\( Ψ^{27} \) (Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 1355)

A Fresh Analysis*

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Abstract: This detailed study of \( Ψ^{27} \) suggests some adjustments to the older editions. In addition to revisiting its measurements and illegible letters (dots), some readings within the manuscript are challenged. A previously unnoticed alpha can be added after a new investigation into the fragment (\( απασα \), verso line 19). It is noted that \( Ψ^{27} \) contains some interesting \textit{Sonderlesarten} often not included in critical editions, e.g. the original aorist passive \( ε/ηλευθερωθη \) (verso line 16). The NA\(^{27} \) and NA\(^{28} \) reading of Rom 8:26 without \( υπερ \) \( ημων \) could also be confidently backed up with \( Ψ^{27} \) vid. Some speculations are raised concerning the almost illegible reading on verso line 6. The possibility of the text reading \( κρα\( ]ζο\)\( ]μεν \) instead of \( υιοθε\( ]σιας \)\( εν \) is suggested on the basis of an omission of the second \( ελαβετε \) from Rom 8:15 and the three dots above the last two letters of \( κρα\( ]ζο\)\( ]μεν \) indicating a pause before the word \textit{abba}. All in all, the study argues that the papyrus was read publically due to the reading aids that it contains.

Introduction

Papyrus 27 (LDAB id. 3010; TM nr. 61854) was found in the manuscript treasury of a rubbish pit in Oxyrhynchus, Upper Egypt (present-day el-Bahnasa), and first published and collated in 1915 by B.P. Grenfell and A.S. Hunt. They assigned these two double sided fragments of a papyrus codex “with probability” to the third century. The manuscript was first housed in Worcester Cathedral Library, from where it ended up in its present location at Cambridge University Library* (classmark Add. 7211).

\footnotetext[1]{All images in the article are reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library (classmark Add. 7211).}
\footnotetext[4]{Hatch, \textit{The Principal Uncial Manuscripts}, plate IX.}
Due to its early age and good textual quality, the manuscript is valuable for the textual criticism of Romans, in spite of its small amount of text. \(\Psi^{27}\) is a typical representative of the early fragmentary papyrus, whose importance should not be played down at the expense of the grand codices, for, as E.J. Epp points out, “it is well known that the NT papyri found at Oxyrhynchus constitute the most numerous, the most geographically concentrated, and as a whole the oldest at any single location.”\(^5\) Oxyrhynchus plays indeed a unique role in New Testament textual criticism: the papyri found there comprise 42 per cent of the currently known 116 papyri;\(^6\) 57 per cent of all pre-fourth-century NT manuscripts (or, 64 per cent of all NT papyri of known provenance\(^7\)) were discovered there, forming “a microcosm of the various textual clusters (texttypes) that present themselves across the entire NT manuscript tradition.”\(^8\)

As a representative of such an important type and group of early NT manuscripts, NA\(^{27}\) refers to \(\Psi^{27}\) five times, once supporting the non-vulgar reading of \(\epsilon\pi\nu\)’ (Rom 8:20), once with an alternative present passive indicative form for \(\varepsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\sigma\omega\) (8:21) and thrice supporting the NA\(^{27}\) text reading (8:34; 8:38), yet twice, of these, as \(\text{vid.}\). The papyrus is, therefore, worth revisiting in its own right, and especially so because of some differences that my detailed study of \(\Psi^{27}\) has found compared to its previously published editions.\(^9\)

I studied the manuscript in Cambridge University Library over the course of the Lent Term of 2010, and again in the Michaelmas Term of 2012, using, in addition to bare eyes, a magnifying glass, a video enlarger and ultraviolet and white light, which were needed because of the (in part) poor condition of the fragments. A 600 dpi colour scan of the manuscript was also used. It is unclear whether the earlier editions could take advantage of all such tools. In my description of the papyrus, I follow D. Parker’s guidelines where applicable.\(^10\)

1. Transcription of the Text

In the transcription below, a dot underneath the letter indicates a degree of uncertainty, while a question mark implies pure speculation. A mere dot means an illegible letter.

