

Uniformity and Regionalism in Latin Writing Culture of the First Millennium C.E.

Edited by Rodney Ast,
Tino Licht and Julia Lougovaya

PHILIPPIKA

Altertumswissenschaftliche Abhandlungen

Contributions to the Study of Ancient World Cultures 162

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of Ancient World Cultures

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PREFACE

This small collection showcases select examples of Latin writing in Graeco-Roman antiquity and the early Middle Ages. It looks at the degree to which uniform practice and regional expression manifest themselves in materials, scripts, layout and even language under varied and often changing political, administrative, social and cultural conditions. Since emphasis is placed on text-bearing artifacts, the volume often explores physical contexts, be it the regions from which texts come (Egypt, Britain, Italy, Visigothic Spain etc.) or the specific archaeological sites in which they were discovered, such as Aswan in Upper Egypt.

Discussion of the origin of written artifacts naturally leads to consideration of the social and historical contexts of their creation and the agents who made them. One of the most prominent contexts in which distinctive regional features of Latin writing can be viewed against more global trends is the Roman army, and texts associated with the army receive much attention in this collection. Given its geographical reach, the army was a multi-cultural setting where a degree of linguistic uniformity was necessary for communication, but where language and writing practice were constantly informed by regional elements. Texts originating in the army thus mirror the fissures and rough edges that are inevitable in frontier zones in which culturally diverse peoples attempt to communicate. Other areas in which the intersection between uniformity and regionalism in Latin writing practice are more pronounced are provincial administrations and religious settings. This volume highlights them as well.

Latin is preserved on many kinds of objects. Best known are parchment manuscripts and stone inscriptions, but papyrus, wood, ceramic sherds (called ‘ostraca’), slate, lead and other materials were used in antiquity and the Middle Ages to write on. They are often regionally significant, either because of the abundance of a particular material in a given area or because of local conditions conducive to the preservation of certain materials in specific places. While both ostraca and papyri were used in Roman military camps in the Eastern Desert of Egypt, ostraca were discarded on the spot and consequently preserved there; papyrus seems to have been removed to places where it did not survive. Other materials were more readily available in some regions than in others, which might explain their confinement to specific locations. Slate in Spain would seem to be such a case, although, as we learn from I. Velázquez Soriano, the material was used outside the Iberian Peninsula, too. By focusing on writing materials, these contributions thus surface some of the tensions between uniformity and regionalism referred to above.

The connection between writing material and features related to the text, such as genre, writing styles and document design, is another theme that informs this volume. A modern reader might take for granted the layout of texts in printed books, where the established conventions are familiar to everyone within certain cultural boundaries, but close attention to the design of texts inscribed on artifacts that predate the printing press can reveal something about the agents behind them. For example, it can highlight cultural preferences in the presentation of language learning tools; it can point up ways in which knowledge was organized in particular institutional settings; it can reveal the interplay between regional sensitivities and tendencies to standardization.

The first section of the book comprises chapters dealing with multilingual environments. Three of them address the topic of layout in the context of second language acquisition. In ‘Where Do You Put the Latin of a Bilingual Text, and Why Does It Matter?’ E. Dickey surveys bilingual (Latin-Greek) glossaries on papyri and shows how the layout of the texts can reveal their purpose. Most early bilingual papyri (i.e. prior to the fourth century) containing glossaries and conjugation tables are arranged in columns and have Greek in the first column and Latin in Greek script in the second. Dickey argues that the columnar layout of glossaries was invented in the Latin West, with the ‘target’ language coming first and each language using its own script, which likely served the purpose of helping to read. Since the Greeks who took over the columnar format were initially foremost interested in learning to speak Latin, they adapted the format to this purpose by putting Greek first followed by Latin in Greek transliteration.

There are of course exceptions to rules, as Dickey acutely points out about her material, and as J. Lougovaya shows in a related chapter entitled ‘A Greek-Latin Glossary from the Fort of Didymoi’. Lougovaya edits for the first time a curious ostrakon from a fort on the road between the Nile Valley emporium of Coptos and the Red Sea port of Berenike. It contains a Greek-Latin glossary probably dating to the third quarter of the third century. Unlike most of the papyri from this period, the text is arranged continuously, not in columns. Why the writer did not follow the columnar layout is hard to explain, but it does not seem that the material (an ostrakon rather than a papyrus) is the reason, or at least the only one. As Lougovaya points out, columns were not uncommon on ostraca in accounts and other kinds of lists, including those used for educational purposes. Therefore, she concludes that the explanation for the unusual layout probably lies with the writer. He or she simply may not have had a conception of how glossaries ought to be arranged. This might reflect the isolated environs of the Eastern Desert or perhaps the writer’s pragmatic approach to learning Latin, which would have been spoken by at least some of the soldiers stationed in the area.

Language learning is also at the center of M.C. Scappaticcio’s chapter on ‘Fables from the East: Latin Texts on Papyrus and the Role of Fables in Second-Language Acquisition’. Surveying the four extant fragments of Latin and Latin-Greek fables preserved on papyrus, which date to the third and fourth century, Scappaticcio considers how fables served as a tool for the acquisition of Latin as a second language by Greek speakers. The moralizing content of such texts made them an educational staple and contributed to their cross-cultural appeal.

After three chapters focusing on multilingual contexts in Egypt, chapters four and five switch attention to North Africa under Roman and Vandal rule. Since the early 19th century, relatively large numbers of Latin ostraca have turned up in parts of modern Tunisia, Algeria and Libya. These texts, which are often difficult to decipher and interpret because of the limited amount of material, as compared to Roman Egypt, reflect aspects of writing practice not seen in epigraphical evidence from North Africa. R. Ast in ‘Uniformity and Regionalism in Accounts on Ostraca from North Africa’ compares accounts on ostraca from two different places, Gighi in Tunisia and Assenamat in Libya. These accounts show marked regional differences, even if the bureaucratic act of recording payments is similar in both places. The account from Assenamat is written in Latino-Punic and is strongly influenced by local documentary habits, as revealed by its layout, while those from Gighi are in line with accounts elsewhere, perhaps reflecting the urban environment from which they come.

The Assenamat account, which comprises rich and unusual onomastics, is very interesting for the window it provides on the place. C. Múrcia’s companion piece, ‘A Note on Names in

O.Assenamat inv. 63/449a', helps elucidate this world by offering linguistic explanations for some of the names in the account. Together, these two chapters illustrate some of the work that awaits researchers interested in this part of North Africa in the Roman and later periods.

The next section of the collection explores that sector of ancient society where Latin played a prominent role in the Roman period: the army. In 'On the Southern Frontier: Latin Ostraca from Aswan', M. Hepa and S. Torallas Tovar focus on a remarkable Latin ostrakon (*O.Syene Swiss 1*) found in excavations at Syene (Aswan) in Upper Egypt. The authors describe in some detail the archaeological context in which the ostrakon was discovered. They then edit the text, a letter between two soldiers in which one requests his military allowance so that he can cover the cost of a bow and armor.

While Latin might be seen as an important communications unifier within the army, the language could show substantial regional influences. The letter from Syene (Aswan) illustrates this very well. It was clearly composed by a Greek speaker (Greek being the principal language of the army in Roman Egypt), as it abounds in evidence of Greek interference. J.N. Adams explores this in another companion piece, 'The Latin of a Non-Native Speaker: *O.Syene Swiss 1*'. He argues on the basis of the extensive interference of Greek that this kind of non-standard Latin, which must have been commonly heard in the army, should be interpreted as 'learner's Latin'. Thus, like the bilingual glossaries, the ostrakon tells us something about 'Latin as a second language' in Roman Egypt.

Latin papyri from the Roman army inform us not only about the Latin language, but also about Roman bureaucracy. O. Salati pursues this point in 'Listing in the Roman Army: Formatting and Graphical Conventions of Latin Lists on Papyrus', which analyzes particular conventions used in army documentation. Such conventions could include blank spaces, *eisthesis* and *ekthesis*, the centering of text and the use of capital letter forms. On the basis of papyri and ostraca from Egypt, North Africa and Syria, Salati concludes that Roman military bureaucracy employed uniform devices in order to organize the large output of documentation within its units. This uniformity she attributes to the army's 'broad documentary pragmatism'.

Similar uniformity is observed by R.S.O. Tomlin in 'Writing on Wood in Roman Britain'. Tomlin surveys Latin documents on wood (wax, stylus and ink tablets) from Roman Britain. These include the well-known tablets from Vindolanda and London, as well as the not-so-well-known ones from places like Carlisle and Caerleon. The tablets represent the earliest witnesses to literacy in Roman Britain, a legacy of the immigrants who came from continental Europe, many of them associated with the army. Because the tablets were part of broader Roman writing practice, their decipherment has been aided by comparison with tablets from elsewhere in Europe.

The final part of the collection addresses the issue of transformation and adaptation of Latin writing practices on the cusp of the Medieval period. The tension between universal practice and regional instantiation is the subject of K. Wallenwein's study of early Medieval relic labels preserved on metal. Although metal is much more poorly attested as a material substrate for relic labels than parchment was, it was not restricted to a particular region. Nevertheless, important regional aspects are noted in, for example, formal features of script and abbreviations.

With some writing materials it is more difficult than with others to assess how widespread their use was. This is true of slate texts, which I. Velázquez Soriano surveys. While certain kinds of documents preserved on slate find parallels in portable media such as ostraca, wooden tablets and papyri, slate itself is largely associated with Visigothic Spain. However, it should not be viewed, in

chronological terms, as a strictly *Visigothic* phenomenon. Roman and Medieval examples of inscribed slates are also known, and slate texts are even attested outside the Iberian peninsula.

Visigothic slates also play a fundamental role in T. Licht's study of the early history of the Visigothic minuscule script. Largely on the basis of them, Licht shows that the thesis promoted by some palaeographers that Visigothic minuscule had its origin actually in Africa, is not supported by the evidence. All signs point to its being a calligraphic development of Visigothic cursive writing.

Continuity is at the heart of the last chapter in the volume. In it, Zöller describes the papal epigraphical culture in late antique and early medieval Rome, with its allusiveness and tendency to stylistic and linguistic imitation, similar to literary continuity, as manifested above all in the *liber pontificalis*. The result is a specific Roman epigraphic tradition, developed on the basis of imperial written culture, that was perceived as being the standard, and thus worthy of imitation.

By nature, communication requires common ground. This explains some of the universal features present in many places. But regionalism exerted powerful influence over documentary practice, and recognizing it can give more nuanced appreciation of how people communicated. While a volume of this size cannot treat in any comprehensive way the manifold contexts of Latin writing, it will hopefully give some idea of them and of their rich diversity.

This volume originates in a conference by the same name that took place in Heidelberg in late September 2017. It was co-hosted by Heidelberg University's Collaborative Research Centre 933, 'Material Text Cultures', and the Naples-based ERC project 'Papyri and Latin Texts: INsight and Updated Methodologies (PLATINUM)', directed by Maria Chiara Scappaticcio. Funding for the event came from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft with a contribution by the PLATINUM project under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program (grant agreement no. 636983). The editors express their gratitude to both agencies for their support, as well as to colleagues from Heidelberg's CRC 933, in particular the scientific coordinator Nele Schneiderreit. Thanks is also owed Elke Fuchs for help with the final formatting of the volume, Sina Will for producing the index, and Caroline Albert for assistance with copy-editing.

One of the great pleasures in preparing this collection was working with James (Jim) N. Adams, who passed away in the fall of 2021. Although Jim was not at the conference, he enthusiastically agreed to contribute to the volume after being shown a transcript of the ostrakon from Syene edited by M. Hepa and S. Torallas Tovar. There are few people who could match Jim's knowledge of Latin language and his excitement for unusual examples of Latin writing like those featured in many of these chapters.

Rodney Ast
Tino Licht
Julia Lougovaya

Heidelberg, 13.02.2022

MULTILINGUAL CONTEXTS

WHERE DO YOU PUT THE LATIN OF A BILINGUAL TEXT, AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Eleanor Dickey

1. Introduction

The question posed in the title of this paper may seem a strange one, for there is a well-established consensus on its answer.¹ From late antiquity and the medieval period we have numerous bilingual Latin and Greek texts, and these are normally laid out in the ‘columnar’ format: two narrow columns that translate each other line for line, with the Latin in the Roman alphabet and the Greek in the Greek alphabet. The language the reader is learning appears in the left-hand column, and the one he or she already knows in the right-hand column. Examples 1 and 2 are typical; these show the layout of the same passage of the *Colloquium Harleianum* (8a–9a), first in a papyrus of c. 400 used for learning Latin through Greek and then in a Western medieval manuscript of c. 900 used for learning Greek through Latin.² Basically the layout in the two versions is the same – even many of the line divisions are the same – but the Latin comes first in the papyrus and the Greek comes first in the manuscript.

1.	[i]n d[o]mum	[εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν]	‘at home
	non eras	[οὐκ ἦς]	you were not.
	[a]udivi homnia	ἤκουσα πάντα	I heard everything
	[ab] alumno· tuo	παρα τοῦ τροφῶος σου]	from your nurse/nursling.’
	[me]ntitur	ψευδεῖται]	‘He is lying,
	qui tibi dixit]	ὁ τοῖς εἰπὼν]	the one who said (that) to you.
	duxit [eni]m [n]mē	ἤρεν γὰρ με	For he took me,
	[pa]t[er] [meu]s	ὁ πατήρ μου	my father,
	[in] p[raetorium]	εἰς τὸ [π]ραιτωρίον]	to the praetorium
	[s]ecum	μεθ’ αὐτοῦ]	with him.’

1 I am grateful to Philomen Probert not only for her usual sharp eyes and critical thinking, but also for suggesting the idea that formed the nucleus of the solution proposed here. I am also grateful to Daniela Colomo, Julia Lougovaya, Rodney Ast, and the participants at the workshop from which this paper comes, for much fruitful discussion, pointing out papyri I had missed, and improving the readings presented here. Daniela Colomo, Maria Chiara Scappaticcio, Marco Fressura, and Serena Ammirati were kind enough to show me their unpublished work, which was extremely helpful; I do not agree with them on every point (a fact that shows the difficulty of the problems involved), but I have profited greatly from their insights.

Abbreviations for papyrological publications follow the Checklist available at <http://www.papyri.info/docs/checklist>. TM stands for the Trismegistos database, available at <http://www.trismegistos.org>, and MP³ for the Mertens-Pack database, available at <http://web.philo.ulg.ac.be/cedopal/database-mp3/>. When not specified otherwise, the dates are AD.

2 Example 1 is *P.Prag.* II 118 verso, in the edition of Dickey & Ferri 2012; example 2 is from British Library MS Harley 5642, folio 30r, with the interpretations of Dickey 2012–2015: II 23–24, 56–59.

2.	εις τι(ν) οικια(ν)	in domum	‘at home
	ενεζεε	laudibus	you were playing
	ουκ· εε	non eras	you were not.
	εγω σε	ego te	I you
	εζεταα	qu(a)esivi	sought
	κ(αι) εκουσα	et audiui	and I heard
	παντα	omnia	everything
	παρα του	apud a(–)	from
	τροφεος σου ειμι·	lu(m)nu(m) tuu(m) su(m)	your nurse/nursling I am
	απερ επουεεαε	que fecisti ~	what you did.’
	ψευδεται	mentitur	‘He is lying,
	ο ειπον· σοι~	quid tibi dixit	the one who said (that) to you.
	μεθ εαυτου	secu(m)	With him
	εις το(ν) πρετορι(ν)β·	in p(rae)toriu(m)	to the praetorium
	επρατεν	agebat	(my father) led (me).’

There is no difference in this respect between continuous texts, like those in examples 1 and 2, and glossaries. Examples 3 and 4 show glossaries; again the Latin comes first in the papyrus (example 3), which is from the fourth century and designed for Greek speakers, while the Greek comes first in the ninth-century manuscript (Hermeneumata Montepessulana), which was designed for Latin speakers (example 4).³

3.	praefect[us]	επαρχ[ος]	prefect
	curat[o]r	επι[μελητης]	overseer
	magistr[us]	μαγ[ιστριανος]	agent
	imperator	βασι[λευς]	emperor
	dux	δουξ	commander
	ductores	δουκ[α]τορες	leaders
	rationa[li]s	καθο[λικος]	finance official
	doct[us]	σοφ[ος]	?
	edili[us]	προ[ξενος]	aedile
	scrib[us]	εκρ[ι]βας	scribe
	potestates	εξο[χικαι]	officials
4.	Περι αρκοντω(ν)	De magistratib(us)	About magistrates
	περι αρκοτων	de iudicibus	about judges
	αρκων	magistratus	magistrate
	ανταρκων	promagistratus	promagistrate
	αποδεδιγμενος	designatus	appointed
	ενφανερως	designatus	designated
	δι’α’δοκος	successor	successor
	βασιλευς	imperator	emperor

3 Example 3 is P.Berol. inv. 21860 verso, lines 29–39, in the edition of Dickey in Scappaticcio (forthcoming); example 4 is from Montpellier H 306, folio 157v.

Although the pattern of what survives from various periods means that ancient copies of bilingual texts were normally written for Greek speakers and medieval ones for Latin speakers, there are enough exceptions to this pattern to show that it is indeed the language being learned, rather than the date of the copy, that determines the layout. Example 5 comes from a fourth-century papyrus probably designed for a Latin speaker learning Greek, as it contains Isocrates with a running Latin translation.⁴

5.	τοιαυτην	[t]alɛm	... such
	πεποινηται	faceɹunt	they may make
	την ὑποθεειν·	cont[r]aversiǝ[m]	rhetorical exercise
	τοις δε σπουδαι[οι]ς	induṣtriis au[tem]	but to the serious
	ου[κ]χ οιον τ[αι]ε τη[ς] αρε[της]	impoṣṣibile ɣ[irtutem]	impossible virtue
	αμελειν·	neclɛgɛrɹɛ[	to neglect ...

Because this pattern is so clear, it allows us to restore bilingual texts even when one language is entirely lost. Example 6 shows Kramer's restoration of a papyrus glossary from the first or second century; only the Latin survives (in Greek transliteration), but Kramer has been able to restore a Greek column to its right.⁵

6.	σκορπιω .	[σκορπιος]	... Scorpio (<i>Scorpio</i>)
	σαγittariους	[τοξοτης]	Sagittarius (<i>Sagittarius</i>)
	καπρικορνο[υς]	αιγοκερως]	Capricorn (<i>Capricornus</i>)
	ακουαριους	[υδροφορος]	Aquarius (<i>Aquarius</i>)
	πικκης	[ιχθυες]	Pisces (<i>Pisces</i>)
	δη ουεντεις	[περι ανεμων]	About winds (<i>De ventis</i>)
	ουεντους	[ανεμος]	wind (<i>ventus</i>)
	ακουιλω	[βορρας]	north wind (<i>Aquilo</i>)
	αυστερ	[νοτος]	south wind (<i>Auster</i>)
	αφρειαυς	[λιψ]	south-west wind (<i>Africus</i>)
	φαιουωνιους	[ζεφυρος]	west wind (<i>Favonius</i>)
	ουολτουρνους	[ευρος]	south-east wind (<i>Volturnus</i>)
	σεπτεμτριω	[αρκτος]	north wind (<i>Septentrio</i>)
	ουβωλανου[ς]	απηνιωτης]	east wind (<i>Subsolanus</i>)

2. The problem

The difficulty with this clear picture is that while it is an excellent description of what happens from the fourth century onwards, a significant number of early papyri deviate from it. These have the Greek column on the left and the Latin in Greek transliteration; the transliteration indicates that they must have been designed for Greek speakers, not Latin speakers, but in that case the

⁴ Isocrates, *Ad Demonium* 48, *BKT* IX 149 fr. 2 verso, lines 2–7, in the edition of Dickey in Scappaticcio (forthcoming).

⁵ *P.Oxy.* XLVI 3315 in the edition of Kramer 1983: no. 8.

columns are the wrong way around. Example 7 is an extract from a papyrus of this type, dating to the first or second century.⁶

7.	περι ανεμων	δη ο[υεντειε]	About winds (<i>De ventis</i>)
	ανεμοc	ουεν[τουc]	wind (<i>ventus</i>)
	[β]ορεαc	ακουλε	north wind (<i>Aquilo</i>)
	νοτοc	αυτερ	south wind (<i>Auster</i>)
	[λ]ειψ	αφρικουc	south-west wind (<i>Africus</i>)
	ευροc	ευρουc	east wind (<i>Eurus</i>)
	ζεφυροc	φαωνικουc	west wind (<i>Favonius</i>)
	[α]παρκιαc	σεπτεντριο	north wind (<i>Septentrio</i>)
	[α]πηλιωτεc	κουβ[ε]ωλανιουc	east wind (<i>Subsolanus</i>)
	[χ]ωροc	τερεcτριc	north-west wind (<i>Terrestriis</i>)
	[κ]αικιαc	καικιαc	north-east wind (<i>Caecias</i>)

Moreover, the very earliest Latin and Greek bilingual papyrus, a glossary from the first century BC, combines putting the Greek first and having the Latin in transliteration with a non-columnar layout. This is illustrated in example 8.⁷

8.	[α]θεοc ανθ' ρ'ωποc	godless person (<i>sine dibus homo</i>)
	εινε δειβουc ομο	
	του κοcμ[ο]υ cυνχυcιc	earthquake (<i>terrae conturbatio</i>)
	τερραι κοντουρβ[ατιω]	
	πλουcιου [ε]παταλαι	luxuries of/for a rich man (<i>diviti deliciae</i>)
	διουειτι δηλ[ι]κου[ια]	
	αγαλcια απεπτοc	unsalted, uncooked (<i>insulsus, apeps</i>)
	ινcουλcουc απεψ:	
	δ[ι]α παντ[οc] ευχεται	he always prays / to vow always (<i>semper vovere</i>)
	ceμπep ουουouepε	

Initially only very few papyri with these divergent patterns had been identified, and they could be dismissed as anomalies. Recent publications, however, have shown that in the first few centuries of the empire bilingual papyri with the Greek coming first and the Latin transliterated are not anomalies, but rather the normal pattern.⁸ The list below includes all bilingual Latin and Greek papyri and early manuscripts known to me, if one defines ‘bilingual’ in the narrow sense of a text that contains all the same material twice, once in each language.⁹

6 *P.Oxy.* LXXVIII 5162 lines 32–42; after the English translations I give the usual Latin versions of the wind names, which do not always match the versions in the papyrus.

7 *BKT IX* 150 lines 118–127, in the edition of Dickey in Scappaticcio (forthcoming).

8 Cf. Ammirati & Fressura 2017: 2–9.

9 There are also many other kinds of bilingual text: ones containing some material in one language and different material in another (e.g. reports of legal proceedings, where the framework may be in Latin and the speeches on both sides in Greek), ones containing a complete text in one language and a translation of part of it in another (e.g. the letter in *P.Köln III* 160 verso or the judgement in *P.Sakaon* 34), ones containing a complete text in one language and a summary in another (e.g. birth certificates and other legal documents), and ones containing a complete text in one language and partial glosses in another (e.g. Latin literary papyri annotated by Greek-

The papyri are arranged in chronological order by century; within each century papyri with similar contents are grouped together. Under ‘script’, the designation ‘Greek’ or ‘Latin’ indicates that the entire text is written in that script; i.e. one of the languages is transliterated. The designation ‘both’ indicates that each language is in its own script. Under ‘first language’ is indicated the language that occurs in the left column of a columnar text, the left-hand pages of a codex in facing-pages format, etc. Under ‘format’ the following terminology is employed:

- ‘columnar’ designating the type of layout illustrated in examples 1–7;
- ‘post-columnar’ designating a text in long lines that switch languages within each line; such texts often show evidence of having been re-arranged from an exemplar in columnar format;¹⁰
- ‘sequential’ designating a single-column layout in which a chunk of material in one language appears above or below a chunk in the other language;
- ‘facing pages’ designating a codex with one language occupying the full left-hand page and the other the full right-hand page of each opening.

	Format	First language	Script	Contents	Date (after TM)	Reference
1	Other	Greek	Greek	glossary/ paradigms	I BC	<i>BKT IX</i> 150 = Kramer 1983: no. 1 = MP ³ 2134.5 = TM 65514
2	Columnar	Greek	Greek	glossary (classified)	I–II	<i>P.Oxy.</i> XXXIII 2660 = Kramer 1983: no. 6 = MP ³ 2134.1 = TM 63291
3	Columnar	Greek	Greek	glossary (classified)	I–II	<i>P.Oxy.</i> LXXVIII 5162 = TM 171907
4	Columnar	Greek	Greek	glossary (classified)	I–II	<i>P.Oxy.</i> LXXVIII 5163 = TM 171908
5	Columnar	uncertain	Greek	glossary (classified)	I–II	<i>P.Oxy.</i> XLVI 3315 = Kramer 1983: no. 8 = MP ³ 3004.2 = TM 63292
6	Columnar	Greek ¹¹	Greek	glossary (classified)	II	<i>P.Lund I</i> 5 = Kramer 1983: no. 9 = MP ³ 3004 = TM 63532
7	Columnar	Greek	Greek	glossary (alphabetical)	II	<i>P.Oxy.</i> XLIX 3452 = Kramer 2001: no. 7 = MP ³ 2134.7 = TM 63603

speaking students who added translations of the hard words). These naturally have different layout possibilities and are therefore not relevant here.

10 For more information on this format and its history, see Dickey 2010: 188–191; 2016: 211–214; 2019: 105–110.

11 Earlier editions put the Latin first, but this is an error, as the fragments join when the Greek half is put on the left: see the edition of Dickey in Scappaticcio (forthcoming).

	Format	First language	Script	Contents	Date (after TM)	Reference
8	Columnar	Greek	Greek	conjugation table	II	<i>P.Oxy.</i> LXXXII 5302 = Scappaticcio 2015: 263–265 = MP ³ 2134.704 = TM 100125
9	Columnar	Latin	both	colloquium?	II	<i>P.Oxy.</i> XXXII 2624 verso = MP ³ 3004.1 = TM 63667
10	Columnar	Greek	Greek	glossary (classified)	II–III	<i>P.Mich. inv.</i> 2458 = Kramer 1983: no. 12 = MP ³ 2685.1 = TM 63848
11	Columnar	Latin	both	glossary (alphabetical)	II–III	<i>P.Vars.</i> 6 as re-read by Dickey 2021 = TM 64235
12	Sequential	Latin	both	Aesop and translation	II–III	<i>P.Yale</i> II 104 = MP ³ 2917 = TM 59039
13	Uncertain ¹²	uncertain	both	uncertain	II–III	<i>BKTIX</i> 148 = MP ³ 3004.01 = TM 63767
14	Columnar	Greek	Greek	glossary (classified)	III	<i>P.Oxy.</i> XXXIII 2660a = Kramer 1983: no. 7 = MP ³ 2134.2 = TM 64163
15	Columnar	Greek	Greek	glossary (classified)	III	<i>P.Laur.</i> IV 147 = <i>SB XIV</i> 12137 = Kramer 1983: no. 5 = MP ³ 2134.3 = TM 27520
16	Columnar?	Latin	both	glossary (alphabetical)	III	<i>P.Sorb.</i> I 8 = Kramer 1983: no. 3 = MP ³ 3008 = TM 64220
17	Post-columnar	Latin	both	glossary (alphabetical)	III	<i>P.Sorb. inv.</i> 2069 = Dickey & Ferri 2010 = MP ³ 3006 = TM 64219
18	Columnar? ¹³	Latin	both	glossary (classified)	III–IV	<i>P.Vindob. inv.</i> L 27 = Kramer 2001: no. 4 = MP ³ 3004.21 = TM 64528
19	Columnar	Greek	Greek	glossary (classified)	III–IV	<i>P.Strasb. inv.</i> G 1173 = Kramer 2001: no. 6 = MP ³ 2134.61 = TM 67947
20	Columnar	Greek	Greek	conjugation table	III–IV	<i>P.Strasb. inv.</i> G 1175 = Kramer 2001: no. 3 = Scappaticcio 2015: 302–306 = MP ³ 2134.71 = TM 67946

12 It is not even certain that this papyrus is bilingual in the narrow sense used here; that is, the two languages may not say the same thing. Although included here for the sake of completeness it is excluded from all subsequent discussion on the grounds that it is too badly preserved to be useful.

13 Kramer (2001: 54) reconstructs a layout that is columnar except that neither column has a straight margin on either side, but as the fragment is badly damaged the reconstruction is uncertain.

	Format	First language	Script	Contents	Date (after TM)	Reference
21	Columnar	Greek	both	conjugation table	III–IV	<i>P.Oxy.</i> LXXXVIII 5161 = Scappaticcio 2015: 378–381 = MP ³ 2134.701 = TM 171906
22	Sequential	Latin	both	Babrius and Latin translation	III–IV	<i>P.Amb.</i> II 26 = Kramer 2007: no. 10 = MP ³ 172 = TM 59335
23	Columnar	Latin	both	model letters	III–IV	<i>P.Bon.</i> 5 = Kramer 1983: no. 16 = MP ³ 2117 = TM 64278
24	Columnar	Latin	Greek	glossary (classified)	IV	<i>P.Fay.</i> 135v descr. = Kramer 1983: no. 11 = MP ³ 2013.1 = TM 66430
25	Columnar	Latin	Greek	glossary	IV	<i>P.Lond.Lit.</i> 187 = <i>P.Lond.</i> II 481 = Dickey 2012–2015: II 284–287 = MP ³ 3005 = TM 64454
26	Columnar	Latin	both	glossary (classified)	IV	PSI inv. 1734 = Kramer 1983: no. 10 = MP ³ 3007 = TM 64407
27	Columnar	Latin	both	glossary/ colloquium	IV	P.Berol. inv. 21860 = Kramer 2001: no. 9 = Dickey 2012–2015: II 280–283 = MP ³ 3004.02 = TM 67628
28	Other? ¹⁴	Latin?	both	Aesop and translation	IV	PSI VII 848 = Kramer 2001: no. 10 = MP ³ 52 = TM 59043
29	Columnar	Greek	both	Isocrates and translation	IV	<i>BKT</i> IX 149 = <i>CPF</i> 1.2.2 21 116T & 119T = MP ³ 1251.02 = TM 61384
30	Columnar	Latin	both	Cicero and translation	IV–V	<i>P.Rain.Cent.</i> 163 = Internullo 2011–2012: no. I = MP ³ 2922 = TM 59455
31	Columnar	Latin	both	Cicero and translation	IV–V	<i>PSI Congr. XXI</i> 2 = Internullo 2011–2012: no. IV = MP ³ 2921.01 = TM 59457

14 Kramer (2001: 100 and 102) argues for an original format with two columns, each wider than normal for the columnar format and with the left margin of the second column not aligned (at least not on the verso); this might also be seen as one very wide column in which the first half of each line is Latin and the second Greek. But because very little is left of the second column the restoration is uncertain.

	Format	First language	Script	Contents	Date (after TM)	Reference
32	Columnar	Latin	both	Virgil and translation	IV–V	<i>P.Ryl.</i> III 478 + P.Cairo inv. 85644 + <i>P.Mil.</i> I 1 = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 5 = Fressura 2017: no. 4 = MP ³ 2940 = TM 62954
33	Columnar	Latin	both	Virgil and translation	IV–V	P.Vindob. L 102 f = Fressura 2017: no. 5 = MP ³ 2943.11 = TM 704169
34	Columnar	Latin	both	Virgil glossary	IV–V	<i>PSI</i> VII 756 = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 13 = Fressura 2017: no. 3 = MP ³ 2946 = TM 62963
35	Facing pages?	Greek?	both	Pauline epistle and Latin translation	IV–V	<i>PSI</i> XIII 1306 = TM 61867
36	Columnar	uncertain	both	glossary (classified)	V	P.Vindob. inv. L 150 = Kramer 2001: no. 5 = MP ³ 2134.6 = TM 64815
37	Post-columnar	Greek	both	glossary to a Christian work	V	Chester Beatty AC 1499 = Wouters 1988 = MP ³ 2161.1 = TM 61873
38	Columnar	Latin	both	Colloquium Harleianum	V	<i>P.Prag.</i> II 118 = Dickey & Ferri 2012 = MP ³ 3004.22 = TM 64769
39	Columnar	Latin	both	Hermeneumat a prologue	V	P.Vindob. inv. L 158a (described: Fressura 2018: 36, Ammirati & Fressura 2017: 12)
40	Columnar	Latin	both	Cicero and translation	V	<i>P.Ryl.</i> I 61 = Internullo 2011–2012: no. II = MP ³ 2923 = TM 316150
41	Columnar	Latin	both	Cicero and translation	V	P.Vindob. inv. L 127 = Internullo 2011–2012: no. III = MP ³ 2923.1 = TM 59460
42	Columnar	Latin	both	Virgil and translation	V	<i>BKT</i> IX 39 = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 4 = Fressura 2017: no. 1 = MP ³ 2939.1 = TM 62957

	Format	First language	Script	Contents	Date (after TM)	Reference
43	Columnar	Latin	both	Virgil and translation	V	<i>P.Fouad</i> 5 = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 15 = Fressura 2017: no. 2 = MP ³ 2948 = TM 62962
44	Columnar	Latin	both	Virgil and translation	V	Husselman 1957 = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 33 = MP ³ 2936 = TM 62967
45	Columnar	Latin?	both	Virgil and translation	V	<i>P.Oxy.</i> L. 3553 = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 9 = Fressura 2017: no. 6 = MP ³ 2943.1 = TM 62968
46	Post-columnar	Latin	Greek/Coptic	Trilingual colloquium	V–VI	<i>P.Berol. inv.</i> 10582 = Dickey 2015a = MP ³ 3009 = TM 64837
47	Columnar	Latin	both	Virgil and translation	V–VI	<i>P.Vindob. inv.</i> L. 24 = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 20 = Fressura 2017: no. 8 = MP ³ 2951 = TM 62969
48	Columnar	Latin	both	Virgil and translation	V–VI	Ambrosian Palimpsest = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 8 = MP ³ 2943 = TM 62964
49	Columnar	Latin	both	Virgil glossary	V–VI	<i>P.Oxy.</i> 1099 = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 19 = Fressura 2017: no. 7 = MP ³ 2950 = TM 62970
50	Facing pages	Greek	both	Gospels and translation	V–VII	Codex Bezae = <i>CLA</i> II 140 = TM 61777
51	Columnar	Latin?	both	glossary (alphabetical/morphological?)	VI	Fragmenta Helmstadiensia (Göttingen) = 1st half of Kramer 1983: no. 4 = MP ³ 2134.4 = TM 65038
52	Columnar	Greek	both	glossary (alphabetical)	VI	Folium Wallraffianum (Cologne) = 2nd half of Kramer 1983: no. 4 = MP ³ 2134.4 = TM 65038
53	Columnar	Latin	both	Virgil and translation, Virgil glossary	VI	<i>P.Ness.</i> II 1 = <i>P.Colt</i> 1 = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 6 = MP ³ 2939 = TM 62974
54	Columnar	Latin?	both	Virgil and translation	VI	<i>P.Vindob. inv.</i> L. 62 = Scappaticcio 2013: no. 11 = MP ³ 2944.1 = TM 64953

	Format	First language	Script	Contents	Date (after TM)	Reference
55	Facing pages	Greek	both	Pauline epistles and translation	VI	Codex Claromontanus = <i>CLA</i> V 521 = TM 65887
56	Columnar	Latin	Latin	glossary (classified)	VI–VII	<i>P.Paris</i> 4 bis = Kramer 1983: no. 14 = MP ³ 3003 = TM 65244
57	Columnar	Latin	both	<i>Acts</i> and translation	VI–VII	Codex Laudianus = <i>CLA</i> II 251 = TM 61729
58	Facing pages	Greek	Latin	Psalms and translation	VI–VII	Codex Veronensis = <i>CLA</i> IV 472 = TM 62184
59	Facing pages	Latin	both	Septuagint and translation	VII	<i>CLA</i> V 520 = TM 62243

This table shows a clear division into two chronological phases. From number 26 onwards – in the fourth century – the Latin is almost never transliterated and the ‘target’ language normally comes first. But before that point both transliterated Latin and putting the ‘target’ language second are common: sixteen of the first twenty-five papyri in this list have at least one of those characteristics, including twelve that certainly have both, by contrast with only eight that follow the later pattern.

3. Consequences of the problem

The discovery of a pattern in the early period different from that in the later period raises a number of questions. On a practical level, it calls into question the restoration of fragments like example 6 above (number 5 in the table): since this is an early papyrus, should one restore the Greek column to the left of the Latin, rather than to the right? On a more theoretical level, it produces a challenge to our understanding of ancient bilingual writing and of ancient language teaching more generally: how can these patterns be explained? Why is there a correlation between using transliterated Latin and putting the Greek first? And what do these patterns tell us about the history of the columnar translation system?

I have argued elsewhere that the columnar translation system originated in the West and was taken over by Greek speakers along with the concept of systematic language teaching itself.¹⁵ As this point is highly relevant for the present argument, it is worth summarizing here the main evidence for a Western origin of this format. The evidence is indirect: as no equivalent of the language-learning papyri survives from the West, one cannot see the format in use in the West directly, but only infer its Western origin from the fact that in Egypt, papyri using this format are overwhelmingly likely to contain the Latin language, texts of Western origin, or (usually) both. Of course, the format is inherently one designed for bilingual texts, but not all bilingual texts involve Latin: Greek–Coptic and Greek–Demotic bilingual papyri also exist. Moreover a glossary can use the columnar format without being bilingual: numerous Greek–Greek glossaries appear in editions in two neat columns, with the lemma on the left and the gloss on the right, thereby demonstrating that the columnar format is a possible one for monolingual glossaries. When one

¹⁵ Dickey 2015b.

inspects the original papyri, however, very few Greek–Greek glossaries turn out to have used this format in antiquity. The figures are summarized in the table below, which includes all bilingual (in the restricted sense of ‘bilingual’ explained above) papyri and ostraca, and all Greek–Greek glossaries, that were written before 600 and for which I have been able to see the original, a photograph, or a drawing; owing to the tendency of editors to ‘improve’ the layout of the original, texts available to me only via an edition are not included.¹⁶ The figures show an overwhelming correlation between columnar or post-columnar format and the presence of Latin.

	Columnar	Post-columnar	Other	Total
Greek & Latin ¹⁷	46	3	9	58
Coptic & Latin ¹⁸		1		1
Greek & Coptic ¹⁹	1		19	20
Greek & Demotic ²⁰	1		1	2
Greek–Greek glossaries ²¹	5		39	44
Total	53	4	68	125

16 For examples of such ‘improvement’ see Dickey 2022. Additionally, only texts containing actual words are included here; some digraphic alphabets are also preserved, as are fragments with letters that do not form reconstructible words, but the layout possibilities for these are different from those for texts made up of words.

17 From the table above, omitting number 13, whose format is uncertain.

18 *SB XXVIII* 17108 = *TM* 128465, a second-century ostrakon with Roman numerals and the Coptic words for numbers in Latin script.

