotropaic Amulet from the Collection of Gustave Schlumberger with a Bilingual Inscription in Greek and Samaritan Hebrew,” *ZPE* 216 (2020) 156–166.

⁶³ However, it is important to note that among these, the only document almost certainly originating from the Hermopolites is *SPP X 102*, a 6th-century account of payments from various Hermopolite villages. The provenance of the other three documents in which XΜΓ is combined with a cross or staurogram remains uncertain: †XΜΓ †ϞΘ in *CPR XXIII 34* (6 cent.), receipt for the loading of wheat for the *annona civica*, with uncertain provenience from the Hermopolites or Antinoopolites, though the presence of ϞΘ suggests a connection to the first region; XΜΓ † in *P. Rainer Cent. 80* (6 cent.), letter, found in Hermopolis, but it is not known whether it was also written there (Nikolaos Gonis pointed out that the addressee, *comes Serenus*, had not been attested in Hermopolis, while it is possible that there was a *comes Serenus* in Antinoopolis around 567: “Prosopographica IV,” *ArchPF* 67 [2021] 95); †XΜΓ in *SPP VIII 964* (6 cent.), receipt with an uncertain provenance from Hermopolites.

panies this monogram in Coptic letters.⁶⁴

The small number of instances where XMF is combined with a cross or staurogram may at first glance seem surprising. But as Fritz Mitthof has pointed out, in most Late Antique documents this monogram appears alone⁶⁵ and combinations with other Christian symbols are much rarer. A survey of instances of XMF from other Egyptian nomes reveals that its association with a cross or staurogram was quite typical in the second half of the 6th century, a period during which, as we have already noted, XMF seems to disappear from the top of Greek Hermopolite contracts. This might help explain the small number of such combinations in Hermopolite documents. Alternatively, regional differences in this practice could be a factor.

However, this does not mean that no other symbols accompany XMF. On the contrary, it should be emphasized that from the late 5th century onward, XMF was frequently combined in the Hermopolites with another two letters: ϩΘ, the well-known isopsephism for ἀμήν.⁶⁶ It appears that the sequence XMF ϩΘ began to be used in the 5th century, both in the Hermopolites and elsewhere.⁶⁷

The first two examples of XMF ϩΘ in certainly dated Her-

⁶⁴ *JJP* 32 (2002) 21 (XMF ϩΘ [] †XMF ϩΘ ††), *BKU* III.1 336 († XMF), *O.Crum ST* 172 ([] XMF [] XMF † †).

⁶⁵ Mitthof, *CPR* XXIII p.218.

⁶⁶ For this see n.8 above and Kovarik, in *Segni, sogni* 92. Instances where crosses, XMF, and ϩΘ appear together are discussed in Mitthof, *CPR* XXIII p.218.

⁶⁷ This sequence of letters is present in the Oxyrhynchite letter *P.Oxy.* LVI 3862, assigned to the late 4th or 5th century in the *editio princeps*, whereas A. Papaconstantinou, *Le culte des saints en Egypte* (Paris 2001) 149, assigns it to the 5th century, as well as at the top of two papyri from Karanis, *P.Mich.* VI 378 (an account of tax payments in kind) and *SB* VI 9436j (a receipt for payment in kind): both are assigned to the 4th century in the *editio princeps*, but a date in the 5th century is now preferred, cf. J. Gascou, *Papyrus de la Sorbonne II* (Atlanta 1994) 46, and P. Sijpesteijn, “Ναυλεπλοῖον: A Ghost Word?” *ZPE* 64 (1986) 117–118.

mopolite documents date to the last years of the 5th century (see Table 2). Notably, in both this is written in a peculiar manner. In *SB V 7758* (497), it appears that ϑΘ is placed between μ and γ (χμϑθγ),⁶⁸ although the published facsimile is not of the highest quality. In *Tyche 29* (2014) 18 (498), ϑΘ is written beneath the vertical stroke of the *gamma* (*fig. 7*). Between 500 and the 530s, XΜΓ combined with ϑΘ is almost as common in the Hermopolites as XΜΓ alone. After the 540s, XΜΓ ϑΘ is attested only once more, in *P.Lond. III 1003* (p.259), dated to 562/3, while in the years 540–560 XΜΓ alone still appears in a few Greek documents (see Table 1).