1.1. Verso

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{o}γ\jmath [\text{π}\text{i} \text{s}]\text{αρκι} & \quad \text{Rom 8:12} \\
[\text{t}ο\nu \text{κατα} \text{σαρκα} \text{ζην} \text{e}i \text{γαρ} \text{κατα} \text{σαρκα} \text{ζην} \text{e}i \text{με}l] & \quad 13 \\
[\text{l}e\text{te} \text{αποθη}nn\text{σκει} \text{e}i \text{δε} \text{πι} \text{tας} \text{πραξ}eis] \text{tο} \text{s} \text{οω} & \quad 14 \\
[\text{ματος} \text{θα}n\text{ατουτε} \text{ζη}σε\text{σθε} \text{οσοι} \text{γαρ} \text{πι} \text{νι} \text{θυ} \text{αγων} & \quad 15 \\
[\text{ται} \text{ουτοι} \text{ι} \text{ιθυ} \text{εισιν} \text{ου} \text{γαρ} \text{ελα}f\text{ατε} \text{πινα} \text{δουλειας} & \quad 5
\end{align*}
\]


\(^6\) Now up to \(\Psi^{27}\), thus making Epp’s data slightly outdated.


\(^9\) Nestle, E. & Aland, K. (eds.), Novum Testamentum Graece (27th revised ed., 8th corrected reprint), Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993, pp. 423f. The Byzantine \(\text{e}k \text{νειρφων} \) would indeed not fit well in v. 34 on the manuscript. Similarly, the word order suggested by NA\(^{27}\) fits most naturally with what can be seen on lines 39–40 recto. NA\(^{28}\) cites \(\Psi^{27}\) similarly.


[παλιν εἰς φοβον ἀλλα πνα νιωθειας εν ὦ κρα]ξομεν12
[ἀββα ο πφρ ωστε;]13 αυτο το πνα συ]γματν
[ρει το πνι ημων οτι εσμεν τ[εκνα β]υ ει δ]ε τεκνα
[και κληρονομοι κληρονομοι] μεν τυ συνκληρονο
[μοι δε χυ επερ συνταισχομε]ν ἴνα και συνδοξα
[σθωμεν λογιζομαι γαρ οτι] ουκ αξια τα παθημ[ατ]
[12 αββα οπηρωστε;]
[ωστε;]
[τοι και αυτη τη κτισις ελευθερη]14 ωθη .. της δου
[λειας της φθορας εις την ελε]θεριαν της δοξης
[των τεκνων του θυ οιδαμεν] γαρ οτι] απαση η κτι
[σις συνστεναξει και συνωδιν]ει αχρ[ι] του νυν
[3 lines lost]
[κατα εκλεκτων θυθς ο δικαιων τις 33, 34
[οι ακρινων θης ο αποθανων μαλλον δε εγερθεις
[ος κατι εστιν εν δεξια του θυς και εντυγχανει υπερ
ημων τις αγαπης του θυ]

1.2. Recto

τις [εγκαλεσει κατα εκλεκτων θυ θς ο δικαιων τις
ο κατι]15 ακρινων χς ις ο αποθανων μαλλον δε εγερθεις
ος κα]16[ι εστιν εν δεξια του θυς και εντυγχανει υπερ
ημων τις ημας χωρισει απο της αγαπης του θυ]

[θης ωστε η στενοχωρια η διωγμος η λιμος η γυμνοτης
η κιν]17[δυνος η μαχαιρα καθως γεγραπται οτι ενεκεν
σου θανα]18[τας ουτε ζωη ουτε αγγελοι ουτε αρχαι ουτε
ενεστωτα ου[τε αγγελοι ουτε βαθος ουτε τις κτισις ετερα]