19 The columnar papyrus, *P.Oxy.* LXXXIV 5414 = *TM* 68057, contains a Coptic translation of several verses of Homer; it has all the elements of a columnar translation except that the left edges of the Coptic glosses do not line up to form a separate column but rather immediately follow the ends of the Greek words preceding them (the editor argues that the Coptic was a later addition to an originally monolingual text). It dates to the sixth century, by which time columnar translation had been used in Egypt for centuries for Latin–Greek bilingual translations, and may be influenced by those translations. The non-columnar ones are *TM* 61310, 61570, 61656, 61714, 61745, 61746, 61811, 61839, 61979, 61982, 62036, 62078, 62320, 64362, 64423, 64709, 68821, 107734, 113257. *TM* 61574, 65368, 65421, and 107238 are excluded here as not being dated before 600, but are not columnar; *TM* 61810 and 61665 are excluded as being too badly preserved for their formats to be determined. For more information on these papyri see Dickey 2015b: 819–820; note also Ammirati & Fressura 2017: 22 and the detailed discussion of layout of Greek–Coptic bilingual papyri of the Old Testament by Nagel (1984), who does not mention the columnar format.

20 The columnar one (*BGU VII* 1544 = *TM* 4794, c. 200 BC) is an account. Accounts are often presented in a single narrow column, making it natural to present a bilingual account in two columns. It is therefore unlikely that this text has anything to do with the later columnar translations. The non-columnar text (Quecke 1997 = *TM* 65708, 3rd century BC) is a glossary, with the Demotic in Greek transliteration. As far as I know, there are no surviving examples of Greek–Demotic glossaries with the Demotic in its own script.

21 The columnar glossaries are Gallazzi 1982 = *TM* 60270, 1st century; *P.Oxy.* LXXI 4819 = *TM* 112371, 3rd/4th century; *P.Berol. inv.* 5014 = *TM* 61036, 5th century; and two papyri whose layout is partly but not entirely columnar: *P.Oxy.* LXXI 4818 = *TM* 112370, 3rd century, and *P.Oxy.* XLV 3238 = *TM* 60894, 3rd century. There is at least one more columnar Greek–Greek glossary, excluded from these figures because it dates to the seventh century: *PapCongr. XX* p. 285 no. 3 = *TM* 61114. Greek–Greek glossaries in other formats, which range in date from the 3rd/2nd century BC to the sixth century AD, are *TM* 60212, 60335, 60339, 60395, 60444, 60511, 60517, 60535, 60545, 60550, 60565, 60588, 60605, 60692, 60704, 60715, 60728, 60820, 60841, 60859, 60887, 60893, 60930, 60933, 60985, 61071, 61204, 63351, 63353, 63597, 63877, 65081, 65774, 68671, 68958, 69057, 109068, 704971, and 832312. Many Greek–Greek glossaries are omitted here because I was unable to verify the layout of the original; De Kreij & Colomo (2019: 10) give a figure of 100 papyrus glossaries to Homer alone.

The fact that columnar texts came in two varieties, however, complicates the question of the format's origin. What did the columnar format look like when it was first borrowed: did it follow the later pattern or the earlier one? An earlier pattern seems on *a priori* grounds more likely to be the original one, but in this case it is hard to see how Latin speakers could have used the earlier format: they certainly did not teach Latin in Greek transliteration, and the available evidence does not suggest that they taught Greek in Latin transliteration either. Perhaps they simply had no fixed order for the columns, and it was the Greek speakers who, in the fourth century, standardized the columnar format so that the unfamiliar language came first. But in that case, why do surviving papyri show such a correlation between putting the Greek first and transliterating the Latin? Did Latin speakers in fact use the later version of the columnar system, and did the Greek speakers have difficulty with it initially, perhaps putting the Greek first simply because Latin speakers had put the Greek first? Again this does not explain the correlation between putting the Greek first and transliterating the Latin.

4. A solution?

This correlation may in fact be the clue to the solution. The relationship between putting the Greek first and transliterating the Latin is not an accidental product of the fact that both features are common in the earlier period: they genuinely go together. Of the first twenty-five entries in the table above, twelve have both these features, eight have neither, and only three (numbers 21, 24, and 25) have one without the other. (A further two, numbers 5 and 13, are incomplete in ways that make their original format impossible to label precisely.)

Moreover, there is a correlation between form and content: all the continuous texts among those early papyri (numbers 9, 12, 22, and 23) have the Latin first and in its own alphabet. These account for half of the eight papyri to use that format. Therefore in the early period continuous texts behave differently from non-continuous ones (glossaries and conjugation tables), which are overwhelmingly likely to put the Greek first and to transliterate the Latin.

Perhaps the reason that transliteration and putting Greek first go together is that they are both useful for someone learning to speak Latin, rather than to read it. Because Latin texts were not generally written in the Greek alphabet, someone studying Latin in transliteration cannot have been aiming at a reading knowledge of the language: transliteration indicates a goal of oral proficiency. And oral proficiency requires an active command of a language, for while knowing how to read a language without knowing how to write it can be useful, being able to understand what someone says to you while being unable to reply is of very limited value. It is for active command of a foreign language that one needs materials starting with the thing one wants to say and then telling one how to say it, such as the English–Latin dictionaries that today are used only by those who write or speak Latin, while students whose interaction with Latin is restricted to reading need only a Latin–English dictionary.

As this last example suggests, glossaries are useful for both reading and speaking; it is therefore not surprising that some of the early glossaries (numbers 16–18 and 23) put the Latin first and in its own alphabet, showing that they were designed for people learning to read Latin (probably in addition to learning to speak it). It is more significant that the continuous texts – which are very unlikely to have been used to build spoken-only proficiency, as the obvious thing to do with a text is to read it – consistently start with the Latin and put it in its own alphabet.

But the continuous texts pose an additional problem by sometimes using the columnar format and sometimes other formats: why is that? The distinction is not random, for some genres (e.g. the

colloquia and the bilingual texts of Virgil and Cicero) always use the columnar format, while fables and Biblical texts normally use other formats. Again the answer seems to lie in the purpose for which the papyri were written: the columnar format is used for texts intended to be read or studied by language learners, while the sequential and facing-page formats are for texts that are bilingual for another reason. Bilingual Bibles were not primarily designed for language learning, and while the fables were language-learning texts in a broad sense, they usually do not seem to have been reading material, but rather texts translated into Latin by students to practice their Latin prose composition skills. Naturally, therefore, these two types of text tend not to appear in columnar format. The Bibles seem usually to have put the Greek first, probably because it was the original sacred text and therefore more important. The fables seem usually to have put the Latin first, perhaps out of a desire to give the actual student work pride of place; modern fair copies of prose composition exercises also often begin with the translation, with the original following afterwards.

From the early period we have only one (probable) colloquium, number 9 in our table. Its layout is the same as that of later colloquia, such as example 1 above: the Latin comes first and uses its own alphabet. This is important, because colloquia are Western texts: they were originally composed for Latin speakers learning Greek and then adapted and expanded for Greek speakers learning Latin. Therefore the format of this colloquium is particularly relevant for understanding what the columnar format originally looked like; it suggests that Latin speakers used the later version of this format. This would make sense if the other version of the columnar format was used primarily by people uninterested in learning to read their second language, a category into which Latin speakers who studied Greek in school did not fall: they wanted to read classical Greek literature as well as to speak the language, and therefore they would not have developed a set of transliterated materials.

5. Conclusions

The following theory would account for all the available evidence; that does not mean it has to be right, but it stands a better chance of being right than any other explanation so far proposed.

- Latin speakers invented columnar translation in the form we know from papyri of the fourth century and later, with the ‘target’ language coming first and each language using its own script.
- When Greek speakers first borrowed this system, they were often interested only in learning how to speak Latin, and therefore when copying texts useful for this goal they often adapted the format to enhance its usefulness for this purpose. Texts useful primarily for reading, such as colloquia, continued to follow the system designed by Latin speakers.
- From the fourth century onwards, Greek speakers learning Latin wanted to read as well as speak it and therefore largely abandoned the special format used earlier.

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A GREEK-LATIN GLOSSARY FROM THE FORT OF DIDYMOI

Julia Lougovaya

The ostrakon presented here comes from the Roman military fort of Didymoi on the road connecting the Nile valley city of Coptos with the harbor of Berenike on the Red Sea.¹ Dated by its archaeological context to approximately the third quarter of the third century, it preserves part of a Greek-Latin glossary written in Greek script and appears to be the only known Greek-Latin glossary inscribed on an ostrakon. Coming as it does from a well-documented modern excavation, it offers more information on its provenance than is often the case with other glossaries: since ostraca did not tend to travel far, the sherd was likely inscribed in Didymoi, or at most in a neighboring fort in the Eastern Desert, where it was used and discarded. While the text on the ostrakon shares some features with early bilingual glossaries preserved on papyrus, it also differs from them in content and layout. This raises the question of common versus particular aspects of such glossaries and whether the differences might be owed to the material, a ceramic sherd, or to the origin of the ostrakon in the remote region of the Eastern Desert of Egypt, a primarily Greek-speaking environment characterized by a persistent presence of Roman soldiers whose language of communication was Latin.

In what follows I attempt to answer this question by considering the Didymoi glossary in light of overarching features of early glossaries on papyrus, that is, those dating to the first three centuries of the Common Era, which are outlined in Eleanor Dickey's contribution in this volume and in Serena Ammirati's and Marco Fressura's (2017) study of bilingual glossaries. The parameters for comparison, which are largely borrowed from the table of Greek-Latin bilingual glossaries in this volume,² are as follows: (a) script; (b) first language; (c) format; (d) contents; (e) paleographical features.

The glossary on the ostrakon is written in Greek script (a) with the Greek word placed first (b) followed by its Latin translation.³ Dickey demonstrates that these two features are characteristic of early glossaries and genuinely belong together. They can be best explained by the goal of oral communication because using Greek to transliterate Latin indicates that the writer did not know the latter, while the placement of the Greek word first suggests that his or her aim was to know how to say its equivalent in Latin.⁴ The purpose of helping oral interaction would fit well the historical context of the Didymoi ostrakon since it comes from a place where a Greek speaker could

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- 1 The ostrakon was found by the French archaeological mission to the Eastern Desert (*Les praesidia du Désert Oriental*), which conducted three campaigns there between 1997 and 2000. I am grateful to Hélène Cuvigny, the director of the mission at the time, for inviting me to work on non-documentary texts from Didymoi. Abbreviations for papyrological publications follow the Checklist available at <http://www.papyri.info/docs/checklist>, and all dates are AD.
 - 2 See Dickey in this volume for the explanation of the first four categories (in a different order), to which I add paleographical features (e).
 - 3 For a possible exception to this order, see notes to lines 4–5.
 - 4 Serena Ammirati and Marco Fressura come to a similar conclusion (Ammirati & Fressura 2017: 6).

easily find himself in need of conducting a basic conversation in Latin. Evidence for this need is provided by the number of Latin texts surviving at the fort, where between 5% and 10% of close to a thousand inscribed ostraca and *tituli picti* have writing in Latin, attesting the persistent even if probably uneven presence of the language throughout the two centuries of the fort's occupation (76/77 to c. 270).⁵

While the glossary on the ostrakon conforms to the prevalent type of early glossaries inscribed on papyrus in using the Greek script for both languages (a) and in the sequence of the languages (b), it differs from them in format (c). Early glossaries on papyrus are usually inscribed in columns, with the Greek word standing on the left and its Latin translation on the right. The pairs of words on the ostrakon, however, are written in *scriptio continua*, with languages switching within each line. There seems to be a preference for not breaking a word at the end of a line, but no device besides an occasional small blank space is employed to separate words. This format, which Dickey calls post-columnar, is attested largely in later glossaries and often shows 'evidence of having been re-arranged from an exemplar in columnar format'.⁶ Even if it cannot be completely excluded that this particular glossary was copied from a papyrus exemplar in columnar format, it seems to be a rather unlikely scenario for the production of the ostrakon, which shows no other characteristic of the post-columnar format, such as regular spacing between pairs of words or the alphabetic arrangement of the reference language.

It might seem attractive to suppose that writing *scriptio continua* was motivated by the small size of the sherd, which caused the writer to abandon the columnar format in order to squeeze in more text. Evidence from the forts in the Eastern Desert, however, makes it clear, that those types of documents, which were conventionally written in columnar layout on papyrus, such as lists or accounts, were usually written the same way on sherds, too. This was also the case with ostraca inscribed with educational staples, such as lists of words or syllables, which all kept the columnar layout characteristic of these types of texts. For example, *O.Claud.* II 415, contains a list of words beginning with the letter pi inscribed in six columns, and several lists of syllables and words written in conventional columnar format were found in Didymoi.⁷ It is thus unlikely that, had the writer of the ostrakon expected a Greek-Latin glossary be written in columns, he or she would have failed to accommodate it when writing on a sherd. More plausibly, the person had no preconception about how a glossary could – or should – be arranged.⁸

5 The estimate is based on the inventoried ostraca recorded in the excavation database, not all of which have been published, cf. Cuvigny 2012: 4. Elsewhere in Roman Egypt the ratio of surviving Latin to Greek documents is about 1 %, cf. Bagnall 1995: 22; Adams 2003: 527.

6 For such features, see esp. Dickey 2010: 189–191, plus further works cited in Dickey in this volume: 7 fn. 10.

7 For examples of such texts from Didymoi, see Lougovaya 2022. And conversely, no lists of words or syllables on ostraca from the Eastern Desert, all of which date to the first three centuries of the Common Era, are inscribed in *scriptio continua*. For a later example of a word list in *scriptio continua* (with punctuation separating words), cf. e.g. *O.Crum* 525 (4th–5th c.; TM 61272), reedited in Huys & Schmidt 2001.

8 An ostrakon from Maximianon, a fort on the route from Coptos to the other Red Sea harbor, that of Myos Hormos (*SB* XXVIII 17108, 150–175; TM 128465), provides an interesting counterpart to the Didymoi glossary. It has a list of numbers from one to 20 with Egyptian pronunciation represented in Latin script followed by corresponding Roman numerals, all written in continuous lines, but with middots separating each entity. While the use of Latin script indicates that the sherd was written by a Latin speaker, the order – with the 'target' language first – is the reverse of the order of early glossaries in Greek script (including the Didymoi ostrakon). Why this order was preferred, is hard to say, but I doubt that the ostrakon was copied from an

Moving on to the content of early glossaries (d), Dickey notes that glossaries which use Greek script for both languages never have continuous text, but contain disparate words or conjugation tables. This is the case of the Didymoi ostrakon, too, which has pairs of single words, but no continuous text. There are both verbs, some accompanied by the adverb ‘not’, and nouns, and possibly an adjective (line 6), and the words – ‘slave’, ‘strike!’, ‘I am not going’, ‘wind’ – can be easily related to quotidian activities at the fort. Although this everyday quality might seem to be in common with early glossaries on papyrus, the content of which Ammirati and Fressura connect with everyday items and natural phenomena, there is an important difference: all early glossaries on papyrus display some principle of arrangement. This arrangement is for the most part thematic (e.g. list of vegetables and types of fish in *P. Oxy.* XXXIII 2660, 1st–2nd c. = TM 63291, or lists of insects and furniture in *P. Oxy.* LXXVIII 5163, 1st–2nd c. = TM 171908, to name just a couple) or it can be alphabetic (e.g. *P. Oxy.* XLIX 3452, 2nd c. = TM 63603). In either case, however, it indicates a systematic approach to the composition of the lists (Dickey aptly calls them ‘classified’ glossaries). Moreover, the survival of lists with similar arrangements suggests that they were transmitted by copying. The glossary on the ostrakon, on the other hand, betrays no sign of a thematic arrangement, even if line 6 were to be restored as *σεκου]δους ἀνεμ(ος) βεντους* (see notes). It seems plausible that it was created *ad hoc* in the fort in response to immediate needs and not as a compendium of possible words designating everyday items or phenomena, as may have been the case with glossaries on papyrus.

There remains (e), the paleographical features of the ostrakon to consider. Ammirati and Fressura (2017: 6) submit that early glossaries written in Greek script are usually inscribed in informal or semi-literary hands. Yet, for the most part the examples they cite are relatively neat book-hands which are easy to read and, presumably, to copy. In contrast, the ostrakon is inscribed in a documentary cursive and even uses an abbreviation, with *ανε*^h for *ἀνεμ(ος)* in line 6. The writing is fluent and confident, but not especially careful, all suggesting that the glossary was produced by the writer for him- or herself. One imagines the person asking somebody who could speak both languages for Latin translations of the Greek words and jotting them down. His or her aim must have been to say the words in Latin, should a need arise, with the glossary serving as a kind of a *vade mecum*.

If this scenario reflects historical reality, the differences displayed by the Didymoi glossary from glossaries on papyrus might well be owed to the mode of learning Latin in the region and not to the material chosen for writing. As chance would have it, both functional and systematic learning to write and read are reflected in other textual finds from the fort, all inscribed on ostraca.⁹ On the one hand, there are several ostraca that, although not numerous, furnish evidence over a long period of time for the *ad hoc* acquisition of writing skills in Didymoi. They date throughout the fort’s history and show attempts to write a name, probably the writer’s own, sometimes accompanied by a military affiliation, in Latin and/or Greek. On the other hand, there is evidence for a systematic Greek curriculum. This includes ostraca inscribed with educational staples such as letters of the alphabet, lists of syllables, word lists, or moralizing *sententiae*. These texts date mostly to the later period of the fort’s occupation in the third century, which suggests that this

exemplar with a columnar format; rather, it was perhaps composed by a Latin writer with the help of a speaker of Egyptian and by showing the corresponding number by the fingers of the hand.

9 For functional literacy cf. especially Thomas 2009; Johnson 2015; Kolb 2018: 8–9; for the evidence for learning in Didymoi, see Lougovaya 2022.

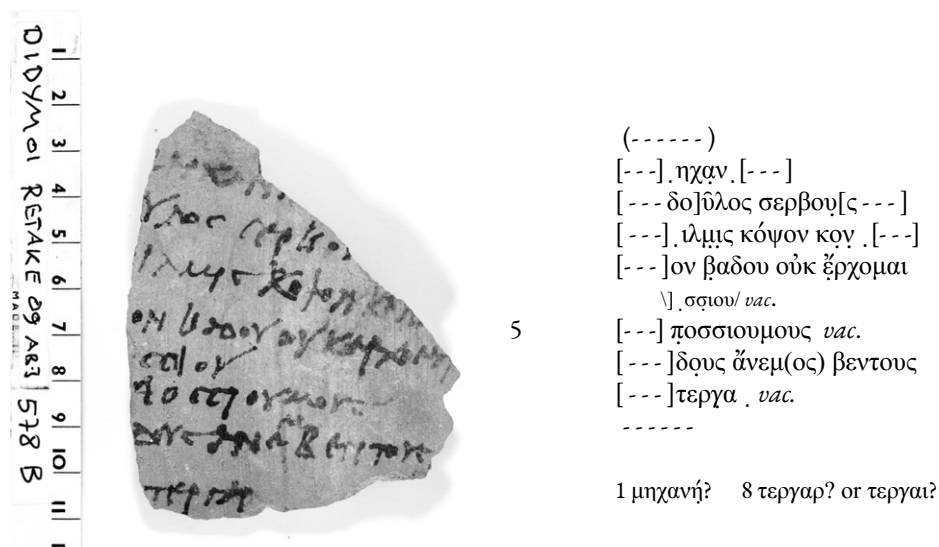
kind of systematic learning of Greek became part of life in the Eastern Desert by that time. Learning Latin, however, must have remained sporadic and oriented to the purpose of immediate communication. This functional and unsystematic mode of acquiring speaking skills in Latin, which found reflection in the peculiarities of the Didymoi glossary, was probably characteristic of a region where the constant presence of speakers of that language created an occasional need for the Greek-speaking majority to pick up some needed vocabulary. It differed from a more systematic approach to learning Latin that may have been practiced in other – perhaps more urban – areas of Egypt and which found reflection in the glossaries on papyrus.

The sherd published here was found in the southwest corner of the fort, which was used as a dumping ground in the last period of its occupation.¹⁰ The ostrakon is broken on the left, top right, and bottom. The lower right edge is preserved and it is possible, though not certain, that the first surviving line is in fact the original first line of writing.

D578b—CSA 653
Fort SW, SU 13200

W. 7.5 × H. 9.5 cm

Discarded ca. 250–270
TM 971876



O.Did. inv. 578b. Photo © Adam Bülow-Jacobsen.

- 1] .ηχαν : the traces would accommodate μηχανή, a word attested in ostraca from Mons Claudianus inscribed with texts related to quarries (*O.Claud.* IV 839, 892, 893). Since the inhabitants of forts on the Eastern Desert roads must have been constantly involved with various construction projects, it may have been a needed word there, too.
- 3] .ύμμις: the word defies me. Presuming that the order of the languages persists throughout the ostrakon, it should be Latin and it must have been misspelled.

10 For the re-dating of the last occupational phase of the fort, cf. Brun 2018: §§ 27–31 with fn. 62.

κονλ[ιδε] for *conlide*, ‘strike’, would fit the traces on the ostrakon and the space on the right of the sherd, which is broken off there, but not much must be lost.

- 4–5 Despite having legible and identifiable words, the line presents a problem: while the verbs *vado* and ἔρχομαι are both staple in Greek and Latin glossaries, one is not an exact translation of the other. *Vado* is usually rendered as ἀπέρχομαι or ὑπάγω, ‘to go (to)’, while ἔρχομαι corresponds to *venio*, ‘to come’. Although a potential correspondence of ν]ον to οὐκ may lend more weight to interpreting the two verbs as belonging together, it entails a change in the order of the languages, since elsewhere on the sherd Greek precedes Latin. The possibilities are thus:

a) νον βαδου (= *non vado*) is translated as οὐκ ἔρχομαι, in which case the translation is imprecise (i.e. ‘I am not going’ vs ‘I am not coming’) and the sequence of languages is changed (first Latin, then Greek). In this case very little might have been lost on the left side of the sherd, which seems difficult for some of the lines. In particular l. 6, where]δουc is likely to be the end of the Latin equivalent of a Greek word that would be inscribed in the lost left side of the piece, since the line above clearly ends in a *vacat*. Yet, if a pair of short words were written before νον βαδου, then the missing left side of the sherd would have been large enough to accommodate more letters in the beginning of other lines.

b)]ον βαδου and οὐκ ἔρχομαι belong to two different pairs of words, with the Latin translation of οὐκ ἔρχομαι, possibly as *non venio* (νον βενιο), in the lost beginning of line 5. -ον βαδου then would have to be preceded by a Greek equivalent, such as οὐχ ὑπάγω or οὐκ ἀπέρχομαι. In this case, the order of the languages would conform to other lines, but the lost left side of the sherd would need to be quite large. For, if the word in line 5 is to be interpreted as *possumus* or *possimus*, it would likely have been preceded by δυνάμεθα or δυνώμεθα or another form of this verb, before which νον βενιο or another Latin equivalent of οὐκ ἔρχομαι, would still need to fit, e.g.:

[οὐκ ἀπέρχομαι ν]ον βαδου οὐκ ἔρχομαι

\\, σσιου/ *vac.*

[νον βενιο δυνάμεθα] ποσσιουμους *vac.*

This restoration, proposed *exempli gratia*, requires 13 letters in line 4 and 16 in line 5 to be lost on the left, which might not be impossible. One wonders, however, how likely it is that two similar verbs of moving would both be accompanied by the adverb ‘not’. All in all, I hesitate to choose one scenario over the other.

] . σσιου: this appears to be an interlinear insertion. Since it evidently repeats the word below it, one may wonder whether it is the same verb in the first person, i.e. *possum* or *possim* with the final *m* omitted. For the omission of final *m*, cf. the Latin letter, though of earlier date, *O.Did.* 417 (c. 120–125), as well as *O.Did.* 455, which is roughly contemporary with the glossary; for *posso* in place of *possum*, cf. *ChLA* I 12, line 16 (after Oct. 7, 167, prov. unknown; TM 69871); a letter from Terentianus to Tiberianus, *P.Mich.* VIII 469, line 15 (Karanis, early 2nd c.; TM 27082).

- 6]δουc: [σεκου]δουc is attractive, but there is no reason to suppose that the words in two neighboring pairs were thematically related (i.e. *secundus* and *ventus*). No other two consecutive words in one language form an obvious pair on the ostrakon.
- 7 τεργα : since this seems to be the end of the line, the word is probably Latin. Perhaps it is τεργαι for *terge* (‘wipe dry’ or ‘clean’) or a related compound form of this verb.

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FABLES FROM THE EAST: LATIN TEXTS ON PAPYRUS AND THE ROLE OF FABLES IN SECOND-LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Maria Chiara Scappaticcio

Once upon a time a man named Aesop used fables to fashion a solid moral creed. His name became emblematic and through the centuries his *auctoritas* became synonymous with a literary genre.¹ The genre was flexible enough to oscillate between the lips of nannies and the schoolroom, between the West and East. The history of the ancient fable as literary genre is long, complex, and multifaceted. It is made up of several aspects.² Let us explore here a very neglected one: the employment of the fable in second-language acquisition as observed in papyri from the Eastern Roman Empire.³

Only four Latin and bilingual Latin-Greek fables survive on papyrus. Dating between the third and fourth century, they all belong to an educational environment. *P.Oxy.* XI 1404 (3rd c.; TM 59041, MP³ 3010) preserves a few lines in Latin of the fable about the dog and its reflection in a river, in which the dog lost the piece of meat it was carrying.⁴ *P.Mich.* VII 457 + *P.Yale* II 104 (3rd c.; TM 59039, MP³ 2917) transmits bilingually, in Latin and Greek, the fable of the swallow and other birds.⁵ Both are ‘Aesopic’ fables, various versions of which can be found in several collections ranging from the *Collectio Augustana* to the Medieval *Romulus*. *P.Amb.* II 26 (4th c.; TM 59335, MP³ 172) is no more than a Latin translation of three Babrius fables,⁶ while *PSI* VII 848 (4th c.; TM 59043, MP³ 52) is the most ancient witness to two Aesopic fables – that of

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Unless specified, all dates are AD.

2 Between 1979 and 1987 Francisco Rodríguez Adrados published a monumental work on the history of the Graeco-Latin fable, translated into English between 1999 and 2003; Rodríguez Adrados 1999; 2000; 2003 stand as reference works on ancient fables, together with van Dijk 1997 and Holzberg 2002; Rodler 2014 (with bibliographical references) is also an important contribution to the genre of the fable.

3 This paper arises from a wider analysis of the role of fables in Latin-learning and a new annotated edition of the four Latin and bilingual Latin-Greek fables on papyrus (Scappaticcio 2017).

4 *P.Oxy.* XI 1404 is re-edited and commented on in Scappaticcio 2017: 77–88. The Aesopic fable on the dog and its reflection is otherwise known through Phaedr. 1.4; *Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana* (*Fragmentum Parisinum* in CGL III 97. 19–30; *Herm. Leidensia* in Flammini 2004: 86.2183–2186); *Romulus* 6.

5 *P.Mich.* VII 457 + *P.Yale* II 104 is re-edited and commented on in Scappaticcio 2017: 89–101. The Aesopic fable of the swallow (or of an owl) and other birds is otherwise known through the *Collectio Augustana* 39a–b (Hausrath 1957); *Romulus* 24.

6 *P.Amb.* II 26 is re-edited and commented on in Scappaticcio 2017: 102–169. The translated fables are Babr. 17, 16 and 11. High-resolution images can be found at <https://www.themorgan.org/manuscript/350230> and <https://www.themorgan.org/manuscript/350231>.

the bull and that of the lion quarreling with a man. These are known thanks to the Medieval manuscript tradition of the so-called *Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana*.⁷

All these fragments of papyrus manuscripts transmitting fables share one relevant peculiarity: although always written before the Greek, the Latin version is actually secondary (i.e., it is a translation of the Greek original). This paper explores this unique feature of bilingual Latin-Greek fables, offering a hypothesis for why it occurs at all.

I. What Latin? Latin-Greek fables on papyrus, and the tradition of bilingual glossaries

Most of these fables are written in Greek and translated into Latin. But what kind of Latin? The Latin version of these bilingual fables on papyrus is not written in exemplary Latin; a student would have hardly found a model of syntactic and stylistic elegance. On the other hand, the fables clearly originated in an educational environment. It is also undeniable that, during the Late Antique period in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, such fables were used by non-native speakers to learn Latin – as was the case with many other bilingual glossaries and texts known through both ancient and Medieval manuscript traditions.

The Latin translation of the fables of *P.Mich.* VII 457 + *P.Yale* II 104, *P.Amb.* II 26 and *PSI* VII 848 is structured *verbum de verbo* (word-by-word). It mechanically reproduces the word order of the original Greek text and as a consequence, the Latin is syntactically very odd. The *verbum de verbo* translation situates fables within a well-known tradition, that of the bilingual Latin-Greek glossaries of classical authors, although with significant differences.⁸

Bilingual Latin-Greek glossaries to works of Virgil and Cicero circulated in Late Antiquity in educational environments of the Eastern Empire. These were intended for Greek-speakers who needed to acquaint themselves with the Latin of classical authors. An Eastern, Greek-speaking audience had become acquainted with Virgil and Cicero thanks to a Greek translation of the original Latin text. The very act of translating Latin authors into Greek would have improved knowledge of Latin vocabulary and, at the same time, permitted familiarity with the language, style, and vocabulary of authors such as Virgil and Cicero. Given the function of Virgil and Cicero's bilingual glossaries, it is not surprising that Greek translations of these Latin authors are extremely mechanical. They make no effort to reproduce either the literary elegance and style or the metrical structures of the originals.⁹

The main difference between the fables and the bilingual Latin-Greek glossaries to Virgil and Cicero is that the latter preserve a perfect syntactical model of the Latin language destined for Greek native-speakers learning Latin. Such a difference is worth emphasis. The Virgil and Cicero bilingual glossaries allowed students to learn exemplary Latin. But the extant bilingual fables would not have given anyone a perfect model of Latin. Instead, the fables offered only a useful tool to acquire vocabulary. If the Latin and Greek texts were copied by someone other than the compiler of the Latin translation, the question naturally arises who the intended recipient of such an imperfect tool was. Why offer a native Greek speaker learning Latin a didactic tool that would

7 *PSI* VII 848 is re-edited and commented on in Scappaticcio 2017: 170–190. The two fables are also found in the *Fragmentum Parisinum* (*CGL* III 100.9–101.23) and in the *Herm. Leidensia* (Flammini 2004: 87.2215–89.2263).

8 On the bilingual glossaries of Virgil and Cicero see Scappaticcio 2015: 44–46, where bibliographical references can be found. Fressura (2017) is a new edition of some of Virgil's bilingual glossaries.

9 On the typologies of Virgil's bilingual glossaries see Fressura 2013.

not have helped him either understand Latin syntax or, if one thinks about the Babrius fables of *P.Amb.* II 26, find correctly inflected verbs and even correctly written words?

Although tiny, the corpus of bilingual Latin-Greek fables on papyrus allows us to both reflect more deeply on their layout and, above all, reconstruct how their structure might have been shaped. *P.Mich.* VII 457 + *P.Yale* II 104 and *P.Amb.* II 26 (and perhaps *P.Oxy.* XI 1404 as well) contain a complete original fable in Greek preceded by a Latin translation. In both cases, they are written in a single column. *PSI* VII 848, by contrast, is structured according to the well-known columnar layout, viz. with Latin facing Greek, and is the oldest manuscript to transmit the very same fables that one will find later in the *Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana*. Both in this case and others, the Latin version always precedes the Greek even though the reference text is the Greek one and Latin is simply a translation of it.¹⁰ *P.Amb.* II 26 is the most illuminating example because the Babrius fables there are known from Medieval manuscripts. Although the other Aesopic fables are unattested in the manuscript tradition, the better-shaped rhetoric and stylistic structures of the Greek parts suggest that the original texts were Greek, while Latin simply functioned as a translation.

Despite their differences, both the bilingual fables and bilingual Latin glossaries to Virgil and Cicero have Latin preceding Greek as tools meant for Greek-speakers learning Latin. But their origins and original employment seem to have differed. The authoritative Virgilian and Ciceronian Latin gave students an opportunity to learn exemplary Latin as a foreign language. Greek simply had to support such a process of acquisition. Perhaps under the influence of the role of (Greek) fables in Greek education, they may have been originally used for compositional exercises. Originating from a Greek original, literal Latin translations may have been generated as an exercise but later employed as an authoritative source for the acquisition of vocabulary. Some thoughts on the layout of the bilingual fables on papyrus could support such a hypothesis.

II.1 Bilingual papyri and the position of Latin

When dealing with bilingual manuscripts one recognizes that the layout is not random.¹¹ The possible origins of columnar translations are described by E. Dickey, who details the tradition of bilingual glossaries being imported to Roman Egypt by Latin speakers needing to learn Greek. Bilingual tools born in the western part of the Empire thus migrated as a model to the East.¹² Surviving witnesses suggest a single conclusion: when a text is translated from its original language to another one, the format is always columnar if Latin is the reference language (as illustrated by bilingual witnesses to Virgil and Cicero). If the reference language is Greek, the format is not usually columnar and the literary genre makes the contents determine the layout.¹³ But these principles do not apply to Late Antique bilingual fable fragments.

¹⁰ Cf. Dickey in this volume.

¹¹ A preliminary analysis of the topic discussed in II.1 and II.2 is found in Scappaticcio 2017: 217–220.

¹² This matter is analyzed in this volume and in Dickey 2015a.

¹³ Dickey (2015a: 818–819): ‘the distribution of material into these two categories is not random: when a continuous literary text originally composed in one language has been provided with a translation in the other language, the format is always columnar if the original language was Latin, and usually non-columnar if the original language was Greek.’ Dickey also gives a list of texts gathered according to their format (815–818); this list includes the fables analyzed here, but the fact that the Latin text precedes the Greek is not emphasized, although the Greek is the reference text.

In the bi-columnar structure of ancient and Late Antique bilingual glossaries, both Latin and Greek occupied the left side. This did not necessarily imply that in the right-hand column was the language most familiar to the learner (the first language or L^1). Striking evidence is furnished by bilingual Greek-Latin glossaries written entirely in Greek script, which must have been addressed to a Greek speaker ignorant of Latin script.¹⁴ For instance, *P.Oxy.* XLVI 3315 (1st–2nd c.; TM 63292, MP³ 3004.2) and *P.Lund* 5 (2nd c.; TM 63532, MP³ 3004) are bilingual Latin-Greek glossaries with the names of winds and zodiac signs, respectively, alongside those of animals. Both languages are written in Greek script, with Latin on the left and Greek on the right side. Glossaries such as *P.Berol. inv.* 21246 (1st c. BC; TM 65514, MP³ 2134.5), a generic list of words, and *P.Oxy.* XXXIII 2660 (1st–2nd c.; TM 63291, MP³ 2134.1), a list of vegetables and fish, are written in Greek script as well, but the Greek column on the left precedes the Latin one on the right.¹⁵

These examples are attested in both antiquity and Late Antiquity: the earliest bilingual glossary is dated to the first century BC and the latest preserved on papyrus to the sixth century. In a bi-columnar layout, the right side is usually occupied by the reference language. The use of Greek script to write Latin language clearly implies a Greek-speaking (and Greek-reading) audience with limited knowledge of Latin (script and language). But the employment of Greek on the left side and Latin on the right does not mean that the latter was necessarily the reference language.¹⁶ Bilingual Greek-Latin glossaries in Greek script could represent an important step in the history of bilingual glossaries as tools to learn an L^2 and in their transmission from West to East and vice versa. Indeed, they clearly bear the traces of didactic instruments for the instruction of an L^2 arriving in the East from the West, where Latin was the L^1 . There, in fact, Latin was the reference language of bilingual Greek-Latin tools, which addressed Latin-speakers learning Greek. Evidence of these tools is otherwise lost, as the only evidence for their existence are examples in the later tradition. The hypothesis that tools from the West moved to the Eastern Empire and were adapted to meet additional needs (the opposite needs, if compared to the ones for which they were generated) is strengthened by the evidence that Latin mainly occupies the right side; a Greek speaker would have found it more practical to read his native language on the right.¹⁷ Some handbooks and tools could have been imported to the Eastern Empire from the West and the only variation they show is the transliteration of the entire text into the script (Greek) that was familiar to an Eastern audience. In other cases, the Western model was altered and adapted to the new needs by moving the reference language for a Greek-speaking reader to the right.

There is an additional possibility that should be explored here. *P.Oxy.* XLIX 3452 (2nd c.; TM 63603, MP³ 2134.7), a bilingual Greek-Latin alphabetical glossary, is written entirely in Greek script. Words follow the order of the Greek alphabet and start with π-, ρ-, and σ-. In such a case,

14 On the usage of Greek script to copy texts in Latin language – the so-called phenomenon of metagrammatismus – see Scappaticcio 2015: 20–21, where bibliographical references can be found.

15 Further examples can be found in Dickey 2012: 7–10. Other known Greek-Latin glossaries in Greek script are *P.Mich. inv.* 2458 (2nd–3rd c.; TM 63848, MP³ 2685.1); *P.Laur.* IV 147 (3rd c.; TM 27520, MP³ 2134.3); *P.Oxy.* XXXIII 2660a (3rd c.; TM 64163, MP³ 2134.2); *P.Strasb. inv. g.* 1173 (3rd–4th c.; TM 67947, MP³ 2134.61), a bilingual Greek-Latin thematic glossary (*de mercibus, de militibus*) in Greek script, which plays a key-role within this group given that it might belong to the same papyrus codex as *P.Strasb. inv. g.* 1175 (3rd–4th c.; TM 67946, MP³ 2134.71), a Greek-Latin conjugation table; see Scappaticcio 2015: 288–369.

16 See Dickey's findings in this volume.

17 This hypothesis is original and will be complementary to the arguments and demonstrations about the Western origin of these bilingual tools given by Dickey in this volume and in Dickey 2015a.

the possibility that a Western model was altered and shaped according to the needs of a native Greek speaker learning Latin is weak. This is because the alphabetical list of words follows the Greek language. Bilingual conjugation tables follow the same criterion. For instance, *P.Oxy.* LXXXII 5302 (2nd c.; TM 100125) is a bilingual Greek-Latin conjugation table written in Greek script. It is intended for someone who knows Greek (script and language) better than Latin, although Latin is provided on the right. The idea that a tool born in the West was moved to and transliterated in the East is hard to defend in this case due to the alphabetical order of verb conjugations following the Greek. The impression arises that bilingual Greek-Latin conjugations coming from the ancient and Late Antique East represent a kind of exercise in inflection where a list of Greek forms was perhaps provided for translation into Latin. Such an exercise could have later crystallized and taken the usual form of a bilingual glossary.¹⁸ But even a Latin-speaking audience cannot be totally excluded: Latin speakers such as generals or high-ranking soldiers, people like Iulius Agrippinus, or Tiberianus and Terentianus from Karanis, or even a Roman *idiologus*, could have had a basic knowledge of Greek. They might have felt the need to improve it at least for the sake of everyday life.¹⁹

A Latin-Greek lexicon in Latin script such as P.Louvre inv. E 2329 (the so-called *Folium Parisinum*; TM 65244, MP³ 3003) could be an expression of the reemployment of an Eastern model (with the Greek on the right) addressed to a Latin-speaker learning Greek. It is dated between the sixth and seventh century, but a few other papyri with Greek language transliterated in Latin script survive and date back to the first to second century. For example, there is *PSI* VII 743 (1st–2nd c.; TM 63240, MP³ 2100), the dialogue between Alexander the Great and the Indian Gymnosophists recorded in Greek but written in Latin script. A certain Iulius Lepus also used Latin script to write a letter in Greek to the banker Archibius (*P.Oxy.* XXXVI 2772; 10–11; TM 16563). Native Latin speakers in Egypt had to acquire a certain degree of competency in Greek, so the existence of specific tools for this in the Eastern Roman Empire can be hypothesized.