Figure 7: Tyche 29 (2014) 18 recto: XΜΓ at top
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G 13263 + G 13376 + G 14694

Given the chronological distribution of instances of XΜΓ ϑΘ, the presence of this sequence in two tax registers, dated by the editors to the second half of the 5th century (*P.Flor. I 78*,⁶⁹ *CPR V 26*),⁷⁰ suggests that they may actually belong to the end of the

⁶⁸ Alain Blanchard suggests reading χμϑγ: “Sur quelques interprétations de XΜΓ,” in *Pap. Congr. XIV* (London 1975) 20; but in my opinion traces of a *theta* are distinctly visible.

⁶⁹ In this document XΜΓ ϑΘ occurs twice, whereas XΜΓ only once. See R. Pintaudi and A. Soldati, “P.Flor. I 78: una riedizione,” *Aegyptus* 95 (2015) 45.

⁷⁰ J. R. Rea and P. J. Sijpesteijn, *CPR V* (Vienna 1976) p.115. Except for pp.24, 43, 47, and fr.2 the XΜΓ ϑΘ or XΜΓ symbol was placed at the top of each written page of the codex. The reason for choosing the one or the other is not clear.

century. This hypothesis is supported by the unusual form of XΜΓ ϑΘ on the recto of *P.Flor.* I 78, where ϑΘ is placed beneath the long, wavy horizontal stroke of the *gamma*, similar to the placement seen in *Tyche* 29 (2014) 18 (fig. 7), which is dated to 498.

The presence of the XΜΓ ϑΘ group on other Hermopolite papyri that are not precisely dated may also provide a clue to their date, allowing it to be narrowed down with a high degree of probability to the years 490–560s. This chronological refinement applies to two Greek sales on delivery: *SB XXII* 15595, which the editor assigns to the 6th–7th century, and *SB XXII* 15596, dated to the 6th century.

It should also be noted that the XΜΓ ϑΘ combination appears in Greek papyri exclusively on various types of contracts (e.g. leases, loans, sales, work contracts) or accounts. In contrast, with the exception of *CPR XXIII* 34 (provenance from the Hermopolites uncertain),⁷¹ it is absent from Greek receipts and letters, where XΜΓ alone was present. This suggests a differentiation in the grouping of symbols with XΜΓ, depending on the type of document.

The situation is different for Coptic documents from the Hermopolites, where XΜΓ ϑΘ is attested exclusively in letters—once at the top⁷² and more frequently on the verso⁷³—suggesting a distinct epistolographic practice.

Despite Mitthof's assertion that the XΜΓ ϑΘ sequence is a com-

⁷¹ The presence of XΜΓ may provide additional support for the document's origin in Hermopolites or Antinoopolites. The appearance of ϣ and † in this context might indicate that the document should be dated to the second half of the 6th century. If this is the case, an Antinoopolite origin would seem more likely.

⁷² *P.Heid.Kopt.* 7 (7–8 cent.).

⁷³ *P.Ryl.Copt.* 305 (6–7 cent.), 308 (6–7 century), *P.Sorb.Copt.* 28 (6–7 cent.), *JJP* 32 (2002) 21 (7 cent.).

mon feature in Late Antique papyri,⁷⁴ the situation appears to be significantly more regionally restricted. In fact, the instances from the Hermopolites clearly outnumber those from other regions. We do not find this group in Greek papyri from the Oxyrhynchites,⁷⁵ Herakleopolites, or Aphrodito, while it appears three times on papyri from Antinoopolis,⁷⁶ twice from Naqlun,⁷⁷ and once from the Apollonopolites Heptakomias.⁷⁸ Among Coptic papyri, it is attested once in Syene,⁷⁹ in Thebes,⁸⁰ and in an unknown locality.⁸¹ Only three of these documents, in both languages, are securely dated, all from the second half of the 6th century to early 7th.

These spatial and chronological distribution patterns point to the regional character of the XΜΓ ϠΘ sequence, with its use, particularly in the first half of the 6th century, appearing to be confined primarily to the Hermopolites, as a local scribal practice.

The presence of the XΜΓ ϠΘ group can, therefore, with a high degree of probability, indicate that a given document originates specifically from the Hermopolites. Such a provenience can thus be suggested for the account *P.Eirene* II 12 (5th–6th cent.) or the list *CPR* VII 23 (mid 5th–6th cent.).

⁷⁴ Mitthof, *CPR* XXIII p.217. The same statement can be found, e.g., in J. H. F. Dijkstra, “A Coptic Papyrus from the Paternouthis Archive in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek at Munich,” *ΖPE* 216 (2020) 243–250, at 248.

