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MODEL DOCUMENTS AND THE SCRIBE¹

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Abstract. — This paper aims to make a clear distinction between model document, sample formulary, draft, and form.

Keywords: model, sample, formulary, draft, form

The complex governance of Egypt could not have functioned without skilled scribes at all levels of the administration. While the evidence indicates that there were scribes of varying levels of ability, little is known about how they were trained.² A basic level of literacy was presumably a pre-requisite skill, but it is unknown whether the further training required was achieved through a “scribal school,” through an apprenticeship, or both.³ Training for those who wished to become scribes went beyond the skill of writing and included arithmetic and metrology, as well as learning the different phrases and formulae that form the basis of most of the documentation.⁴ Training in this latter skill was presumably on-going as formulae changed and procedures were amended. The evidence for this is found in documents which fall into the category of model or sample. However,

¹ This article was prepared within the frame of the research project *grammateus: the architecture of Greek documentary papyri*, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (project # 182205) and based at the University of Geneva. I would like to express my gratitude to Paul Schubert, Peter van Minnen, and the anonymous referees for their very helpful comments.

² S. Bucking, “On the Training of Documentary Scribes in Roman, Byzantine, and Early Islamic Egypt: A Contextualized Assessment of the Greek Evidence,” *ZPE* 159 (2007) 229–247.

³ R. Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Atlanta, GA 1996) 28–29; “Education in the Papyri,” in R. Bagnall (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology* (Oxford 2009) 324.

⁴ R. Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton, NJ 2001) 182–183. An example of a scribal exercise may perhaps be seen in T. Garvey, “An Oxyrhynchite Marriage Contract as School Exercise?” *BASP* 47 (2010) 67–73: the hand is described as “an advanced school hand” (p. 68), and while the omission of year and month numbers (l. 10) might indicate a draft, the fact that there are no spaces for their later insertion, artificial amounts (p. 68), no subscription, and corrections in another hand (ll. 2, 10), all point to “a scribe in training” (p. 71). *SB* 4.7434 (second century CE) might also be described as a practice document where the scribe wrote the opening of a contract and repeated it with different (fictitious?) names.

often in the literature the model or sample document can be confused with a draft or a form, and an attempt is made here to draw a clearer distinction between them.⁵ There are a number of examples dating from the Byzantine and Arabic periods,⁶ but the focus here will be on these documents up to the early fourth century CE.

Model Documents

A model document can be defined as one which is an exemplar of a type. It will likely have been written by a scribe establishing a model, learning a new procedure, or practising a text. The surviving examples indicate that these documents were not meant for circulation but served as a template: the defining feature is the use of the indefinite – usually *τις* or sometimes *δεῖνα*⁷ – where names, dates, titles, places and amounts are the variables and the rest of the content is relatively fixed.

It is clear that some of the models emanated from scribal offices of the administration. A distinction can be made between samples which are relatively complete model documents and those which are sample formulae. While both contain indefinites, scribes practicing sample formulae concentrate their efforts on particular sections of a document, but for a model document the scribe reproduces a complete (or relatively complete) sample.

⁵ For a list of model documents see *P.Berl.Cohen* 3, introduction, p. 21, and add: *P.Hamb.* 4.254. In his introduction to *P.Cohen* 3 the editor consistently refers to these models as “blank forms.”

⁶ Model documents from the fifth century CE onwards are also included in the list in *P.Berl.Cohen* 3, introduction, p. 21. See also examples on ostraca: *O.Bru.* 14 (38–43 CE, Thebaid), a declaration of birth, *O. Krok.* 1.79 (98–138 CE, Krokodilo), a grain account, and *O.Kell.* 148 (212 CE, Kellis), the end of a document; and on wooden tablets: *SB* 1.5941 (510 CE) a contract, *SB* 26.16507 (475 CE, Oxy.) extracts of three model documents on a single tablet, see A. Papathomas, “Eine spätantike griechische Holztafel mit drei Mustertexten juristischen Inhalts,” *APF* 45 (1999) 39–46, with n. 8 for further references.

⁷ One Roman period papyrus uses *δεῖνα* rather than *τις*, the formulary *P.Mich.* 2.122 (49 CE, Tebtunis), examined below. *O.Bru.* 14 substitutes *δεῖνα* for names on what may be designated a declaration of birth. See C. Sánchez-Moreno Ellart, “Υπομνήματα ἐπιγεννήσεως: The Greco-Egyptian Birth Returns in Roman Egypt and the Case of P. Petaus 1–2,” *APF* 56 (2010) 126–127. The indefinite *δεῖνα* seems to be favoured in later model documents e.g. *SB* 1.6000 (sixth century CE), *P.Rain.Unterricht* 109 *recto* (sixth century CE), and the wooden tablet *SB* 1.5941 (510 CE). Some magical texts write *δεῖνα* in the form of a symbol, e.g. *PGM* 2.78 has Δ, and *PGM* 8 has Δ with a tail at the base.