Rom 9:1

45 συνικαταρκουσης [μοι της συνειδησεως μου εν πνι
αγιω οτι λυπη μι]19[οι εστιν μεγαλη και αδιαλειπτος ο
δυνη τη καρδια μι]20[ου πικωμη γαρ αναθημα ειναι αυ
τος εγιο απο του χυ υπερ των αδελφων μου των συγγε
νων μου κατα [σαρκα

12 This line is particularly difficult to read.
13 The word ωστε is contained by D.
3 lines lost)

\[\text{aiωνας αμὴν οὐχ ὦιν δὲ οτι εκπεπτωκεν ὁ λόγος} \]
\[\text{τοῦ θεοῦ γαρ παντες οἱ εἰς ἀπλα οὐτοί ἀπλα οὐδὲ οτι} \]

55 \[\text{εἰσιν σὰρκια αβρααμ παντες τεκνα ἀλλὰ ἐν ἱσαακ}
\[\text{κληθήσεται οἱ σπέρμα τοὺς ἐστὶν ὦ τα τεκνα της}
\[\text{σαρκὸς ταῦτα τεκνα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τα τεκνα τῆς ἐπαγγε}
\[\text{λίας λογιζεται εἰς σπέρμα ἐπαγγελίας γαρ ὁ λόγος}
\[\text{οὗτος κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τούτον ἐλευσόμαι καὶ}

60 \[\text{εὑταί} \]

1.3. Notes on the Transcription

On the whole, my transcription of the manuscript is more stringent than the previous ones. Some of the letters transcribed with a dot, or sometimes even without, were invisible to my eyes. This could be due to the ageing of the manuscript or differences in the methods used.

Wessely’s transcription differs from Grenfell & Hunt’s on just five occasions: he sees one fewer letters on verso line 8 and recto line 53, one more certain letters on verso line 14 and recto line 49 and one fewer doubtful letters on recto line 45. In comparison to both of these early collations, I see significantly fewer certain letters and more doubtful ones. Junack et al. are closer to my reading of the papyrus, giving it an even greater number of doubtful letters. As an interesting example, their verso line 6 contains more uncertainty than the previous editions, rendering the line as υἱοθεσίας εν instead of Grenfell & Hunt’s υἱοθεσίας εν. This is, again, closer to my reading of the text. Compared to Comfort & Barrett, I see more letters on four and fewer on at least fifteen occasions. Their transcription also reads the superscription of verso line 17 differently as -σεται instead of -ουται, without stating why. Another difference is the absence of any indication of uncertainty in their collation.

The following chart sums up how many letters different transcriptions see in ₰27.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transcription</th>
<th>Published</th>
<th>Visible letters</th>
<th>Certain letters</th>
<th>Doubtful letters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grenfell &amp; Hunt</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wessely</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junack et al.</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort &amp; Barrett</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siikavirta</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The Physical and Palaeographical Characteristics of ₰27

On the whole, the text of ₰27 is badly damaged, with between half or two thirds of the textual column lost.\(^{14}\) Most scholars deduce that the papyrus was a one-column page composed of 32 to 33 lines, of which only 20 + 7 lines on the verso and 19 + 8 lines on the recto side remain, with three lines in between the fragments and “several” upper and lower lines lost completely.\(^{15}\) The others propose that the number of letters is between 32 and 42 per line\(^{16}\) while my transcription gives a slightly broader spectrum from 29 to 42 and an average of approximately 36.

\(^{14}\) Grenfell & Hunt, Oxyrhynchus Papyri XI, p. 9; Aland, Studien, p. 115.
\(^{16}\) Aland, Studien, p. 115; Junack (et al.), Das Neue Testament auf Papyrus II, p. 30.
Twelve to thirteen lines would be needed to fit Rom 8:27–32 in the missing portion between the two sides, making use of the average of 36 letters per line. Assuming that the gap is evenly divided between the two sides, that would give the papyrus about 36 lines per page already, not taking into account the missing top of the verso and the bottom of the recto side. Therefore, Eric G. Turner’s estimate of “41?” lines per page resonates with my analysis.\(^{17}\) To estimate how many pages Romans or the entire Pauline corpus would have encompassed in the codex of which \(\Psi^{27}\) was a part, the following calculation would need to be conducted: the number of letters in Romans or the Pauline corpus ÷ (36 × 41).