⁷⁵ Besides the aforementioned letter, which most likely dates to the 5th century.

⁷⁶ *PSIXIII* 1342 (5 cent.); *P.Flor.* I 93 with *BLI* 147 (569), and possibly the same sequence was present at the top of its duplicate *P.Lond.* V 1713, as suggested by Bell, though, as he himself admits, the traces are too small for any certain reading; *P.Lond.* V 1714 (570, lease).

⁷⁷ *P.Gascou* 29 (6–7 cent.); an inverted order, θϠ, and [–] Ϡ? XΜΓ is attested also in *P.Naqlun* I 9 (6 cent.). Here the sequence has been found also on amphora stamps: *P.Naqlun* I 14 = *SB* XX 15196 (6 cent.), 15197 (6 cent.).

⁷⁸ *P.Lond.* II 483 (p.323) (615 or 616).

⁷⁹ *ΖPE* 216 (2020) 243.

⁸⁰ *P.Mon.Epiph.* 140 (7 cent.).

⁸¹ *BKU* III.2 400 (6–8 cent.).

Conclusions

A diachronic and synchronic analysis of the instances of the XΜΓ group in Hermopolite material has allowed for a clear identification of the temporal limits of its use, particularly in the case of precisely dated papyri. The group appears at the top of Greek Hermopolite documents from the early to mid-5th century but rapidly disappears after the 560s. In Coptic documents from the Hermopolites, it is rarely present at the top but is more commonly found on the verso of letters.

The analysis has also established that the attestations of the XΜΓ ϑΘ combination are primarily limited to the Hermopolite nome, pointing to a regional scribal practice. The presence of this symbol, as an expression of a local habit, may thus help, together with other criteria, in the localization and dating of the papyri.

TABLE 1: XΜΓ atop certainly dated Hermopolite documents⁸²

<i>Document</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Symbol</i>
<i>SPP</i> XX 121	439, July. 6	land sale	χμγ
<i>P. Strasb.</i> VII 654	425–450	surety deed for grain delivery	χμγ
<i>P. Münch.</i> III 102	455, Sept. 20	acknowledgment of receipt of taxes	χμγ
<i>BGU</i> XII 2149	470, Sept. 19	lease	χμγ
<i>SB</i> XVI 12486	470, Sept. 30	sale of wine	χμγ
<i>P. Lond.</i> V 1793	471 or 472	surety	χμγ
<i>P. Jena</i> II 6	477	lease	χμγ
<i>PSI</i> VI 703	480	loan	[χ]μγ
<i>CPR</i> X 118	482, Oct. 13?	(unknown)	χμγ

⁸² In both tables, documents whose origin from the Hermopolites is uncertain are underlined, Coptic papyri are in bold.

<i>BGU XII</i> 2156	483, Aug. 27	lease	χμγ
<i>CPR V</i> 16	486, Sept. 16	lease	χμγ
<i>P.Lond.</i> V 1794	488, June 21	contract of partnership	χμγ
<i>SB V</i> 7758	497, Aug. 20	loan	χμγ
<i>Tyche</i> 29 (2014) p. 18	498	lease	[χ]μγ Ϟθ
<i>P.Herm.</i> 79	500, Jan. 14	receipt <i>annona militaris</i>	χμγ
<i>P.Amst.</i> I 45	501, July 7	loan	χμγ
<i>ΖPE</i> 209 (2019) p.237	502–503?	account	χμγ
<i>SB XVI</i> 12378	504, Oct. 12	lease	χμγ Ϟθ
<i>BGU XVII</i> 2688 = <i>SB XXVIII</i> 16858	507, Nov. 25 (?)	loan	χμγ Ϟθ
<i>ΖPE</i> 215 (2020) p. 260 no. 2	509	lease of land	χμγ
<i>BGU XVII</i> 2680	510, Aug. 23	receipt for a house rent	[χμ]γ
<i>BGU XIX</i> 2818	511, May 6	contract	χμγ †
<i>SB IV</i> 7369	512	lease	χμγ
<i>P.Scholl</i> 8	515, Sept. 18	lease	χμγ Ϟθ
<i>P.Lond.</i> III 994 (p.259)	517, Feb. 24	lease	χμγ
<i>CPR XIX</i> 10	522	loan	[χ]μγ Ϟθ
<i>BGU XIX</i> 2783 = <i>SB XIV</i> 11377	523, Mar. 9	tax receipt <i>annona</i> and <i>kanonika</i>	χμγ
<i>P.Gen.</i> IV 190	523, Oct. 24?	sale of wine	χμγ Ϟθ
<i>SB XXIV</i> 16284	533, Oct. 28–Nov. 26	work contract	[χ]μγ Ϟθ