Four⁸ model documents on papyrus from the Roman period are extant:

Date	Reference	TM no.	Contents	Location
II CE	<i>P.Oxy.</i> 33.2677	26928	Deposit agreement	Oxyrhynchus
II CE	<i>P.Hamb.</i> 4.254	78276	Letter of Condolence	unknown
146–147 CE	<i>SB</i> 20.15004	14918	Declaration to βιβλιοφύλαξ	Arsinoite
II–III CE	<i>SB</i> 6.9226	27285	Surety/Lease	Sok.Nesos

The first, *P.Oxy.* 33.2677, appears to be a model document in every sense of the word. It is a contract of deposit in the form of a *cheirographon*, the opening of which comprises wholly of indefinites, which are carried through wherever variables may appear in the contract; there are no orthographic errors.⁹ This model was written on the back of a sheet cut from a larger account book.¹⁰ The papyrus is squarish in shape, the writing against the vertical fibres, with visible margins and a large space between the end of the text and the lower edge. The text is written as a single block and carefully laid out with an even left hand margin; there are no lines indented or separated from the main text – a layout not unusual for such contracts.¹¹ It is a generic example of a deposit contract with the usual guarantee and κυρία clauses but, as it is a sample, no signatures or subscriptions. While there are no examples matching the formulae exactly, it no doubt served as a template to be adapted according to requirements.

P.Oxy. 33.2677

τίς τινοσ τοῦ τινοσ μητ(ρός) τινός ποθέν
 τινί τινοσ τοῦ τινοσ μητ(ρός) τινός ποθεν
 χαίρειν. ὁμολογῶ ἔχειν παρὰ σοῦ διὰ

⁸ Another model, that of an oath to appear before the court of the prefect, is no. 15 in the PhD thesis of Dominic Montserrat, “An Edition, with Translation and Commentary, of Unpublished Papyrus Texts of the Roman Period from Oxyrhynchus,” which is available online. This model is written in a rapid cursive hand, against vertical fibres on a small piece of papyrus (200–203 CE, Oxyrhynchus). Where the indefinites occur they are abbreviated, see also *P.Hamb.* 4.254, below.

⁹ Bucking (n. 2) 234. Image available on the POxy: Oxyrhynchus Online website.

¹⁰ *P.Oxy.* 33, p. 113: on the other side “some accounts, legible only in part and cut off at the foot.”

¹¹ Compare, e.g., *PSI* 12.1253 (186 CE, Oxy.)

- χ[ε]ιρ[ὸ]ς ἐν παραθέσει ἀργ(υρίου) (δραχμὰς) ποσὰς γί(νονται)
 (δραχμαὶ) ποσαί·
 5 ἄς κ[α]ὶ [ἀ]ποδώσω σοι ὀπηνίκα ἐὰν αἰρή ἂν-
 υπε[ρθ]έτως. εἰ δὲ μή, ἐκτείσω σοι κατὰ τὸν
 [τῶν] παραθηκῶν νόμον γεινομένης
 σοι τῆς πράξεως ἕκ τε ἐμοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὑ-
 παρχόντων μοι πάντων καθάπερ ἐκ
 10 δίκης. κυρία ἡ χεὶρ τῆς παραθήκης οὕσά μου
 τοῦ τινος ιδιόγραφος [δισ]σὴ γραφεῖσα παν-
 ταχῇ ἐπιφερομένη καὶ παντὶ τῷ ὑπὲρ σοῦ
 ἐπιφέροντι. (ἔτους) . [. .]

“X son of X and grandson of X, mother X, from X (*place*), to X son of X and grandson of X, mother X, from X (*place*), greetings. I acknowledge that I have received from you by hand on deposit X silver drachmas, which I will return to you whenever you choose, without delay. And if I do not, I will pay a forfeit to you in accordance with the law of deposits, you having the right of execution on me and on all my property just as by a court decision. The instrument of deposit being written in two copies by me X in my own hand, is valid, wherever produced and whoever produces it on your behalf. (*Date*).”