Taken from different points of the fragments,\(^{18}\) we gain the following measurements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Large fragment</th>
<th>Small fragment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Widest point (cm)</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrowest point (cm)</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longest point (cm)</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortest point (cm)</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results differ somewhat from the less detailed overall measurements of Grenfell & Hunt and others of 11.2 x 4.4 cm for the large fragment and 4.7 x 2.5 cm for the small fragment (cf. K. Aland’s 11 x 4.4).\(^{19}\) Originally, the page is envisaged to have been 25–26 x 13 cm, with approximately 23–24 x 10 cm as the dimensions of the written area.\(^{20}\) Also my measurements of the margins differ from those of Aland, K. Junack et al., who mention merely an outer margin of 1.5 cm;\(^{21}\) the outer margin on the verso side as we have it now measures 0.3–1.0 cm and 1.0–1.3 cm on the recto side.

As the fragments are double-sided, the fibres on the verso go in the left-right diagonal direction, compared with the vertical fibres on the recto side.\(^{22}\) At times, the wearing out of the papyrus has revealed and twisted the fibre structure so severely that it makes the text difficult to read. According to W.H.P. Hatch, the much clearer recto side must have been reproduced.\(^{23}\) The small hole penetrating the margin on line 15 of verso and 44 of recto could be a binding trace. Similar traces may be seen in e.g. \(\Psi^{105}\) (P. Oxy. LXIV 4406) and in P. Ryl. III 461d.

The hand can be characterised as upright informal majuscule\(^{24}\) as well as irregular (cf. the alphas, epsilons etc.), and despite being uncial, it has cursive elements typical of the third century.\(^{25}\) The ligature elements in the text are interesting. For instance, on the second line of the verso, all three letters in the Greek μετ are tied together. Another good example on the recto side is the ligature of ωσ on line 38. The letters alpha, iota, kappa and pi extend below the line, delta and iota go over the line (notable in κτισις on verso line 15), and beta, xi, phi and psi do both.\(^{26}\) The letter xi is particularly elaborate and has a tail that stretches underneath the following letter (see for instance αξια on verso line 11). Hatch rightly points out that between some

\(^{18}\) As suggested by Parker, *Introduction*, p. 91.
\(^{23}\) Hatch, *The Principal Uncial Manuscripts*, plate IX.
\(^{26}\) Cf. Junack (et al.), *Das Neue Testament auf Papyrus II*, p. 31.
words, there is slight separation, notably on line 42 of the recto (ὡςμα ουτεβα[θος) and line 3 of the verso (του σω[ματος). This could also be the case with the proposed gap before the word abba (verso line 7; see below).

There are no stops in the text apart from the paragraphus line on top of recto line 54 on the small fragment (Rom 9:6). There, the τ of του penetrates slightly further into the margin than elsewhere in the papyrus. The text lacks accentuation and punctuation but does contain the diaeresis on the initial iota and upsilon.

It also seems that various kinds of dots appear mostly in the margins but also between lines, which has not been noted by the previous editors. Most of the single dots look like standard line markers (e.g. recto lines 35–40), but the triple (the edge of the margin on recto line 37) and double dots (e.g. verso line 25 of the small fragment) are more complicated—let alone the combination of a dash underneath (verso line 19 and maybe 11) or above two dots (verso line 7; verso line 27). Especially two of these are worth mentioning. On the sixth line of the verso, there appear to be three dots in a down-pointing triangular shape above the letters ε and v. This is especially significant if the word on the line is κρα[ζομεν instead of υιοθε[σιας εν, as I speculate below, in which case it might indicate a pause in voiced reading before the Aramaic word abba. This, however, is mere speculation. The following line on the same page has both an elongated upsilon for right-hand justification and what looks like a dash on two parallel dots (see figure 1).