II.2 Bilingual fables and the position of Latin

Turning back to fables, we can offer some preliminary conclusions. Both in the case of a bi-columnar layout or when the translation precedes the original text in the same column, all bilingual Latin-Greek fables on papyrus have Latin preceding Greek. This sequence indicates that the addressee of the texts is likely a Greek speaker. This becomes even clearer when one considers the educational environment and the need to learn Latin likely felt among some Greek speakers in Egypt (and the Eastern Empire).²⁰ Although the number of fables is small, the layout of these texts can help us understand the role the fables had in the instruction of Latin in the Eastern Empire.

The four Latin and bilingual Latin-Greek fables on papyrus all date between third and fourth century. Whether an Aesopic fable or Babrius himself, the Greek section can always be linked to

18 The only known alphabetical list of Latin words on papyrus is *P.Oxy.* LII 3660 (mid 4th–mid 5th c.; TM 64594, MP³ 3008.2), which has been thought to be an expression of a preliminary stage in the formation of a bilingual Latin-Greek glossary; on this papyrus see also Scappaticcio 2015: 433–438 and 462–463.

19 Some letters from the archive of Gaius Iulius Agrippinus from Karanis are known and date to the beginning of the second century; the archive is mostly in Greek, although a single Latin letter survives (P.Berol. inv. 14088; ca. 103–148; TM 45366). On the bilingual archive of Tiberianus and Terentianus see Strassi 2008, while on the *idiologus* see Blouin 2012.

20 On the teaching of Latin and the witness of papyri, see recently Swiggers & Wouters 2015.

a specific model. But nothing is known about the translator of the Latin section, aside from what can be deduced from such crude Latin.

Latin translation of Babrius' fables in *P.Amb.* II 26 was possibly done as an exercise in language learning with the support of a bilingual dictionary.²¹ There is no obstacle to identifying the scribe of *P.Amb.* II 26 and the author of the Latin translation of the Babrius fables contained in it: the compiler of the Latin translation of Babrius leaves us with a direct and unique witness to a kind of exercise that could suggest the use of a bilingual Latin-Greek (or Greek-Latin) dictionary and the application of previously learned grammatical rules. This way of working is revealed in several mistakes that allow us to see how the translator made his choices: drawing on a copy of Babrius' Greek fables and using a bilingual dictionary, the translator builds up a Latin text from which the imperfect *maîtrise* of such a bilingual tool emerges, along with the linguistic specificities of the translator as speaker. He was practicing his ability to learn the vocabulary and morphology of Latin as a second language (L^2); his competence in Latin writing was undoubtedly higher than that in Latin grammar and language. As both languages are written by the same hand, one might imagine a scenario in which students were tasked with translating Greek fables into Latin. Afterwards, their translations could have been compiled into a kind of textbook for reuse in schools accompanied by the original Greek text.

The scribes of *P.Oxy.* XI 1404 and *P.Mich.* VII 457 + *P.Yale* II 104 were skilled. Both show a bureaucratic tendency in writing. It is impossible to state with certainty whether the person writing was actually the one learning (which actually seems to be very hypothetical). But the Latin prose of these papyri does not have literary pretension. As for the fable about the swallow, it is certain that the Latin version slavishly follows the syntax of the Greek original in the same way that the Latin translation of Babrius (*P.Amb.* II 26) and the fables of the third book of the *Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana* do. The tiny scrap of *P.Oxy.* XI 1404 only preserves a few Latin lines of the fable about the dog and its reflection. But it cannot be excluded that a Greek version of it was copied on the same roll. *P.Oxy.* XI 1404 and *P.Mich.* VII 457 + *P.Yale* II 104 do not have such a large number of mistakes as the Latin text of Babrius in *P.Amb.* II 26; imperfections are registered in the Latin text and they exclusively concern orthography. They give voice to either a specific diachronic or diatopic variety of Latin, or to a deformation due to the scribe himself. In contrast to *P.Amb.* II 26, the scribes of *P.Oxy.* XI 1404 and *P.Mich.* VII 457 + *P.Yale* II 104 seem to differ from the compiler of the Latin versions of their fables. This may mean they were not personal notebooks, but actually compilations of translations born of exercises.

Looking at the two fragments making up *P.Amb.* II 26, one immediately notices how much more spacious the Latin section is when compared to the Greek.²² In the Latin section, a line of text is 1–1.5 cm high. In the Greek one, a line is 0.7–1 cm high. Each Babrian verse occupies one line and each Latin line translates a Greek verse, although the Latin script is larger than the Greek one and therefore Latin lines are often longer. But how did the translator-scribe work? Either he copied the Greek Babrian text from an exemplar and left a blank space to later fill in the Latin translation, or he combined two exemplars: a Greek original from Babrius and a Latin translation of this text (we cannot exclude the possibility that they are notes by the translator-scribe himself).

PSI VII 848 is structurally different from the other three fragmentary witnesses of fables. The order of the two fables known through this Late Antique fragment is the same found in the

21 Cf. Adams (2003: 726): 'the translation was probably done as an exercise in language learning.'

22 This is most apparent on this fragment: <https://www.themorgan.org/manuscript/350231>.

Medieval tradition of the fables in the *Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana*; so too is the placement of Latin on the left side with Greek on the right. The bi-columnar layout of *PSI* VII 848 with the *pars Latina* on the left and the *Graeca* on the right implies a specific addressee, such as someone learning the Latin language (and vocabulary) thanks to such a didactic tool. At the same time, the different layout of *P.Amb.* II 26 and *P.Mich.* VII 457 + *P.Yale* II 104 could imply still another audience and perhaps another aim.

III. Preliminary conclusions

The use of fables as a tool for second-language acquisition is not striking, given their common employment in educational *milieux*: fables were listed among *quaedam dicendi primordia* ('certain rudiments of oratory',²³ Quint. *Inst.* 1.9.1) that a grammarian had to accustom his pupils to. Fables were listed among the progymnastic exercises in rhetor classrooms known from Priscian among the Latin grammarians.²⁴ They were paraphrased, rewritten, or even augmented with an ethical motto.²⁵ In Late Antiquity (if not before), grammarians also employed fables to allow students whose native language was not Latin to learn it as L^2 . The Medieval tradition of the third book of the *Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana* (of which *PSI* VII 848 is an ancestor and direct testament) bears witness to a tradition that was consolidated by the fourth century at least.

P.Amb. II 26 and *P.Mich.* VII 457 + *P.Yale* II 104 (and maybe *P.Oxy.* XI 1404 as well) lie somewhere between these two different employments of fables within a school context. Coming from an educational environment in which a non-native Latin speaker was receiving training in his L^2 , these are not progymnastic exercises *stricto sensu* but simply exercises in translation. These exercises were only possible thanks to bilingual educational tools such as bilingual Latin-Greek (or even Greek-Latin) dictionaries or lexica. The Greek-speaking translator had to use these instruments and combine them with his own knowledge of Latin grammar. This clearly emerges from *P.Amb.* II 26, which allows us to enter into the translator-scribe's laboratory. Such exercises could have had several topics, but the topic we know of is fables.

Obviously, the limited number of surviving direct witnesses does not allow for definitive conclusions. But it seems that fragments with Latin translations of original Greek fables, which followed the translations, are important evidence for the reconstruction of how Latin was taught as an L^2 in alloglot contexts. This step was complemented by familiarization with the Latin vocabulary – as the numerous bilingual glossaries show –, but it followed the acquisition of the basic principles of the Latin grammar of the *Artes grammaticae*. Exercises in translation like these left issues related to Latin syntax totally uncovered, given the mechanic reproduction of the Greek reference texts in their Latin translations. Mechanic translations were not unknown in the panorama of bilingual educational tools circulating in the Late Antique Eastern Empire. This gives rise to the possibility that mono-columnar bilingual texts (e.g. the fables of *P.Amb.* II 26, *P.Mich.* VII 457, *P.Yale* II 104, and perhaps *P.Oxy.* XI 1404) represented a preliminary stage for achieving well-canonized bilingual and bi-columnar tools such as the bilingual classical authors or the fables that passed into the tradition of the *hermeneumata*.

23 Trans. Butler 1953: 157.

24 On Priscian's *praeexercitamina* see Pirovano 2013, where bibliographical references can be found; in Scappaticcio 2017: 29–30 fables in Priscian's *praeexercitamina* are examined.

25 On the employment of fables in schools, see Scappaticcio 2016; 2017, esp. 14–67.

How preliminary was this stage? It is impossible to provide an answer. There are too many missing links in the history of the circulation of fables in educational environments. But it is certain that some themes and topics met fruitful educational approval that allowed them to cross linguistic and cultural boundaries. Fables were a perfect instrument for passing down ethical values. The notion that fables were written, rewritten, and deployed for learning an L^2 clearly expresses a common aim of moral and linguistic teaching.

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UNIFORMITY AND REGIONALISM IN ACCOUNTS ON OSTRACA FROM NORTH AFRICA

Rodney Ast

Latin ostraca from North Africa pale in comparison to those from Roman Egypt.¹ This is not because fewer Latin ostraca have been documented in North Africa than in Egypt.² On the contrary, North African pieces outnumber Egyptian ones significantly, thanks largely to the preservation of about 150 sherds from the Roman fort of Bu Njem in Libya, the richest single source of Latin ostraca anywhere in the ancient world.³ Rather, one reason why North African ostraca receive less attention is because they do not belong to a large body of written records on papyri and other media, as Latin ostraca from Egypt do. Thus, there is no documentary record of the scale and variety of Egypt's to help contextualize and explain the ostraca from North Africa. All of this contributes to the fact that, by themselves, these texts do not directly add much to our understanding of the Roman Empire. This is not to say that they have nothing to do with the larger Roman world. They do. For example, they are of obvious importance to studies of the Roman army, both in frontier regions and more generally, and for Latin language and palaeography.⁴ But as historical records they are very much confined to the regions from which they come.

Given this situation, one would expect Latin ostraca to be of interest mainly to historians of Roman North Africa. But the impression gained from the literature is that traditionally this evidence did not receive much attention from them, either, perhaps because the ostraca show few points of contact with the more abundant inscriptional material from the region. Moreover, as anyone who has tried to read them knows, they can be very difficult to decipher and interpret, and this contributes to their marginal status. Fortunately, the situation is changing and these documents are receiving more scrutiny,⁵ but seemingly intractable problems persist. For a study of

1 I thank Maria Giulia Amadasi for very valuable comments on a draft of this chapter. It goes without saying that I am responsible for any flaws. The abbreviations used to refer to papyrological editions follow the Checklist available at <http://papyri.info/docs/checklist>. Corpora that do not appear there are listed in the bibliography below. All dates are AD.

2 The term 'North Africa' is used throughout the article to designate northern parts of the continent outside Egypt.

3 By way of comparison I note that Trismegistos registers only 157 Latin ostraca from all of Egypt, many of them from the Eastern Desert; see, e.g., *O.Berenike* II and III; *O.Claud.* I, II, IV; *O.Did.*; *O.Edfou*; *O.Florida*; *O.Krok.* I; the Fawakhir ostraca (published as *CPL* 303–309). For the Bu Njem ostraca, see R. Marichal's edition (= *O.BuNjem*); an overview of the texts with particular attention to linguistic matters can be found in Adams 1994. General treatments of the use of ceramic sherds as a material substrate for writing include Bagnall 2011, especially chapter 6; Caputo & Lougovaya 2020; Cuvigny 2003: II 265–500; Cuvigny 2018.

4 Adams 1994 and Godfrey 2004; the latter is a treatment of the ostraca from the Carthage oil archive in the context of bureaucratic writing practices that originated in the Roman army.

5 For example, see within the last decade or so Laporte & Dupuis 2009; Conant 2013; Kurtz 2021 and, especially, Leveau 2020.

regional features, which this volume is interested in, such problems and ambiguities make these texts good subject matter. Furthermore, the occasion to contribute to this volume offers a chance to conduct a survey of published and known unpublished ostraca in Latin script from North Africa, which will hopefully make it easier for researchers to take account of them in the future.

Survey of Ostraca in Latin Script

As a preface to a survey of Latin ostraca from North Africa, I should briefly acknowledge another type of portable writing material found there that is not included in this study: wooden tablets. Best known are the Albertini tablets (*T.Alb.*), which consist mainly of deeds of land-tenure sales. They date to the years 493–496, in the reign of the Vandal king Gunthamund, and are an important source of information for the study of agriculture and economy in Vandal North Africa. In addition to these, other wooden tablets from the region have recently come to light, although the manner in which they have done so, through auction announcements rather than in scientific journals, has been less than ideal.⁶ They comprise wills and deeds of purchase dated to the last quarter of the third through the first three quarters of the fourth century. They are not as well known as the Albertini tablets but, like them, differ typologically from ostraca, as many of them are legal instruments (wills and deeds). These types of documents are not characteristic of Greek and Latin ostraca anywhere.⁷

Together, published and unpublished ostraca in Latin script originating in North Africa total more than 300 pieces (Table 1 below). Some 150 of these come from the fort at Bu Njem. The other 150-plus are from more than twenty sites across modern Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. These include Assenamat (near modern Sirte), Gheriat el-Garbia, Sabratha (Sabrata) and Wadi el-Amud in modern Libya; Bou Ghara (Gigthi), Carthage (including Ilôt de l'Amirauté and Byrsa Hill), El Ouara, Gafsa (Capsa), Henchir Bou Gornine, Djerba (Meninx), Ksar Koutine, Maknassy, Sbeitla (Sufetula), Skhira and Tozeur (Tusuros) in Tunisia; Bir Trough, Henchir Besseriani (ad Maiores), Negrine,⁸ Henchir el Abiod, Henchir el Maïz and Ain Touta in Algeria. Most are in Latin script *and* Latin language, but not all. Often designated Latino-Punic, the few non-Latin language pieces that are extant have yet to be fully understood. These come exclusively from sites in modern Libya,⁹ and only the ostraca from Gheriat el-Garbia (Table 1, no. 11) have been published. The editors interpret them as a form of South Punic, but R. de Simone has questioned whether they are Punic at all.¹⁰ While I do not address the issue of language, something outside my area of expertise, I will point out that according to those who have this expertise the large number of Libyan personal names observed in texts with non-Latin elements, such as the Assenamat accounts discussed below, should not be considered indicative of a Libyan language context. Texts

6 I am referring here to the Latin tablets that have been trickling into the public domain via the auction house *Timeline Auctions* (www.timelineauctions.com); for editions of some of these, see *AE* 2016, 40 and 2029–2036.

7 An unpublished Vandal-period receipt from the region of Sidi Bouzid that features witness signatures (below Table 1, no. 31) might be an exception. Although the text may be only a draft, it is an unusual type of document for an ostrakon.

8 For a detailed discussion of the region, see Oukaour 2020.

9 See Table 1, nos. 2 (Assenamat), 8 (Wadi el-Amud) and 11 (Gheriat el-Garbia). The distribution of these ostraca is very similar to that of Latino-Punic inscriptions, which are concentrated for the most part in the pre-desert area of Tripolitania; Wilson 2012: 309–310 (Fig. 11.17), 314; Jongeling & Kerr 2005: 59–79; cf. already Amadasi Guzzo 1990: 103–104.

10 See Ziegler & Mackersen 2014 and Ziegler 2015; De Simone 2018.

containing such onomastics could still be Latino-Punic.¹¹ Throughout this chapter, I refer to the ostraca that are in Latin script but not in the Latin language simply as ‘non-Latin’.

Ostraca from North Africa can be divided into two main groups. There are the pre-Vandal pieces from before the Vandal conquest of North Africa in the 430s, and the Vandal-period and later texts. Only a small number of post-Vandal Latin texts survive, not enough to be assigned their own group. Aside from two large corpora, that is, the Bu Njem ostraca, which date to the 250s (Table 1, no. 5), and the 35 texts belonging to the ‘Carthage oil archive’ published by T. Peña in 1998, which date to 373 (Table 1, no. 10), very few ostraca from North Africa are securely dated. Of the pre-Vandal pieces, one is from year 359 (no. 9) and another from 419 (no. 16). The Vandal-period ostraca bear no dates in the reigns of any of the first five kings.¹² They start with Gunthamund (484–496), whose regnal formula occurs in five ostraca from Bir Trouch (no. 18). Two ostraca, from Henchir el Maïz (nos. 19 and 20), record the reign of Thrasamund (496–523), and one piece, from Sbeitla (no. 33), attests a regnal date for the Vandal king Hilderic (523–530). The post-Vandal period is attested probably in three ostraca, two of which record indictional years (nos. 34 and 35), indicating a date in the reign of Justinian or later.¹³ The third, which comes from Henchir Besseriani (ad Maiores) and documents tax assessed on an olive oil producer, is dated to the sixteenth year of Emperor Justinian (542/543; no. 36). Where no consular, regnal or indictional years are given, texts are dated on the basis of their script, a notoriously imprecise method.

The range of text types found in the ostraca is also limited. Outside the military context of the Bu Njem documents, which comprise strength reports, memos and delivery notices (in epistolary form) related to the everyday operations of the fort, North African material consists primarily of agricultural accounts and other kinds of lists, and receipts (see Tab. 1). For example, the Carthage oil archive contains accounts of considerable interest related to the olive oil trade, and the accounts from Gighi (*O. Gighi*) report grain transactions. But beyond this largely fiscal type of documentation, the written record is not typologically diverse. There are a couple of texts that might be described as orders for delivery and a handful of letters.¹⁴ The only non-documentary ostrakon is a fragment inscribed with the name *Dido*. It is in an unpracticed hand, and Marichal thought it was possibly a school exercise (*O. BuNjem* 144).

Most striking about the North African material is its local character, which is demonstrated in a variety of ways, such as by regional onomastics, non-Latin vocabulary and unusual graphemes. Such features set the documents apart as important regional witnesses. However, because these

11 G. Levi Della Vida (1963; see also 1965: 59–62) was the first really to show that the language of such texts was Punic and not Libyan; but there were already suggestions to this effect in Février 1953: 466–468 and Friedrich 1957: 295–297. Cf. Kerr 2010: 12, who says about the corpus of inscriptions he designates as Latino-Punic, ‘The argumentation of those who wish to see these people as “Libyans” seems largely to be based on the onomasticon, i.e. the high percentage of “Libyan” (i.e. neither Punic nor Roman) names attested in these texts Onomasticon, however, cannot be used to establish an ethnicon’. Kerr believes that Latino-Punic is a better designation of the language surviving in such inscriptions, which in the past were sometimes called Latino-Libyan; for the latter view, see, e.g., Goodchild 1950. Cf. also Mattingly 1995: 163.

12 Epigraphic evidence is apparently the same. The only inscription to mention an early king is an epitaph from Sbeitla that was actually carved in the year 534 (*AE* 1915, 38 = *AE* 2014, 1487); it records the year of the deceased’s birth, in the reign of Genseric (year 456). See Kurtz 2021: 10 and 16 no. 10.

13 See Duval 1981: 515–517; cf. *AE* 2016, 1956 and 1957.

14 One letter, from Carthage, is published in Ast 2021 and another, from Djerba, in *O. Jerba* 17. There is an unpublished letter from Sabratha (Table 1, no. 3); the texts in epistolary style from Bu Njem (*O. BuNjem* 74–117) are perhaps better described as delivery notices.

elements are unusual, even unparalleled, one can easily get caught in a kind of vicious circle, in which the understanding of a document depends on the decipherment of elements that are unique to that particular document or attested in only a couple of other places, which themselves are obscured by ambiguity. And the ambiguities in these texts include very basic things, not just personal names but simple abbreviations and accounting methods. To address such features in detail would require a long study. For this reason, I have limited my scope to two sets of pre-Vandal accounts, one from Gigthi in southeastern Tunisia and the other from Assenamat in Libya, about four kilometers southwest of modern Sirte and about 800 kilometers southeast of Gigthi. Comparison of these two typologically similar documents, which come from two geographically distinct places, reveals basic trans-regional features—this is the ‘uniformity’ part of this chapter. At the same time, the same two groups of documents show fundamental differences, some of which have a regional quality that can, I argue, be attributed to differing degrees of exposure to documentary practice in other parts of the Mediterranean.

Urban vs Rural?

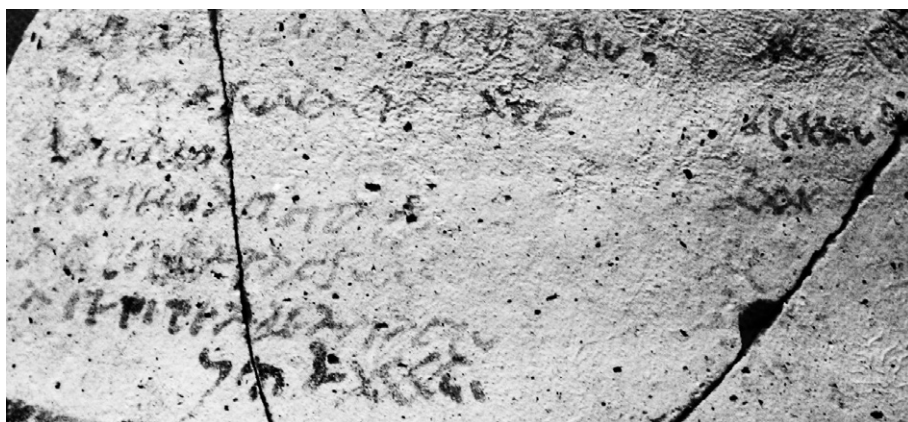
O. Gigthi 1 and 2

Gigthi (modern Bou Ghara) is located on the Gulf of Bou Ghara across from the island of Djerba in southeast Tunisia. The settlement is attested already in the first century AD. In the second century, under Antoninus Pius (138–161), it was granted the status of *municipium* and by all indications it flourished into the third century.¹⁵ It is approximately in this later period, i.e., the second or early third century, that two large ceramic amphora walls were inscribed with accounts in Old Roman Cursive script. The accounts themselves are not dated but the writing is at home in this period.¹⁶ They record barley and wheat payments, but the precise reason for the transactions and the agent responsible for recording them are not known. All that we can say is that the ostraca appear to document payments by individuals (tenant farmers?) in and around the city (*civitas*) of Gigthi to some central body, such as a large private estate, perhaps as rent or tax.

The first seven lines of one of the amphora walls illustrate their basic layout and accounting method (Fig. 1). This section begins with an unnamed ‘I’ who reports the receipt of barley payments both from a farmstead or village (*bila* for *villa*) and from the city (*cibitas* for *civitas*) of Gigthi itself. If the document was an estate account, we might presume that the payments encompassed the estate’s various holdings in and around the city. Here are the first seven lines as they appear in the edition.

15 The most detailed treatment of the place remains Constans 1916; see too Mattingly 1995: esp. 128–131.

16 See *O. Gigthi*: 228–233.

Fig. 1. *O. Gigthi* 1 lines 1–7. Photo: R. Ast.

	acepi a puero ad bila hordiu	b(ilibres) XII
	per Tafsura a cibitate	b(ilibres) LXXXXV
	a Nonjo	b(ilibres) XXX
	acepi ego a cibitate	b(ilibres) L
5	acepi per Tafsura	b(ilibres) X[X]XVI
	acepi per Bernaclu	b(ilibres) LXXXIII
		.en b(ilibres) XXXVII

1 *l.* acepi, villam hordeum 2 *l.* Tafsurem, civitate 4 *l.* acepi, civitate 5 *l.* acepi,
Tafsurem 6 *l.* acepi, Vernaclum

‘I have received from the slave at the farm barley, 12 *bilibres*
Through Tafsur from the city 95 *bilibres*
From Nonius 30 *bilibres*
I have received from the city 50 *bilibres*
5 I have received through Tafsur 36 *bilibres*
I have received through Bernaclus 73 *bilibres*
... *bilibres* 37’¹⁷

It is not important whether we take the repeated term *civitas* in a legal sense to refer to Gigthi’s civic status, or we interpret it simply to mean the ‘city’, in contrast to the unnamed farmstead (*villa*) mentioned alongside it.¹⁸ What matters is that the administrative context has clear ties to an urban center. Moreover, the document’s generic accounting language, mixed onomastics and general layout would have been encountered in similar places across the Roman Empire.

¹⁷ I have come to think that, contrary to the edition, line 7 should read 4 III b(ilibres) XXXVII, or ‘3 *centenaria* and 37 *bilibres*’. To arrive at a total of 337, one would have to read L[X]XVI in line 5, which is perfectly possible, and assume that a single digit is no longer visible in one of the lines. The 4-symbol appears also in lines 82 and 83 of the Assenamat ostracum below.

¹⁸ See *O. Gigthi*: 216; Zahrnt 1989.

Although the Latin contains a small number of orthographical anomalies, the language is otherwise similar to accounts found elsewhere. One can compare the opening line, *acepi* (l. *acepi*) *a puero ad bila* (l. *villam*) *bordiu* (l. *bordeum*), with *O.Berenike* III 333.1f., a second-century receipt for delivery of water from the Red Sea port of Berenike, *acepi ab decnus* (l. *decano*); or with *O.Claud.* I 135.2, a letter from the quarry of Mons Claudianus in Egypt's Eastern Desert dated c. 107 that acknowledges receipt of clothing, *acepi a Melanippo tunicas duas* etc.; or, finally, with *P.Masada* 722, an account of payments to soldiers from Palestine dated around 75, *acepi stipendi* (*denarios*) *LX*[. Thus, from a linguistic perspective, nothing really stands out in the passage from the Gigthi account quoted above.

The onomastics of the Gigthi accounts reflect the region, but overall they might be described as mixed. 'Roman' cognomina, both male and female, constitute just over half of all those recorded in the text. Roger Bagnall identifies ten such names, some of them suggestive of servile status, such as *Bernaclus* (l. *Vernaculus*); others are common both generally and for the region, e.g., *Ianuaria* and *Prima*.¹⁹ In addition, there are seven non-Roman names (whether Punic or Libyan), which give a glimpse of an indigenous population. These include *Lundim*, *Sibilut*, *Tafsur*, *Zemoz*.²⁰ Their presence in an account of grain payments suggests that these people could lease land, if not even own it.²¹

Similar to the language, the script is also not very remarkable, but there is one feature that deserves mention: the grapheme *š*, identified also in Latin ostraca from Bu Njem.²² It resembles a Greek ξ,²³ and seems to occur twice in the Gigthi accounts in the name *Šemoz*, where it is represented in the transcription by the letter *Z*.²⁴

The layout of the accounts will seem unexceptional to anyone familiar with Greek or Latin accounts preserved on papyrus and ostraca. Indeed, one could even call it conventional. It begins with a basic heading followed by a list of people and the amounts associated with them. *O.Gigthi* 2 col iv, lines 11–15 illustrate well the list arrangement in which the name of the recipient is followed by the measure of the commodity and the amount received:

	Zemoz	b(ilibres)	X. [
	Tafsur	b(ilibres)	X[
	Bernaclus	b(ilibres)	XLIII[
	Calendio	b(ilibres)	XX[
15	Sibilut	<b(ilibres)>	XX[

Of particular interest is the unit measure recorded to the right of the names, which is abbreviated throughout the account with the letter *b*. In line 9, however, the adjective *bilibre* (two-pounder) is written in full, where it appears to modify a container or pot called a *cacabus* in a context that is

¹⁹ See *O.Gigthi*: 226–227.

²⁰ See *O.Gigthi*: 227–228. Amadasi has asked (*per litt.*, August 2021) if the name Sibilut could correspond to Punic *Šblt*; on the latter, see Jongeling 2008: 374.

²¹ This is consistent with what we know from other sources: in the Roman period, members of the indigenous population seem to have achieved some standing in urban places like Gigthi; see Mattingly 1995: 39, 128–131, 161.

²² The editors of the Gigthi ostraca were not entirely sure that the letter was not simply a *z*; cf. Marichal in *O.BuNjem*: 36–38.

²³ See the reproduction of the letter under the letter *z* in *O.Gigthi*: 233 Table 2.

²⁴ It occurs at *O.Gigthi* 1.20 and 2 col. IV, l. 11.

unfortunately not entirely clear, *ex quibus semen positu* (l. *positum*) *b(ilibres) xxxiii a l(ibris?) iiii in cacabu* (l. *cacabum?*) *bilibre* (l. *bilibrem?*). This occurrence of the word *bilibre* indicates that the *bilibris* was probably the measure represented by *b* throughout the account.²⁵ From this it follows that the account was for the distribution of barley and wheat in *bilibres*. This interpretation has possible implications for our understanding of the next ostrakon.

O.Assenamat 63/4499a

While the Gigthi accounts have been interpreted as fiscal records at home in an urban environment, O.Assenamat 63/4499a, which is published here for the first time, comes from a different setting, namely a Roman farmstead at Assenamat outside Sirte, ancient Marcomades Selorum. Antonino Di Vita refers to it and thirteen other ostraca from the same place in his description of new acquisitions to the Tripoli Museum in the 1964 issue of *Libya Antiqua*.²⁶ The pieces are large amphora walls similar in size to those from Gigthi: O.Gigthi 1, for example, measures 16.5 × 32.8 cm and O.Assenamat 63/4499a, 19 × 30.5 cm. They contain accounts and can be dated on the basis of the script to the second or third century.²⁷

In a note in *O.BuNjem*, Marichal also mentions the Assenamat ostraca,²⁸ and it is clear from the papers in his archive that he spent time on them, as multiple copies of handwritten transcripts exist for some of the texts.²⁹ The photographs of the ostraca preserved with these papers are of poor quality. Nevertheless, between them and the transcripts it is possible to get a good idea of what was on the ostraca. In the case of O.Assenamat 63/4499a, the document clearly began with a general heading consisting of a single line that stretched across the top of the sherd. Unfortunately, the reproductions are so bad in the upper regions that it is uncertain what language this introductory line was in, but it does not appear to have been Latin.

After the brief header, the ostrakon preserves four distinct sections of writing, which consist of the following elements in each line: 1) abbreviated measure + amount; 2) personal name; 3) abbreviated measure + amount; 4) personal name. Combined, these form a two-column account recording the amounts transacted by specific individuals. The final three to five lines in the lower right corner appear to give a summary of the transaction. The language here is certainly not Latin, but it may be Latino-Punic (see below).

In purely formal terms, without regard to the content of the text, the account is most remarkable for its layout. On the left side of each column, the measure was recorded first, followed by the amount and then by the name of the person responsible for the transaction. This sequence

25 It is worth noting that the word *bilibris* is written out also in an unpublished account kept in the Centro di Documentazione e Ricerca Archeologia dell'Africa Settentrionale 'Antonino Di Vita' (see Table below for more information about this group of ostraca).

26 Di Vita 1964: 140–141 with fn. 28 and Pl. LXIXc.

27 O.Assenamat 63/4499a is in an Old Roman Cursive script resembling that of the Gigthi accounts, although it is somewhat more cursive (cf. O.Gigthi: 217, 220–221 with Table 1 and 2); the Gigthi texts were dated to the second century, but some of the features of the palaeography that led Várhelyi (O.Gigthi: 228–229) to prefer the second century, such as the form of *a*, are not observed in the Assenamat ostraca.

28 O.BuNjem: 37.

29 Marichal organized the transcripts together with the photos in paper folders that he labeled 'Assenamat 4499a–p', for a total of fifteen objects. Assenamat 4499o and 4499p are so poorly preserved that no writing is visible in the photos. I thank Maria Chiara Scappaticcio for giving me scanned copies of papers and photographs in Marichal's archive. General information about the archive is available in Vezin 2004 and Iovine 2017.



Fig. 2. *ChLA* III 208 col. II, l. 17: • *Apollinar(ius) (denarii) CLXXII (o)b(oli) XXVII s(emis)*.

The clerical dot is visible in the upper left corner.

– *amount* followed by *individual* – is observed in seven of the nine accounts from Assenamat that preserve enough text to permit a conclusion about the layout. Notably, it is the reverse of the sequence found in the Gigthi accounts and in Greek and Latin accounts and lists from elsewhere in the Empire, where the convention is for the names to be written first on the left, followed by information such as commodities, measures and amounts.³⁰ There is no way to know for sure why most of the Assenamat accounts are arranged this way. I would hypothesize, however, that the arrangement reflects local practice, perhaps even a longstanding local convention that may go back to Liby-Phoenician practice. This is not to say that the writer was used to writing right to left. There may be no direct connection between the past local practice and what we see here. It might be better described as a legacy, a sort of visual memory, of a local or regional habit.

The Assenamat accounts feature several abbreviations. The most commonly employed looks like a circle or large medial dot followed by the letter *b* (Fig. 4). It appears throughout 4499a. Marichal's transcript shows that he interpreted the writing as the letters *ob*, an abbreviation for the word *obolus*, which would mean that the account was for payments of money. But this interpretation is problematic for a couple of reasons. First of all, the purported *o* looks in many places more like a blob of ink rather than a letter; this is true, too, of two other Assenamat accounts, inv. 63/4499e and 4499l. More importantly, the *o*-shaped character is not observed before every *b* in the accounts (see below lines 35, 65, 67, 70, 72, 73, 75, 79, 81). Thus, it is hard to imagine that it was a letter belonging with *b*. It seems better to interpret it as a dot, which was meant to show that the transaction had been completed, in the manner of a check mark.³¹ Where the mark is missing, we might assume that a payment was not made. Thus, in col. II, lines 67 and 70, payments associated with a man named Victor were not checked off, perhaps an indication that he was in arrears.

If we interpret this blob as a clerical mark confirming a payment, then we are left with explaining the lone *b*; as an aside, I note that in several of the Assenamat accounts an abbreviated unit is used that consists only of *b*, without any character preceding it.³² From Egypt there survive two Latin papyri that contain a word abbreviated with *b*, which editors have interpreted as the word *obolus*: *ChLA* III 208 = *P.Fay.* 105 (c. 175) and *ChLA* V 305 (3rd c.). *ChLA* III 208 is an

30 In North Africa, we see this conventional arrangement not only in the Gigthi accounts discussed above, but also in the Carthage oil archive (*O. Carthage*) and in the Bu Njem ostraca, e.g., 1–62.

31 Assenamat 4499i is of particular interest in this respect, as the circular character appears both at the beginning of each entry and at the very end, following the repetition of an amount. Take, for example, line 9 of that account, which reads • *b(-) XI Gufara b(-) XI* • (it is worth pointing out that the amount recorded for Gufara in the passage quoted here is the same as it is for a person with the same name in 4499a, l. 12 below).

32 Assenamat 4499h and 4499i have *b* only, as does 4499f, where amounts are given on the right.

account of money held on deposit for cavalrymen of an unknown auxiliary unit. The deposits are recorded in sums of *denarii* and the word abbreviated with *b*. The *denarius* is represented by its conventional asterisk-looking symbol (*), whereas the lone *b*'s are thought to denote the word *obolus* (see Fig. 2). In *ChLA* V 305, an account of payments, the letters *sing* precede a *b*, which is expanded by the editor to *sing(uli) (obuli)*. In other papyri, such as the account of payments *ChLA* X 446 (3rd c.), the word *obolus* is abbreviated *ob*, but one can see how the latter abbreviation might be reduced to just a *b* through elimination of one of the two circular strokes (see Fig. 3). It is worth highlighting, by the way, that *ChLA* III 208 also includes dots at the beginning of the individual entries (Fig. 2), which resemble those in O.Assenamat 63/4499a and are certainly clerical marks of the type proposed for the Assenamat ostrakon.



Fig. 3. *ob* for *oboli* in *ChLA* X 446, line 3.

Thus, it is possible that the lone *b* in the Assenamat accounts designated *obolus*, in which case the account was for money payments. However, as we saw in the Gigthi accounts, the word that was abbreviated *b* there was undoubtedly *bilibris*, a two-pound measure for barley and wheat, whether grain or flour. And we know from other sources that the *bilibris* was used as a dry measure equivalent to the choinix (χοῖνιξ).³³ I find this explanation of the *b*-word more compelling than *obolus*, especially given the high numbers in some of the entries. For example, line 34 records a quantity of 53 (*LIII*), which seems unlikely for obols. For this reason, it seems preferable to interpret the *b* in O.Assenamat 63/4499a as *bilibris*, which would make the document a grain account.

Before turning to the edition of 4499a, I wish to address another important feature of the account: the onomastics. The ostrakon preserves thirty-nine complete or partial names, both male and female. Only six or seven of these are what one might call ‘Roman’ names – *Coccei* (for *Cocceius* presumably), *Donatus*, *Fortis*, *Germanus*(?), *Primigenius* and *Victor*, a couple of them typical cognomina for North Africa.³⁴ There is only one clearly Punic name: *Barigbal*, which is Phoenician for ‘blessed of Baal’.³⁵ Several other names have been identified as possibly Libyco-Berber,³⁶ and it seems likely that many of the remaining are also Libyan. A few are attested outside the Assenamat accounts, such as the feminine *Tafsur*, which is recorded in the Gigthi accounts, and *Nyftba*, which appears in a funerary inscription from Leptis Magna (*IRT* 733).³⁷

33 See *O.Gigthi*: 224–226. Revelation 6.6 in the Latin Vulgate reads: *et audiui tamquam vocem in medio quattuor animalium dicentem bilibris tritici denario et tres bilibres bordei denario*, ‘and I heard something like a voice in the midst of four animals saying, “one *bilibris* of wheat for one denarius and three *bilibres* of barley for one denarius”’. The word *bilibris* translates the Greek term χοῖνιξ; καὶ ἤκουσα ὡς φωνὴν ἐν μέσῳ τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων λέγουσαν, χοῖνιξ σίτου δηναρίου καὶ τρεῖς χοῖνικες κριθῶν δηναρίου. See Stolle 1914: 54–58.

34 Kajanto 1965: 18; cf. Mattingly 1995: 168.

35 I am grateful to Maria Giulia Amadasi for this information. Carles Múrcia (this volume) suggests that MICHYNYNSAR (text below, l. 14) might also be Punic.

36 See the contribution by Múrcia in this volume for discussion of these.

37 See Múrcia, this volume. Other names, such as *Fala*, *Gufara* and *Mathula*, appear in other, as yet unpublished accounts from Assenamat.