SB 6.9226 carries two model documents on a single sheet; the first is a surety or guarantee, and the second a proposal to lease an olive grove. The editor of this text believes the models to have an official character, probably written or transcribed in the office of the *nomographos*.¹² The presence of two sample documents on the same sheet may imply it was part of a longer papyrus or series of papyri carrying sample texts.¹³ In the absence of an image, the editor describes a papyrus in *pagina* format with evenly spaced top and bottom margins, each model with a heading on a single line before the start of the text.¹⁴ Both samples are complete. The

¹² J. Schwartz, “Un formulaire de nomographe,” *JJP* 4 (1950) 209–214; at p. 210 the editor states: “il s’agit d’un formulaire ... rédigé par un professionnel ...” – this document cannot be described as a form according to the criteria defined below. The suggestion by Schwartz on p. 213 that lines 8–9 should read instead ἐπακροῦσθου(το)ς τιγος ὑπη[ρέ]του seems reasonable.

¹³ The title given to this papyrus on papyri.info is “Abschnitt aus dem Formularbuch eines νομογράφος” – the presence of two sample documents on the same sheet may indeed suggest a “book” of formulae.

¹⁴ The headings are presented in *ekthesis* to the rest of the text in the edition, but this cannot be verified as reflecting the papyrus without the image. There is no information in the edition on the direction of the fibres.

guarantee under oath is a condensed version of many actual such documents and has most of the necessary elements.¹⁵ None of the extant proposals to lease for olive, or olive and palm groves, have all the elements present in this model in a single document, which perhaps indicates that the model could be adapted to more specific requirements.¹⁶ However, the opening formula (ll. 10–17) can be found in all of the olive grove proposals to lease. The way in which the text of the model document is laid out on the papyrus sheet is also significant: often in such lease agreements the opening section of the formula (τινὶ τινός ποθεν) is indented or separated from the text which follows, (παρά τίς τινος τοῦ τινός ποθεν), i.e. the *παρά* clause begins a new line; the layout of the opening lines appears in the model to be presented on the sheet in this same way.¹⁷ This perhaps implies that care was also taken to practice how the text was laid out on the sheet.

A complete document is found upside-down in the lower margin of a bank receipt for the sale of a camel.¹⁸ This is a model of a declaration to be made to the βιβλιοφύλαξ following the submission of a financial report for guardianship.

SB 20.15004

βιβ(λιοφύλαξι) δη(μοσίων) λόγ(ω)ν
 παρά τινος ἐπ(ιτροπού) τινος.
 κατεχώρισα ὑμεῖν
 λόγ(ον) λη(μμάτων) καὶ ἀναλω(μάτων)
 τῇ[ς] πρ[ο]κ(ειμένης) ἐπ(ιτροπῆς) τοῦ θ (ἐτους)
 //καὶ [ἔσ]χον τὴν
 ἀπ[ο]χήν.

“To the heads of the archives of the public records from X guardian of Y. I have given you the report of the income and expenses relating to the aforementioned guardianship of the 9th year, and I have received the receipt.”

¹⁵ E.g. *P.Oxy.* 51.3602–3605 (215 CE, Ars.); *P.Oxy.* 43.3091 (216–217 CE, Oxy.).

¹⁶ There are six lease agreements for olive groves only, all from the Arsinoite nome (when known): *SB* 16.13012 (42 CE), *P.Mich.* 9.561 (102 CE), *P.Ryl.* 2.97 (unknown; 139 CE), *P.Lond.* 2.168 (162 CE), *CPR* 1.34 (217–223 CE), *P.Col.* 7.179 (300 CE).

¹⁷ E.g. *SB* 16.13012 (42 CE, Ars.), *P.Mich.* 9.561 (102 CE, Karanis), *P.Lond.* 2.168 (162 CE, Psenarpsenes), *P.Col.* 7.179 (300 CE, Karanis). Although there is no image for the model document, it is clear the *παρά* clause begins a new line.

¹⁸ *SB* 20.15004 (146–147 CE, Ars.). Cf. P. Schubert, “Bemerkungen zu BGU I 88,” *ZPE* 77 (1989) 189–190. The camel sale is *BGU* 1.88 (146–147 CE). Image available on the Berliner Papyrusdatenbank website.

In this instance a specific year is mentioned, but as the names of the guardian and ward have been replaced by indefinites, it is clearly a model text being practised in the space available at the end of the original document.

Another complete model document, *P.Hamb.* 4.254, is not one concerned with administration, rather it is a private letter of condolence. The existence of a sample document in a non-administrative setting suggests a scribe employed by a large household, or perhaps a street scribe. However, rather than it being an exemplary model, the editor of the text believes the number of orthographic and syntactic errors points to the sample having been composed from extracts of real examples.¹⁹ Evidence of ink in the top and left-hand margins and the writing running against vertical fibres (although on the smoothest side of the sheet), certainly point to the re-use of the papyrus for this purpose; this does not necessarily mean that it was used for a single occasion as suggested by the editor.²⁰ Again *τις* is used in place of names, but is abbreviated at each occurrence:

P.Hamb. 4.254.1–5

- 1 τί(ς) τι(νι) εὐθυμεῖν. τῆς ἀπευκταίας
- 2 μοι ἀγγελίας σημανθείσης περὶ τοῦ
- 3 εὐμύρου τι(νός) πῶς ἤχθέσθην πα-
- 4 νοικε(σία) οὐκ ἔχω τῷ λόγῳ παραστῆ-
- 5 σαι κτλ.