<i>P.Strasb.</i> V 472	534, Dec. 16?	lease	χμγ
<i>SB XXII</i> 15322	535, Mar. 19	loan	χμγ
<i>PSI III</i> 188	540, Jan. 1– Apr. 30	lease	χμγ
<i>P.Sta.Xyla I</i> 9	544, Jan. 19	contract	χμγ
<i>P.Lond.</i> V 1872 descr.	548	lease	χμγ
<i>P.Herm.</i> 65	553 or 554	loan	χμγ
ζPE 219 (2021) p.188 no. 8	554	acknowledgment of debt	χμγ
<i>SB XX</i> 15136	558/9	lease	χμγ
<i>P.Lond.</i> III 1003 (p.259)	Ca. 562–563	lease	χμγ ϕθ
CPR II 6 = CPR IV 90	596	sale of land	χμγ

TABLE 2: XMG atop uncertainly dated Hermopolite documents

<i>Document</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Symbol</i>
<u><i>SB XVI</i> 12244</u>	4 th cent.?	contract or letter?	χμγ
<i>BGU XVII</i> 2727	Second half of 4 th cent.	business letter	χμγ
<u><i>SB XVI</i> 12244</u>	4 th cent.	(unknown)	χμγ
<i>BGU XIX</i> 2780	5 th cent.	tax receipt	χμγ
<i>BGU XII</i> 2144	5 th cent.	receipt	χμγ
<i>PSI IV</i> 307	5 th cent.	account	χμγ
<i>P.Flor.</i> I 78	Second half of 5 th cent.	tax register	χμγ ϕθ: recto fr.A and B; χμγ: verso fr.B

<i>CPR</i> V 26	Second half of 5 th cent.	tax register	Atop each page χμγ Ϟθ or χμγ (except pp. 24, 43, 47, and fr.2)
<i>SB</i> XXII 15226	433–499	receipt	χ[μγ]
<i>P.Rainer Cent.</i> 77	5–6 th cent.	private letter	χμγ
<i>P.Berl. Monte</i> 12	5–6 th cent.	list of persons	χμγ
<i>P.Gascou</i> 66	5–6 th cent.	receipt	χμγ
<i>P.Jena</i> II 22	5–6 th cent.	grain receipt	χμγ
<i>SB</i> XII 10902	First half of 6 th cent.	receipt	χμγ
<i>BGU</i> XII 2194	6 th cent.	receipt	χμγ
<u><i>CPR</i> XXIII 34</u>	6 th cent.	receipt	† χμγ † Ϟθ
<u><i>P.Batav.</i> 22</u>	6 th cent.	receipt	χμγ
<u><i>P.Lond.</i> V 1887</u>	6 th cent.	private letter	χμγ
<u><i>P.Rainer Cent.</i> 80</u>	6 th cent.	business letter	χμγ †
<i>SB</i> XXII 15596	6 th cent.	sale on delivery	χμγ
<u><i>SPP</i> VIII 964</u>	6 th cent.	receipt?	† χμγ
<i>SPP</i> X 102	6 th cent.	list	† χμγ
<u><i>SB</i> XVIII 13595</u>	Second half 6 th cent.	list of payments	χμγ
<i>BGU</i> XIX 2797	6–7 th cent.	receipt	χμγ
<u><i>P.Grenf.</i> I 64</u>	6–7 th cent.	official letter	χμγ
<u><i>P.Laur.</i> II 45</u>	6–7 th cent.	official letter	χμγ
<i>SB</i> XXII 15595	6–7 th cent.	sale on delivery	[χ]μγ Ϟθ
<i>P.Lond.</i> III 1310 (a) (S. 250)	7 th cent.	receipt	χμγ
<i>P.Lond.</i> V 1740	7 th cent.	receipt	χμγ

<i>SPP VIII 808</i>	7 th cent.	receipt	χμγ
<i>P. Strasb. Copt. 14</i>	End 6 th cent.– beginning 7 th	letter	χμγ
<i>P. Köln Ägypt. II 30</i>	7 th cent.	guarantee deed	χμγ
<i>P. Lond. Copt. I 1048</i>	6 th –8 th cent.	receipt	χμγ
<i>P. Heid. Kopt. 7</i>	6 th –8 th cent.	letter	χμγ ϕθ

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