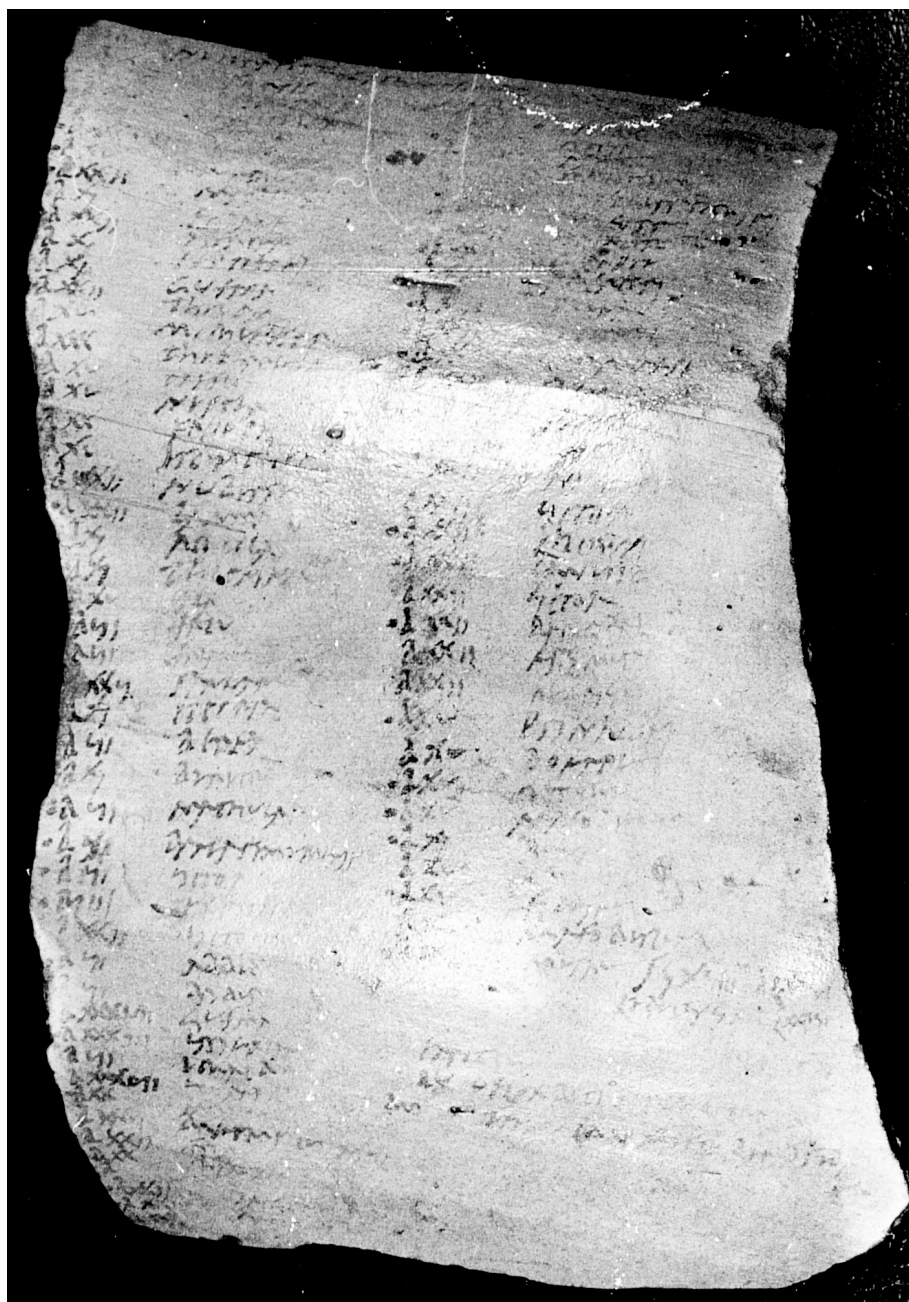


Fig. 4. O.Assenammat inv. 63/4499a. © Marichal Archive.

Assenamat
Inv. 63/4499a

Account
W. 19 × H. 30.5 × Th 1.2 cm

2nd–3rd c.
TM 971877

What follows is a transcript of O.Assenamat 63/4499a (Fig. 4; Table 1, no. 2). The text consists of mainly numerals and names, all of which are in Latin script. Despite this there are several features that point to a non-Latin language. For example, the string of letters in the header, which perhaps provided some context for the account, does not make sense as Latin. And the last three lines, in the lower right corner, appear to summarize the account in a language other than Latin. One word in particular stands out: *farit*, which is used in two other, unpublished accounts from Assenamat (4499b and 4499i). In every case it is placed above a text block that it seems to introduce. While it is not impossible that the Latin verb *facit* was actually written here, the third letter is better interpreted as *r*.³⁸ The only characters in these last few lines that might suggest a Latin word are the very last ones: *febr*. (l. 86), which if correctly deciphered would signal a date. Maria Giulia Amadasi has made the very intriguing suggestion that the letters are preceded by the Phoenician word BYM (bi-yōm), ‘on the day’.³⁹ If correct, then we could have a Latino-Punic dating clause with a Latin loanword derived from the month *Februarius*. The traces directly before *febr* might be a number indicating the day of the month. Marichal transcribed *b*, but a Roman numeral such as *II* seems also possible.

The quality of the scanned black and white photos and of the plate in DiVita 1964 (Pl. LXIXc) is not very high. Thus, Marichal’s readings are sometimes adopted without being verified, especially in the upper regions of the text. Differences between the text printed here and Marichal’s are recorded in the apparatus, except in the case of *b(ilibres)*, the transacted item that Marichal consistently represents as *ob* (see above).

.... nusyraṣṣiṭheathmasinṭar

Col. I

	[•] b(ilibres)	XL	Fortis
	• b(ilibres)	XX	İtibura
	• b(ilibres)	XV	
5	• b(ilibres)	XX	G
	• b(ilibres)	XXXXVII	
	• b(ilibres)	XV	Mach
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Maṇi
	• b(ilibres)	XI	Fystana
10	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Yfyrchṭ
	• b(ilibres)	XI	Septiema
	• b(ilibres)	XI	Gufara
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Thsydir
	[•?] b(ilibres)	XVI	Michynysar
15	[•?] b(ilibres)	XXX	Thy . ṛrcyra
	• b(ilibres)	XV	Tafsur

38 In his transcripts, Marichal interprets this word everywhere as *farit* except in one draft of 4499a, where he writes *facit*. The version that I take to be his clean copy has *farit*.

39 *Per litt.*, August 2021.

	• b(ilibres)	XV	Nyftha
	• b(ilibres)	XX	Kanopy
	• b(ilibres)	XV	Ispunichyn
20	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Nubyrgh
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Lamari
	• b(ilibres)	XI	Ro. ȝila
	• b(ilibres)	XI	Thicnina
	[•?] b(ilibres)	XV	Ƒala
25	[•?] b(ilibres)	VII	Ƒalu
	[•?] b(ilibres)	VII	Fala ...
	[•?] b(ilibres)	XXVI	Sanuam
	[•?] b(ilibres)	XI	Cipiria
	• b(ilibres)	VII	Bereȝ
30	• b(ilibres)	XI	Byryssa
	• b(ilibres)	VII	Mathula
	• b(ilibres)	VII	Buryasymymeȝis
	• b(ilibres)	VII	Victorin
	• b(ilibres)	LIII	Yxpyrin
35	b(ilibres)	XXII	Victorin
	• b(ilibres)	VII	Abbyba
	• b(ilibres)	VII	Bribur
	• b(ilibres)	XXXVII	Gufara
	• b(ilibres)	XXXIII	Ȝariglia
40	• b(ilibres)	VII	Ychata
	• b(ilibres)	XXVII	Ȝ
	• b(ilibres)	XX	
	• b(ilibres)	XXVI	Banymys
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	... in
45	• b(ilibres)	XX	c. 7
	• b(ilibr-)		vac.
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	traces
	• b(ilibres)	X ..	traces
	[•?] b(ilibres)	XX ..	traces

1 *vel* Thmasingar : Şçh . . nusyras̃iȝtheathmasintar XXXI . . . *Marichal* (=M.) 12 *vel* Guftar? 17 *cf. Jongeling s.v.* Nyfthae : Nystha M. 27 *vel* Sanuar M. 29 *vel* Bereȝ 32 *vel* Bituasymymaris 34 LIIs M. 37 *vel* Bridur : Balbur M. 38 Gusma M. 39 Urriel. ȝ M. 45 ob XXI M. 46 [ob] X M. 47 [ob] ... [M. 48–49 *non transcr. M.*

Col. II⁴⁰

50	nybr		
	[•] b(ilibres)	XX	
	• b(ilibres)	XX	Peṭ . . s
	[•] b(ilibres)	X . . .	Ar . . s
	[•] b(ilibres)	. . .	
55	. .	. .	. . . bargychimi
	[•] b(ilibres)	XXIII	M . . ebra
	[•] b(ilibres)	XXII	postu . . .
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	tē
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	erteri
60	• b(ilibres)	XXII	
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	G[e]rmanu
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Cycyna
	b(ilibres)	XXII	Syr . . ci
65	b(ilibres)	XXII	Coccei
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Nifysuri
	b(ilibres)	XXII	Victor
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Syccessi
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Vanusi .
70	b(ilibres)	XXII	Victor
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Barigbal
	b(ilibres)	XXII	Esulmus
	b(ilibres)	XXII	rel . .
	• b(ilibres)	XV	Primigeniūs
75	b(ilibres)	XV	Donatuš
	• b(ilibres)	XV	. . . t . . .
	• b(ilibres)	XV	Mafo bys . .
	• b(ilibres)	XI	Romi
	b(ilibres)	XV	c. 6
80	• b(ilibres)	XV	Fiddimus
	b(ilibres)	XV	Mafo bysluna
	• b(ilibres)	XXII	Musaṇ s(umma) ḡ XVIII b(ilibres) LXXVII
			Lybycus ḡ III b(ilibres) LXXVII
	farit		
85	b(ilibres) X[]V flox bytiusm . .		
	ducyfy . . l dumyst . bȳm . febr . .		

62 XXII Ger . . . arsi *M.* 63 *vel* Secuna 64 Syrecci? 68 *vel* Lyccessi : Sēluṣai *vel* Selussi *vel* Selchysi *M.* 74 . XXVI . Primigenus *M.* 81 *vel* Mafo bysium 82–83 ḡ *pro* centenaria? 82 Musan s V̄ XVIII D LXXVII *M.* 83 Lybycus? : VIIII D LXXXVII *M.* 85 X[L]V *M.* : bytius . . . hXV . m . x 86 du cefyḡ . l dumys . bȳm ḡ febr *M.*

40 Because Marichal did not transcribe the last two lines of col. I, his line numbers in col. II are two off of mine.

Conclusion

The accounts from Assenamat retain a remote character that seems in keeping with their findspot, a farmstead near Sirte, beyond the more prosperous urban sites of Tacapae, Gigthi, Sabratha, Oea and Leptis Magna.⁴¹ It has been suggested that Sirte (ancient Marcomades Sclorum) may have had the status of *civitas*,⁴² but it was not a *municipium*, as Gigthi was. Moreover, other evidence from the same surroundings has led observers to take exception with this region of North Africa. For example, R. Kerr points out that Punic persisted around Sirte into the Christian period and thus later than elsewhere.⁴³ Others have noted that obelisk tombs associated with farmsteads were a Punic feature common to this area.⁴⁴ It is therefore not surprising that the Assenamat accounts, coming as they do from an estate in this part of North Africa, betray local influences, such as the unusual layout and non-Latin language. It seems natural to conclude from this that documentary practice at Assenamat was informed by conventions not found in the more urban settings. Why exactly this was the case is unclear, as we cannot easily reconstruct the intended readership and larger bureaucratic atmosphere of the Assenamat account. Alone, the non-Latin language in the last lines of the ostrakon points to a primarily non-Latin-speaking milieu, even if the account's Latin script, the measure employed in it (*bilibris*) and the Roman numerals have the veneer of 'Romanness'. Thus, the Assenamat ostrakon cannot, in the end, be regarded as a Latin account in the sense that those from Gigthi can. The administrator responsible for it was not fully exposed to practices current in the wider Mediterranean world. And he probably had no good reason to be.

There is still much work to be done on the non-inscriptional documents from North Africa before we can understand the genesis and context of the region's written records. Most importantly, these texts need to be published together in a single corpus, preferably including the non-Latin ostraca written in Latin script. Once that is done, people can address more easily the many challenging features of the texts, such as the local onomastics, the unusual metrological symbols, and other features that distinguish them from papyrological evidence elsewhere.

Latin Ostraca from North Africa

The table below contains a list of published and unpublished Latin and purported Latino-Punic texts. Among the unpublished ostraca are the pieces documented in Marichal's papers (see above); these are labeled *Marichal in the last column of the table. Another substantial group of unpublished texts is at the Centro di Documentazione e Ricerca Archeologia dell'Africa Settentrionale 'Antonino Di Vita'.⁴⁵ It comprises twenty-two objects from the Roman and Late Antique periods. All of them purportedly come from Tripolitania, and those identified more precisely are mainly from Sabratha, more specifically from the Temple of Jupiter in Sabratha. These texts are labeled *Di Vita in the table. In addition to ostraca, this group includes inscribed plaster and fragments of marble plaques written in ink. Finally, the table contains several unpublished ostraca discovered in recent years in Tunisia and Algeria.

41 See Mattingly 1995: 25 for a description of the Phoenician origins of these places.

42 Mattingly 1995: 59, 76.

43 Kerr 2010: 23–24, 211.

44 Goodchild 1952: 103; Mattingly 1995: 162–166.

45 I thank Maria Antonietta Rizzo for the offer to study the ostraca, and Maria Giulia Amadasi for facilitating photography of them. Professor Rizzo informs me in an email dated 25.10.2019 that Prof. Di Vita received the pieces from 'Pugliese Carratelli e da un altro studioso francese'.

Table 1. *Published and Unpublished Ostraca from North Africa*

Place	Date	Lang	Text type(s)	Milieu	No. of ostr.	Publication (if published)
1. Bou Ghara/ Gigthi (Tunisia) Pleiades: 344380 TM-Places: 17077	2nd c.?	Lat	Accounts	Estate	2	<i>O. Gigthi</i> 1 and 2 (TM 244038 & 244039)
2. Assenamat (near Sirte, Libya)	2nd–3rd c.	Lat, Lat- Pun(?)	Accounts of grain (?), etc	Estate?	14	Assenamat inv. 63/4499a published here ⁴⁶
3. Sabratha/ Sabrata (Libya) Pleiades: 344282 TM-Places: 16995	2nd– 3rd? c.	Lat	Misc.	Unknown	10 ⁴⁷	*Di Vita
4. en-Ngila Pleiades: 344450	2nd– 3rd c.?	unclear	Dipinto on table ware	Unknown	1	* Di Vita
5. Bu Njem/ Gholaia (Libya) Pleiades: 344377 TM-Places: 3135	253–259	Lat, Lat- Pun ⁴⁸	Day books, notices, lists, accounts, receipts	Military	146 (158 frags)	<i>O. BuNjem</i>
6. Carthage (Tunisia) Pleiades: 314921 TM-Places: 484	3rd c.?	Lat	Private letter	Estate?	1	Ast 2021 (=TM 851603)
7. Sabratha/ Sabrata (Libya) Pleiades: 344282 TM-Places: 16995	3rd c.?	Lat	Accounts (wine, oil?), numbers, correspon- dence?	Unknown	9	*Marichal
8. Wadi el-Amud (Libya) Pleiades: 344545 TM-Places: 51930	3rd–4th c.	non- Lat	Uncertain	Estate/Oil production site	5	*Marichal ⁴⁹
9. Henchir Bou Gornine (Tunisia) Pleiades: N/A TM-Places: 17202	359	Lat	Grain receipt	Estate	1	<i>BCTH</i> 1915: CXCII = <i>AfrRom</i> IV 3 2008 (<i>AE</i> 1915, 81; TM 200872)

⁴⁶ For a reproduction of this piece, see too Di Vita 1964, Pl. LXIX c.

⁴⁷ In addition to ostraca, this group contains inscribed plaster and marble fragments written in ink.

⁴⁸ Cf. *O. BuNjem* 146.

⁴⁹ One of these ostraca is reproduced, upside-down, in Mattingly 1995: Pl. 42.

Place	Date	Lang	Text type(s)	Milieu	No. of ostr.	Publication (if published)
10. Ilôt de l'Amirauté – Carthage (Tunisia) Pleiades: 836358555	373	Lat	Receipts and inventories	Olive oil industry	35	<i>O. Carthage</i>
11. Gheriat el-Garbia (Libya) Pleiades: 344374 TM-Places: 16961	c. 360–455	South Punic?	Unclear; list	Unknown	9	Ziegler-Mackensen 2014: 313–339; cf. De Simone 2018
12. Skhira (Tunisia) Pleiades: 324675 TM-Places: 18220	mid-4th c.	Lat	Unclear	Church	1	Fendri 1961: 56–57
13. Djerba/Meninx (Tunisia) Pleiades: 344440 TM-Places: 14147	late 4th–5th c.	Lat	Receipt for murex dye	Dye industry	1	<i>O. Jerba</i> 4
14. Djerba/Meninx (Tunisia) Pleiades: 344440 TM-Places: 14147	late 4th–5th c.	Lat	Letter with request for oil	Unknown	1	<i>O. Jerba</i> 17
15. Henchir Bou Gornine (Tunisia) TM-Places: 17202	late 4th–6th c.	Lat	Receipt in kind (wine)	Estate?	1	<i>BCTH</i> 1915: CXCIII (<i>AE</i> 1915, 82; TM 200873)
16. Ksar Koutine ⁵⁰ Pleiades: 344417 TM-Places: 18139	419	Lat	Receipts (oil)	Estate	1	<i>BCTH</i> 1913: CCXXXI (<i>AE</i> 1914, 31; TM 200719)
17. El Ouara (Tunisia)	c. 430–c. 530	Lat	Fragmen-tary re-ceipts etc.	Church	8	Béjaoui 2008: 216 Fig. 14; <i>Königreich der Vandalen</i> 2009: 253 no. 165 ⁵¹

⁵⁰ TM 200719 reports the ostrakon as coming from Thaborra (Henchir Tambda).

⁵¹ The fragment is reproduced in both of these publications upside-down.

Place	Date	Lang	Text type(s)	Milieu	No. of ostr.	Publication (if published)
18. Bir Trough (Algeria) TM-Places: 18476 Gsell 1911, f. 50 no. 45	484–496 (Gunthamund)	Lat	Grain receipts	Estate	5	<i>AE</i> 1967, 588–592 (TM 204944–204948)
19. Henchir el Maïz (Algeria) Gsell 1911, f. 40 no. 36	4.10.508–3.10.509 (Thrasamund)	Lat	Receipt	Estate	1	<i>P.Gascon</i> 1 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1937; TM 200791)
20. Henchir el Maïz (Algeria) Gsell 1911, f. 40 no. 36	496–523 (Thrasamund)	Lat	Receipt	Estate	1	<i>P.Gascon</i> 4 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1940; TM 701130)
21. Henchir el Maïz (Algeria) Gsell 1911, f. 40 no. 36	496–523(?) (Thrasamund?)	Lat	Receipts, accounts, payments for oil, grain	Estate?	6	<i>P.Gascon</i> 2 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1938), 3 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1939), 5, 6, 7 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1941), 8 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1942) (TM 701128, 701129, 701131–701134)
22. Leptis Magna, Port (Libya) Pleiades: 344448 TM-Places: 11836	5th–6th c.	Lat	Receipt? (barley)	Unknown	1	*Di Vita
23. Henchir Soffit (Libya) Pleiades: 344406	5th–6th c.	Lat	unknown	Unknown	1	*Di Vita
24. Ksar Koutine or Thaborra = Henchir Tambra as in TM 200720 (Tunisia) Pleiades: 344417 TM-Places: 18139	5th–6th c.	Lat	Receipts (oil)	Estate	1	<i>BCTH</i> 1913: CCXXXII (<i>AE</i> 1914, 32; TM 200720)
25. Carthage, Byrsa Hill (Tunisia) Pleiades: 560130183 TM-Places: 484	5th–6th c.	Lat	List of names on marble	Unknown	1	Mallon & Perrat 1964–1965, 135

Place	Date	Lang	Text type(s)	Milieu	No. of ostr.	Publication (if published)
26. Gafsa/ Capsa (Tunisia) Pleiades: 324684 TM-Places: 17131	5th–6th c. ⁵²	Lat	Accounts of bread, grain, oil and wine	Estate?	3	*Marichal; Iovine 2017: 126 (TM 942306)
27. Henchir el Abiod (Algeria) TM-Places: 17436 Gsell 1911, f. 39 no. 94	5th–6th c.	Lat	Rent payments, memoranda	Estate	2	<i>P. Gascon</i> 11–12 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1958–1959; TM 322479, 701135)
28. Henchir Touta (Algeria) Gsell 1911, f. 39 no. 227	5th–6th c.	Lat	Money payments	Unknown	2	<i>P. Gascon</i> 13–14 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1953–1954; TM 205156, 701136)
29. Maknassy (Tunisia) TM-Places: 17332	5th–6th c.	Lat	Receipts for payment in kind (wine, meat)	Estate	8 ⁵³	<i>BCTH</i> 1912: CCLIX–CCLX (<i>AE</i> 1913, 15–19; TM 200614, 200616–200619)
30. Tozeur/ Tusuros (Tunisia) Pleiades: 334643 TM-Places: 18257	5th–6th c.	Lat	Fiscal doc.	Church	2 ⁵⁴	
31. Sidi Bouzid (region) (Tunisia)	5th–6th c.	Lat	Receipt with witness signatures	‘Rural site’	1 ⁵⁵	
32. Negrine (Algeria) Gsell 1911, f. 50 no. 128	5th–6th c.?	Lat	Letter(?)	Estate	1 ⁵⁶	

⁵² Two of the pieces are possibly somewhat earlier.

⁵³ Three of these are now illegible.

⁵⁴ The two pieces perhaps come from a single ostrakon. They were discovered by the archeologist Mourad Chetoui (l’Institut National du Patrimoine, Tunisia) and reported to R.S. Bagnall in 02/2019.

⁵⁵ This ostrakon was discovered by the archeologist Anis Hajlaoui (l’Institut National du Patrimoine, Tunisia) and reported to R.S. Bagnall in 02/2019.

⁵⁶ This ostrakon was discovered by Hakim Oukaour at a farmstead 2.5 km north of Negrine. It is being studied by him as part of his PhD thesis, an ‘Archaeological and analytical study of Ad Majores (Besseriani, south-eastern Algeria) and its territory in Roman times’, under the direction of Michel Redde. I thank Mr. Oukaour for sharing with me information about it.

Place	Date	Lang	Text type(s)	Milieu	No. of ostr.	Publication (if published)
33. Sbeitla/ Sufetula (Tunisia) Pleiades: 324816 TM-Places: 17226	523–530, 526/527? (Hilderic year 4)	Lat	Receipt wine(?)	Uncertain/ Estate?	1	<i>P.Gascon</i> 17 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1876; TM 701139); Ast 2022
34. Henchir el Abiod (Algeria) Pleiades: N/A TM-Places: 17436 Gsell 1911, f. 39 no. 94	After 536 (indict. 15)	Lat	Receipt	Estate	1	<i>P.Gascon</i> 9 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1956, with note on date and prov.; TM 322480)
35. Henchir el Abiod (Algeria) TM-Places: 17436 Gsell 1911, f. 39 no. 94	After 544 (indict. 8)	Lat	Receipt	Estate	1	<i>P.Gascon</i> 10 (<i>AE</i> 2016, 1957, with note on date and prov.; 322481)
36. Henchir Besseriani/ ad Maires (Algeria) Pleiades: 334559 TM-Places: 17467 Gsell 1911, f. 50 no. 152	01.04.542 –31.03.543	Lat	Tax receipt	Estate	1	Laporte-Dupuis 2009: 90–91 no. 18 (see <i>AE</i> 1933, 232 for prov.; TM 205416)
37. Unknown (Libya)	2nd– 3rd c.?	Lat	Account, text with numerals	Unknown	5	*Di Vita
38. Unknown (Libya)	5th–6th c.	Lat	Receipt (black ink under mod- ern? glaze)		1	*Di Vita
39. Henchir Khanefi (Tunisia) Pleiades: 344398	Unknown	Lat	Unknown	Unknown	2	<i>BCTH</i> 1902: CXLVIII, CLXXVI; cf. Albertini 1932: 60 no. 3
40. Bou Ghara – Gigthi (Tunisia) Pleiades: 344380 TM-Places: 17077	Unknown	Lat	Unknown	Unknown	4	<i>BCTH</i> 1903: CCVI, CCXXII; cf. Albertini 1932: 61 no. 5

Place	Date	Lang	Text type(s)	Milieu	No. of ostr.	Publication (if published)
41. Djerba (Tunisia) ⁵⁷	Unknown	Lat	Unkown	Unknown	3	Bonnal & Février 1966–1967: 246 fn. 1 ⁵⁸
42. Between Djebel Onk and Tamerza (Algeria)	Unknown	Lat	Unclear (names; <i>partis dominice</i>)	Unknown	3	Albertini 1932, 62 no. 10 ⁵⁹
43. Djebel Onk (Algeria) TM-Places: 18555	Unknown	Lat	Unknown	Unkown	3	Bonnal & Février 1966–1967: 246 fn. 1
44. Bir El Ater (Algeria) Pleiades: 324676 Gsell 1911, f. 51 no. 8 and 9	Unknown	Lat	Unknown	Unkown	1	Bonnal & Février 1966–1967: 246 fn. 1
45. Gemellae (Algeria) Pleiades: 334553 TM-Places: 17996	Unknown	Lat	Unknown	Unknown	1	Bonnal & Février 1966–1967: 246 fn. 1
46. Unknown (Libya)	Unknown	Lat?	Unclear	Unknown	2	*Di Vita
47. Unknown	Unknown	Lat	Unknown	Unknown	1	Bonnal & Février 1966–1967: 246 fn. 1 ⁶⁰
					Total = 311 ⁶¹	

57 The authors do not say so explicitly, but I take for granted that this refers to Djerba (ancient Meninx) – Pleiades:344440, TM-Places:14147.

58 This ostracon is said to have been acquired in Nov. 1949 from M. Paris.

59 This piece is reported to have been in the private collection of M. Hély Cambon.

60 The authors report that this ostracon was bought from M. Rocco by M. Lassus in 1956.

61 The total recorded here is necessarily an approximation.

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A NOTE ON NAMES IN O. ASSENAMAT INV. 63/4499A

Carles Múrcia

(a) Names that may be identified morphologically and lexematically as Libyco-Berber

- I 13. THSYDIR: this name might point to an affricate pronunciation [ʦ] of the third person feminine singular of the perfective stem of the verb meaning ‘to live’.¹ In the masculine, the opposition is **yāddir* (aorist) ‘may he live!’ ~ **yiddir* (perfective) ‘he is alive’, as attested in the old anthroponymy of Zeugitana, Byzacena, Numidia and Mauretania Caesariensis by IADER, IADAR, IADDIR, IADYR, IIDIR et IIDER, and even in a Neo-Punic inscription from Cirta by *y’dr* (N 45, Jongeling 2008: 336) and a Libyan inscription by IDR (*RIL* 260). The feminine counterpart is **tāddir* (aorist) ‘may she live!’ ~ **tiddir* (perfective) ‘she is alive’, as attested by THADER (*Thagaste, ILAlg* 1000) / THADIR (*Thubursicu Numidarum, ILAlg* 1616). Moreover, the name and its cognates were common first names in Northern Africa throughout the Middle Ages and even down to the present.
- I 16. TAFSUR: this is the third person feminine singular of a verb whose root √FSR may be the same as in the name of a Numidian *circumcellio* FASIR cited by Optatus of Milevis (III 4 = *CSEL* 26: 82, l. 1) and FASIRIA, the name of two women attested in Carthage and Maktar (*CIL* VIII 13652 and 16732 and *BCTH* 1951–1952: 98). Both FASIR and FASIRIA are included in Jongeling 1994: 46 *s.v.* and Camps 2003: 228 *s.v.* The name NIFYSURI (col. II, l. 66) could be related to it as well. A verb *fsr* belonging to the root √FSR is attested nowadays all over the Berber dialectal cluster with the same meaning ‘to spread, to hang out, to display, to unfold’, both with transitive and intransitive use. Nevertheless, the identification of the root of the old Libyan names TAFSUR, FASIR, FASIRIA with the modern √FSR is uncertain for semantic reasons.
- I 17. NYFTHA: this may be the same name as NYFTHAE (*IRT* 733), NYPTANIS (*CIL* VIII 23834), NIPTHEUS (*CIL* VIII 16384) and NFTN in four Libyan inscriptions (*RIL* 528, 529, 630 and 704, included in Rebuffat 2018: 97 *s.v.*). It can be analyzed as **nif-tān* ‘we prevail over them’, the first person plural of the perfective (or the aorist?) stem of an important verb all over the Berber dialectal cluster (except Eastern dialects), which means ‘to be better than, to prevail over, to surpass’, plus the clitic personal pronoun of the direct object in masculine plural. It may be related to the name NIFATEN attested by Corippus (VIII 481, ed. Diggle & Goodyear 1970). In modern Berber, the opposition is as follows: aorist *-af-* ~ perfective *-uf-* in Tashelhit and Tamazight, aorist *-afu-* ~ perfective *-ufa-* in Tuareg and aorist *-if-* ~ perfective *-if-* in Kabyle and Zenatic dialects, aorist *-äkti-* / *-äfti-* ~ perfective *-ukta-* / *-ufta-* in Zenaga. Generally speaking, it is unusual for a personal name to be in the first person plural, but this

1 Footnote: This study presents some of the results of the R&D&I project ‘*Per Africae gentes, deserta atque loca: Amazigh (Berber) Toponymy in Latin and Greek Sources (AGDAL)*’ (PID2020-114348GA-I00; PI: Carles Múrcia Sánchez, Institut del Pròxim Orient Antic, Universitat de Barcelona), funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation of Spain and the State Research Agency (AEI) /10.13039/501100011033/.

kind of onomastic usage, where conjugated verbs are followed by weak personal pronouns (both direct and indirect objects), is otherwise very common among Berber of all times. *Tuft-tnt* ‘she prevails over them (women)’ or ‘she is more beautiful than them’ is still in usage as an anthroponym. The name of the historical king of Numidia Jugurtha was actually **yugur-tān* ‘he surpasses them’ (Múrcia 2011: II 312, § IX.8.2.93).

- I 40. YCHATA: this is perhaps related to the name IVCVTA found in Torre d'en Quart, Minorca (Obrador, de Nicolás & Múrcia 2020: 62). Both forms may contain the clitic personal pronoun of the direct object (**-tān*) in the masculine plural and the third person masculine singular of the following verb: Tuareg *-ākkū-* (aorist) ~ *-ākka-* (perfective), Northern Berber *-kk-* (aorist) ~ (perfective) *-kka-* ‘to pass; to surpass, to prevail over, to master, to rule over’. Whereas IVCVTA may reflect the aorist stem **yukku-tān* ‘may he surpass them’, YCHATA may reflect the perfective stem **yākka-tān* ‘he surpasses them’.

(b) Names that may be identified morphologically as Libyco-Berber but are lexematically dubious

- I 10. YFYRCHR: this name may be analyzed as the third person masculine singular of a verb whose tetraconsonantal root could be **√FRḲ_* > *√FRḲ_* or *√FRḲ_*. I can only suggest *√FRKK*, represented by Tuareg *fārkkā*, ‘to be slim, to be slender’, in the third person masculine singular of the perfective stem *ifārkkā* ‘he is slim’, and *√FRKT*, represented by Tuareg *ifārkkāt* ‘he has bloomed’. However, these are rather uncertain identifications.
- I 20. NUBYRGH: this may point to the first person plural of a verb belonging to the root **√BRG*, attested by Ghadamsi *βərg*, Tamahaq Tuareg *hərgət*, Tamashaq Tuareg *burgət*, Tamajaq Tuareg *argət* / *argu*, Tachelhit *wərg*, Tamazight *wurg*, Kabyle *argu*, Tarifit *arju*, Figuig *rjit* ‘to dream’. It may be rendered as **nuβərg* ‘we dream’.
- I 23. THICNINA: this may be the same feminine name as TICNET (*Ksar Koutine*, Tripolitania, *ILAf* 14), whose masculine counterpart would be IACINA (Jongeling 1994: 59 s.v.) / ICNANUS (*CIL* VIII 10688). Morphologically, it can be analyzed as the feminine participle of a verb. It is doubtful whether the root that could account for these names, **√ḲN* ‘to tie, to bind’, would be suitable for such anthroponyms. For instance, **tākkānān* ‘she who is tied, she who is bound to’ ~ **yākkānān* ‘he who is tied, he who is bound to’.
- I 31. MATHULA: this name may be related to MATILA (*CIL* VIII 13085).
- II 82. MUSAN: this name may be related to MUSANIA (*CIL* VIII 25586) and MUSIANUS (*CIL* VIII 3953).

(c) A possible Punic name

- I 14. MICHYNYSAR: this may point to the same lexeme as in the names MICCIN, MICCINA, MIGGIN, MIGGINIATUNIS, etc. (see Jongeling 1994: 94 s.v. *miggin*). It is unlikely that this name is of Libyco-Berber origin. It could be Punic, but its lexeme is unknown to us.

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ON THE FRONTIERS

ON THE SOUTHERN FRONTIER: LATIN OSTRACA FROM ASWAN

Mariola Hepa & Sofia Torallas Tovar

Introduction

The intersection of papyrology with archaeology can have important consequences for the work performed on texts originating in an archaeological dig.¹ Often enough, the archaeological context enhances documents beyond their value as individual texts. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, however, both disciplines had developed their tools and methodologies in somewhat in isolation of each other.² Recent excavations in Egypt, however, are changing the relationship between papyrology and archaeology, and new paths of collaboration are being explored in the search for a balance that satisfies scholars on both sides. The benefits of this collaboration run in both directions: papyrologists learn about their documents from the context in which they were found, and, inversely, archaeological contexts can be explained or illuminated by using the documents found within them.³

In this chapter we present two Latin documents from Area 13 in Syene, Roman Aswan,⁴ excavated in 2004 and 2005 by the Swiss Institute of Architectural and Archaeological Research Cairo, under the direction of Cornelius von Pilgrim, Kai-Christian Bruhn and Patrick Moser.⁵ This will be a first attempt to understand Area 13, in advance of a complete study of the site, still in progress. We think that understanding the context in which the texts were produced enhances the value of these documents by providing insight into a social and historical setting that the text alone would not provide. One of these two ostraca is a virtually complete letter, the second one is a *titulus pictus* on a globular jug.

Excavating ostraca in Syene

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century there has been plenty of diverse archaeological activity in Elephantine and Aswan, as well as illicit plundering and antiquities smuggling, all of which has produced large numbers of ostraca and papyri. Consequently, many texts from

1 We thank Cornelius von Pilgrim and Wolfgang Müller from the Swiss Institute for allowing us to publish these ostraca here, Serena Ammirati, Rodney Ast, James Adams and the anonymous reviewer for their help and suggestions. Papyri and ostraca are cited according to the Checklist (<https://papyri.info/docs/checklist>). For further information, we have given the Trismegistos number (www.trismegistos.org) for all cited documents.

2 Notice how Youtie (1963; 1966) does not consider archaeology to be a sub-discipline that papyrologists should gain some knowledge of.

3 Bagnall 2016 highlights the latest collaborative studies in this direction. See also Gagos, Gates & Wilburn 2005.

4 Latin documents from Aswan and Elephantine are so rare that we only had three (with more text than just a subscription) on papyrus: a bilingual receipt for wheat dated to 221, *SB* VI 9248 = *ChLA* XVIII 662, reedited by Cuvigny 2016: 936–941, and two third-century lists of soldiers, *ChLA* XI 481 and 482.

5 Von Pilgrim et al. 2006: 264–270; Hepa 2011: 15.

Elephantine and Aswan are already well known and published,⁶ but their editions do not include an archaeological study of the context.

Since 2000 the joint archaeological project of the Swiss Institute of Architectural and Archaeological Research in Cairo (SI) and the Aswan Inspectorate of the Ministry of Antiquities (MoA) in Syene/Old Aswan have been performing excavations in Syene, the ancient town of Aswan, producing abundant materials for research, including over 1,800 ostraca. The clear advantage of the Swiss Institute ostraca, in comparison to the material mentioned above, is that they have a precise archaeological context, which provides much more detailed information in the form of accompanying materials such as pottery, coins, and other artifacts, as well as stratigraphic chronology.

The major task of the Swiss Institute project is to carry out systematic rescue excavations. That means providing both archaeological supervision and documentation of any construction work in the urban area. Besides the rescue excavations, which include 94 investigated areas to date,⁷ the sustainable development and protection of the few registered ancient zones is a further major task of the joint mission.⁸

Typically, the locations of rescue excavations are not chosen according to rescue objectives but are random. In the course of many years, excavations were conducted over a wide area not only in the surrounding neighborhood of the nucleus of Late Period and Graeco-Roman Syene, but also in the newer northern quarters of the Medieval town. These sites, sometimes quite small in area but excavated to considerable depth, often produce data and material ranging from the Old Kingdom to the Mamluk or even Ottoman periods.

Apart from a few fragments of papyrus and carbonized papyrus, the papyrological texts found in these urban areas are all written on pottery sherds, and include most of the languages known to have been used in Egypt: Arabic (160), Aramaic (36), Coptic (200), Demotic (101), Greek (600 + 200 amphora neck inscriptions), Latin (2).⁹

Area 13

Area 13, situated to the north of the modern Coptic Orthodox Cathedral of Archangel Michael and to the south of the Abu El-Eila mosque, was excavated between 2004 and 2005 by members of the Swiss-Egyptian Joint Mission described above.¹⁰ The area covered was 200 m², which was subdivided into three sections: Areas 13a, b and c (Fig. 1.1–2). The excavations revealed a chronological sequence of building remains, ranging from the early Ptolemaic to the Roman Imperial period.¹¹

6 Ca. 2,200 ostraca and more than 700 papyri, mainly in Greek, Demotic and Aramaic. A large number of these have been collected in *P.Berl.Dem.* I and III, *P.Eleph.*, *P.Eleph.Dem.*, *P.Eleph.Wagner*, *O.Bankes*; many of the ostraca were published in *O.Wilck.*, *O.Berl.*, *O.Bodl.* and *O.Cair.*, *O.Erem.*; and a good number in *O.Leid.*, *O.Stras.*, *P.Brookl.*, *P.Lond.* V; *P.Münch.*; *P.Äg. Handschrift.* and *TAD* I, II and IV (list not exhaustive).

7 Von Pilgrim et al. 2016–2017: 30, Fig. 1.

8 Von Pilgrim, Bruhn & Kelany 2004: 119–120; von Pilgrim 2011: 79–84.

9 We provide in parentheses after each language an estimate of ostraca with a comprehensible text.

10 Von Pilgrim et al. 2006: 264–270.

11 Hepa 2011: 12–13; Martin-Kilcher & Wininger 2017: 42–44; Rembart 2020: 10.



Fig. 1.1. Plan of Aswan with the location of Area 13a, b and c in the south of the ancient town. After W. Müller and M. Hepa.