“X wishes X good courage. How much it saddened me and my whole family when the sad news of the passing of X was brought to me, I cannot describe in words.”

The text is written as a single block, with no indentations or distinction between lines – often in private letters the opening address is separated from the rest of the text, and many of the examples of letters of condolence follow this pattern; one does not.²¹ It appears that the scribe is not concerned here with how the text is presented on the sheet, but solely with the content.

¹⁹ *P.Hamb.* 4, p. 99. Image available on the website of the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg.

²⁰ *P.Hamb.* 4, p. 98.

²¹ E.g. *P.Oxy.* 1.115 (second century CE, Oxy.), *SB* 18.13946 (third–fourth century CE, Herm.), *P.Giss.* 1.97 (second century CE, Ars.); *SB* 14.11646 (first–second century CE, Bakchias?) is written as a single block of text with only the final salutation indented.

Sample Formulae

A sample formula, or formulary, is not a complete document but contains only sections of a document, with indefinites inserted for the variables, and usually no dates specified. There are four such examples on papyri up to the fourth century.

Date	Reference	TM no.	Contents	Location
49 CE	<i>P.Mich.</i> 2.122	11966	Grapheion reports	Tebtunis
270–275 CE	<i>P.Oxy.</i> 40.2927	16643	Corn dole/ Subscriptions	Oxyrhynchus
III CE	<i>P.Oxy.</i> 42.3075	30339	Opening of a will	Oxyrhynchus
early IV CE	<i>P.Oxy.</i> 49.3478	32487	Subscription	Oxyrhynchus

Two of these concern the business of administration: *P.Mich.* 2.122 is a sample register of contracts recorded in the grapheion, possibly written by the official in charge, a certain Kronion identified from other documents.²² Although there is a date specified for the drawing up of the document, the use of indefinites throughout clearly makes this a document of samples. This formulary makes particular use of δέῖνα rather than τις,²³ and the formulae closely resemble those found in other registers from the *grapheion*.²⁴ This is a large sheet (H × W = 27 × 24.5 cm), the writing is along the horizontal fibres, and there are traces of another column of sample formulae on the other side, written against the fibres, so that it appears the whole sheet was a compilation of formulae.

P.Mich. 2.122

- 19 . . . ζ (ἔτους) μη(νός) Σεβαστοῦ πόστη
 20 ὁμο(λογία) τοῦ δῖνος τοῦ δῖνος ε[ι]ς <τὸν δέῖνα> παραχωρήσεως
 κλήρου ἀρο(υρῶν) περὶ ποιάν²⁵ κώ[μην]

²² See *P.Mich.* 2.122.81. Image available on the APIS website of the University of Michigan.

²³ I can think of no apparent reason for this other than a preference. The scribe writes δῖνα for δέῖνα except at l. 35 (col. 1) where he correctly writes δέῖνα τοῦ δέῖνατος (see *P.Mich.* 2.122.83). See also n.7 above.

²⁴ This formulary closely resembles *P.Mich.* 2.121 verso, which does not however include the full nomenclature at each entry, e.g. *P.Mich.* 2.121 verso ll. 15–18: ὁμο(λογία) Ὑδρου καὶ ἄλλω(ν) πρὸς Ψοσνεο(ῶν) παραμο(νῆς) (δραχμῶν) ξ | μίσθ(ωσις) Κρονίω(νος) πρὸς(ς) Εἰρηναῖο(ν) (ἀρουρῶν) κδ | ὁμο(λογία) Ὀρσενο(ύφιος) πρὸς(ς) Ἀπολλῶ(νιον) ἐνοικήσε(ως) (δραχμῶν) ξ | πρᾶσις Παπνεβτνις(*) πρὸς(ς) Ὀρσεῦν (τετάρτου) μέ(ρους) τόπ(ου) ψεῖλ(οῦ)...

²⁵ Originally Πέαν κώ[μην] was read, and also on the following line – but see H.C. Youtie, “*P.Mich.* II 122,” *ZPE* 21 (1976) 206.