As Comfort and Barrett have suggested, \( \Psi^{27} \) has close similarities with \( \Psi^{20} \), or, even, presents the same hand. Similar letters include the alpha, beta, delta, epsilon, kappa, iota, omicron, pi, rho, sigma, phi, upsilon, psi, omega, whilst dissimilarities exist in the eta, mu and nu. The zeta may be another letter that looks different. \( \Psi^{20} \) has been dated to the third century, which means that \( \Psi^{27} \) would stem from the same time period, even if it were not written by the same copyist. Junack et al., however, have argued that \( \Psi^{27} \) is certainly older than \( \Psi^{20} \), whose penmanship is better than in \( \Psi^{27} \).

The text lacks itacisms and assimilations, reading συ[νμαρτυρει (Rom 8:16), συ[νκ[λη ρο[ν[μοι (8:17) and συ[νμαρτυρονης (9:1). The following nomina sacra are visibly abbreviated: θεος (8:14, 17, 19; 9:6), κυριος (8:39), πνευμα (8:14) and χριστος (9:3). The text length makes it likely that others such as υιος, ιησους, ισραηλ and πατηρ were contracted as well.

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27 Hatch, The Principal Uncial Manuscripts, plate IX.
29 Junack (et al.), Das Neue Testament auf Papyrus II, p. 31.
33 Junack (et al), Das Neue Testament auf Papyrus II, p. 31.
34 Cf. Junack (et al), Das Neue Testament auf Papyrus II, p. 31.
3. The Textual Problems of \( \Psi^{27} \)

\( \Psi^{27} \) has text from Rom 8:12–22, 24–27 (verso) and 8:33–9:3, 35–39 (recto).\(^{36}\) In its original form, \( \Psi^{27} \) contained mostly a good quality Alexandrian text.\(^{37}\) The only clearly visible exceptions are the \( επ' \) instead of the vulgar \( εφ' \) on verso line 16 and the unknown present passive correction of the illegible reading on verso line 17.\(^{38}\) On the basis of the tight space, it is very likely that the text there originally read \( ελευθερωθη \) or \( ηλευθερωθη \) \( εκ \) in the aorist instead of the longer future passive.\(^{39}\) Interestingly, Grenfell & Hunt seem to think so as well but do not print it in the text of their edition. The correction by a later hand \( (ελευθερωθηται \text{ or } ηλευθερωθη \text{ εκ}) \) together with the original reading are both Sonderlesarten only found in \( \Psi^{27} \) and some Vulgate manuscripts.\(^{40}\) Comfort and Barrett, however, render the correction as \( ελευθερωθη \), without explaining why.\(^{41}\) The present form would logically match those in Rom 8:22 and convey a meaning of the liberation of creation as an on-going process, whilst the aorist is slightly odd albeit understandable if referring to the recapitulation and liberation that has already and definitely taken place in Christ.

Somewhat more surprisingly, the first editors seem to have missed the initial \( α \) from \( ἀπασα \) in Rom 8:22 (see figure 3).\(^{42}\) The small ellipse-shaped trace is unlikely to be anything but the round part of the alpha, not even part of the initial \( π \).\(^{43}\) This is especially evident when compared to the almost identical second \( α \) of the word. The video enlarger came in useful when confirming this small discovery. Grenfell & Hunt, together with the subsequent editions, have failed to notice the alpha even though it is visible to the naked eye. They do not even mistake it for the iota of \( οτι \), which their edition puts in brackets. This extra letter does not alter the meaning in any way, however, as the form with an alpha is merely an alternative yet slightly less common form of \( πασα \).