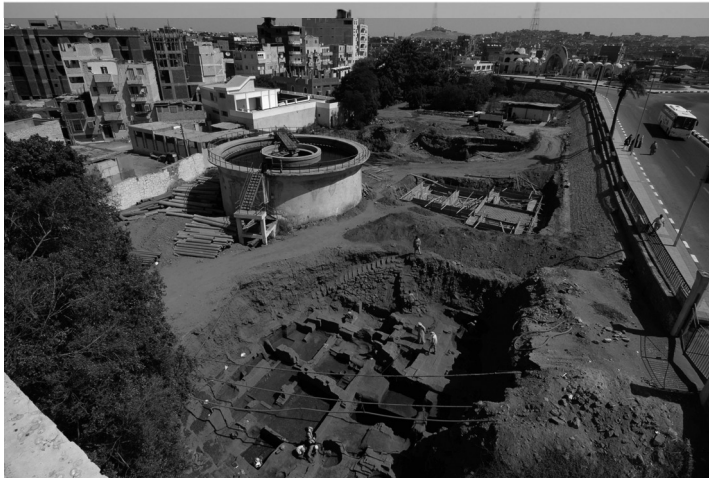


Fig. 1.2. Situation of Area 13a, b and c (orientation to the east).
Photo: Swiss Institute.

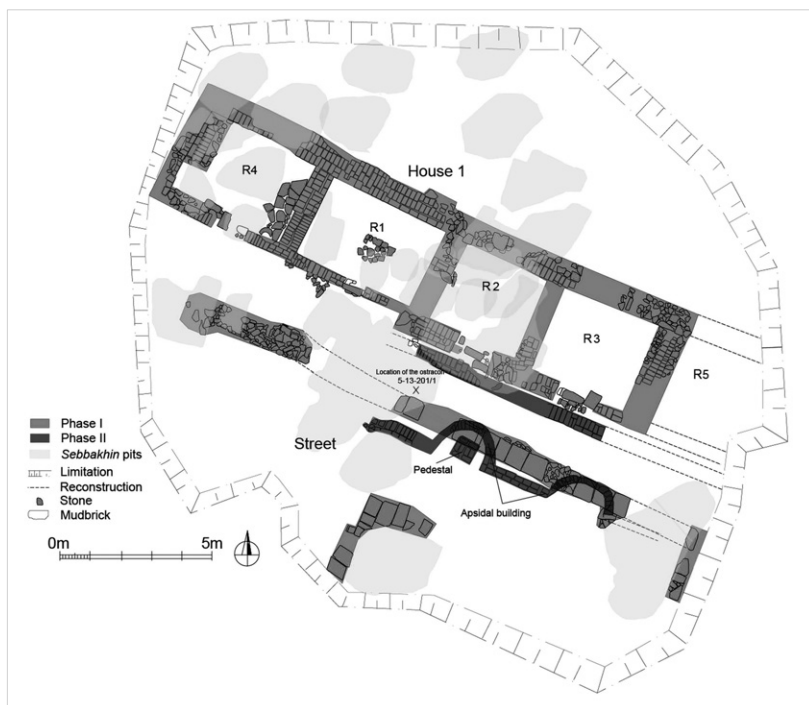


Fig. 2. Plan of taberna building with porticus (Phase I) and apsidal construction (Phase II) in Area 13c, dated mid to late 2nd century CE. After M. Hepa.



Fig. 3. Detail of apsidal construction with pedestal. Photo: Swiss Institute.

Area 13a was characterized by a sequence of domestic structures, dating from the 6th century BCE or older through the 1st century BCE until the 1st century CE.¹² The last occupation phase was dated by material that provided a terminus in the middle of the 2nd century CE.¹³ Possible Late Antique and medieval structures were removed in the course of modern construction work at the beginning of the twentieth century.¹⁴ The ostraca with find-numbers 4-13-45-41/10 and 4-13-45-51/19 (together they form *O.Syene Swiss* 2, see below) were deposited directly in the backfill context of a cellar in House 1,¹⁵ which can be dated, based on numismatic evidence, to the reign of Emperor Domitian.¹⁶ The ostrakon with find-number 4-13-45-1/6, 1st–2nd century, a Greek letter addressed to an *armicustos* is residual and came from the surface material and first layer, which was mixed with coins dated to the 4th–5th century.¹⁷

The neighboring Area 13c produced a sequence of building structures that can be divided into six chronological layers.¹⁸ Above the oldest structures, such as the remains of a fortification wall of the 6th–5th century BCE, were the remains of domestic houses grouped either along an east-west street or around a court¹⁹ and dated to the late 3rd century BCE.²⁰ From the next building layer, dating from the 1st century BCE until the end of the 1st century CE, two vaulted rooms and an associated bathhouse were preserved.²¹ After the abandonment of the bathhouse in the 2nd century CE,²² a building was constructed that showed rows of rectangular rooms, with a porticus in front of them (Fig. 2). Each room could be entered from this porticus and suggests the character of a taberna construction, probably with shops or workspaces.²³ The east-west street that had been in use for a long period of time was now paved with carefully laid sandstone slabs.²⁴ During the next construction phase the building was supplemented with additional architectural elements such as two adjoining apsidal mud-brick structures (Fig. 3). A wall corresponding to the apses partly covered the entrances to the shops. A rectangular mud-brick pedestal in the center of the apsidal structure was severely damaged by later conversions of the house.²⁵

Three inscriptions are of special interest in this context. They were dedicated to different Roman Emperors and are of social importance as several military units stationed in Syene at the time are mentioned in them.²⁶ In a short report from the end of the nineteenth century, a paved road with an elaborately designed stone building situated nearby, close to the Abu El-Eila mosque

12 Von Pilgrim et al. 2006: 265–270.

13 Martin-Kilcher & Wininger 2017: 43.

14 Von Pilgrim et al. 2006: 265.

15 Von Pilgrim et al. 2006: 270 fn. 121. For the text, see below *O.Syene Swiss* 2.

16 Martin-Kilcher & Wininger 2017: 42.

17 Martin-Kilcher & Wininger 2017: 41.

18 Hepa 2011: 13.

19 The edges of the structure in the south of the site were not excavated because of the limits of the plot of land. Consequently, it is not clear whether it is a street or a court construction.

20 Hepa 2011: 45; Rembart 2020: 177.

21 Müller & Hepa 2017: 55–57.

22 Rembart 2020: 177.

23 MacMahon 2003: 25.

24 Hepa 2011: 24.

25 Hepa 2011: 26–27.

26 Von Pilgrim et al. 2006: 265 fn. 112.

and Area 13c is given as the findspot of three inscribed blocks with four Latin inscriptions.²⁷ Just the orientation of the inscriptions to the pavement is not clear.²⁸

The taberna, porticus and pedestals along a paved court or street could well be parts of a public space.²⁹ One part of the taberna building at some point was not in use anymore, judging from the apsidal architecture in front of the entrance. Probably the transformation led to an open and visible area. If the inscribed bases were indeed located on top of the pedestals, in front of decorative apses, this would indicate that an important public space was also situated in this part of Roman Syene showing features known (on an admittedly larger scale) from Pompeii, Djemila or Timgad in Tunisia.³⁰

From the materials found in Area 13c, the fibulae are of special relevance. They were imported from the western provinces, maybe from Germania Superior, and associated with military horse equipment and probably with soldiers' personal items.³¹ A further example of an Omega-fibula from Area 13a, which was associated with the Latin ostrakon 4-13-45-51/19 (see below *O.Syene Swiss* 2), hints to a southern Gallic origin or allows a comparison with materials from the Rhone valley.³²

The building ceased being used in the 2nd century CE.³³ After this abandonment, a part of it was used during Late Antiquity, when two pottery kilns were built.³⁴ After the final abandonment, probably in the 5th century, the site was not used again until the activities of the *sebbakhin* in the later nineteenth century (Fig. 4).³⁵ The so-called *sebbakhin* dump was very rich in finds, such as pottery, coins and numerous ostraca. One of them is edited below as *O.Syene Swiss* 1 (find-number 5-13-201-1/1).

The ostraca in Area 13

Area 13 produced a large number of ostraca from all periods and in different languages.³⁶ Among them there are interesting documents illustrating the presence of the Roman army.³⁷ The only two Latin ostraca from the Swiss Institute finds came from this area. The first ostrakon presented here was found in the dump of the *sebbakhin* pit in Area 13c, the second in Area 13a.

27 Sayce 1896: 107–108; Cagnat 1896: 39–41; *CIL* III *Suppl.* 2 14147 (1–4) (1 and 2 = respectively *ILS* 3.2 8899 and *ILS* 3.2 8907 [two inscriptions on one block]; 3 = *ILS* 3.2 8910; 4 = *CIL* *Suppl.* 14147); von Pilgrim, Bruhn & Kelany 2004: 126, Fig. 1. The description in Ludwig Borchardt's diary runs thus: '... hinter dem Bahnhof in Assuan, südl. vom Werkstattgebäude, beim Sebahgraben freigelegt worden ist. Oben auf dem Sockel Spuren, daß darauf etwas (Standbild oder dergl.) stand ...' (the diary is kept in the library of the Swiss Institute in Cairo). The location of the blocks is given in a letter of Borchardt, cf. von Pilgrim 2021.

28 Cagnat 1896: 38.

29 Coarelli 2002: 133–135; von Hesberg 1994: 58.

30 Zimmer 1992: Abb. 206.

31 Hepa 2015: 154–155.

32 Fünfschilling 2017: 291–293.

33 Rembart 2020: 12–13.

34 The reuse phases are well dated by numismatic evidence to the 4th and 5th c. (studied by H.-C. Noeske, whom we thank for the information); Hepa 2011: 28–29.

35 Von Pilgrim et al. 2006: 264.

36 This is not the place for extensive descriptions, but just by way of example, there are Ptolemaic bank receipts, letters and documents from the Roman period, some Demotic fragments and even Arabic texts.

37 On the Roman army in Aswan, Elephantine and Nubia, cf. Bowman 1978; Speidel 1988; Maxfield 2009; Speidel 2018; in Late Antiquity, cf. Keenan 1990.

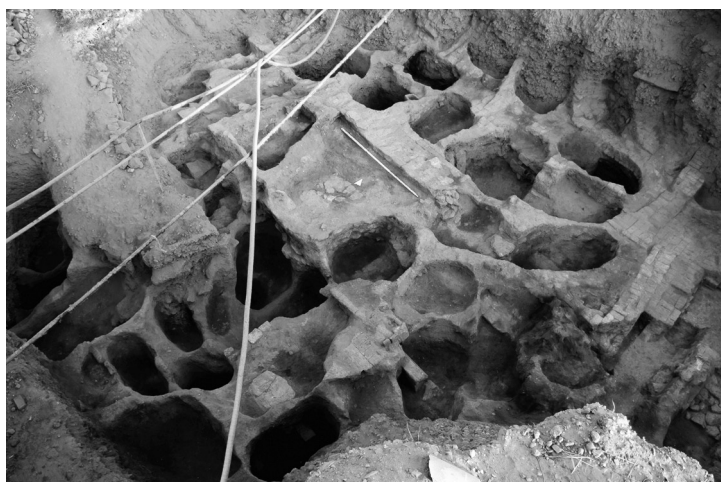


Fig. 4. Situation of the *sebbakhin* pits in Area 13c. Photo: Swiss Institute.

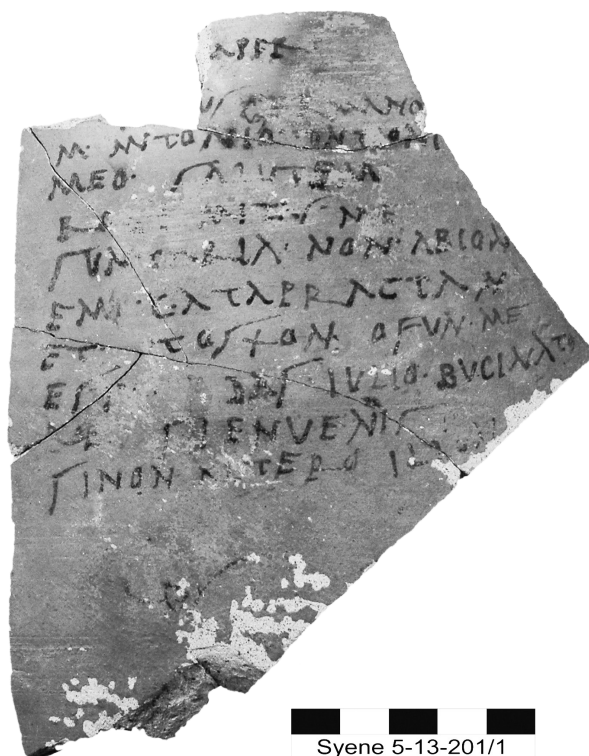


Fig. 5. *O. Syene Swiss 1*. Photo: Swiss Institute.

Letter of a soldier (O.Syene Swiss 1)

Syene

1st century CE

Inv. No. 5-13-201-1/1ca

W. 15 × H. 12 cm

TM 874106

Fig. 5

This ostrakon is a fragment from a red slip amphora³⁸ made of local pink clay.³⁹ The text of the document is almost complete, since it has the four margins preserved, except for a small fragment lost from the left upper corner, where the sender's name stood. There are twelve lines of writing. The farewell formula in l. 12 stands at a distance of about 2 cm from the main text and is centered in the line. The text is written by a slow hand that can be dated to the end of the first or early second century: a capital majuscule with cursive elements, without contrast in the strokes, and serifs in some of the letters (AMN). Some features worth describing are S in two strokes, A in two strokes, B in three, P with a tiny head and serif in the base stroke, O in two strokes. Interpunction is used fairly regularly as a word divider. The dots stand at a medial to high position, often closer to the word they follow and allowing some extra space after it, which acts as a word divider, too. The fairly regular use of interpunction might suggest an earlier rather than a later date, since its use disappears from the early second century (see Anderson, Parsons & Nisbet 1979, 131; Ammirati 2015: 32–33, 38–39). Some comparanda to this hand are *P.Mich.* VIII 467 (100–125; TM 27080); *T.Vindol.* II 255 (97–103; TM 114498); *O.Faw.* 3 (1st–2nd c.; TM 70164).⁴⁰

- 1 [] Aper
 [1-2]. [2-3] us
 M· Antonio· \Germano/ .ont. oni
 meo· salūtem
 5 rogo[.] mitas· me
 sumptaria· non· abion
 emi· catapractan
 et· tosxon· ofun· me
 est· . . das· Iulio· bucinato-
 10 re· si envenis
 sinon al̄tero ill̄om
 val/

3 l. optioni 5 l. mittas mihi 6 l. sumptuaria, l. non habeo 8 l. opus mihi
 9 l. da 10 l. invenis 11 l. alteri illo 12 val(e)

‘[N] Aper, [] to M. Antonius Germanus, my optio, greetings. I beg you to send me the money for expenses, (since) I do not have (?). I have purchased a coat of mail, and I need a bow. Give (it) to Julius the trumpeter if you find him, otherwise to that other one. Greetings.’

38 Gempeler's type K 703, Gempeler 1992: Abb. 120, 6.

39 Peloschek 2015: 178, Fig. 36b.

40 We are very grateful to Serena Ammirati for her advice about the hand.

Commentary

1–3 From the name of the sender, only *Aper* in line 1, itself a common cognomen (TM name 8681) (although it might also be the ending of a different name), and the ending of a name or most likely an office or ethnonym in *-us* are visible in line 2. There is space in the lacuna for at least five letters. The *e* of *Aper* is somewhat smudged and the three horizontal strokes are not as clearly written as in other examples of *e* in the text. However, we prefer to read *e* rather than *i*. Lines 1 and 2 seem to be more spaced than the text that follows, and there might even be some text in between the two lines.

For the addressee, the position of the word *germano* is puzzling. If we take the word order as it stands in lines 2–3 *germano* | *M. Antonio*, then it seems to be used as a reference to kin, rather than the personal name, although *frater* would be the expected form in this early period. We would also expect it after the name and probably followed by *meo*; see in this volume Adams: 80. Alternatively, we might understand *Germano* to be the cognomen of the addressee, inserted in line 2 at a later moment and intended to be read after *M. Antonio* in line 3, thus as *M. Antonio Germano*. Two further facts favor the latter interpretation: the ink is fainter than in the previous and following text, and the word was written slightly lower than the preceding *Jus* in line 2. Consequently, we are inclined to take it as an insertion into line 3, as the cognomen of the addressee. *Germanus* was a commonly used cognomen throughout the Empire. For *Germanus* as a soldier's name, see Dean 1916: 31 and esp. 197 for a Marcus Antonius Germanus stationed in Alexandria in 94 CE (*AE* 1910, 75 = TM 80130).

We cannot accurately read the traces beyond *.ont oni*/. There seems to be traces of a letter before the *o* (perhaps a *c*), but possibly just a stain. We expect here a rank of the army. We can think of two possibilities. Taking the traces before the *o* as just a stain in an otherwise not unexpected space after punctuation (see above), we can read perhaps a misspelled *ontioni* for *optioni*. An assimilated pronunciation of the *p* to the following dental can be lurking under this spelling, with the *n* as a nasal infix. For a linguistic explanation see below Adams: 80.

The second possibility would be to read the mentioned traces as *c*, and read *controni* or *contioni* for *contironi*, 'fellow recruit'. While *tirones* are attested in both Greek and Latin letters (cf. e.g. *P.Mich.* VIII 471 [TM 27084], *O.Did.* 362 [TM 144923] in Latin and *O.Krok.* II 250 [TM 704535] in Greek), *contirones* are not.

Since there is evidence of other letters in the area with similar contents addressed to *optiones*, we are more inclined to interpret the text as addressed to an *optio*, which also fits better with the circumstances: the soldier is asking for his *sumptuaria*, normally not provided by a peer soldier.

5 *rogo mittas mihi* is a common epistolary formula, cf. e.g. *O.Faw.* 2.15–17 (TM 70163) *rogo te ut ema[s] mi ... et [mi]ttas mi*; *P.Mich.* VIII 467.29–30 (TM 27080) *rogo et or[o te] ... ut em[a]s et mittas*. Without the *ut* cf. e.g. *T.Vindol.* II 233.6 (TM 114480) and *T.Vindol.* II 311.6 (TM 114545).

6 *sumtaria* stands for *sumptuaria*, 'money for expenses' (cf. *sumtuarium* in *P.Masada* 722.7 and 14, ca. 75 CE; TM 78491). This interpretation fits adequately in this context, since the sender needs money to buy a bow. For the spelling in Latin and the meaning of the word, see below Adams: 84–86. Not far away from Area 13, in Area 2, two Greek

military letters (find-numbers 12-02-70-23/ 1, 2, 3) were found with a similar request addressed to an *optio* for the delivery of the κομετάριον, which can also be interpreted from the context as a payment in money.⁴¹

The fact that the soldier needs to buy his own coat of mail and bow (see below) from his allowance can confirm Tacitus' statement in *An.* 1.17: 'Assuredly, military service itself is burdensome and unprofitable; ten asses a day is the value set on life and limb; out of this, clothing, arms, tents, as well as the mercy of centurions and exemptions from duty have to be purchased.' MacMullen (1960: 23–24) collects some evidence from the papyri to confirm the fact that the soldiers had to pay for their own equipment: *P.Princ.* II 57 (2nd c.; TM 27162) a military account, *P.Fouad* 45 (before 183; TM 20991) a receipt for a loan, *P.Fay.* 105 (ca. 180 CE; TM 10770). For the supply of clothing to the army, see Droß-Krüpke: 2012. For a parallel expression and perhaps a similar context, see below Adams: 84 on the phrase *accepit stipendium*.

non abion is a puzzling misspelling, perhaps for *non habeo*. The spelling *habio* appears in *C.Epist.Lat.* 157 (TM 69871) and *O.Faw.* 2 (= *C.Epist.Lat.* 74; TM 70163) and *abio* in *O.Did.* 420 (TM 144981). The final *-n* can either be a nasalization of the final vowel, or influence of the *-n* of *non*, or Greek interference. On this and the loss of initial *b*- see below Adams 86–87.

- 7 *catapractan* features the accusative ending in *-n* as in Greek. The term is indeed a loan from the Greek καταφράκτης for Latin *lorica*, with a *p* for the Greek φ (see next commentary and below Adams: 87). It is not clear when the rank of *cataphractarius* appeared in the Roman army, perhaps under Hadrian, as suggested by *CIL* XI 5632 (MacMullen 1960: 30; Daremberg-Saglio 1873: 967).

- 8 *toxson* is yet another loan from Greek for Latin *sagitta*, featuring the accusative ending in *-n*. It stands for τόξον, with an interesting rendering of ξ as *sx*; cf. Biville 1990: 292–293. *ofun me est* is a puzzling spelling too, and could be a corruption of an expression like *opus mihi est*. In other letters from the same period there are similar expressions of need following a request: e.g. *SB XXVIII* 17099.4 (TM 383684) *quia deest nobis*; *T.Vindol.* II 255.6–9 (TM 114498) *rogo ut ea quae ussibus puerorum meorum opus sunt mittas mihi sagacias*.

The confusion of *f* and *p* is common in the Greek of the papyri (see Gignac 1976: 87–88). See also above the rendering of φ in *catapractan*. The final *-n* for *-s* could be explained by analogy with the final *-n* of *toxson*. Parallels to this phenomenon are given below in Adams: 87.

The combination of coat of mail and bow indicates that this soldier is a heavily armed trooper from the auxiliary units that were probably stationed south of Aswan, either in the surveillance of the quarries or in the fortified posts.

- 9 There are traces of an intentionally deleted letter before *das*.
9–10 The final *i* of *bucinatori* is not completely clear and could be an *e* instead. The *bucinator* or *buccinator*, 'trumpeter', appears in the Latin papyri: *PSI XIII* 1307 (= *ChLA XXV* 786, 1st c.; TM 25148), *P.Lond.* II 229 (166; TM 11654), *ChLA XI* 502 (2nd c.; TM 69988), *ChLA X* 443 (3rd c.; TM 69941), in later Greek papyri in transliteration, as βουκινάτωρ: *P.Bodl.* I 145.l. 5 (6th–7th c.; TM 38179) and *P.Oxy.* XVI 1903.l.8 (6th c.; TM 22035),

41 See below fn. 52.

but also, a first-century papyrus from Qasr Ibrim has a letter from a *bucinator* to another one, mentioning three other trumpeter colleagues (cf. Derda, Łajtar & Płiciennik 2014–2015: 103–104; see also Derda & Łajtar 2013; Derda, Łajtar & Płiciennik 2015). The Greek *καλπιγκτής* (with variant spellings) appears ca. 20 times in papyri in non-military, agonistic and temple contexts. For signaling in the Roman army, see Donaldson 1988. On music and trumpets in the military, cf. Behn 1912; Speidel 1976.

- 12 The traces are probably to be read as *val(e)*, with a large diagonal stroke above the *l* indicating abbreviation. For a parallel, see e.g. *O. Claud.* I 131 (ca. 107; TM 24143).

In this letter, a man named [N.N.] Aper addresses his *optio* Marcus Antonius Germanus and asks him to provide *summaria/sumptuaria*, ‘money for expenses’, to be delivered through Julius the trumpeter, *bucinator*. He has bought a coat of mail and needs a bow, terms he expresses in Greek, even using the Greek accusative ending in *-n*: *catapractan* and *toxon*. The soldier needs to provide for his own armor, and judging from the fact that he needs a coat of mail and a bow, we can infer that he is stationed in a protective garrison (*cataphractarius* and *sagittarius* were ranks of soldiers in defensive posts). The region of the First Cataract around Syene and Philae had at least three auxiliary units permanently stationed there, with outposts to the south.⁴² Perhaps this soldier is writing from one of these outposts to his superior stationed in Syene. Before considering the socio-linguistic environment of this letter, we will present the only other Latin ostrakon found at the site.

Inscription on a vase (O.Syene Swiss 2)

Syene

Inv. nos. 4-13-45-41/10ca

4-13-45-51/19

Fig. 6

W. 2.9 × H. 6.5 cm

W. 9 × H. 11 cm

Reign of Domitian?

TM 874107

The two fragments match perfectly together but were found in different layers of the same findspot in Area 13a, in a cellar. The different color they present can be due to the fact that they broke in antiquity and were separated for a long time exposed to different conditions. This indicates that the cellar was filled with debris in a single moment, as was already evident from the numerous joins of pottery sherds across layers.⁴³ The text is written in two lines in a neat Latin majuscule book-hand which contains just names in the genitive, an indication of the owner of the amphora (*titulus pictus*). It seems to have been written on the chest of a globular jug or vase⁴⁴ made of local pink clay with red slipped outside surface.⁴⁵ The pink clay, typical for the Aswan region, indicates local production. On Latin amphora inscriptions, see Callender 1965: xxvi, 21–22. There

⁴² Speidel 1988; Locher 1999: 280–281; Maxfield 2009: 67–69; cf. Strabo 17.1.12, 53; *ILS* 8907.

⁴³ Martin-Kilcher & Wininger 2017: 42.

⁴⁴ Perhaps the sherd typologically belonged to a jug like those found in the cellar backfill of Area 13a, Martin-Kilcher & Wininger 2017: 59, Abb. 3.16, 94–96. However, without a preserved rim more precise identification is impossible.

⁴⁵ Peloschek 2015: 178, Fig. 36b.

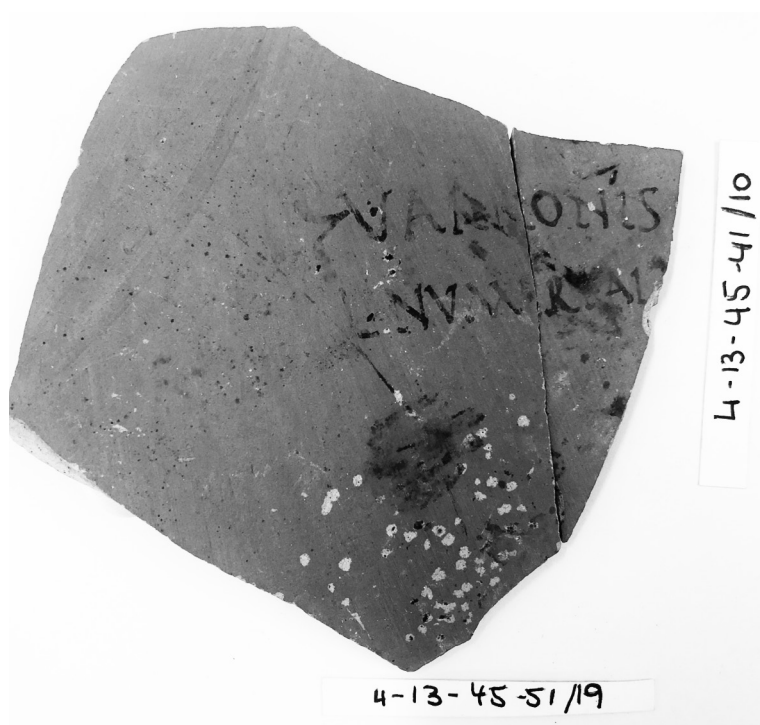


Fig. 6. *O.Syene Swiss 2*. Photo: Swiss Institute.

is a line crossing down from left to right under the text and traces of ink of a sign that was apparently smudged. The text opens with a symbol for *centuria*.

1 > Varronis
L. Numeri Alb[

‘(Centuria) of Varro ...
of L(ucius) Numerius Alb- ...’

It is quite unexpected to find Latin texts in Aswan,⁴⁶ even if connected to the army. The letter presented here provides an interesting example of language choice⁴⁷ and code-switching. We cannot reconstruct the communication channel, so the language choice – in this case, Latin in a mainly Hellenized environment – can have multiple sociolinguistic explanations: from a peer-

46 As stated above in fn. 4, there were only three Latin documents known from Aswan prior to the discovery of these two ostraca. Latin documents are elsewhere ca. 1% of the total of documents related to the army in Egypt. See Bagnall 1986: 5; 1995: 22; Gilliam 1956: 360; Adams 2003: 527, 599–623; Rochette 1997: 147–150.

47 On language choice and Latin in Egypt in general, see Kaimio 1979, more recently Adams 2003: 527–633; Halla-aho 2013 on language and document types and bilingual documents; Fournet 2003 and Leiwo 2018; 2020 on the linguistic environment in the praesidia of the Eastern desert.

to-peer communication to an attempt of indicating military rank and superiority by the user of the language.⁴⁸ The two Greek loanwords used in the letter can be interpreted as technical terms (for arms and armor), in a context of peer communication where both parts were probably bilingual, in an environment where the Greek language was clearly dominant.⁴⁹ At this point, the archaeological context and the artifacts found in it provide new elements to interpret the sociolinguistic situation. We refer especially to the fibulae from Area 13c, mentioned above, which connect – albeit indirectly – our recipient of the letter with the western provinces.

Both the language of the letter and the material culture found in this house point toward a soldier from the Western Empire stationed in Aswan some time at the end of the first century or beginning of the second. The sender or at least the scribe/writer of the ostrakon, if not the same person, shows many signs of being a speaker of Greek (see below Adams),⁵⁰ while the addressee, M. Antonius Germanus, if we place him in the findspot of the ostrakon, could be connected to the Western Empire and be a speaker of Latin as L1.

Putting this ostrakon in its wider archaeological context and comparing it to other textual materials found in adjacent areas make the linguistic landscape of Roman Syene look even more interesting. In Area 2, not far from Area 13, sometime in the early second century CE, a Roman Syenite decided to build a house by the city wall and on top of the remains or ruins of a previous house. In order to level the ground, he proceeded to fill in some gaps with debris.⁵¹ The documents found in the debris are the most complete and best-preserved Greek ostraca from Syene. Among them, many tax receipts attest to tax payments for handcrafts, a fact that makes sense in an area where domestic spaces have been identified as workshops. There are also two interesting Greek letters, which offer a parallel to our Latin letter.⁵² The first of them is addressed by a man to his wife, asking her to go and ask the *optio* to give her his money for expenses, in a rather corrupted Greek form of the Latin *sumptuaria*: *σομετάρια* (compare the spelling *sumtaria* in the Latin letter). The second letter was found in the same place. It is addressed to the *optio* Maximus, who is told ‘my wife, whose name is Anabasous, will come and see you, please give her my *σομετάρια*’. It is not indicated why this man needs his salary, perhaps too for the acquisition of armor, as in our Latin letter. In any case, it is interesting to see the use of a Latin loanword in the Greek of this soldier, parallel to the use of Greek loanwords found in the Latin letter. It is worth studying the sociolinguistic background of both documents as emanating from a common linguistic space within the frame provided by archaeology.

The other piece edited here presents a different but equally interesting situation. If our interpretation is correct, it is a Latin *titulus pictus*, with names in the genitive, and referring to the army, with parallels attested as amphora inscriptions throughout the empire. One might think that

48 The possible reference to rank in the letter (*optio*), excludes this possibility, since the letter is written from a lower to a higher rank.

49 This is probably a case of ‘unmarked code-switching’; see Adams 2003, esp. 410–413, on Myers-Scotton 1993 models of markedness of code-switching. This means that we can interpret a peer-to-peer communication, where the use of loanwords for technical terms is not marked.

50 But see also Leiwo 2020 for a description of the linguistic pool of the military settlements, where multiethnicity is in the background of a complex community of speakers of Greek as L2.

51 The ostraca in this filling are remarkably well preserved and there are some textual interconnections that definitely link them. For this reason, we think that if they had been dumped and reused, it must have been in a very short and localized cycle. On ‘tertiary refuse’, see Ast & Davoli 2016.

52 Publication is still in preparation. For a description, see von Pilgrim et al. 2017–2018: 36–38.

this was an imported vessel, but the pottery is clearly local, so we are witnessing a western practice of inscription in Latin on eastern/local materials. This text, moreover, is connected by its findspot to a fibula of southern Gallic origin and coins dated to the reign of Domitian. From the same findspot (albeit a surface find) came a Greek letter (inv. 4-13-45-1/6; 1st–2nd c.) addressed by Valerius Proclus to Longinus, the *armicustos*. It is further confirmation of the military context behind these texts.

Conclusion

We have tried to combine in this paper a double approach to the written materials excavated in an area of the citadel of Syene, understanding them as artifacts and as texts. This approach and dialogue have been very productive to not only date, but to understand these documents in a wider context than they normally receive. This has required that we both make an attempt at developing a methodology adequate to the specific case, trying to find explanations to both the text and the context.

We are however aware of the caveats in our approach. The archaeological context does not always provide clear links between the materials found together. Many different events could have intervened, and many questions will always remain unanswered. However, the development of strategies to connect texts and their places of discovery is providing good results. Most often, ostraca appear in primary or secondary dumps⁵³ and are probably not originally related to the architectural structures in which they were found.⁵⁴ Still, work on bringing together the different finds can help recreate the larger context, even if the microcontexts are not recoverable. Work on dumps of ostraca has proven very productive, as demonstrated by excavations conducted at Mons Claudianus,⁵⁵ Didymoi⁵⁶ and other forts along the desert roads, as well as at the port of Berenike on the Red Sea, or Amheida in the Dakhla Oasis.⁵⁷ In these sites, almost all of the material found – a bit short of twenty thousand ostraca in all – came from dumps. From a papyrologist's perspective, however, understanding this process makes it possible to connect ostraca found in similar contexts, even if they have not preserved a single trace of the verbal links, such as shared names or official titles, which usually allow papyri and ostraca to be assigned to an archival body.

In addition to these questions of research methodology, there still remains a further set of problems: that of presenting the results in publications. Both disciplines, archaeology and papyrology, have decades of tradition behind them, with strict methodologies and traditional ways of publishing results. It is not easy to change these conventions or to offer new language of exposition to these communities, which in general remain isolated from each other.

Among the challenges of such a publication is the degree to which one can integrate archaeological information into the textual edition, and conversely, the extent to which a detailed edition can be usefully integrated into an archaeological report. In other words, how deep should the collaboration of archaeologists and papyrologists be, and how much of the information that the archaeologists master can be presented to papyrologists and vice-versa. Can, for example,

53 On this topic, with bibliography, see Ast & Davoli 2016; Ballet 2003.

54 Bagnall 2016; Landvatter 2016.

55 Bingen 1996; Maxfield & Bingen 2001; van Rengen 1997.

56 Cuvigny 2012; Brun 2011.

57 Ast & Davoli 2016.

papyrologists re-organize their editions so as to represent archaeological units?⁵⁸ Traditionally, papyrus volumes have been organized based on texts, ordering documents according to type, rather than by provenance or archaeological contexts. In this paper, an archaeologist and a papyrologist aimed at a joint study of materials from excavations in Aswan, in the hope of both answering the questions posed above and testing the possibilities of this type of collaborative teamwork.⁵⁹ The collection of different kinds of evidence add up to a richer picture of the human activities in Area 13 than would be available from one type alone. We are only at the beginning of our exploration of the possibilities that the ostraca excavated by the Swiss Institute in Aswan have to offer. Our first goal is to extend the present study of Area 13, integrating research on pottery, numismatics, small objects, inscriptions, and the stratigraphical information of the building remains with the information provided by the texts of the ostraca. Moreover, this paper is followed by an extensive linguistic analysis of the Latin Letter (*O.Syene Swiss 1*) by James Adams, combining thus the expertise from three different fields into understanding a document in its context.

These are just a few of the methodological experiments that we believe will be necessary before we can celebrate ‘the end of an isolated philology’.⁶⁰

58 For a recent attempt, see Ast & Bagnall 2017.

59 We are aware that this is not new: see Ast & Davoli 2016; Stephan & Verhoogt 2005; Bagnall & Davoli 2019, among others, who have explored this type of presentation of evidence. On the benefit of this type of collaboration for understanding the Roman army, see Maxfield 2003. Another approach of this type is Landvatter 2016.

60 Bagnall 2016: 87.

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THE LATIN OF A NON-NATIVE SPEAKER: *O.SYENE SWISS* 1

James N. Adams

For the text of this letter see Hepa and Torallas Tovar (this volume). I reproduce their text here. After the text I have added my translation of the main part.

- 1 [] Aper
 [1-2]. [2-3]us germano
 M· Antonio· .ont .oni
 meo· salūtem
5 rogo[.] mitas· me
 sumtaria· non· abion
 emi· catapractan
 et· tosxon· ofun· me
 est· . .das· Iulio· bucinato-
10 re· si envenis
 sinon al̄tero ill̄om
 val/

Lines 5–11: ‘Please send me expenses (?). I don’t have any. I have bought a coat of mail, and I need a bow. Give (the money) to Iulius the *bucinator* (as courier) if you find him, if not to that other.’

The most striking feature of the letter is the pronounced interference that the Latin shows from Greek.¹ The writer was clearly a first-language speaker of Greek. The Latin that he had picked up is partly formulaic, partly influenced by ordinary speech, and partly astray because of analogies that he was applying. He had a limited control of the verb system, and also of nominal/pronominal inflections. There are other non-literary Latin texts showing Greek interference, but not usually to the extent seen here. One such is a letter of a slave trader Aeschines Flavianus of Miletus (2nd century AD) written in Latin, but, significantly, in Greek script (*SB* III 6304; *AE* 1922.135; cf. Adams 2003: 53–59). This will be referred to below. But of particular relevance to the present letter is the corpus of letters in Greek and Latin from another multilingual Roman military community in Egypt, Didymoi (see Cuvigny 2012 and the chapter in that work by Bülow-Jacobsen). Many of those texts are from much the same period as the Syene letter, and they will be used to elucidate phenomena that come up there.

1 I am grateful to numerous people for help, and for information that has been used in this article: Rodney Ast, Anna Chahoud, Eleanor Dickey, Adam Gitner, David Langslow, Adam Ledgeway, John Lee, Giuseppe Pezzini, Sofia Torallas Tovar, Roger Tomlin. Abbreviations for papyrological publications follow the Checklist available at <http://papyri.info/docs/checklist>.

This chapter is in the form of a commentary on linguistic features in the order in which they appear in the text.

germano

In theory this could be an example of *germanus* = *frater*, a usage attested since early Latin, and commonplace, and also surviving in some Romance languages (see *TLL* VI 2.1915.10ff.). There are however various objections to taking it in this way. First, the use of *frater* in the dative in the address of letters, denoting not kinship in the strict sense but comradeship or affection, is regularly placed after the name to which it is attached. Second, it is not certain that there was such a weakened use of *germanus* at this period. In Christian Latin *germanus* is sometimes used of a ‘spiritual brother’ (*TLL* VI 2.1918.74ff.). But the present text is rather earlier, and any weakened use here would be without the special nuance of the Christian usage. *Fratri* in letters tends too to be accompanied by *suo*, but that is not always so. Here are a few examples of *fratri* in letter addresses: *T.Vindol. I* 310.i.1 *Chrauttius Veldeio suo fratri contubernali*, 311.i.1 *Sollemnis Paridi fratri plurimam salute[m]*, 343.i.1 *Octavius Candido fratri suo salute*, 670A.i.1 *Martius Victori fratri karissimo salute[m]*, *O.Did. 326 Iulius C. Valer[i]o Iusto frat(ri)*, 362 *C. Lucius Ario fratri sal.* So in the Greek letters from Didymoi τῷ ἀδελφῷ is constantly used in addresses, always after the name of the addressee (e.g. No. 319, 233, 323, 329, 330, 331, 339). See further Hepa and Torallas Tovar in this volume.

otioni

This is explicable as the dative *optioni*, which, with the very common assimilation of *pt* > *t(t)*, would have become in (a good deal of) speech *otioni*. For such assimilations see e.g. *CIL* VIII 466 *otimi* and *otimo*, IX 2827, 26 *scritus* (see e.g. Adams 2013: 171–172). A Greek might well have pronounced *otioni* with a nasal inserted before the *t*. For the common addition of the nasal before stops in Greek papyri see (Gignac 1976: 118) citing e.g. a case of οὔντος = οὔτος.