- 21 μεσιτέα τοῦ δῖνος τοῦ δῖνος πρὸς τὸν δῖνα κλήρου ἄρο(υρῶν)
 περὶ] ποιὰν κόμην
 22 πρᾶ(σις) τοῦ δῖνος τοῦ δῖνος [πρὸς τὸν δῖνα τοῦ δίνατος οἰκία[ς]
 καὶ αὐλῆ(ς) . . . δε τινη()
 23 ὁμο(λογία) τοῦ δῖνος τοῦ δίνατος πρὸς τὸν δῖνα τοῦ δίνατος
 ὑπο[θ]ήκης οἰκία[ς] πρὸς ἀργ(υρίου) (δραχμάς)

“... Year 6, month Sebastos, the *n*th day. Agreement by A son of B with < C > to cede an allotment of X *arourai* at such-and-such a village. Mortgage by A son of B with C of an allotment of X *arourai* at such-and-such a village. Sale by A son of B with C son of D of a house and courtyard and other things ... Agreement by A son of B with C son of D to give a house in security for X silver drachma.”

These entries are followed by other sample formulae for registering different types of contract (col. 2), as well as the formula for an oath to be taken by the official after he has completed his report (lines 27–33). This document certainly raises the possibility that scribes in various administrative offices worked from model “books.” However the layout is haphazard: the information is spread between two uneven columns, with different line lengths, the second column compressed into the top right hand corner of the sheet. There are dividing lines and some spacing between some of the formulae, so an attempt was made at some regularity. It is likely the scribe copied the formulae from other documents: for example at lines 7–8 while copying ὁκολνομημενδι (ὁκολνομημέναι) the scribe mistook the final *alpha* for *delta*.

A second formulaary, also from an administrative office, *P.Oxy.* 40.2927, contains a total of eight formulae – the first three are headings for different categories relating to the corn dole, the remaining five are model subscriptions with τις for the names.²⁶ There are examples of similar formulae.²⁷ This is also a large sheet ($H \times W = 23.5 \times 32.5$ cm), the writing along horizontal fibres, which may imply the papyrus was used for this purpose in the first instance, and each of the formulae are separated on the sheet by a one or two line space. On the other side (*P.Oxy.* 40.2928), written against the vertical fibres, there is a list of totals which may also be connected to the corn dole – these two columns take up the top third

²⁶ Image available on the POxy: Oxyrhynchus Online website.

²⁷ Cf. *P.Oxy.* 40.2927, introduction; and Bucking (n. 2) 235–236 for an analysis of the formulae.

of the sheet and there is other faint writing upside down on this side.²⁸ While the formulae of *P.Oxy.* 40.2927 were originally neatly aligned, the wide bottom margin appears to have been used as a place for a quick note, as evidenced by a list of numbers, some indecipherable lines, and some notes written upside-down. This gives the impression of a formulary lying around the *scriptorium* and used to jot down notes in a hurry. The formulae are free from orthographic errors, but there are scribal deletions (line 1, where another word is overwritten, line 7, where a phrase is struck through), and brackets excluding some words (but not striking them through) (lines 7, 8), indicating that this exemplar was adjusted either during writing, and/or afterwards, perhaps by the same hand as some additions earlier in the text.²⁹

Other surviving formularies concern private documentation and, compared to the administrative exemplars, have been found on smaller slips of papyrus and contain a single formula. The sample subscription by a witness to the opening of a will in *P.Oxy.* 42.3075 is written on a small fragment ($H \times W = 7.5 \times 5.5$ cm) and contains one sentence, the name being the only variable.³⁰

P.Oxy. 42.3075

- 1 [. . . .] . . τῖς τινος παρή-
- 2 [μην τῆς] διαθήκης ἀν[ο]ι-
- 3 [γομένης καὶ ἐπέγνω
- 4 [.] . σφραγεῖδα
- 5 [.] .

“I X, son of X, was present at the opening of the will and recognised (my?) seal.”

The editor posits that the missing part of the first line might “designate the documentary type, as in *SB* 9226” (see under models above). The papyrus was likely re-used and turned to accommodate the writing along horizontal fibres.³¹

Another subscription formula can be found in *P.Oxy.* 49.3478, that of a settlement agreement (διάλυσις).³² Written with the fibres, the back

²⁸ *P.Oxy.* 40.2928, 89.

²⁹ See *P.Oxy.* 40.2927.15n.; on orthographic errors see Bucking (n. 2) 235.

³⁰ Image available on the POxy: Oxyrhynchus Online website.

³¹ Cf. *P.Oxy.* 42.3075, introduction.