Another observation concerning previous editors has to do with verso line 6. There, the letters before the \( ευ \) are somewhat problematic. To my eye, it would be possible to envisage the word as \( κραζομεν \) (or, indeed, \( κραξομεν \) as in F) instead of \( υιοθεσιας \) \( εν \). This word could fit at the end of the line if the somewhat redundant repetition of the verb \( ελαβετε \) were omitted, resulting in 40 letters on the line. This could happen as the result of a careless mistake but would not change the meaning of the sentence. The suggested reading would include a gap of five to ten letters before (or, indeed, after) the interjection \( αββα \ ο πηρ \) as a reading aid. A similar gap seems to appear in \( \Psi^{26} \) on recto line 11, between the invisible \( ορατε \ οτι \) and before the

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37 Junack (et al), *Das Neue Testament auf Papyrus II*, p. 31.
38 Grenfell & Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri XI*, p. 9; Hatch, *The Principal Uncia Manuscripts*, plate IX.
40 Junack (et al), *Das Neue Testament auf Papyrus II*, p. 31.
43 This is a reading by Junack (et al), *Das Neue Testament auf Papyrus II*, p. 62.
emphatic statement of Jas 2:24 (εξ εργων [δικαιουται ανθρωπος και] ους εκ πιστεω[ζ Μονον]).

One may speculate further with insertions such as ωστε, as found in Codex Claromontanus (D) and in the Syriac Peshitta. This would signify a further departure in \( \Psi^{27} \) from the Alexandrian text-type towards a Western (or Byzantine, in the case of sy\(^{6} \)) text.

On the other hand, such speculated omission of the verb is not attested anywhere else, and the proposed reading does have its problems. The long, slightly curved letter, if taken as a \( \zeta \), does not occur elsewhere in the papyrus for comparison. If taken as the work of the same scribe, the zeta in \( \Psi^{20} \) (occurring three times) lacks the long downward stroke appearing in this section, looking much like the modern capital Z. The iotas in \( \Psi^{20} \) are also sometimes markedly extended and final sigmas often open downwards, which could also be the case here. If taken as the iota of \( \upsilon θεσιας \), however, it would certainly be the longest and curviest one in \( \Psi^{27} \).

Perhaps this is why Junack \( \text{et al.} \) render \( \upsilon θεσιας \). A useful point of comparison between the majority interpretation of this line in \( \Psi^{27} \) and \( \Psi^{20} \) is recto line 6 in the latter where the same sequence of letters (\( σιασ \)) occurs in the word \( θυσιαστηριον \) and looks rather similar to what it could be in \( \upsilon θεσιας \) in \( \Psi^{27} \). In \( \Psi^{27} \), there would also seem to be a small gap between the \( \mu \) and the \( \epsilon \), unless the wrinkling of the vertical fibres have simply caused it to appear over time. That could be the case, and \( \Psi^{20} \) may indeed not be the product of the same scribe. What we can be sure of is that the decay of the manuscript’s fibres makes reading the letters before \( εν \) very difficult.

The significance of \( \Psi^{27} \) for the textual variants concerning \( διοτι \) (8:21), \( τις \) (8:24), \( τη ασθενεια \) (8:26), \( υπερ ημων \) (8:26), \( ιησους \) (8:34) and \( τις \) (8:39) is also an interesting question. Suffice it to say that since all of these variants are \( \textit{vid.} \) in the manuscript, assumptions concerning them can only be treated as such, apart from one exception. The addition of \( υπερ ημων \) (8:26) is clearly not supported by \( \Psi^{27} \), as it would lead to the exceptionally great number of 50 letters on verso line 30. All the other variants, perhaps aside from the extra long \( τις \) \( \tau \) \( και \) reading of 8:24 (yielding 44 letters on verso line 25), would fit within the papyrus’ normal range of letters per line.

These observations show how much speculation is involved when discerning the letters and words of a badly damaged and worn out papyrus. Moreover, on the basis of how many more letters Grenfell & Hunt read compared to the number readable today—especially at the ends of the lines—the question must be raised whether they had \( \Psi^{27} \) in a much better condition almost a century ago or if they were simply more optimistic in their work than contemporary scholars.