It is also possible to explain the spelling from within Latin itself, as a hypercorrection. Before *t* in Latin not only *p* (see above) but also *n* tended to be lost by assimilation (see e.g. *CIL* IV 2257 *Froto* = *Fronto*; 6902 *metula*: Väänänen 1981: 63). For an omission at Didymoi by a certain Cutus see letter 334.2: *saluta . . . Logino* (here though it is *n* representing probably the velar nasal that is left out). Another omission from Didymoi is in letter 326.6, *cetur[i]oni*. A writer aware that such assimilations were taking place in speech might have attempted to ‘correct’ the single *t* but have inserted the wrong consonant. This explanation is not convincing for this writer, who was not given to Latin hypercorrections but frequently displays interference from Greek.

rogo mitas me sumptaria

Rogo mitas is an epistolary formula, and it is elsewhere accompanied by the dative of the personal pronoun in the same position as that of *me* here. See *T.Vindol. II* 233.i.4 *rogo mitas mihi plagas*, 311.ii.5–6 *rogo mitas mihi nomina*; also 312.ii.9–10 *rogo aliquid [...]orum mihi mittas*; cf. too 218 *rogo, si quid utile mihi credid[eris], aut mittas aut reserves quid nobis opus esset* (note too the expression *quid nobis opus esset*, which will come up below).

There is nothing exceptional about the omission of *ut* after *rogo*. The paratactic use of *rogo* + plain subjunctive is found from Plautus onwards (*Per.* 634) and is in both Cicero (e.g. *Att.* 4.14.2 *rogo ... nos quam primum reuisas*) and Caesar (*Gal.* 1.20.5 *consulatus rogat finem orandi faciat*)

(see Kühner & Stegmann 1955: II 228–229). It also occurs in other non-literary texts, though in Vindolanda letters it is outnumbered by *rogo ut* (see Halla-aho 2009: 98–99).

Me is obviously functioning as a dative. Dative pronouns regularly complement *mitto* in non-literary letters, and not only at Vindolanda, as in the passages quoted above (*ad* incidentally is also sometimes used with *mitto*, as e.g. at *T.Vindol.* 252 *ad te misi*; cf. 318). In a letter from the Myos Hormos Road (Egypt) (see Cuvigny 2003: II 409, M689 = *SB XXVIII* 17099; Adams 2016: 253) a dative is found in a context similar in a way to that of the present letter: 3–4 *mittas nobis aqua quia deest nobis et unde potere non abemus*. The addressee is asked to send to the writer (dative) water ‘because we do not have any’ (cf. below on *non abion*). For the dative see also e.g. the letter from Mons Claudianus in Egypt (*O.Claud.* 367; Adams 2016: 285): *misi tibi per tabellarium*. The writer at Myos Hormos above adds a causal clause introduced by *quia* (followed by *non abemus*), whereas the present writer uses much the same verb phrase, but in this case paratactically expressing a reason without a subordinating conjunction. This is very basic writing.

Why then has the writer used what looks like an accusative personal pronoun instead of the dative? Is it really an accusative? I will consider three possible explanations of the form, the first related to Greek, the second to earlier Latin, and the third to late Latin and the emerging Romance languages.

In Koine Greek and in the medieval Greek vernacular the dative declined in use and was eventually lost (see Horrocks 2010: 496, index s.v. ‘dative case’, and Manolessou & Beis 2006). Signs of this decline are to be found quite early, and not least in the personal pronouns. Both genitive and accusative forms occur with dative function. Horrocks (2010: 183–185) discusses a letter (*P.Oxy.* XIV 1683) dated to the end of the fourth century AD, which has the following expressions: εἶρηκά σου (20) ‘I said to you’, εἶπές με (22–23) ‘you said to me’, σε δ[ί]δω (24) ‘I give to you’, with a genitive and two accusatives expressing a dative function (see Horrocks 2010: 184–185, with further examples; also Manolessou & Beis 2006: 221). Much earlier (1 BC) note *P.Oxy.* IV 744.7–8 καὶ ἂν εὐθὺς ὁψώνιον λάβωμεν ἀποστελῶ σε ἄνω. Even earlier is *P.Tebt.* III 2 885.43–44 (c. 200 BC): κέραμος ὧν τὸ καθ’ ἐν δώσω σε. For further examples from the imperial period see e.g. *P.Oxy.* I 119.5 (2nd–3rd century) and *P.Lond.* VI 1916.33 (c. AD 330–340) (information from John Lee). The numerous examples of σε for σοι in papyri may be seen by consulting www.trismegistos.org/textirregularities (information from Sofia Torallas Tovar).

Such confusions of dative and accusative forms are also found in the letters from Didymoi, both Greek and Latin. In this paragraph I give some Greek examples and will come to Latin later. Letter *O.Did.* 327.9–10 of AD 77–92 has γράψατέ με ‘write to me’, whereas earlier in the letter (5–6) we find μοι with the same function in a different expression, πέμψατέ μοι φάσιν; contrast too with lines 9–10 above letter 353.8 γράψον μοι, the normal usage in the letters. 327 also (3–4) has ἐρωτάω used with two direct objects, the first the second person pronoun with a dative form, and the second a personal name in the accusative: καθὼς σοι ἠρώτηκα καὶ Ἀντώνιν, ‘as I asked you and Antonius’ (cf. letter 317.2 ἐροτῶ σε). Or again, in letter 350.4 there is an expression with the dative form of the second person pronoun: εὐχομαι σοι ὑγιαίνειν. This is the commonplace formula εὐχομαι σε ὑγιαίνειν (misspelt), which should have the accusative pronoun (cf. e.g. 325.3, 372.10–11, 406.3).

These Didymoi letters with case confusions in personal pronouns from much the same period as the letter from Syene raise the distinct possibility that the (Greek) writer of our letter was influenced by the Greek use of με as a dative.

Second, was there a Latin dative form *me*? There was. According to Festus p. 152 Lindsay, *me pro mihi dicebant antiqui*, but his claim is not sustained by the one example he quotes, from Ennius (*Ann.* 119 Skutsch), which is taken by Skutsch 1985: 271 to be an ablative. Nevertheless, the form *me* = *mi/mihi* is attested. It may occur with *mittas* (*me mittas*) in the Johns Hopkins *defixiones* of about 100 BC, but there is an ambiguity to the context and the form could be accusative (see Adams 2016: 115 for details). More convincingly, a very old formula in Varro (*Ling.* 7.8) runs *tescaque me ita sunt* (see further *TLL* V 2.255.8–16 for a few more possible cases; also (de Melo 2019: 906) on the usage in Varro). The early Latin diphthong *ei*, which developed to long *i* in the classical period and later, did so via an intermediate stage, represented in writing by the letter *e*, which is traditionally taken as being phonetically a long close $\bar{e}$: thus *ei* > $\bar{e}$ > $\bar{i}$. Earlier the dative pronoun was *mihei* (see Leumann 1977: 462). The truncated dative *mī* must first have emerged via a transitional form *mē* (see de Melo 2019: 906). For further such *e* spellings, found particularly in *sibe*, *tibe*, *ube* and *quase* (all of which forms have an alternative form with *ei* in the second syllable) see Adams 2013: 52–54. Some of these are from the imperial period (see Adams loc. cit.), by which time the original *ei* had certainly developed beyond the intermediate long close *e* and had become long *i* (but subject to iambic shortening in the above words), and the *e* must have been preserved as a form of archaising orthography. Indeed Quint. (1.7.24) reports Asconius Pedianus as saying that Livy wrote *sibe* and *quase*, and as adopting the same spellings himself from his model Livy.

In the old formula in Varro the *e* of *me* must have represented this intermediate $\bar{e}$. The present text is dated to the first century AD or possibly the second. It is out of the question that such a writer would have used ‘archaising orthography’, but might a more open long vowel than the usual $\bar{i}$ of this period have lived on (in the pronoun) in the military circles in which the writer moved? See further below.

Finally, I turn to late Latin and the developing Romance languages. There is evidence reconstructable from Romance, and also from some early medieval Latin texts, suggesting that up to a point the two forms *me* and *mi* lost their case distinction and became interchangeable. Elcock (1960: 78) says that *mi*

lost its dative function to become an alternative accusative; thereafter either ME or MI could be employed as accusative or dative, as occasion required (cf. the use of *me*, *you* &c., in modern English). Eventually, where both were used, syntactical distinctions emerged, one form being for the atonic position before the verb [thus *me* in French, *il me donne*], and the other for the tonic position [thus *donne-moi*]. But this medieval allotment of function must have followed upon a long period of confusion in Vulgar Latin, since Spanish and Italian appeared with exactly opposite solutions, the atonic forms being Ital. *mi* and Span. *me*, whereas the tonic forms are Ital. *me* and Span. *mi*.

This statement is not entirely accurate (information below from Adam Ledgeway), at least as a description of early Romance varieties (Elcock does however appear to have been speculating about Vulgar Latin), but it is in general true that *mi* and *me* were not kept apart in function. For example, in many early southern Italian dialects the accusative/dative clitic is *me* and the corresponding tonic form is *me* too. In Italian today the clitic form *mi* changes to *me* before a third person accusative clitic (e.g. *me lo*). Elcock is right about French. In old French the clitic form *me* (tonic *mei/moi*) carried all non-nominative functions, including accusative and dative (see

Anglade 1918: 91). See further Salvi (2011: 322) on the neutralisation of the formal distinction between accusative and dative in first person pronouns, singular and plural (Romanian excepted).

As for later Latin itself, Pei (1932: 167–168) reports from eighth century Latin texts of northern France the use of dative personal pronouns such as *mihi* for the accusative. More reliable evidence of *me* for *mihi* and *mihi* for *me* in texts of the very late period is to be found, with bibliography, in Stotz 1998: 123.

We thus have in both Greek and late Latin confusions between $\mu\omicron\iota/\mu\epsilon$ and *me/mi* (and in Greek too $\sigma\epsilon$ with dative as well as accusative function). The pre-Romance developments in Latin, which are attested only centuries later, cannot be relevant to a text as early as ours. However, the falling together of the dative and accusative forms particularly of personal pronouns in Koine Greek is attested well before the time of the present letter and long after too, and in Egypt itself at this very time, and the sender may well have adopted in Latin the spelling for the dative first person pronoun that he (sometimes?) used in Greek. It is, finally, not impossible that in the first century AD in some communities or at some social levels the intermediate vowel long close *e* of earlier Latin retained some currency in the dative (of the personal pronoun), but the problem is that most examples of this spelling are either very early (as in the document of Varro) or regarded in antiquity itself (by Festus and Asc.) as either ancient or artificial. The present writer is not ‘ancient’, and neither was he capable of using old-fashioned orthography. Moreover, he uses (long) *i* correctly in the verb form *emi*, and also in the dative *ontioni*. I am inclined to treat *me* as influenced by Greek. He would certainly have heard the formula in its Latin form as *rogo mittas mi*, but in writing perhaps lapsed into a spelling of the pronoun corresponding to that which he might have used in Greek.

There is moreover other evidence in these polyglot Roman army communities in Egypt at this period for the mixing up of dative and accusative forms by those attempting Latin, and not only of pronouns. We saw above $\epsilon\rho\omega\tau\acute{\alpha}\omega$ ‘ask’ used with both a dative and an accusative complement at Didymoi. From the same place in a Latin letter by one Iulius (326.6, second half of the first century AD) *rogo* ‘ask’ is used with a dative: *roges cetur[i]oni ut uenias*. In the same letter there is (lines 9–10) *salutat te*, whereas in letter 417.16 *saluto* is used (partly: see further below) with a dative complement: *saluta Cerescenti*. *Rogo* with the dative is found a number of times in later Latin from different places, and the motivations might have varied (examples at Adams 2016: 398–399).

Another pronominal confusion (with accusative for dative) at Didymoi also occurs in letter 417.9, on the editor’s interpretation and on another I would offer here. The passage from line 7 runs: *serua te ab omnes donico ego at te uenio, ne qui te inponant*. The writer states that he has not received something from the curator that he should have, and then he continues as above, translated by Bülow-Jacobsen as ‘Now I ask you, be careful of everyone until I come to you, lest anyone attack you.’ In a note he states: ‘te inponant makes no sense in Latin. The writer must be translating $\epsilon\pi\iota\tau\acute{\iota}\theta\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ + dative = “attack”’. But *impono* + dative makes good sense in Latin. See *OLD* s.v. meaning 16, (intr., w. dat.) ‘To deceive, trick, impose upon’. The first of a number of examples cited is Cic. *QFr.* 2.4.5, ... *Catonis, cui tamen egregie imposuit Milo noster*. Deception does seem to be at issue in our letter, but on whichever interpretation *te* must be used for *tibi*. In his introduction to the two letters on this ostrakon Bülow-Jacobsen (2012: 352) states: ‘The letters are probably written by someone, perhaps Numosis himself, who wrote and spoke Greek and had a good knowledge of the Latin letters which are well traced, but whose knowledge of Latin was poor’. However we take *te inponant*, it has influence from Greek in the pronominal case form.

I mention finally in this connection a poorly written letter from Didymoi (429) by a certain Iulius Priscus, which has the following (5–7): *tu scis com[odo ego] tibi amo tanq[am meo] frateri*, where both the pronominal and nominal objects of *amo* have dative forms.

sumtaria

This form *sumtaria* for *sumptuaria* is explicable. First, *u* in hiatus would usually be expected to change into the semi-vowel [w], but if it followed a consonant cluster impeding such consonification it tended to be suppressed, see Väänänen 1981: 46. For an example of suppression see *Appendix Probi* 208 *februarias non febrarias* (cf. Ital. *febbraio*, Fr. *février*). Second, threefold consonant clusters, including *mpt*, were often reduced to two members in writing, no doubt in reflection of pronunciation. The inscription *CIL* VIII.16556 has not only *sumtu* for *sumptu* but also *prompt-* for *promptus* (see *TLL* X 2.1884.75–1885.1). See further Cotton and Geiger 1989: 37 fn. 33, citing *CIL* VI 26007 *emtas*, VIII 9064 *promtissima*.

Relevant to the meaning of *sumtaria* is *P.Masada* 722, a military pay record of AD 72 beginning with the phrase *accepi stipendi* (in which *stipendi* is complete and a genitive, = ‘I have received of/from the *stipendium*’: see Cotton & Geiger 1989: 44 on this usage). There follows a list of deductions taken from the soldier’s *stipendium* in a particular pay period. Presumably if a soldier was away from base he would ask from a distance for various expenses, which would be deducted. Cotton and Geiger (1989: 37) note that the fine calligraphy of the document suggests that it was ‘most probably executed by the official in charge of accounting and salaries or his clerk’. They also note (44) that *accepi stipendi* does not mean ‘received in cash’, but rather refers to what was entered to the soldier’s credit. The use of the first person is ‘subjective’, whereas in a Geneva papyrus (P.lat. Gen. 1, for the text of which see Cotton & Geiger 1989: 40–41) of similar type the third person, *accepit (stipendi)*, is used instead (Cotton & Geiger 1989: 45).

In the Masada papyrus *sumptuarium* occurs twice, both times with loss of the *p* but retention of *u*, *sumtuarium*. For the text of the document see Cotton & Geiger 1989: 46–47. *Sumtuarium* is one term in a vertical list of deductions, containing also *bordiaría*, *caligas*, *tunica linia*, *pallium opertori*. Cotton and Geiger translate both instances of *sumtuarium* as ‘food expenses’. At 52 they have a brief discussion of the word, without saying why they take it to refer to expenses for food. On the basis of their assumption about the meaning they state that the ‘deduction for food, *sum(p)tuarium*, proves once and for all, despite Tacitus’ omission in *Ann.* 1.17 (*denis in diem assibus animam et corpus aestimari; hinc uestem arma tentoria*), that “rations ... have never been made the subject of free issue”. The base word of *sumptuarium*, *sumptus* is non-specific in its reference to expenses, expenditure, and no connection with food purchase emerges from the classifications in the *OLD*. In the Geneva papyrus referred to above *sumptuarium* does not occur. The items listed are *faenaria*, *in uictum*, *caligas fascias*, *Saturnalicium*. It is possible that *in uictum* is equivalent to *sumptuarium*, but that does not pin down the precise sense of *sumtuarium*, because *uictus* can refer either to food (*OLD* 1a) or to other ‘necessities of life’ (*OLD* 1b).

There are two further examples of the word (both also without the *p*) in a British inscription on a brick from Holt, Wales (Tomlin 2018: 290–291; also Hassall & Tomlin 1995: 387–388, no. 28):

sumtu[aria]
 Iuniu[s . . .]
 (denarios) IIII
 Maternu[s]
 5 sumptuaria
 Belletus

These are records of payments made to two workers, presumably soldiers. In both the hand varies, which means that the names are signatures. The word is translated by Tomlin as ‘expenses’, and such expenses could in theory be of miscellaneous kinds, living or for equipment. Hassall & Tomlin (1995: 387 fn. 50) offer as well ‘living expenses of soldiers outposted from their base’.

I return to the letter under discussion. The writer has spent money on a coat of mail and needs a bow, and in this context the *sumptuaria* seem to refer to money to be spent on arms and armour (cf. *arma* in the passage of Tacitus above). Perhaps the term specifically means ‘expenses for arms’, or it may have a general meaning ‘miscellaneous essential expenses’. Or could the point be that, as he is using up what cash he has on weaponry he now needs money for food? This last possibility is surely ruled out by the statements that he has run out of *sumtaria* and, immediately after, that he ‘needs’ a bow. There is a strong implication that the *sumtuaria* are to pay for that. It begins to look possible that the word could denote essential expenses, which would be used to acquire a variety of necessities that would vary according to the occupation of the recipient.

The adjective *sumptuarius* in classical Latin is usually applied to *lex* in reference to the *lex Fannia* of 161 BC, which restricted the amount that could be spent on banquets (I am grateful to Anna Chahoud for information used here). The aim of this law and other *leges sumptuariae* was to impose a restriction on luxury: see Gell. 20.1.23 *quid tam necessarium existimatum est propulsandae ciuium luxuriae quam lex Licinia et Fannia aliaeque item leges sumptuariae*? Serenus Sammonicus quoted by Macr. *Sat.* 3.17.5 refers to the *lex Fannia* as aimed at ‘luxurious banqueting’ (*luxuria conuiuiorum*). Cicero and others mainly employ the adjective *sumptuarius* in this connection (see e.g. *Att.* 13.7.1, *Fam.* 7.26.2, 9.1.5, *Tac. Ann.* 3.52.2, *Suet. Iul.* 43.2, *Aug.* 34.1). In a sense this use of *sumptuarius* alludes to outlays on food, but there was more to ‘luxurious banquets’ than mere food. Nevertheless, it is possible on such evidence that a nominalised neuter, whenever it might have emerged, could have referred to outlays on food.

There is, however, a different use at *Cic. Att.* 13.47: *tu uelim e Pollice cognoscas rationes nostras sumptuarias. turpe est enim nobis illum, qualiscumque est, hoc primo anno egere. post moderabimur diligentius*, ‘would you please find out from Pollex the figures of my outgoings. It is disgraceful for me to have him in need in this first year, whatever he is like. Afterwards I will be more carefully in control’. *Illum* here refers to Cicero’s son, now in Athens (see Shackleton Bailey 1966: 385). The support he is receiving from Cicero is financial, but obviously not restricted to the purchase of food. A nominalised neuter based on this use of *sumptuarium* would obviously refer to general expenses/necessities, i.e. living expenses (which are here paid out by Cicero, not received), not specifically to food expenses.

There are then considerable uncertainties about *sumptuarium*, which do not seem to have been addressed by Cotton & Geiger. Is Tacitus’ list *uestem arma tentoria* right after all? In the military context was *sumptuarium* a general term for expenses on any necessities, or had it been specialised, to indicate either food expenses or expenses on arms and armour?

The word (in the form *σομετάριον*) also occurs in the same area in two Greek military letters addressed to an *optio* requesting the delivery of what must have been expenses of some sort (see Hepa and Torallas Tovar). The context is very similar to that of the present letter, and we must have the same use of the Latin term in Greek guise, but the letters do not make it clear what the money was for.

non abion

Verbs in *-eo*, including *habeo*, often show closing of the *e* in hiatus to *i* (see Väänänen 1966: 37). Cf. e.g. *CIL* IV 2083 *habias*, and from Didymoi letter 326, *ualias*. This phonetic development in forms such as *habias* led to the emergence of *i*-forms where the vowel was not in hiatus. For *habis* and *habit* used for the present tense forms *habet* and *habet* see *TLL* VI 1.2395.52–53, 55–57, where they are interpreted as showing a change of conjugation, from second to fourth (see 51ff.). There are attested unequivocally fourth conjugation forms such as *habire*.

The problem here lies in the final *n*. Here are a few possibilities that I have considered.

First, could a final *i* be missing or have been intended, *non abio, ni?* ‘I don’t have allowances, if not’ (= ‘if you don’t send’). *Abion* is right at the edge of the ostrakon, and an *i* might either have been obliterated or omitted (?). For a similar context see *T.Vindol.* II 343.7–10 *spicas me emisse prope m(odios) quinque milia propter quod (denarii) mihi necessari sunt. nisi mittis mi . . .*, ‘(I have written to you) that I have bought about 5,000 *modii* of ears of grain, on account of which I need cash. Unless you send it (I will be in trouble)’. The writer here has bought something (cf. *emi* in our present letter), and is in financial trouble unless money is sent to him. It is just possible that *n(i)* in our document is elliptical, with the act of sending to be understood. I have not however been able to parallel such an elliptical use of *ni* or *nisi*. Another difficulty is that the text shows consistent interpuncts as word dividers and there is not one here.

Second, might the writer crudely have attached the question marker *n(e)* to the verb, converting to a question, ‘I don’t have any, do I?’ This would of course be out of line with the normal use of *n* in second person present verb forms such as *scin?*, *audin?* (see e.g. Hofmann & Ricottilli 2003: 159–160), and such an explanation is implausible.

A third possibility is that there has been interference from Greek, with the *-on* ending representing perhaps the first person singular ending of the Greek imperfect, = οὐκ εἶχον. The imperfect in this context would have to be epistolary, equivalent in meaning to a present. ‘I don’t have any as I write’ is modified to suit the perspective of the recipient when he reads the letter later, > ‘he didn’t have any a week ago when he was writing this letter’. For the epistolary imperfect in Latin see Kühner and Stegmann 1955: I 157 and Pinkster 2015: 413, and in Greek papyri, Mayser 1934: 78. One of Pinkster’s examples (*Cic. Att.* 1.6.2) has the verb phrase *secum habebat*. The short text is replete with Greek interference, as will become clearer below. The verb forms that are correct for Latin are with just one other exception in the present tense, *rogo, mitas, est, enuenis, das*. The exception is a perfect, first person, *emi*. Was it perhaps the case that this Latin learner operated with a present and simple past and was not in control of the full verb system? The presence of the subjunctive *mitas* is easy to understand, as *rogo mitas* was an epistolary formula. An objection, however, to such an interpretation of *abion* is that the epistolary imperfect is a rather contrived usage, perhaps beyond the writer.

There is another possible hybrid form that *non abion* might represent, namely the present participle, = (οὐκ) ἔχων (as suggested to me by Giuseppe Pezzini); cf. the substantival participles, positive and negative, ὁ ἔχων, οἱ ἔχοντες / οἱ οὐκ ἔχοντες, used without an expressed object but

referring to money, wealth, = ‘the rich, the poor’ (LSJ s.v. ἔχῳ B.1). Thus ‘send me my expenses; though badly off/not having any I bought an X and need a Y’.

This possibility is perhaps easier than the last, but is it overcomplicated? One would expect a firm statement in such a text that ‘I do not have (*summaria*)’ rather than an oblique and stylised concessive participial usage.

One final question is whether the Greek nasal *v* is ever haphazardly added to final vowels. Gignac (1976: 112–114) does indeed have a section on the addition of *-v*. The examples are classified into various categories, but interestingly the first consists of additions ‘in pausa’ (112–113). *Abion* is at the end of a line, and of a sentence if the verb is straightforwardly taken to be (*h*)*abio*, and it is a distinct possibility that the writer has fallen into a Greek orthographic tendency, another type of interference. Gignac (113) summarises thus: ‘This very frequent omission and converse erroneous addition of final *-v* indicates that final nasal was dropped in the speech of many writers of the papyri’.

catapractan

καταφράκτης is masculine in Greek but for the most part feminine in Latin (see *TLL* III 592.18ff.), with normal feminine endings such as *-ae*, *-as*, *-arum*. In *catapractan* the writer has partially Latinised by adopting the *a* of the Latin feminine accusative (cf. the Greek ending *-την*), but has used the Greek-style final consonant *-n*, seen above and which will come up again below. What is interesting here is that he has written *p* for Gk. *φ* rather than *f*. The uncertainties generated by these letters are such that the writer may well have used *f* for *p* in *ofun* (see below) and on the other hand *p* for *φ* here.

There was a Latin word (*lorica*) that could have been used instead of *catafractan*, just as *arcus* might have been used for *toxon*. The Latin element in this text is very basic and marked by interference from Greek, and two of the objects acquired or needed by the writer are expressed in Greek.

toxon

This is τόξον ‘bow’, Lat. *arcus*. The word is not recorded as borrowed into Latin by Saalfeld (1884), and it has been confirmed to me that the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* does not have a slip for it with the meaning ‘bow’ (information from Adam Gitner). We have here the first attestation ever of *toxon* in Latin. The writer has clearly switched into his native language instead of using the commonplace Latin term.

Gignac (1976: 139–141) lists numerous double-consonant representations of *ξ* from Greek papyri, but this (*sx*) is not one of them. One such however is *ξς*, which occurs both in Greek words and in Latin names and loanwords (141), and here the writer has crudely reversed the letters.

ofun me est

Ofun may represent *opum* = *opus*. The expression *opus est* (with the dative) seems to have been conventional in formulaic non-literary letters. An example from Vindolanda was mentioned above (see on *rogo mitas me sumtaria*). Here is another: *T. Vindol. II 255.i.6–8 rogo ut mea quae ussibus puerorum meorum opus sunt mittas mihi* (note its association with the *rogo ut mittas* formula).

Opum (neuter) for *opus* does not seem to be attested (the form is not cited by the *TLL*), though it is not hard to understand how it would emerge, if some speakers aware that the word was neuter ‘normalised’ the *-us* ending (the word was occasionally treated as a masculine: see *TLL* IX 2.840.42–46). There are indeed parallel cases of neuters in *-us*, *-oris/eris* alternating with a form *-um*, *-i*.

There exist both *penus*, *penoris* and *penum*, *peni* (see *OLD* s.v.), and *tergus*, *tergoris* and *tergum*, *tergi*.

For the construction here (on this interpretation of *ofun*), with a noun subject and the predicate *opus est* + dative, see Cic. *Verr.* 3.196 *mibi frumentum non opus est* (with *TLL* IX 2.860.14ff.). Clearly *me* is intended as a dative, as earlier in the letter.

The final *-n* would reflect interference from Greek, of the type seen above in *catapractan*. The letter of a slave trader Aeschines Flavianus of Miletus written in Latin but Greek script (*SB* III 6304, *AE* 1922.135) referred to at the start has ταβέλλαρον for *tabellarum*. See also Adams 2003: 56 for another transliterated text (*ILCV* 4919) containing φιλιωρον τριουν πατερ, with two further Greek-influenced lapses into *-v*. For final *-n* in a Latin neuter term from Didymoi see 326.4 *quon meum uotum est*, on which Bülow-Jacobsen (2012: 245) correctly observes that it was undoubtedly the formula *quod meum uotum est* that was meant. Perhaps the final *-d* tended to be assimilated in speech to the following nasal, *quom meum*. If so, in representing that the writer may have fallen into the Greek *-ov* neuter ending.

The spelling with *f* (*ofun*) is odd, but may have to do with inconsistencies in Greek in transliterating Latin words with *p* or *f*. For example, on the one hand Lat. *fiscus* turns up in Greek papyri with initial φ for the Latin *f* (for φίσκου see Gignac 1976: 99), whereas in φαινόλης for *paenula* (100) φ is for Latin *p*. Lat. *funda* is found in Greek papyri with both initial φ and π (99), as is *faciale* (100). Conversely in Latin script there might have been some tendency for Greeks to mix up *f* and *p*, just as in the above Latin words in Greek there is interchange between φ and π. See further above on *catapractan*, with *p* for φ. It is also possible that the writer associated *opus* loosely with ὀφείλω (suggested to me by David Langslow) or a related term, such as ὀφείλῃ or ὀφείλημα. Could he be taking *opus mihi est* as meaning (the purchase of a bow) ‘is an obligation I face’?

das

The present indicative (as well as the future) is commonly used with imperativ force, particularly in late technical texts. See Adams 2016: 495, with further bibliography.

bucinator

The final letter is not clear, but if it is an *e* with dative function it is anomalous. The ending does occur above twice in the personal pronoun *me*, but there is reason to think that that is a special case.

Spellings with *e* for long *i* do occur, falling into various categories. I illustrate some of these. First, in some cases the *e* is found where originally there was an *ei* diphthong. Strictly the present example could be classified in that way, as the early dative ending was *-ei*. As we saw above (on *me mitas*), an intermediate stage was *e* representing long close *e*. But this was an early (and very rare) phenomenon, or an archaïsing orthography. As was remarked earlier, the present writer was hardly an archaïser. Second, in the Republic there is evidence for a rustic pronunciation, long *e* for long *i*, as in *speca* and *uella* for *spica* and *uilla* (see Varro *Rust.* 1.48.2). Third, sometimes such spellings are due to a special factor. For example, *felex* for *felix* may, as Väänänen (1966: 23) suggests, be due to vocalic assimilation. Fourth, in very late (early medieval) texts there are *e*-spellings of the dative ending of the third declension, as in words such as *iudice* (see Löfstedt 1961: 68–69 for examples and bibliography). Löfstedt (69) rightly rejects a suggestion that such forms at that period were continuations of the intermediate long close *e* ending, and he treats them as isolated analogical forms (with the *e* taken from the *-e* ending of both the accusative and ablative) from a period when the synthetic dative was in serious decline.

None of these four factors seems relevant to *bucinatorē*. The text has a correct (long) *i* form in *ontioni*, and also in the first person perfect *emi*. If the reading is right, which it may not be, the spelling would have to be haphazard or mechanical, perhaps based on the analogy of the dative *me* a few words earlier. Conventional linguistic explanations are not necessarily applicable to the oddities adopted by language learners, which may be analogical or even chaotic. The Didymoi letters in Latin have various such inflectional oddities in texts obviously written by learners. Cutus, who has a Thracian name, at 333.3 writes *Antoniu* as the dative of *Antonius*, in keeping with his habit of writing *u* for *o*, and in the previous line he attaches this *u* to the conventional dative form of *curator*, producing *curatoriu* as the dative (see Adams & Ast 2021 for more on the Cutus letters). Another letter of his, 335, begins *Cutus Tarula salut<e>m*, ‘Cutus sends greetings to Tarula’, where the addressee’s name is given no inflection at all. A letter by a different learner, 417, which came up earlier, has several inflectional anomalies. At 3 there is *non accepi a quratori*, in which the dative and ablative endings of a noun in *-tor* have been confused, as may well have been the case in *bucinatorē*. In 3 we have *Claudio frateri et magisteri suo*, where the correct dative *-i* is found in *frater*, but attached to the nominative rather than to the reduced stem. In the coordinated *magisteri* the same ending is used, by analogy with *frater*, *frateri*, but *magister* is only superficially similar to *frater*, being of a different declension. Line 16 is more chaotic: *saluta Cerescenti conterane meum*. The object of *saluta* is expressed partly by a dative form, partly by an accusative, and partly by a form without inflection (*conterane* for *conterraneo*: or has the writer interpreted the final *e* as an inflectional ending?).

enuenīs

The prefix *en-* for *in-* is a clear case of interference, with the Greek form of the prefix replacing the Latin. So the letter of Aeschines Flavianus mentioned above (*SB* III 6304.8–9) has εἰς ἐντερωγατιῶνε for *ex interrogazione* (though there of course the prefix is strictly *inter-*).

altero

The standard dative of *alter* is *alteri*. *Altero* is cited by Neue & Wagener (1895–1902: 2 539) once, from an inscription; there are a few more examples at *TLL* I 1730.55–57. Analogy, as well as Greek influence, was a factor influencing the writer. He had just used *Iulio* as a dative, and now applies the same ending to another masculine term in the dative. It is also possible that he had heard the form, as it was probably a substandard variant of *alteri*.

An interesting instance of *altero* is at *CLE* 192.3, *ab alio speres, altero quod feceris* (‘you may hope for from another what you have done to the other’).² Buecheler (1921) ad loc. cites a comic fragment, *inc. inc.* 82 (Ribbeck 1873: 126) that must be the source of this maxim, *ab alio expectes alteri quod feceris*, with the correct dative form *alteri*. Analogy was at work in the *CLE* version, with the inflection of *altero* determined by that of *alio*.

(altero) illum

The most obvious explanation of *illum* is that it could be a neuter accusative of *ille*. Might it refer back to *sumtaria* and be object of the imperatival use of *das* (*das iulio bucinatorē si enuenīs sinon altero illum*)? For attestations of the substandard use of *illum* (neuter) = *illud* see *TLL* VII

2 Adam Gitner points out to me that by the *TLL* this passage would be cited as Publil. A 2 (from W. Meyer, Publilii Syrae Mimi [1880]).

1.340.61ff. At *O.Did.* 334.7 (*ut excipias ilum*) in a letter of Cutus *ilum* is found as a neuter pronoun picking up *uino*, and the same form occurs at *O.Did.* 336. The *o* for *u* would represent a conflation of the Greek and Latin neuter endings. However, this explanation is unconvincing for two reasons. First, it is singular but *sumtaria* is plural. Second, the placement of *illom* right at the end of the sentence would be bizarre and very difficult to account for. It ought to follow *das* immediately, never mind be last word in the sentence.

Another possibility is that it stands for a substandard dative *illo* in the expression *altero illo*. This would be the ‘article’ use of *ille*, which is exhaustively treated in the *TLL*, where it is shown that *ille* in this role not only precedes the term it modifies, but may also follow it (see for the latter placement *TLL* VII 1.357.16ff., 358.38ff., 359.25ff.). For *ille* accompanying *alter* see VII. 1.362.24ff., and particularly I 1749.2ff., where nine lines of examples are given, and it is made clear that in some writers there are other examples not listed. The heading used for this list is *ille alter* and there is no separate rubric for *alter ille*, but it does occur (e.g. at Sen. *Dial.* 4.4.2, which appears in the list of examples of *ille alter*). For the dative forms *illo* and *illae* see Neue & Wagener (1892–1905: 2 427). I would not see the addition of *-m* as phonetically motivated (i.e. as a nasalisation of the final vowel), but as possibly a mechanical orthographic addition caused by the dropping of final nasals in speech, which undermined unassured writing (and not only in Latin but in Greek, as was seen above on *abion*). There remain uncertainties about this final word. The reading is not certain, and *ille alter* is definitely far more usual than *alter ille*.

Seven of the nine declensional endings in this short text (I leave out *illom* because of the uncertainties) are wrong for standard Latin (*me* twice, *catapractan*, *tosxon*, *ofun*, *bucinator*, *altero*), the only exceptions being *sumtaria* and *Iulio*, both of which endings would be (virtually) the same in Greek. Five of the seven are either Greek, part Greek or possibly Greek, whereas *altero* and *bucinator* possibly are analogical (or substandard in the case of *altero*). There is a Greek prefix in *enuenis*, and *abion* may have a Greek verbal ending, though doubts about that have been expressed above and a different explanation favoured. Alternatively (and more plausibly) the word has a Greek-style addition of a final nasal at a pause. The two key nouns in the text are Greek, adopted even though they refer to items of Roman military equipment. Of the pure Latin parts of the text, *rogo mitas* is formulaic, and the assimilated spellings of *sumtaria* and *ontioni*, and the imperative use of the indicative *das* reflect non-standard Latin speech. *Ontioni* in addition to its Latinate assimilation *pt > t* also has an intrusive nasal that seems Greek-inspired.

The Syene letter and also some of the letters from Didymoi considered above throw light on varieties of non-standard Latin which must have been widely heard in the Roman empire, and particularly in the army, varieties that may be called ‘learners’ Latin’. These varieties, which have not received much attention, were marked by bilingual interference, by diverse analogical usages, and by speculative and illogical usages deriving from a lack of command of the second language. Nor were these learners only Greeks: Cutus is a likely exception.

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LISTING IN THE ROMAN ARMY: FORMATTING AND GRAPHICAL CONVENTIONS OF LATIN LISTS ON PAPYRUS

Ornella Salati

Introduction

The papyrological evidence proves the importance that documentation had for the Roman army.¹ Through a well-developed bureaucratic system, all units managed their personnel and maintained control over them, a sign of a close association between literacy and power.² Given this practical purpose, military records had to contain detailed information about every single aspect of the status and number of soldiers, as well as of their movements and the duties which they were performing. For this same reason, each document needed to be clearly legible and easy to update and, consequently, to make use of specific features, both in format and in language.