³² Image available on the POxy: Oxyrhynchus Online website.

blank, the dimensions of the fragment ($H \times W = 7.4 \times 27$ cm) and the irregular top edge all suggest that this was part of a more substantial text which may have contained a complete model document.³³ There are no exact parallels, but the general sense of the formula can be found in actual subscriptions to this particular type of document.³⁴

Draft

A draft document is by definition a precursor to the main event; it is the preliminary version of a document where mistakes, corrections, deletions, and insertions can be made before the finished document is drawn up. The draft can be distinguished from the model document by the fact that it is drawn up for a specific occasion and as such often has particular names and dates included. It is considered a draft because it contains the precise information needed for the scribe to produce the final version, but is not the fair copy. A close examination of draft documents highlights some common criteria; drafts may have some or all of the following:

- mistakes, corrections, deletions, and insertions;
- inclusion of specific names, placenames, and dates;
- may mention sender but not addressee or *vice versa*;
- may remain unfinished;
- usually has no closing salutation;
- no signatories;
- often written on a re-used sheet of papyrus;
- may not be the main text on the sheet;
- may bear no relationship to other texts on the sheet.

There is a wide variety of content ranging from letters and petitions,³⁵ to wills, reports, and accounts.³⁶ *P.Mich.* 10.582 (col. 2) (49–50 CE, Philadelpheia) may serve as an example which fulfills many of the above

³³ *P.Oxy.* 49.3478, introduction.

³⁴ E.g. *P.Oxy.* 16.1880 (427 CE, Oxy.), *SB* 13.11896 (425–250 CE, Herm.); cf. *P.Oxy.* 49.3478, introduction.

³⁵ Petitions appear to be by far the most drafted type of document with examples ranging from the third century BCE – e.g. *P.Cair.Zen.* 4.59620 (248–239 BCE, Ars.) and 4.59621, a copy of the same petition with an amended ending – into the sixth century CE, e.g. *P.Cair.Masp.* 1.67009 (567–570 CE), or 3.67352 (548–551 CE), petitions from the archive of Dioskoros of Aphrodito.

³⁶ A list of draft documents is certain to be incomplete – there are many examples where the criteria have been met but the description is not specific.

criteria.³⁷ This draft petition was written on a re-used sheet of papyrus containing the remnants of a tax list, to which it bears no relation. There are interlinear corrections and some deletions, an addressee but no sender, and the text includes specific names and dates relating to the petition; there is no closing salutation or signatories. Corrections, deletions, and insertions are an obvious sign of a draft text, e.g. the heavily corrected petition of Zenon,³⁸ or the different hands correcting the petition of Ptolemaios.³⁹

Drafts are very often written on re-used sheets: an official letter to the *strategos* was drafted on the *protokollon* of a roll, the first sheet of which carried some accounts.⁴⁰ A draft petition by a former *sitologos* runs to three columns with many corrections; this sheet was used first for a report,⁴¹ after which, more than a decade later, the draft was drawn up on the other side,⁴² and then at a later stage some accounts were scribbled in the margins on both sides.⁴³ A draft statement of guarantee was written in the space following a wet-nurse contract, by the same hand, but is unconnected to the contract.⁴⁴ A fair copy⁴⁵ of a draft letter from the *oikonomos* Apollonios⁴⁶ is itself later re-used for another draft letter⁴⁷ and a grain list,⁴⁸ all over a period of months.

Some drafts are found to be written after a model version on the same sheet. P.Berl.Cohen 3 (second–third century CE, Soknopaiou Nesos) contains the texts of two tax receipts in two different hands, the first of which contains indefinites for the names but completes the payment information (lines 1–2); the other details payments complete with names and amounts (lines 3–6), repeating the formula almost exactly from the first line of the papyrus. The writing is against the fibres of a sheet where the other side is blank. The exemplar of the first two lines was copied as a draft (note the scribal error on line 3) presumably before being drawn up properly.

³⁷ Image available on the APIS website of the University of Michigan.

³⁸ *P.Cair.Zen.* 5.59832 (246 BCE, Philadelphia).

³⁹ *UPZ* 1.43 (164–161 BCE, Memphis).

⁴⁰ *P.Tebt.* 1.13 (114 BCE, Tebtunis).

⁴¹ *P.Mich.* 18.786 (167 CE, Oxy.).

⁴² *P.Mich.* 18.787 (181–183 CE, Oxy.).

⁴³ *P.Mich.* 11.619 (c. 182 CE, Oxy.?).

⁴⁴ *BGU* 4.1160 (5–4 BCE, Alex.).

⁴⁵ *P.Köln* 6.263 (February 213 BCE, Ars.).

⁴⁶ *P.Köln* 6.264 *recto* (February 213 BCE, Ars.).

⁴⁷ *P.Köln* 12.478.27–37 (March 213 BCE, Ars.).

⁴⁸ *P.Köln* 12.478.1–26 (June/July 213 BCE, Ars.).