**Conclusion**

The correction in Rom 8:21 indicates that the text was treated with some care. While the small size of the papyrus is taken by some to indicate that it was not meant for public (liturgical) reading, \( \Psi^{20} \) is of a similar size and has reading marks that indicate that such usage was possible for manuscripts written in small hand, too.\(^{46}\) As Peter Head has observed, many of the Oxyrhynchus fragments from the second and the third centuries portray clear evidence of diaeresis (\( \Psi^{100} \), also \( \Psi^{56} \), \( \Psi^{41} \)), breathing marks (\( \Psi^{77} \), \( \Psi^{104} \), \( \Psi^{105} \), also \( \Psi^{41} \)), punctuation marks (\( \Psi^{27} \), \( \Psi^{102} \), \( \Psi^{103} \), \( \Psi^{103} \), \( \Psi^{103} \), also e.g. \( \Psi^{41} \), \( \Psi^{56} \), \( \Psi^{57} \)), paragraph divisions (\( \Psi^{77} \) and codices cited earlier) and

\(^{44}\) High-definition images of \( \Psi^{20} \) can be consulted at http://www.princeton.edu/~dcskemer/APIS-Jamesi.html.

\(^{45}\) Junack (et al), \textit{Das Neue Testament auf Papyrus II}, p. 31.

\(^{46}\) I am indebted to Dr Peter M. Head for this observation.
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page numbering (𝔓106, also 𝔖65). 47 Although 𝔖27 lacks punctuation, the existing nomina sacra, diaereses on an iota (8:17; cf. second-century 𝔖27 in recto line 32, verso line 2) and two upsilons (8:19, 39), gaps between letters (verso line 3; recto line 42; possibly also verso line 7; cf. 𝔖75) and possible reading-aid dots (most notably verso line 6; cf. 𝔖27) may indicate that this manuscript’s early use entailed public reading. 48 Recto line 54 is the only place where 𝔖27 shows evidence of ekthesis (projection of the first letter of a new section into the left margin such as in 𝔖64). Despite variation in how divisions were marked, as Epp points out, there is clear indication of liturgical use amongst the Oxyrhynchus papyri. 49 It is likely that amidst the persecutions of the third century, Paul’s comforting text at the end of Rom 8 would have been cherished and read often in Christian congregations.

Because of its excellent category I text, it can be maintained that 𝔖27 is an earlier representative of the text type that made its way into the Codex Vaticanus. As Epp maintains, Oxyrhynchus was a cradle of all text-types. 50 It is, therefore, possible that the textual tradition behind old papyri such as 𝔖27 was used as the source for the formation of B, increasing the significance of the papyrus. Critical editions of the NT could take advantage of the papyrus even more than the five times that NA27 and NA28 do. For instance, the original and unique aorist passive reading of ε/ηλευθερωθη could be mentioned, as it conveys a very different kind of meaning from the future passive. Similarly, the reading of 8:26 without ὑπερ ημων could be confidently backed up with a 𝔖27 vid in the apparatus. In future studies, the speculated omission of the second ἔλαβετε in Rom 8:15 would also be an interesting detail to test further.

All in all, this study of 𝔖27 has shown that even well-known and widely studied papyri reward further examination. Further in-depth studies of the so far neglected dots and their potential role as reading and pronunciation aids may provide interesting insights into the context in which 𝔖27 was used.

48 Cf. Hurtado, The Earliest Christian Artifacts, pp. 177–181. Head admits, however, that sometimes the “dots” remain simply inexplicable, especially when they do not correspond to paragraph divisions (see the discussion on Papyrus 100 in Head, “Some Recently Published NT Papyri,” p. 14).
Appendix 1: Colour Images of \( \Xi^{27} \) (Recto and Verso)