The topic of military documentation has, in fact, two faces. Since the army was one of the most homogeneous organizations in the Roman Empire,³ its documentation was also highly homogeneous and standard throughout the provinces. The written texts, being essential to monitor personnel, had to be regulated in their use: especially those elements of the documents, which were important for their legibility and proved their authenticity, remained constant over space and time. Chief among them was the general appearance of the documents, achieved by technical layout and graphical features. However, it is not surprising that even formal details were changed and adapted to local habits, specific purposes, and topics. Depending on the internal organization of the unit and the nature of a document, such devices could attain different degrees of formality and be combined with other ones. In this respect, papyrological evidence gives us clear insights into both the uniformity and the variety of the documents drawn up every day by the clerks of the Roman army.⁴

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 - 2 On the significance of both official and private written records in the Roman army, cf. recently Speidel 2018: 180 and 182. On the amount of paperwork, see the well-known section of Veg. *mil.* 2.19, with the remarks of Bowman 1998a: 35–36 with further bibliography. The specific purpose of the military records is emphasised by Phang 2007: 286; Speidel 2007: 175–176; Le Bohec 2010. Overall, on military documentation, see also Watson 1974; Austin & Rankov 1995: 155–161. On the use of writing to construct power in all ancient societies, see the useful remarks of Bowman & Woolf 1998. With specific reference to the military environment of Vindolanda, see Bowman 1998b.
 - 3 Haensch 2009: 68.
 - 4 After an optimistic view of the standardization of military documentation, expressed for instance by Gilliam 1967: 233, scholarly discussions now assume a more cautious approach, pointing out both the uniformity and

This chapter explores the topic further, highlighting what the features of military records were and how such features made records more legible and, thus, helpful in the exigencies of control. The evidence consists of a specific kind of document, namely lists of soldiers, both generic and specific, such as duty rosters and guard rosters.⁵ For several reasons, this typology is convenient for the present analysis: overall, lists are well-represented among military papyri from Egypt⁶; secondly, staff lists were the basis for all other records of the Roman army and, thus, were particularly useful for the command of the personnel. Lastly, and maybe most importantly, these records were usually associated with a specific layout: the personal data was arranged in several adjoining columns; the columns were quite narrow, adopting a rectangular form, but at the same time they contained a large number of lines. Therefore, to be read and understood, these documents needed specific editorial and/or graphical devices; in other words, they made use of a complex of conventions pertaining to their readability.⁷

The editorial conventions that were usually employed in military lists on papyrus consist of two kinds: particular positions of lines (in *ekthesis*, in *eisthesis*, and in the middle of a column) and blank spaces. The evidence shows that line positioning was used particularly for headings, sub-headings and all pivotal entries of a document that needed an immediate identification. In contrast, blank space was more suitable for separating different sections of a text. Thanks to apparently simple but still useful tools, even long lists could be divided into shorter and autonomous sub-lists and, thus, were more easily readable.

Similar to layout, the kind of script used in the lists is of interest. Military papyri provide several examples of the use of capital script, even some carefully executed ones,⁸ and, more importantly, of the switching from capitals to cursive in the body of the same text. This graphical feature, usually with capital letters for headings only, was typical of the more formal and important documents written out by military clerks, like *pridiana* or pay records.⁹

Within lists, too, this hierarchy of scripts was employed, allowing one to easily distinguish parts or entries of the text. A further graphical convention occurring in military papyri is the increased size of the letters. It is customary that the first letter of the first line was enlarged to highlight the line itself; however, the enlargement of all letters of a line in the body of the text was also used to give it special emphasis.

flexibility of the written records. Cf. Bowman 1998a: 48–49; Stauner 2004: 207–210; Phang 2007: 289–291; Speidel 2007: 193–194; 2017: 182–183.

5 In his excellent, though dated, corpus Fink 1971: ix–x divides the records between special lists and unclassifiable ones: by the former definition, clearly, the scholar refers to those documents whose exact nature can be understood. However, it is obvious that each military list was drawn up with a specific purpose and its understanding mostly depends on its state of preservation. On the need to update the categories of the scholar, see Speidel 2009: 283–304. On the definition and features of rosters recording the daily tasks performed by soldiers, see Phang 2007: 291–292.

6 For an idea of the material, see the evidence collected and analysed by Daris 1964; Fink 1971; Stauner 2004.

7 See in this respect the definition of ‘Grammar of legibility’ coined by Parkes 1987 to describe the conventions that can be used in texts to help their readers. Parkes was interested in the scribal practices of the early middle ages, but the quality of being clear can be applied to every kind of writing or text over time. As for papyri, both literary and documentary, this feature is discussed by Johnson 2004; Fioretti 2012; Ammirati 2015; Sarri 2017.

8 Cf. e.g. P.Heid. Lat. 7 (= *ChLA* XI 500; *ante* 125; TM 69986) a document surely related to furlough.

9 Among *pridiana* see e.g. *BGU* II 696 (= *ChLA* X 411; 156 August 31; TM 69913), while among pay records, see e.g. P.lat. Gen. 1r (= *ChLA* XLVIII: 7–11; 81–90; TM 69867). On this graphical feature of military papyri, see Watson 1974: 507; Phang 2007: 287.

It cannot be denied that these editorial and graphical devices were common in each kind of list, even independently of the writing medium.¹⁰ It is also obvious that such devices were not used by military clerks only. However, this chapter is exclusively interested in documents pertaining to military personnel and, thus, does not cover other kinds of evidence coming from other contexts. It can be interesting to focus on the use of the aforementioned conventions and their level of regularity in military records, which were undoubtedly drawn up in different tactical units – legions, alae, auxiliary cohorts – within a long chronological framework from the first to third century. Such an analysis can be useful to test the degree of uniformity of military documentation also in its general look and, overall, to elucidate the techniques of writing documents in Roman society.

The present chapter is organised into two parts. First, peculiarities of layout and script of the military lists from Egypt will be analysed; the evidence, discussed in chronological order, consists of the most interesting documents in Latin script.¹¹ Although we are aware, thanks particularly to the important discoveries from the Eastern Desert, that the Roman army did not have an exclusive language and Greek was also used in official records,¹² only Latin papyri will be considered here. Military lists in Latin are more numerous and thus very useful for the goal of this paper; moreover, as has been rightly pointed out by Adams,¹³ in Egypt, Latin, being the language of Rome, assumed a special significance in some contexts and especially within the army. In the second part, comparative evidence from the same period coming from other military forts outside Egypt, such as Dura Europos on the middle Euphrates, Bu Njem in North Africa and Vindolanda in Britain, will be briefly discussed. The conclusion will shed light on similarities and differences in military lists, exploring possible connections to time, space, type of unit, and writing support as well.

I.1 Blank spaces

Some lists show a careful layout in which the column has the shape of a long and rectangular block with blank spaces in its body. Blank spaces can be large or small, but they are used between bits of information, and thus allow one to recognise them immediately. Such layout is characteristic of the oldest lists as proved by P.QasrIbrim inv. JdE 95210, dated to the last twenty years of the first century BC and related to legionaries.¹⁴ It consists of a single column, in which *praenomen* + *nomen*, patronymic and tribe are recorded without a change of line; in each line the personal data is regularly separated by blank spaces, so that the writing frame appears to be organised in three narrow vertical rows. At the same time, such a design allows one to focus on single soldiers when scanning the list in a horizontal direction.

An identical arrangement characterises BGUIV 1083 (around 32–38; TM 9457), which comes from Herakleopolis and is likely related to legionaries, as suggested by the nomenclature, which is

10 Some examples of military lists on stone, showing the same layout of parallels on papyrus, can be found in Speidel 2018: 195.

11 Naturally, documents that do not make use of technical devices or survive in exiguous conditions are not taken into account. This is the case with *O.Did.* 63 (88–96; TM 144629), in which the only one surviving column, though well laid out, does not show technical conventions, or with *O.Krok.* I 119 (98–117; TM 88716), consisting of only the right portion of one column.

12 See the useful overview sketched by Fournet 2003.

13 Adams 2003: 545–546 and 599–623. See also Haensch 2008: 74–75.

14 The papyrus, found in 1984 and kept in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, has been recently edited by Derda, Laitar & Plóciennik 2015: 52–54.

made up of *nomen* + *cognomen*, filiation, tribe and nationality. It consists of only one column and each line is devoted to a single soldier and shows small blank spaces separating bits of personal information. The column of the list is thus easily readable, as it appears to be divided into a set of vertical and horizontal rows.¹⁵

P.Berol. inv. 21688 + 14109r (= *ChLA* XI 468 + X 456; 95–96; TM 69960), of unknown provenance and related to an unknown unit, is designed slightly differently compared to the two abovementioned papyri. The soldiers are listed according to years of service, indicated by the consular formula, as usual, and by the formula *a(nnus)* + numerals; this data is recorded in a line by itself, whereas proper names and nationalities occur on a different line. In this specific case, blank spaces are employed not within a single line, but between two lines to distinguish each set of chronological and personal data from the subsequent one. This document shows that the same convention could be used in a different way and adapted to the kind of information transmitted by the list.

There are also cases in which bigger or entire sets of information are distinguished from the rest of the text by some vacant spaces. A good example of this use is provided by P.Vindob. inv. L 2 (= *SB* XII 15638 = *ChLA* XLIII 1242; 98–127; TM 70034), which records groups of soldiers from the two Egyptian legions of Augustan times, the *III Cyrenaica* and the *XXII Deiotariana*.¹⁶ The exact purpose of this list remains unknown, but it seems likely that it detailed changes in the status of legionaries, as suggested both by the presence of entries mentioning specific categories of soldiers, such as those killed in action, and by a structured annotation system.¹⁷ Therefore, some elements indicate that the document might have been a draft: the papyrus is cut on the left and is written on both sides; the lines tend progressively to slant downwards; some lines were added later, in the interlinear space; the hand is quite rapid and there are corrections.¹⁸ Despite that, the document was written by a competent scribe and was arranged in such ways as to make reading easy (Fig. 1).

15 The editorial resemblance between P.QasrIbrīm inv. JdE 95210 and *BGUIV* 1083 is pointed out also by Speidel 2018: 195, who notes that listing soldiers individually in justified columns was a characteristic trait of military records since at least the 1st c. BC. On similarities in soldiers' nomenclature employed in these two papyri, see also Derda, Łaitar & Plóciennik 2015: 54.

16 On the history of these legions see, respectively, Gatier 2000 and Daris 2000.

17 The difficulty of a certain classification of the list lies in the presence of the two puzzling entries *onero* (*recto* col. I ll. 2 and 19, *verso* col. II l. 8) and *bareton* (*recto* col. II l. 1, *verso* col. II l. 16), whose meaning has not been explained yet; see in this respect Watson 1974: 506. Fink 1971: 160 thinks it is a casualty list; Kramer 1993: 148 is in favour of a list of detachments. For details on the annotation system used in this document, see Austin & Rankov 1995: 159.

18 As for the writing, this papyrus is usually assigned to a scribe who was not particularly well trained in script and was more accustomed to Latin than Greek. See the negative judgment of Fink 1971: 160, who speaks of a 'rough, unskillful, hand, vacillating between capitals and cursive'. In contrast, Breveglieri 1985: 62, believes that this hand cannot be regarded as a representative of the category of βραδέως γράφοντες; although simple, it was able to trace capital letters. On the language, see Adams 2003: 621–622.

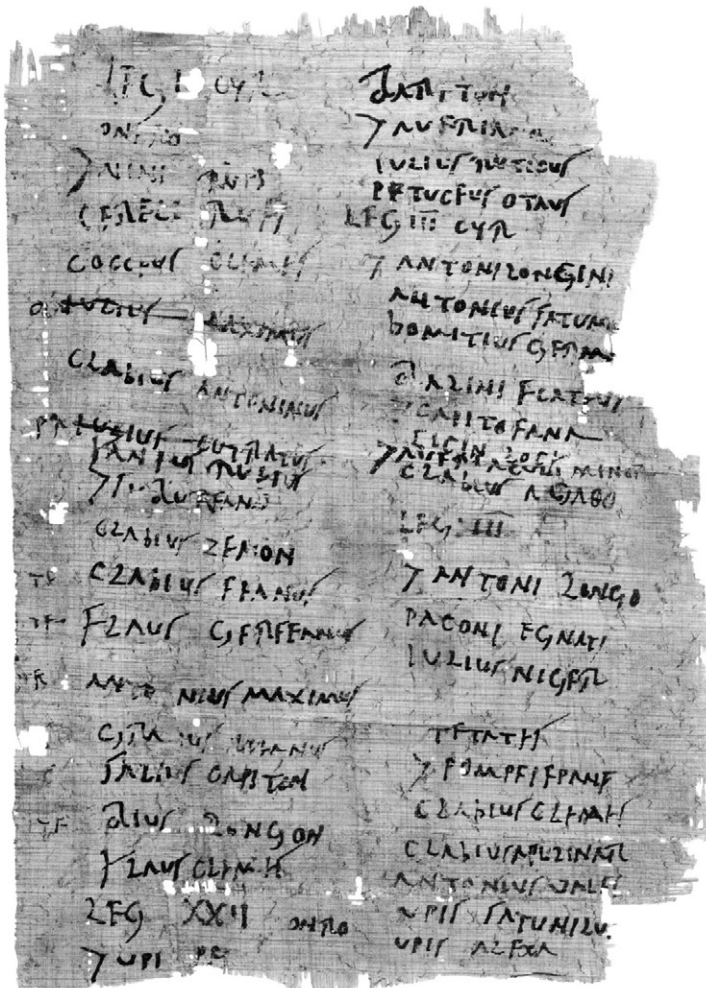


Fig. 1. P.Vindob. inv. L 2 recto, columns with blank spaces in their body.

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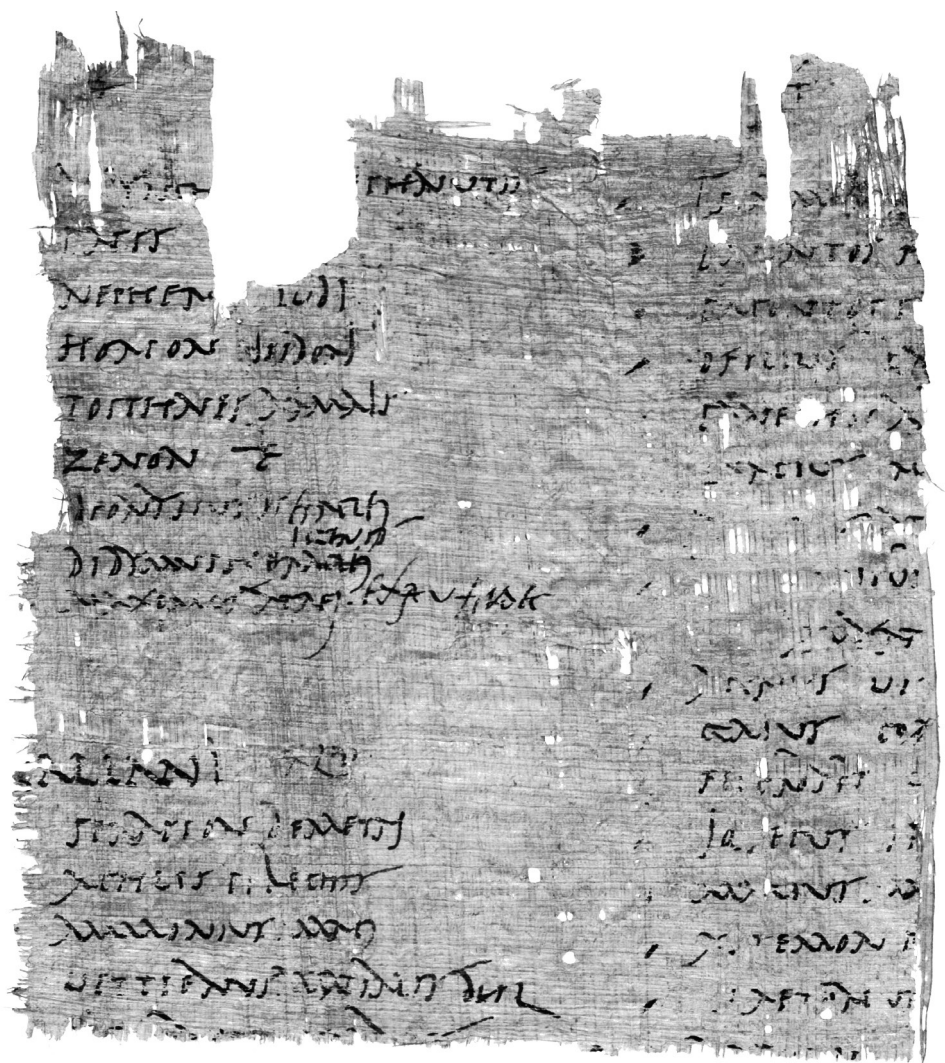


Fig. 2. P.Vindob. inv. L 99 *recto*, columns with blank spaces in their body.
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Among the different tools used in this document, it is worth noting that the opening of the section concerning the dead soldiers is emphasised by a broad interlinear space (*recto* col. II 17–18). To the same chronological period belongs P.Vindob. inv. L 99r (= *ChLA* XLIV 1315; 1st–2nd c.; TM 70102), which preserves a list perhaps of auxiliaries.¹⁹ In this case a broad blank space is visible in

¹⁹ At first, Fink 1957: 298 classified the document as a partial roster on account of the blank ticks next to some names, in a similar way to the more usual disks used in rosters. Later, in his corpus, Fink 1971: 168, placed the document

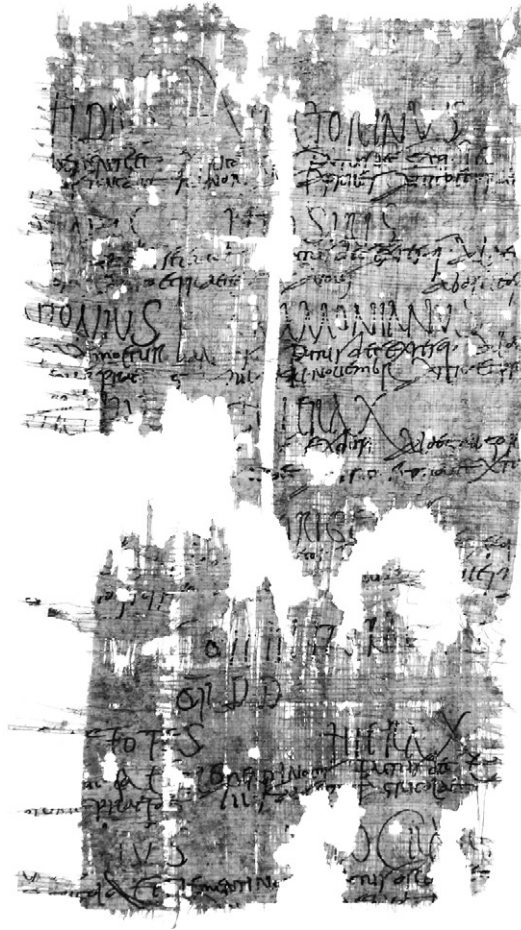


Fig. 3. *P.Mich.* III 164, columns with blank spaces in their body. © Papyrology Collection, University of Michigan Library.

col. I 10–11, where, in a similar way to *P.Vindob. inv. L 2*, it divides different groups of soldiers; the soldiers so marked were enrolled within different centuries (Fig. 2).

Among the evidence of the third century an example is provided by *P.Hamb. inv. Gr. 409* (= *ChLA* XI 497; 222–229; TM 69983), which lists soldiers of an unknown unit according to their years of enlistment. In this list the same convention can be noted: large blank spaces were left to distinguish men enrolled in different years (col. I 26–27; II 9–10, 11–12; III 5–6). *P.Mich.* III 164 (= *ChLA* V 281; 242–244; TM 69888) features a list of centurions and decurions of two auxiliary units. As was customary, the soldiers are recorded with the date of enlistment, but in this specific

among unspecified lists, describing it as a ‘check-list of some sort’. Daris 1964: 69, following the readings of Fink, agrees with this classification and argues that the checked soldiers were assigned to specific tasks.



Fig. 4. P.Vindob. inv. L 4 *recto*, columns with blank spaces in their body.
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case, for each name the mention of his appointment to his current rank is also given. The layout is perfectly consistent with this pattern: the column is divided in its body by small vacant spaces; each space separates a single block of information dealing with a single top-ranking official (Fig. 3).

The last piece of evidence, also third century, is P.Vindob. inv. L 4r (= *ChLA* XLIII 1244; 3rd c.; TM 70036). The document, which records soldiers of an unknown unit who were sent on detachment, follows a general pattern: after the date, a place-name and the number of related soldiers are written, followed by the identification of a turma; then the formula 'X in replacement (*loco*) of Y' occurs. Overall, broader blank spaces occur to separate different chronological sections (col. I 20–21; II 6–7; III 11–12); moreover, within the same section, smaller blank spaces were left to distinguish men who were performing the same task (col. II 10–11; III 6–7) (Fig. 4).

I.2 Positions of lines

Single elements of military lists, such as dating formulae, ranks, personal names, can be clearly distinguished by being on their own lines; in addition, such lines can be placed in *ekthesis* or *eisthesis* or in the middle of the column and thus made more visible.

This use can be observed in the aforementioned P.Vindob. inv. L 2 (= SB XII 15638 = *ChLA* XLIII 1242; 98–127; TM 70034). In addition to the vacant spaces noted, the lines containing important entries are marked by their position in *eisthesis*. That is the case with the names of the legions (see *recto* col. I 1: *leg(io) III Cyr(enaica)*²⁰) and lines which can be regarded as headings or sub-headings of the text, because they make mention of specific categories of soldiers, such as those killed in action (see *recto* col. II 18: *tetates*),²¹ and those grouped by not otherwise attested words, like *onero* and *bareton* (see *recto* col. I 2: *onero*; col. II 1: *bareton*) (Fig. 1).²²

As for the evidence from the second century, it is remarkable that lists on ostraca are organised and designed like those on papyrus, despite the short lifespan that ostraca normally had.²³ Among a few Latin lists on ostraca found in the stone quarry of Mons Claudianus, the most interesting example is provided by *O.Claud.* II 304 (*post* 150; TM 24002). It probably bears a roster written in several columns,²⁴ in which personal names alternate with dates. Therefore, columns appear rectangular-shaped and made up of a high number of lines. In order to make the document easier to read, the scribe regularly justified the lines with chronological data to the left.²⁵ In addition, numbers indicating the turns are written in isolated and centred lines within the columns.²⁶

There are two further examples coming from the same environment to consider more closely, namely *O.Claud.* II 305 (*post* 150; TM 24003) and *O.Claud.* II 306 (*post* 150; TM 24004). Both are very fragmentary rosters, which share a similar arrangement: since the dates correspond to different sections of the main part of the text, they are always written in *eisthesis*.²⁷

As for papyri, *P.Mich.* III 162 (= *ChLA* V 283; 193–197; TM 21330) is a list of soldiers perhaps belonging to a *turma*, recorded by years. Overall, the surviving column is well laid-out and easy to read because of the use of capital letters; in addition, years of enlistment, in the form of consular dates, are consistently placed in the middle of the column.²⁸

This same editorial device characterises the evidence of the third century and is frequently used to emphasize chronological data. That is proved, for example, by P.Vindob. inv. L 100r (= *ChLA* XLIV 1316; 217; TM 70103) and *P.Ant.* I 41r (= *ChLA* IV 261 = XLVIII 261; 212–230; TM 30482). Both documents concern an unknown unit and are classifiable as rosters, because of the presence of marginal annotations on the left. In these documents soldiers are listed according to

20 However, in col. II l. 5, the name is written in *ekthesis*.

21 On the so-called theta nigrum see Bellucci & Bortolussi 2014; Nocchi Macedo & Rochette 2015, with previous bibliography.

22 The fact that these words were written not as annotations, but as headings, is pointed out by Watson 1974: 506.

23 Overall, Bagnall 2011: 118, 131–137, points out the ephemeral value of documents written on ostraca, which usually consist of receipts, accounts and lists. More specifically, on the military documentation on ostraca from Bu Njem see Marichal 1979: 438–440, who emphasizes the ‘draft’ function of such texts.

24 See Cuvigny in *O.Claud.* II: 141–156.

25 See e.g. col. I 14, 25, 40, 53.

26 See in the very same column l. 8, 10, 12, 19, 21, 23, 25, 36, 38, 45, 47, 49, 51, 58.

27 *O.Claud.* II 305.5 and *O.Claud.* II 306.4; images available at papyri.info/ddbdp/o.claud;2;305 and papyri.info/ddbdp/o.claud;2;306.

28 See e.g. l. 1, 3, 6.

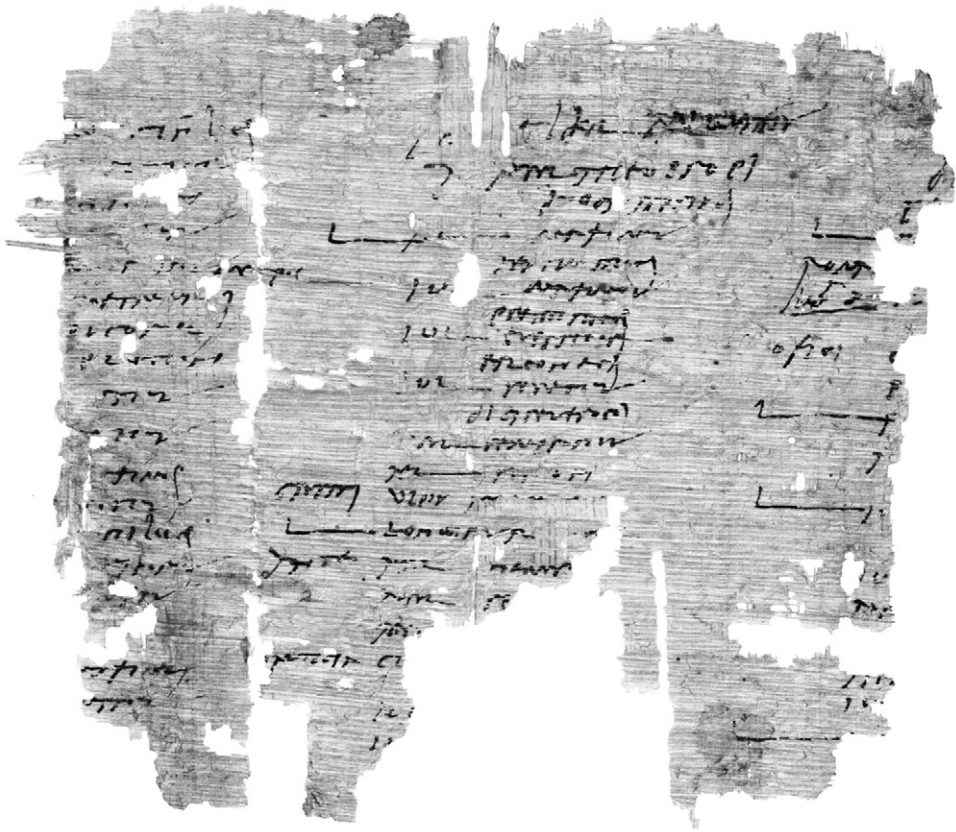


Fig. 5. P.Vindob. inv. L 100 *recto*, lines placed in the middle of the columns.

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their seniority: given their importance as identification elements, dates of enlistment are consistently written in their own line and are centred within columns (Fig. 5).²⁹

One can observe this feature also in the aforementioned P.Hamb. inv. Gr. 409 (= *ChLA* XI 497; 222–229; TM 69983): the consular formulae, which might be regarded as different sections of the text, are regularly projected to the left (col. II 1, 10, 12).³⁰ A further papyrus deserving a brief mention is P.Berol. inv. 25052 (= *ChLA* XI 482; 3rd c.; TM 69971), which records the present and available men of an anonymous unit. Personal names and tasks are listed together, as shown by the

²⁹ See, respectively, P.Vindob. inv. L 100r col. II 3, 5, 7, 9, 11; *P.Ant.* I 41r, 4, 8.

³⁰ Although P.Hamb. inv. Gr. 409 shows the use of capital and cursive letters, this feature cannot be regarded as a technical device, because the sections and lines in cursive script (see e.g. col. III 2) were written by a second hand, probably as additions; on this point see also the remarks of Marichal in *ChLA* XI 497.



Fig. 6. *P.Mich.* VII 454, lines written in *ekthesis*.
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only extant column. In order to make evident the section concerning the absent soldiers, the scribe wrote the formula *ex eis* (l. 4) in a line by itself and justified it to the middle of the column.

This kind of layout – with very tall and narrow columns, in which specific entries are pointed out by their positions – persists during the third century, as proved by the next two instances. *P.Mich.* VII 454 (= *ChLA* V 276 = XLVIII 276; 3rd c.; TM 69886) features a list of soldiers who had been recently transferred from various units to a new one and presents an interesting layout: the names are recorded individually, and for each man indications of his previous unit, introduced

by *item*, and of his new squadron (turma) are given; both entries are justified to the left margin.³¹ Furthermore, in order to distinguish these two entries clearly, the clerk began lines with the *item* formula further to the left (Fig. 6).

Lastly the aforementioned P.Vindob. inv. L 4r (= *ChLA* XLIII 1244; 3rd c.; TM 70036) shows the placement in *eisthesis* of those lines with the name of the turma to which the soldier belonged (col. I 5–7, 11, 13–14, 16, 18–19, 22–23; col. III 3, 5, 10); in addition, the entry *loco*, indicating the replacement of a soldier, is written in a separate and centred line (col. I 5, 13) (Fig. 4).

II.1 Enlarged letters

Another common way to distinguish relevant parts of a document consists in the enlargement of the first letter of the line. This device can be found also in the body of the document, for lines containing pivotal information or marking the start of a new paragraph or section. One of the earliest examples of this style is provided by the abovementioned P.Vindob. inv. L 99r (= *ChLA* XLIV 1315; 1st–2nd c.; TM 70102): in this case the line containing the name of the century is distinguished not only by an increase in the height of the letters, but also by the use of a calligraphic script, which resembles capital shapes (col. I 11) (Fig. 2).

Especially in the evidence of the third century one can observe that headings, formulae or important entries are enlarged and quite elaborated, suggesting a certain degree of homogeneity in the format of military lists. An interesting example of this feature is provided by the abovementioned *P.Mich.* III 164 (= *ChLA* V 281; 242–244; TM 69888): personal names are set out in separate lines and, more importantly, are written in very enlarged letters (Fig. 3). Similar use can be observed in P.Berol. inv. 14107 (= *ChLA* X 454; 3rd c.; TM 69952), dealing with an unknown unit. The single surviving column, which details the number and duties of soldiers, is made up of a large number of lines; consequently, the scribe wrote the formula *ex eis in custodias* (l. 40) in enlarged letters to make it more readable.

Finally, it is worth considering again the list of P.Vindob. inv. L 4r (= *ChLA* XLIII 1244; 3rd c.; TM 70036); in addition to the abovementioned conventions, the papyrus provides an interesting example also from the graphical point of view: the dates, written in isolated lines and functioning as a heading or sub-heading of specific sections, are marked by the height of letters; in these lines the script is also particularly elegant and shows an evident chiaroscuro (see col. I 1, 21; II 1, 7; III 12) (Fig. 4).

II.2 Capital letters

A change in the style of handwriting can be taken as a further device used by military clerks to mark important parts of their documents. In particular, capital script can function as a heading, whereas the main text is written in cursive. The graphical differences are not due to a change of hand; rather they can be assigned to the same scribe, who simply modified the style of script.

Two coeval examples attest this feature: P.Princ. inv. 7532r (= *ChLA* IX 403 = XLVIII 403; 235–242; TM 69910) and *P.Oslo* III 122 (= *ChLA* XLVI 1391; 238–242; TM 21553),³² which preserve a list of *principales* (Fig. 7). In both, the rectangular-shaped columns are internally divided by lines that, as headings or sub-headings, specify the rank of the soldiers; the capital letters are exclusively used for

31 For lines containing the *item* formula see col. II 3, 8, 13; for the name of the turma see, in the very same column, l. 4, 6, 11, 14.

32 On these papyri see also Stauner 2004: 56–59.

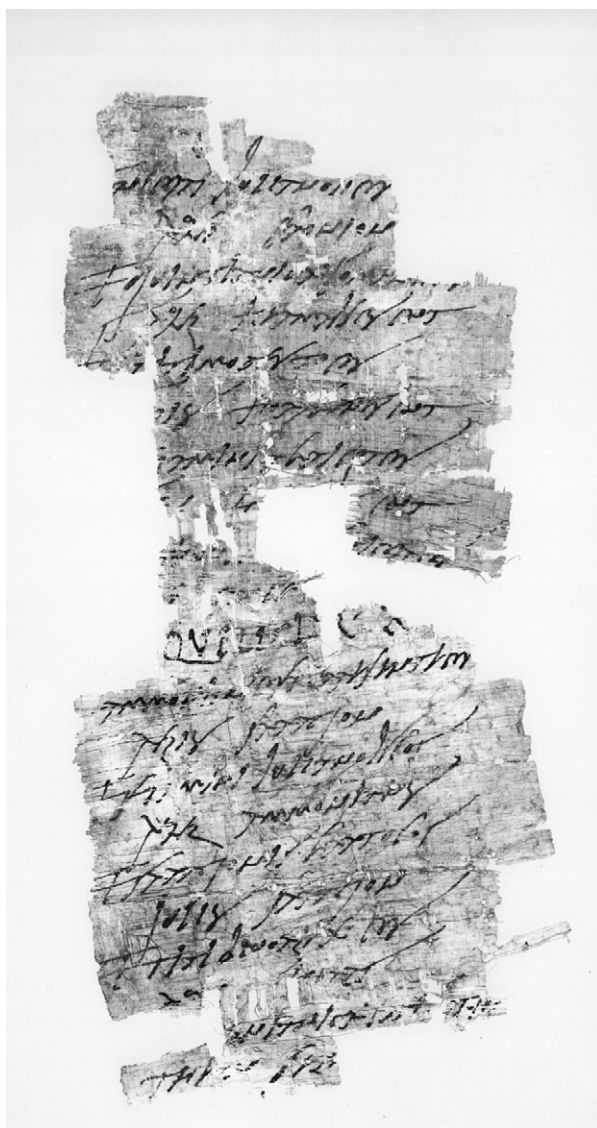


Fig. 7. P.Oslo III 122, heading in capitals.
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these lines (see P.Princ. inv. 7532r, 17: *cornicularii*; P.Oslo III 122, 11: *sesquiplicarii*). The other lines, which contain personal names, are in a bureaucratic old Roman cursive.

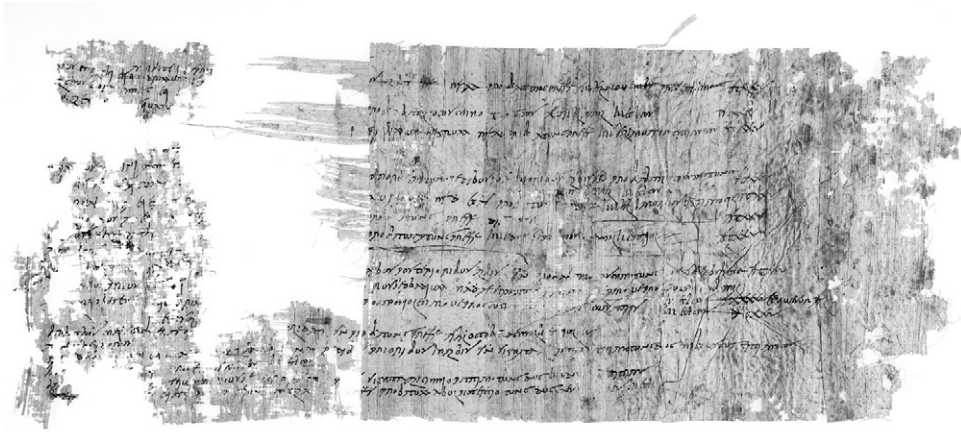


Fig. 8. *P.Dura* 97, columns with blank spaces in their body.
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III. Comparative evidence

In order to evaluate the issue of homogeneity and flexibility in the formats of military lists, let us look briefly at some examples coming from other geographical contexts. In fact, almost all of these other examples belong to the archive of the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* stationed at Dura Europos from the early to mid-third century.³³ As in the first part of this chapter, blank spaces and positions of lines are analyzed before enlarged and capital letters.

At the outset, it is worth saying that neither the layout nor the writing of lists shows significant differences; the scribes made use of the same formal conventions to compile and to make readable their document. Particularly for the layout, *P.Dura* 97 (= *ChLA* VII 352; *post* August 251; TM 44829) is a good example of the use of blank spaces: the only extant column consists of very long lines detailing cavalrymen and horses, and thus assumes the shape of a squared block. In its body one can note the regular use of large blank spaces to separate one section's end from another's beginning (Fig. 8).

A common characteristic of Dura papyri is the specific position of lines: this convention is frequently attested and is consistently used to point out chronological information. This, for instance, can be observed in *P.Dura* 98 (= *ChLA* VII 353; 218–219; TM 44830) and *P.Dura* 102 (= *ChLA* IX + XLVIII 357; 222–228; TM 44834), which contain lists in which the names are recorded in order of seniority within the same centuries. In both papyri the date headings are written in *eisthesis* (Fig. 9).³⁴

33 On the Dura papyri see the editions of Welles, Fink & Gilliam in *P.Dura* and Marichal in *ChLA* VI–IX. Furthermore, on the meaning and value of the term ‘archive’ for a deliberate collection of documentary texts or documents discovered in groups in the same archaeological context, see Vandorpe 2009.

34 Cf. *P.Dura* 98, e.g., fr. a col. I 2, 5, 10, 15, 23, 26, 28, 32; II 4, 9, 24, 26, 28; III 9, 12, 17, 20, 23, 25, 28. *P.Dura* 102, e.g., col. II 21, 28; III 14. *P.Dura* 105, e.g., fr. b col. I 3, 7, 10, 14, 16, 18, 22.



Fig. 9. *P.Dura* 98, with date headings written in *eisthesis*. © Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

An alternative in the arrangement of the line is shown by *P.Dura* 120 (= *ChLA* IX 375; 222; TM 44852), which preserves a list of names grouped by centuries. In this record, the dates are by year, as usual, followed also by the indication of day and month, which are written in separate lines; both of the lines, which can be taken as a unique element, are centred in the middle of columns (Fig. 10).³⁵

A similar design occurs also in the roster preserved by *P.Dura* 104 (= *ChLA* IX 359; 238–247; TM 44836); in this case, as was customary, consular formulas act as a sort of sub-heading and are placed in the middle of the column.³⁶ Lastly, *P.Dura* 105 (= *ChLA* IX 360 = XLVIII 360; 250–256; TM 44837) and *P.Dura* 115 (= *ChLA* IX 370; 250–256; TM 44847), are both lists in which the names are recorded in order of seniority within the same centuries. Given this same pattern,

³⁵ See e.g. col. I 8–9.

³⁶ *P.Dura* 104, e.g., fr. a 6, 8.

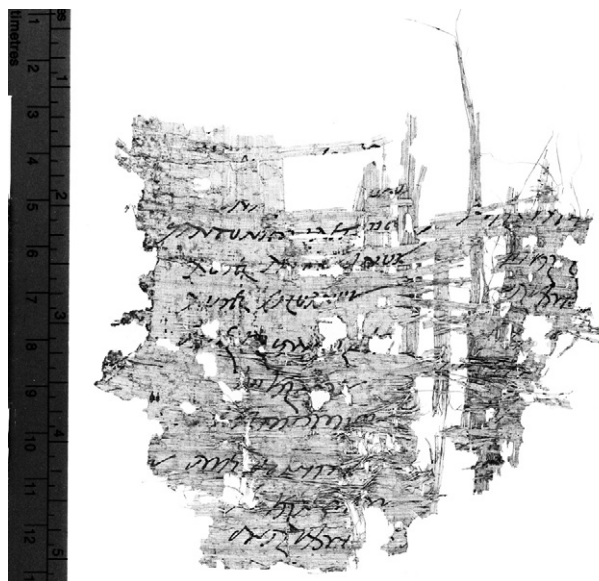


Fig. 10. *P.Dura* 120, lines placed in the middle of the columns.
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Fig. 11. *P.Dura* 93, heading in capitals.
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the two documents also share the same arrangement, in which the consular formulae are regularly written in *eisthesis*.³⁷

As for script, *P.Dura* 93 (= *ChLA* VII 348; 216–232; TM 44824), a list of *principales*, is the only record attesting the contemporary use of capital and cursive letters in the same document: the names in cursive are divided by headings in capitals, which designate various ranks (Fig. 11). For this feature, it is conspicuous that the papyrus closely resembles the abovementioned Egyptian parallels preserved by *P.Princ.* inv. 7532r and *P.Oslo* III 122 (Fig. 7).