A receipt for payment of beer tax is written twice, in two different hands, once on either side of a small slip of papyrus (H × W = 8.5 × 6.5 cm).⁴⁹ The text on both sides is identical, with the same date and amounts; the example written against the fibres supplies Αὐρ]ήλ(ιός) τίς τινος for the name (line 4), but the name at this point on the other side is lost. A large bottom margin on both sides indicates that the fragment contained these texts only. The writing against the fibres is more practised than that on the other side; it appears a more experienced scribe wrote the model and the draft was drawn up on the other side by a slow writer.

A draft instruction to register a loan can be found on the other side of a register of receipts for special taxes relating to a particular region.⁵⁰ The instruction makes up the third of nine columns (of which only the first three are legible), and follows two letters from a *beneficarius* to other officials. The opening address uses indefinites for names, τινὰ παρά τινος, but further down specific names, a place-name, and date are included. In this instance, as the document contains all the precise information needed to produce the final version, apart from the heading, and it clearly refers to a very particular situation, it cannot be said to be a model document but must be categorised a draft. Similarly, a document modifying a previous agreement omits the names of the parties involved and opens with τίς τινι χαίρει[v], but continues with specific information regarding the original contract; coupled with the corrections and lack of subscription, this must also be called a draft.⁵¹

A curious document initially defies categorisation as either a model or a draft: *P.Oxy* 7.1034 (second century CE, Oxy.) is part of a will which, while it specifically states that the heirs will be a daughter, her foster-brother, and a third person, substitutes indefinites for their names:

P.Oxy 7.1034

κληρονόμους καταλείπω τὴν θυγατέρ[α]
μου τινὰ καὶ τὸν {τον} σύντροφον αὐτῆς
τινὰ καὶ τινὰ

“I leave as my heirs my daughter X, and her foster-brother Y, and Z”

It also gives some information on the property to be bequeathed, although there are lacunae where the place-names might be. However, given the

⁴⁹ *BGU* 13.2286 (c. 212 CE).

⁵⁰ *P.Lond.* 3.1157 verso (246 CE, Herm.).

⁵¹ *P.Oxy.* 3.509 (late second century CE, Oxy.).

correction on the second line, the errors in the sentence construction at lines 5–6 (*P.Oxy* 7.1034 n. 3–6), and the fact that there are some lines of a much corrected account on the other side, the conclusion must be that it is indeed a draft of a will as the original edition states.

Some drafts have been practiced more than once. Zenon drew up his petition to the king twice, making an amendment to the final lines in his second draft.⁵² Two drafts of a petition from a prisoner asking for his release were drawn up on either side of a single sheet,⁵³ as was a letter from Zenon regarding an amount of grain.⁵⁴

In some cases both the draft and fair copy of a document have survived. A draft of the marriage contract between Hermias and Thaubarion was written along the fibres on one side of a sheet of papyrus, while a fair copy was written against the fibres on the other side.⁵⁵ A draft reply by Menches the *κωμογραμματεὺς* concerning a farmers strike is hastily drafted below a letter from Horos the *βασιλικὸς γραμματεὺς*; but on the same day Menches wrote a better version to be forwarded to his superior.⁵⁶

Form

Descriptions of models, samples, and drafts in the literature often refer to “forms,” or “blank forms,” which is somewhat misleading. A form (*formulaire*, *formular*) is a document with the standard formulae already written and blank spaces, or windows,⁵⁷ into which variable details can be later entered. Papyri which have *τις* or *δεῖνα* in place of variables cannot be defined as a form as there are no spaces to insert the information. Key features for the definition of a form on papyrus are the presence of different hands at certain points in the text, or windows where another hand may, or may not, have entered further information or a signature.

⁵² *P.Cair.Zen.* 4.59620 and 59621 (248–239 BCE, Philadelphia).

⁵³ *P.Coll.Youtie* 1.12 (177 BCE, Tebtunis).

⁵⁴ *P.Zen.Pestm.* 56 (251 BCE, Philadelphia).

⁵⁵ *SB* 24.16072, the draft and 16073, the fair copy (12 BCE, Alexandria).

⁵⁶ *P.Tebt.* 1.26, the draft, and *P.Tebt.* 4.1099, the fair copy (both 9th November 114 BCE, Kerkeosiris).

⁵⁷ P. Schubert, “Who needed writing in Graeco-Roman Egypt, and for what purpose? Document layout as a tool of literacy,” in A. Kolb, *Literacy in Ancient Everyday Life* (Berlin 2018) 335–350; cf. especially p. 340 (“windows,” spaces left purposely blank for someone else to fill in at a definite stage of the procedure).

There are many examples of forms following these criteria in the corpus: *SB* 5.7532 (74 BCE, Nilopolis), is a six-witness loan agreement in the form of a double document, where blank spaces have been left in both the inner and outer scripts for the name of the creditor. This may have facilitated the transfer of the loan to another creditor in the future.⁵⁸ Another Ptolemaic loan agreement has a distinct change of hand at the point where the loan amount is entered in two places in the contract, signifying its later insertion into deliberate blank spaces.⁵⁹

Different hands are also discernible in *SB* 16.12648 (338 CE, Oxy.) a declaration of prices drawn up for the guilds of Oxyrhynchus and was clearly prepared in advance with blank spaces for the inclusion of specific information at particular points in the document. Of the six columns, the first four show a single scribe wrote the main text while a different hand entered the variable information each time, and yet another signed under a line after the text on each column. The main text in the two final columns is written by a different scribe, and here the windows are clearly visible where the information has not been entered.⁶⁰

There are clear instances of form filling to be seen in the certificates of pagan sacrifice (or *libelli*) found in third century Theadelphia.⁶¹ A declaration had to be made by individuals in each village as the procedure of sacrificing and tasting was witnessed by officials. To make the whole process move smoothly, the main text of the document was prepared by one scribe and windows left blank on the document for the insertion of official signatures at the time of declaration, e.g. *P.Ryl.* 2.112a: the opening address and statement of sacrifice was written in advance by a scribe (lines 1–9), who also wrote the date at the end of the document, on the bottom of the sheet (lines 13–15); a clear space was left on the sheet for a statement to be written by another scribe at the time of the declarant's sacrifice (lines 10–11), and this was further followed by an official signature in another hand (line 12).⁶²

⁵⁸ On this document and other possible examples see E. Berneker, "Blanketterklärungen in Papyrusurkunden," in *Ius et commercium. Studien zum Handels- und Wirtschaftsrecht. Festschrift für Franz Laufke* (Würzburg 1971) 11–32. Also mentioned by Berneker is *P.Merton* 1.6 where the name of the debtor differs in the inner and outer scripts, but the use of spaces here is not so clear cut (p. 19).

⁵⁹ *P.Ryl.* 4.586 (99 CE, Oxy.) now with *SB* 6.9225 = TM 5736; cf. Berneker (n. 58) 20.

⁶⁰ Image available on the Digitised Manuscripts website of the British Library (*Papyrus* 760).

⁶¹ P. Schubert, "On the Form and Content of Certificates of Pagan Sacrifice," *JRS* 106 (2016) 172–198; for a recent list cf. 192–194.

⁶² Cf. <https://grammateus.unige.ch/document/12907> for an image.

Another example of administrative form filling can be noted in the production of *penthemeros* receipts, a type of certification provided upon completion of the compulsory maintenance of dykes and canals.⁶³ These receipts were produced in large numbers and were drawn up in the office of an official whose scribe began the form with the full regnal year followed by a statement that the work was completed in that same year. After this the remaining information was inserted by another hand, at the site of work, with the specific date of the labour and the location; the name of the labourer may be added in yet another hand, before one or more final official signature.⁶⁴

The structured layout of *libelli* and *penthemeros* receipts are clear examples of forms with pre-filled information, windows for the later completion of the document, and more than one hand involved in the process. Such forms are themselves a type of model document which certainly facilitated their reproduction in an easy and consistent manner.⁶⁵

Summary

While some documents may be less easily distinguished as a model, sample formulary, draft, or form, it is useful to have some basic parameters by which to categorise them. In summary, a model document is one which serves as a template for a particular type of document and which uses indefinites for the variable elements. In a sample formulary, particular formulaic phrases are modelled and indefinites are also used for the variables. The evidence for these models appears to come overwhelmingly from the administration and it is probably safe to say that these models were an essential tool for both the apprentice and professional scribe. A draft, on the other hand, is a practice document which contains specific information, and where there are often amendments to the text; the evidence for these may be found in both the administrative and private arenas, with letters and petitions featuring often. Finally, forms are documents with pre-filled information and windows left for the addition of further information later; the evidence for these appears to be mostly administrative.

⁶³ On this type of document see P. Sijpesteijn, *Penthemeros-certificates in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Leiden 1964). There are more than 400 published *penthemeros* receipts; for a list consult *P.Col.* 10, p. 256, introduction.

⁶⁴ E.g. *P.Mich.* 15.690 (first century CE, Sok. Nesos), image on the APIS website of the University of Michigan; *SB* 16.12860 (87–88 CE, Philadelphia), image on the Berliner Papyrusdatenbank website.

⁶⁵ P. Schubert (n. 61), especially p. 187.

	Amendments	Indefinites	Names	Dates	Windows	Re-used sheet
Model		•				•
Formulary	•	•				•
Draft	•		•	•		•
Form			•	•	•	