The few lists belonging to the archive from Bu Njem, where a detachment of *legio III Augusta* was stationed along with a *numerus collatus* from 201 to 238,³⁸ are preserved by *O.BuNjem* 63 (253–259; TM 73213), *O.BuNjem* 64 (253–259; TM 73214), *O.BuNjem* 65 (253–259; TM 73215), and *O.BuNjem* 118 (253–259; TM 73268).³⁹ In all these documents the single column is well laid-out, albeit without particular features of interest.

Among the Vindolanda tablets only two lists survive. *T.Vindol.* II 161 (85–92; TM 114424) is unfortunately too fragmentary and uninformative about the layout and the script; by contrast, *T.Vindol.* III 580 (107; TM 130213) can be taken into account. In this document an important

³⁷ Cf. *P.Dura* 98, e.g., fr. a col. I 2, 5, 10, 15, 23, 26, 28, 32; II 4, 9, 24, 26, 28; III 9, 12, 17, 20, 23, 25, 28. *P.Dura* 102, e.g., col. II 21, 28; III 14. *P.Dura* 105, e.g., fr. b col. I 3, 7, 10, 14, 16, 18, 22.

³⁸ After this date only the *numerus collatus* remained in the fort until AD 259, later reinforced by a reduced *vexillatio* of the *cohors VIII Fida equitata*; cf. Marichal 1979: 437.

³⁹ Reproductions of the ostraca are given in *O.BuNjem*.

entry at line 7, the nature of which remains unclear,⁴⁰ is emphasised by its indentation; moreover, line 1 contains a consular formula and is marked by an increase in the height of the letters.

IV. Conclusions

The Egyptian evidence clearly shows that, in listing personnel, military clerks followed a basic and regular pattern, in which the soldiers were recorded by centuries or *turmae* and, within their respective companies, by year of enlistment.⁴¹ Moreover, in order to mark important and identifying elements of their lists, the clerks made use of standard conventions, both in layout and script. In this way, it was easier to read a document, to update it, and to extract vital information from it also for the writing of other kinds of records.

As far as the arrangement is concerned, blank spaces were very common in military lists: whereas in the oldest papyri the presence of blank lines occurs in each line to separate elements concerning the same soldier, in the second and third century material it consistently occurs in the body of the lists to mark boundaries between different sections of the text, concerning different groups of soldiers (see table I). In that period, the starting position of lines in the middle of columns seems to occur more frequently than its projection to the left or indentation. Furthermore, it was regularly used for identifying elements of the personnel, such as names of a century or *turma* and years of enlistment by consular formula. Lines in *ekthesis* were used for the same elements, while lines in *eisthesis* mostly mark opening formulas, such as the date.

As for the script, identifying elements (ranks) are emphasised by capital letters, even if this convention appears to be limited to a narrow chronological period (3rd c.); in addition, an increase in the size of the letters is also used to mark specific elements of lists, like opening formulas, identifying features of soldiers, and dates (see table I). In this respect, the evidence reveals that the same kind of information was emphasized by military clerks, both through the layout and the script.

It is also worth noting that a good number of Egyptian papyri show a high level of accuracy through the combination of two or more of these tools. Moreover, the use of two conventions in the same part of one list is not infrequent: a particular offsetting of the line is attested together with blank space; blank space occurs together with an increase in the height of the letters; sometimes blank space, an increase in the size of the letters, and script resembling capital letters are combined among them (see table II).

Although none of the conventions here analysed can be regarded as exclusive to military lists alone, it is conspicuous that they aided in their comprehension. Military lists contained a large quantity of data that was also highly repetitive: personal names of single soldiers, names of squadrons, consulships, formulas related to duties, place-names. For this reason, the scribes needed to make their records easy to read, pointing out headings, sub-headings and bits of information through a good system of conventions. These same parts had to be emphasized also for possible additions and upgrades over time. Overall, we cannot know exactly to which step of the internal communication process the surviving evidence belonged; however, the use of such devices appears to be a constant element of military lists, both in draft records (e.g., P.Vindob. inv. L 2; above Fig. 1) and in more formal documents (e.g., P.Hamb. inv. Gr. 409).

⁴⁰ Cf. *T.Vindol.* III 580.7n.

⁴¹ On the identification markers of soldiers see Fink 1971: 4–5; Phang 2010: 289.

Particularly the case of P.Vindob. inv. L 2 can be illustrative from several points of view: firstly, it proves that from the very beginning, a list was compiled and arranged in such ways as to ease reading; secondly, it reveals that the sections of the document that were made evident were also those that needed updating, because they detailed changes of personnel, due to, for instance, promotions, death, and transfers; thirdly, it suggests that these very parts of the document could be also extracted and re-used to create new lists of men (for an example of a shorter and specific list of transferred soldiers, see *P.Mich.* VII 454).

A final consideration concerns the chronological and geographical distribution of layout and script. It is truly remarkable that the use of conventions occurs already in the oldest surviving materials on papyrus; moreover, the Egyptian evidence testify to the fact that such conventions remain constant from the end of the first century AD until the end of the third; new features are not developed in this timeframe. It therefore appears that the writing of records followed criteria that were precise and established from the early decades of the new imperial army; consequently, different and specific lists could assume a general homogeneous appearance. In this light, any attempt to explore the question of the uniformity of military documentation must deal with its materiality and format, not only with its content. Furthermore, the surviving evidence, although it represents just a tiny part of the whole documentation produced by the Roman army in Egypt, comes from several sites and is related to different units, both legionary and auxiliary ones. Thus, the impression conveyed by Egyptian lists is that, like time, neither space nor the type of unit influenced the general appearance of lists. Egyptian evidence proves that even lists on ostraca could be drawn up in a very similar style as those on papyrus. The general conclusion is, therefore, that there was a broad documentary pragmatism within the bureaucracy of the Roman army.⁴² Military clerks had to ensure that their documents were easily understood by using technical conventions; but, with a good degree of flexibility, they could change and adapt layout and script, by tailoring the tool more to specific purposes of documentation and even by combining different tools. Such an assumption is strengthened by comparative evidence and, particularly, by the Dura papyri: among lists of the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* the use of a specific layout or hierarchy of scripts occurs with the same regularity and for the same parts of the documents.

⁴² The signs of a bureaucratic mentality within the Roman army are particularly noticed by Stauner 2004: 205–206 and Phang 2010: 301.

Table I

Convention	Papyrus	Part of the text
Lines in <i>ekthesis</i>	<i>O.Claud.</i> II 304 (TM 24002) P.Hamb. inv. Gr. 409 (TM 69983) <i>P.Mich.</i> VII 454 (TM 69886)	Dates Dates of enlistment Names of unit and turma
Lines in <i>eisthesis</i>	<i>O.Claud.</i> II 305 (TM 24003) <i>O.Claud.</i> II 306 (TM 24004) P.Vindob. inv. L 4r (TM 70036)	Dates Names of turma
Lines in the middle of column	<i>P.Mich.</i> III 162 (TM 21330) P.Vindob. inv. L 100r (TM 70103) <i>P.Ant.</i> I 41r (TM 30482) P.Berol. inv. 25052 (TM 69971) P.Vindob. inv. L 4r (TM 70036)	Dates of enlistment Formula
Blank spaces	P.Qasrlbrim inv. JdE 95210 (TM 851433) <i>BGU</i> IV 1083 (TM 9457) P.Berol. inv. 21688 + 14109r (TM 69960) P.Vindob. inv. L 2 (TM 70034) P.Vindob. inv. L 99r (TM 70102) P.Hamb. inv. Gr. 409 (TM 69983) P.Vindob. inv. L 4r (TM 70036)	Personal data Categories of soldiers Dates
Capital letters	P.Princ. inv. 7532r (TM 69910) <i>P.Oslo</i> III 122 (TM 21553)	Ranks
Increase in the size of the letters	P.Vindob. inv. L 99r (TM 70102) <i>P.Mich.</i> III 164 (TM 69888) P.Berol. inv. 14107 (TM 69952) P.Vindob. inv. L 4r (TM 70036)	Categories of soldiers Names of soldiers Formula Dates and categories of soldiers

Table II

Papyrus	Lines in <i>ekthesis</i>	Lines in <i>eisthesis</i>	Lines in middle of column	Blank spaces	Capital letters	Increase in letter size
P.Vindob. inv. L 2		×		×		
P.Vindob. inv. L 99r				×		×
<i>O.Claud.</i> II 304	×		×			
P.Hamb. inv. Gr. 409	×			×		
P.Vindob. inv. L 4r		×	×	×		×

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WRITING ON WOOD IN ROMAN BRITAIN

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More than 2,800 ‘monumental’ inscriptions have been published in *Roman Inscriptions of Britain* I and III, but only one is cut in wood, and that is just a splinter from an inscribed oak plank found in demolition debris when excavating Milecastle 50 (Turf Wall) of Hadrian’s Wall. The surviving tips of a few letters reveal the names of the persons responsible, the Emperor Hadrian and his legate, Platorius Nepos. Like the wooden panel depicted on Trajan’s Column, it would have surmounted the milecastle gate.¹ Much less revealing, although complete, is an oak panel found in the Flavian fort at Carlisle. Dating from the 80s, some forty years earlier, it is a rectangle with two neat projections which retain the nails which once attached it to a wooden structure; but it was never incised, and there is now no trace of what must have been a painted text.²

Part of a waxed tablet was also found in that milecastle³, a form of writing on wood in Roman Britain which is far more informative. The wax has gone and the surviving scratches are illegible, but it can be recognized as the second tablet of a ‘triptych’, the set of three used for legal documents written in duplicate. The inner text was sealed to prevent fraudulent alteration.⁴ Wood was one of the media in which books (*libri*) might be written in roll or codex-form, according to the jurist Ulpian: his list includes papyrus, parchment, limewood and waxed tablets.⁵ Papyrus and waxed tablets share a famous wall-painting with Terentius Neo and his wife at Pompeii: he is holding a papyrus scroll, she holds two waxed wooden tablets hinged together and presses a stylus to her lips. Her *tabulae ceratae* are thin sheets of wood neatly recessed on one face and filled with beeswax coloured black with soot so as to contrast with the writing, which her *stilus* made by scratching through the wax to the pale wood underneath. This stylus is a sharp-pointed steel needle which terminates at the other end in a wedge, which was used for erasure. Parchment might be easier on the eye, as Quintilian remarks, but the great advantage of using a waxed tablet was that one could rub out a mistake and write over it; whereas writing with pen and ink, one is forever stopping to dip the pen.⁶

Terentius Neo poses the question: was there ever papyrus in Roman Britain? It has not yet been found, except for a few scraps mineralized by metal salts in the Corbridge hoard of armour.⁷ But this lack of papyrus is probably an accident of survival, since Britain and western Europe do not provide the very dry, Egyptian conditions which best preserve it. The tattered sheet found on

1 Collingwood 1935, now *RIB* I, 1935. Lepper & Frere 1988: 100 with Pl. XXXVII (Scene li).

2 Caruana 1987.

3 Simpson, Richmond & St Joseph 1935, esp. Fig. 10 (photograph).

4 The second tablet in this format (Tomlin 2016: 23–25) was signed by witnesses, who included soldiers in the Bloomberg tablets, but none will be cited here.

5 *Digest* 32.52.1, *sive in charta sive in membrana ... si in philyra aut in tilia ... vel in ceratis codicillis*.

6 Quintilian, *Inst.* 10.3.31. See below, *T. Bloomberg* 44, 45 and 29, for instances of erasure and correction.

7 Allason-Jones & Bishop 1988: 86 and 106, No. 298 with Fig. 103. Fragments of at least three stylus tablets were also found.

the coast of Brittany, at the Mané-Véchen villa in Plouhinec, is quite exceptional, but shows what might survive: it is apparently a business letter which was used to wrap up coins.⁸ Nonetheless, papyrus in Britain would have been imported all the way from Egypt, so it was probably uncommon. This conclusion is supported by copious evidence of a substitute made locally, card-thin shavings of wood trimmed into rectangles and sized, perhaps with animal glue, to take pen and ink.⁹ These stiff paper-like tablets, often folded double into ‘diptychs’, were first found at the fort of Vindolanda, ten miles to the east of Milecastle 50. In March 1973, Robin Birley found two rectangular slivers of wood, stuck together. ‘When casually prized apart, in the excavation trench, ink writing was immediately evident, although at the time it could not be read and within fifteen minutes it had become invisible to the naked eye.’¹⁰ The text was recovered by Alison Rutherford with innovative infra-red photography, and proved to be part of a letter sent to a soldier at Vindolanda: ‘... I have sent you ... pairs of socks from Sattua two pairs of sandals and two pairs of underpants, two pairs of sandals ...’¹¹

This inconsequential message presages the profusion of detail provided by subsequent tablets. Serious historians can always study major texts such as the strength report of the First Cohort of Tungrians commanded by Iulius Verecundus and the birthday invitation received by Sulpicia Lepidina, wife of the prefect Iulius Cerialis.¹² More than eight hundred fragments have now been found, and they are published by Alan Bowman and David Thomas in volumes which are a model to the rest of us.¹³ They give a uniquely detailed picture of a Roman frontier garrison in the late first century. In summer 2017, the present Director of Excavations, Robin Birley’s son Andrew, found yet another thirty tablets in a single trench, four of which have now been published, all relating to the prefect Iulius Verecundus. In one he writes to his slave about a wagonload of vegetables and a missing key; the others are letters he receives from two Tungrian soldiers asking a favour for a colleague, a cavalry troop-commander (*decurio*) asking for the return of his cleaving-knife, and a pompous colleague who is probably the prefect of a cavalry regiment (*ala*), complaining of a centurion.¹⁴

These ink tablets have made Vindolanda famous, but they are not unique to the site. About fifty were found at the contemporary (Flavian) fort of Carlisle, including this fragment of an ‘address’ (Fig. 1):

8 Provost 2000: 9–10. Photographs of the papyrus were sent to the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents, Oxford, where they were examined by Alan Bowman and me. A stylus tablet seems to have been re-used at Vindolanda for the same purpose (Tomlin 2020: 490, No. 23).

9 The use of glue is suggested by John Pearce (pers. comm.) to explain the association of *glutem tauri* [*nam*] (bull’s glue) with *atramenti* (blacking, ink) in a Vindolanda account (*T. Vindol.* III 591.b.4 and 6), although the editors offer a medical explanation. But the wood must have been sized in some way, since otherwise its fibres would have responded to the ink like blotting-paper.

10 Birley, Birley & Birley 1993: 11.

11 *T. Vindol.* I 38.i.2–5, [*mise*]ram tibi paria udon[um] [...] ab Sattua solearum [*paria*] duo et subligariorum [*paria*] duo solearum paria du[o ...] ...

12 *T. Vindol.* II 154 and 292 respectively.

13 *T. Vindol.* I and *T. Vindol.* II (celebrated by me in Tomlin 1996) and *T. Vindol.* III. Subsequent discoveries (*T. Vindol.* IV) have been published as Bowman, Thomas & Tomlin 2010 (= *T. Vindol.* IV.1), 2011 (= *T. Vindol.* IV.2) and 2019 (= *T. Vindol.* IV.3).

14 *T. Vindol.* IV.3 890–893.



Fig. 1. Carlisle ink writing tablet (*T.Luguval. 44*) addressed to a guardsman of Agricola. Photo by A. Rutherford, University of Newcastle.

[eq(uiti) al]ae Sebosianae sing(ulari)
Agricolae

‘To [...] trooper of the *ala Sebosiana*, *singularis* of Agricola.’

The addressee, whose name is lost, was a member of the cavalry regiment which then garrisoned Carlisle, but he had been seconded to the mounted guards (*equites singulares*) of Britain’s best-known governor, Iulius Agricola.¹⁵ The legion formerly commanded by Agricola, the Twentieth, is itself attested at Carlisle by a stylus tablet dated 7 November 83 which records the loan of 100 *denarii* by one legionary to another.¹⁶

An ink tablet has also been found at the Second Legion’s base at Caerleon in South Wales, very fragmentary, but detailing the movement of personnel.¹⁷ Such tablets were evidently used by the Roman army in Britain as a matter of course, but tiny scraps have been found in a civilian context, in the countryside not far from Oxford.¹⁸ Their use must have been widespread, and three have been found in London. Here is one from the Bloomberg site, which has been so rich in stylus tablets (Fig. 2).

It is part of a two-page ‘diptych’, like many from Vindolanda, but the ink has remained visible without need of infra-red photography. It is the upper portion of a postcard-sized wood shaving folded in half, which carried a letter in two columns written

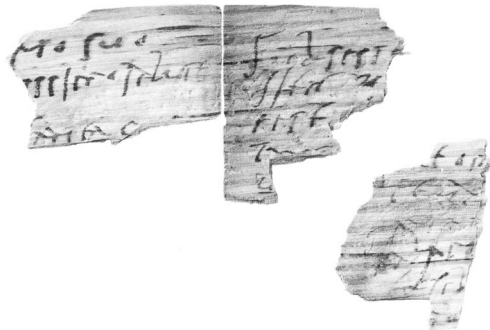


Fig. 2. London ink writing tablet (*T.Bloomberg 185*).
Photo © Museum of London Archaeology.

¹⁵ Tomlin 1998, 74–75.

¹⁶ Tomlin 1992, 146–150.

¹⁷ Hassall & Tomlin 1986: 450.

¹⁸ Claydon Pike (Grew 1980: 384), but fragments of wooden ‘leaf’ tablets, not ‘probably of parchment’. The ‘traces of script’ are single letters in cursive or ‘address script’, but no recognizable words, which is unfortunately why they were not published.

to 'dearest ...' someone, whose name may be *Ianuarius*.¹⁹

The term used by Ulpian of such ink 'leaf' tablets – *tilia* (limewood) – is also used by the Vindolanda Tablets of themselves, although the wood is usually alder. A correspondent of the prefect Cerialis, for example, says that he has sent him a *tiliam*.²⁰ Verecundus' correspondent already mentioned, the pompous cavalry prefect, refers to *ti[li]as* previously written by Verecundus.²¹ Their terminology is echoed by a governor of Hispania *Tarraconensis* who reads out his decision in a land-dispute 'from a limewood tablet'.²² There is even literary reference to the use of such tablets in Britain: the able but eccentric governor Ulpian Marcellus advertised his vigilance by writing orders 'on twelve writing-tablets, such as are made of limewood', and ensuring that one was delivered every hour of the night, even while he was actually asleep.²³

These ink 'leaf' tablets were not peculiar to Britain, even if excavation in Italy and other provinces has not yet confirmed the epigraphic and literary evidence. Herodian, for example, says that Commodus was assassinated because he wrote down a list of people to be executed on a writing-tablet, which fell into the hands of the first person on the list. This writing-tablet was 'one of the kind made out of limewood cut into thin sheets with two hinged pieces that close together'.²⁴ His account has been condemned as a doublette of Dio's account of Domitian's death, which was prompted by the death-list he himself had written on 'a two-leaved tablet of limewood'.²⁵ But even if this detail were fiction, it would still guarantee the existence of such tablets. Herodian and Dio, like Ulpian, take it for granted that people used 'limewood', with no implication that it was regarded as an inferior substitute for papyrus. None at all: even emperors used it, just as Antoninus Pius, when he was old and bent, wore a corset the stays of which were made from 'limewood tablets'.²⁶

The other wooden writing-medium which Britain shared with provinces elsewhere is the waxed stylus tablet, and this is best illustrated from the London Bloomberg site, but first may be noted an interesting hybrid, stylus tablets inscribed in *ink*. Stylus tablets have hardly been found in Romano-British villas, but this must be another accident of survival, since more than seventy villas have produced metal *stili*.²⁷ A rare exception is the fragmentary tablet found in a Roman well in Somerset, at the Chew Stoke villa. The remains of its recessed face, although intended for wax, carry six lines of cursive writing in ink. They cannot be fully deciphered, but formulas have been recognized which show that it was a deed of mancipation, certifying the sale of real property.²⁸ It may be compared with another stylus tablet inscribed in ink, which was found at Drapers' Gardens in London. This text, however, was written on the plain outer (unrecessed) face. It consists of the final clauses of a loan-note (*mutuum*) in which the borrower acknowledges receipt of the money

19 *T.Bloomberg* 185.

20 *T.Vindol.* II 259.3 with Appendix in III, *misi tibi frater tiliam ex qua ...*. Compare *T.Vindol.* III 589.a.ii.5, *tilia data*, and perhaps 643.a.ii.4 and 707.2.

21 *T.Vindol.* IV.3 893.3.

22 *CIL* ii 4125 (Tarragona, AD 193), *decretum ex tilia recitavit*.

23 Dio Cass. 72.8.4 (Loeb translation adapted by A.R. Birley).

24 Herodian i.17.1 (Loeb translation).

25 Dio Cass. 67.15.3 (Loeb translation adapted).

26 Augustan History, *Ant. Pius* 13, *tiliacis tabulis*. But the History does not say whether they had been used for writing.

27 Hanson & Conolly 2002, esp. 158–159.

28 *RIB* II.4, 2443.13.

and promises to repay it duly with interest. It concludes with the date, 3 December 158.²⁹ The scratches on the inner, recessed face are illegible, but they probably include remains of the primary text inscribed on wax which was sealed up after being duplicated by the outer, ink text. There is nothing peculiarly British about this combination of duplicate texts, one incised, the other ink-written: it is often found in the archive of the Sulpicii at Pompeii.³⁰ It is far less suprising than a recently published stylus tablet from Tunisia: its recessed face, like the Chew Stoke tablet, carries no wax; instead it is inscribed in ink, in fluent cursive writing, with a will dated 12 April 340. Yet the writing is Old Roman Cursive, which would normally be dated to the third century: a problem for palaeographers, since the tablet is undoubtedly genuine.³¹

The Drapers' Gardens text was not visible when the tablet was found and first examined; it was only seen when the tablet had been cleaned and conserved. But when stylus tablets were used for correspondence – and two waxed tablets hinged together, face to face, made a very strong 'envelope' when tied and sealed – the recipient's name and address were often incised on the plain outer (unrecessed) face. A striking example comes from the Bloomberg site (Fig. 3):



Fig. 3. London stylus tablet with address (T.Bloomberg 6).
Drawing by R.S.O. Tomlin.

Londinio Mogontio

'In London, to Mogontius ...'

It is one of the very first instances of the place-name 'London'. The gap, as usual, shows where the vertical binding-cord ran. Were these letters simply cut into the wood with a stylus, or was a metal pen used with ink? In these Bloomberg 'addresses', there is no trace of ink: it would seem that bare incisions were sufficient.

The Bloomberg tablets were found in 2012 during excavation on the site of an office-block called Bucklersbury House, which is where the London Mithraeum was uncovered in 1954. Londoners queued to see its remains before they were demolished to accommodate the basements of Bucklersbury House, an act of vandalism which has now been avenged by the demolition of Bucklersbury House itself. Its site has been redeveloped as the European headquarters of Bloomberg, which has generously reconstructed the Mithraeum and opened it once more to visitors. This is on the right bank of the Walbrook, a tributary of the Thames which disappeared centuries ago into underground culverts and sewers, but once divided the two hills of Roman and

²⁹ Tomlin 2011: 446, No. 9, ... *iii non(as) Decem(bres) Tertullo et Sacerd[ote] (consulibus)*.

³⁰ Camodeca 1999 (another model publication), Nos. 15, 22, 27, 34, 35, 36, 55, 67, 86, 89, 96, 99, 116, 118.

³¹ Rothenhöfer & Blänsdorf 2016. The present owner has kindly shown it to me.

medieval London, Cornhill (the site of the Roman forum) and Ludgate Hill (where St Paul's Cathedral now stands). The earliest Roman settlement was on Cornhill in the late 40s, and it was expanding westward across the Walbrook when it was destroyed by Queen Boudica in 60 or 61.

The Romans embanked the Walbrook valley to gain more space for building, and as buildings were demolished and rebuilt, the depth of stratification increased. Rubbish from the Cornhill settlement was also dumped there, resulting in deep, waterlogged deposits, which by cutting off oxygen have preserved rich organic material. This includes fragments of some four hundred stylus tablets, the largest such assemblage from a single site in Britain, and almost unparalleled outside Italy.³² It is only equalled by the six hundred fragments from the legionary rubbish-dump at Vindonissa (Windisch in north Switzerland) which Michael Speidel has published so well.³³

The Vindolanda tablets were celebrated as Britain's oldest manuscripts, but the Bloomberg tablets are even older: the strata in which they were found can be dated to the first years of Roman London, from the early 50s until the late 80s, dates also found in the headings of ten tablets.³⁴ One of these was found trodden into the earth floor of a timber-framed building which the excavators romantically called 'London's first office' because eighteen other tablets were found there. However, it should be said at once that the Bloomberg tablets are not an 'archive' like those of Caecilius Iucundus at Pompeii and the Sulpicii nearby at Murecine.³⁵ Like the Vindonissa tablets, the Bloomberg tablets are discarded rubbish, in effect waste paper. They are fragmentary, and they have lost their wax coating.³⁶ This tablet is unusual in being almost complete, but the wax has gone as usual, and so has much of the underlying surface (Fig. 4).

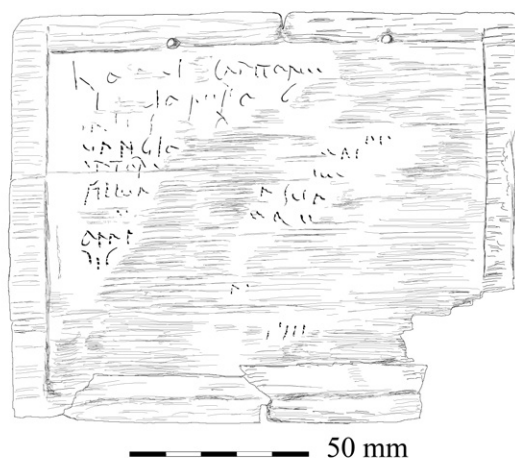


Fig. 4. London stylus tablet dated 67 (*T.Bloomberg* 48).
Drawing by R.S.O. Tomlin.

32 Tomlin 2016. Individual tablets are cited as *T.Bloomberg*.

33 Speidel 1996, transcribing the 65 which are legible. The Bloomberg total is 79.

34 Tomlin 2016: 305, s.v. 'Calendar'.

35 Andreau 1974 and 1999. Camodeca 1999.

36 *T. Bloomberg* 108 is almost unique in retaining some of its wax (Tomlin 2016: 17, Fig. 10), but there is no trace of lettering. A better-preserved example, since it was part of a pair, was found in London at No. 1 Poultry (Tomlin & Hassall 2003: 374, No. 23).

There are just enough scratches to identify the name of the first consul, Fonteius Capito, who shared the consulship of 67 with Iulius Rufus. Below this heading, the first identifiable word begins *uangoio...* which must surely refer to the First Cohort of Vangiones, one of eight auxiliary cohorts drafted into Britain from the Rhineland after the defeat of Boudica in 61.³⁷ The word *filium* ('son') and part of *omn[...]* can also be read, prompting the guess that this is the will of a soldier or veteran in the cohort, who was a Roman citizen and appointed his son heir to all his property (*omnium bonorum meorum*). This is not a document peculiar to Britain: it might have been written anywhere in the Empire. It is actually the second Roman will from Britain itself, the first being a block of about ten tablets wired together in a 'wooden book' found by peat-diggers in North Wales in the mid-nineteenth century. Only the first tablet now survives, and for many years it lay wrapped up in a cupboard in West Kensington; publicity given to the Vindolanda tablets prompted the owner to bring it to the British Museum for identification.³⁸

This Welsh tablet is very unusual in being stained black by the wax, which has vanished but preserves the writing as a lighter, brown 'ghost'. The Bloomberg tablets, like almost every other stylus tablet found in Britain, can only be read from scratches left in the wood underneath. This is only possible if the stylus has cut into the wood but the tablet has not been re-used; however, many texts are 'multiple' and the resulting palimpsest is unreadable, at least by present methods. The best way forward is likely to be by 'reflectance transformation imaging' (RTI), using software which combines many digital photographs into a virtual three-dimensional image. The Bloomberg tablets are now being scanned by RTI, but they were studied first by simpler means. After they had been washed but not yet conserved, and while they were still wet in the conservation lab, it was possible to choose about a hundred which looked as if they might be legible, including some with obvious 'addresses' scratched in the plain outer (unrecessed) face. These tablets were then all photographed by low, raking light from the four diagonals – in sets of four photographs, without moving the camera or the tablet – so as to make a full record of the incisions. A single photograph cannot do this, since an incised line, as its direction changes, only shows up well when the lighting is at right-angles. Then by combining *four* photographs in Adobe Photoshop – or rather, by using them as the basis of a line-drawing – it was possible to plot the incisions. This was drawing rather than tracing, since it was done while looking at the original under a binocular microscope, for example to decide whether an incision was deliberate or not; but this drawing was somewhat like a tracing, in trying to be as objective as possible and not to 'restore' anything that was now lost. It conveyed a sense of how the letters were made (their *ductus*), and thus helped to decipher them. They were incised by the scribe drawing the stylus towards himself, in short, separate strokes, sinuous or diagonal (Fig. 5).

37 Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.38. He does not name the cohorts, but the Vangiones were previously first attested in Britain by the diploma of 103 (*RIB* II.1, 2401.1). For another of the cohorts, see *T. Bloomberg* 33 below.

38 Tomlin 2001.

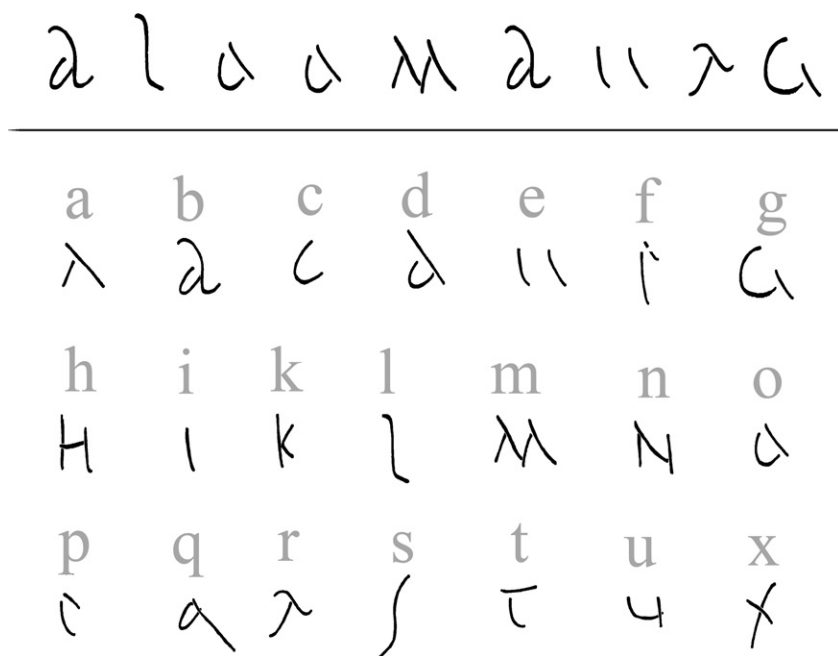


Fig. 5. Letter-forms in the Bloomberg stylus tablets. Drawing by R.S.O. Tomlin.

These letter-forms are not peculiar to Britain, of course. Being so early in date, they were surely inscribed, not by native Britons, but by London's first generation of immigrants, businessmen, soldiers, officials, their freedmen and slaves. Correspondence like the *Londinio* tablet already quoted is more likely indeed to have been written in Gaul than in Britain. The script is familiar because it is shared by contemporary tablets from Pompeii and Vindonissa. Stylus tablets have also been found in the Walbrook since the 1920s, and in Britain there are two other important collections for comparison, even if they have not yet been fully published, which derive from the same sites as the ink tablets, Vindolanda and Carlisle.³⁹

The most exciting moment in those preliminary visits to the conservation lab was to see half a tablet lying wet in the tray, the first word of which was *Nerone*, the ablative of 'Nero' (Fig. 6). Obviously a date in one of the Emperor's four consulships, 55, 57, 58 or 60, so it must have been written before the Boudican destruction.

³⁹ *RIB* II.4, 2443 (wooden stylus tablets). In 2443.15 (London), *petitionis* (claim) was read, but *T.Bloomberg* 50 now shows that *pensionis* (payment) is a better reading.

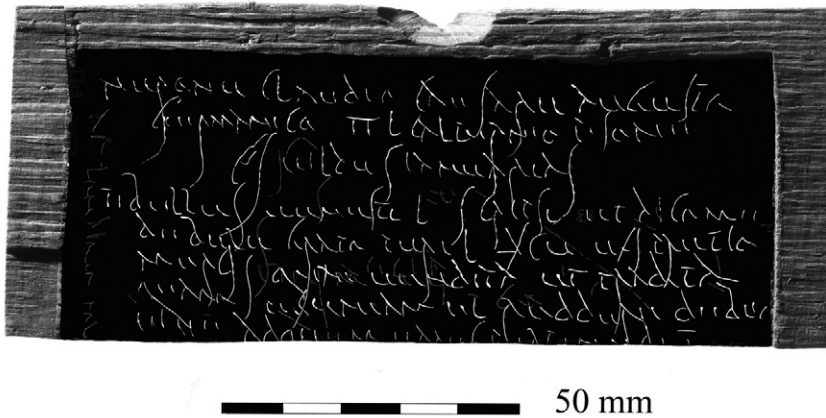


Fig. 6. London stylus tablet dated 8 January 57 (*T. Bloomberg* 44, as it may have looked before the wax was lost). Photo © Museum of London Archaeology.

Nerone Claudio Cesare Augusto
 Germanico II L(ucio) Calpurnio Pisone
 co(n)s(ulibus) VI Idus Ianuarias
 Tibullus Venusti l(ibertus) scripsi et dico me
 5 debere Grato <S>puri l(iberto) (denarios) CV ex{s} pretio
 mercis quae uendita et tradita <est>
 quam pecuniam ei reddere debeo
 eiue ad quem ea res pertinebit

.

‘In the consulship of Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus for the second time and of Lucius Calpurnius Piso, on the 6th day before the Ides of January (8 January 57). I, Tibullus the freedman of Venustus, have written and say that I owe Gratus the freedman of Spurius 105 *denarii* from the price of the merchandise which has been sold and delivered. This money I am due to repay him or the person whom the matter will concern ...’

There are traces of earlier text under line 6, probably *quam uendidit et tradidit* (‘which he has sold and delivered’), an instance of text being erased and corrected.⁴⁰ The scribe’s first draft was in the active, which he changed to the passive, ‘... which has been sold and delivered’, omitting the auxiliary verb *est*. Silver *denarii* were the standard coin of account: a legionary earned 225 a year. Bloomberg, whose business is providing financial information, appropriately now owns the City’s

⁴⁰ Retained in Fig. 6, but it would actually have become invisible.

first financial document, which nicely illustrates what Tacitus says of London just before it was destroyed by Boudica: it was ‘very full of businessmen and commerce’.⁴¹

Other tablets reinforce this picture of a thriving business community. Historically the most important is one which was written less than six years later (Fig. 7).

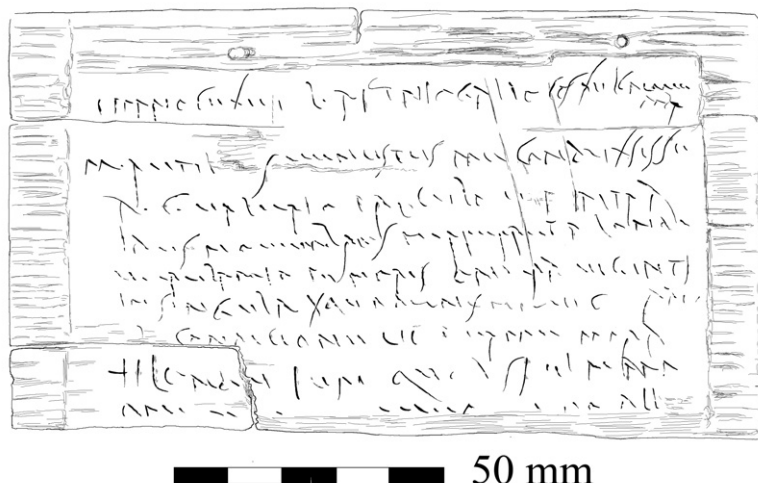


Fig. 7. London stylus tablet dated 21 October 62 (*T.Bloomberg* 45).
Drawing by R.S.O. Tomlin.

P(ublio) Mario Ce<lso> L(ucio) Afinio Gallo co(n)s(ulibus) XII Kal(endas) Nouembr(es)
M(arcus) Renn[iu]s Venustus me condux{s}isse
a C(aio) Valerio Proculo ut intra
Idus Nouembres perferret a [[Londi]]
5 Verulamio penoris onera uiginti
in singula (denarii) quadrans uecturae
ea condicione ut per me mora
(assem) I Londinium quod si ulnam
om[n]e[m] ...
.....

‘In the consulship of Publius Marius Celsus and Lucius Afinius Gallus, on the 12th day before the Kalends of November (21 October 62). I, Marcus Rennius Venustus, (have written and say that) I have contracted with Gaius Valerius Proculus that he bring from Verulamium by the Ides of November (13 November) twenty loads of provisions at a transport-charge of one-quarter *denarius* for each, on condition that ... one *as* ... to London; but if ... the whole ...’

It breaks off here, the ‘condition’ probably being that one-quarter was withheld until the job was completed. At the end of line 4, after the preposition *a* (‘from’), Venustus (or his scribe) wrote

⁴¹ Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.33, *copia negotiatorum et com meatuum maxime celebre*.

Londi, the beginning of ‘London’. He then realised his mistake (he meant to write ‘from Verulamium’), but there was not enough room to write ‘Verulamium’ at the end of 4, so he postponed it until line 5. He must have erased *Londi* in the wax, of course, but there would have been no trace of erasure in the wood, which is all that survives. The place and date are important: London and Verulamium (St Albans) were destroyed by Boudica in 60 or 61 when, according to Tacitus, 70,000 lives were lost.⁴² Venustus was writing only a year or two later, so he provides unexpected evidence of rapid recovery.

Historically these are the two most important texts, but others provide more glimpses of that business community. Sometimes they are only an address like the *Londinio* tablet already quoted, for example this letter to a tradesman (Fig. 8).

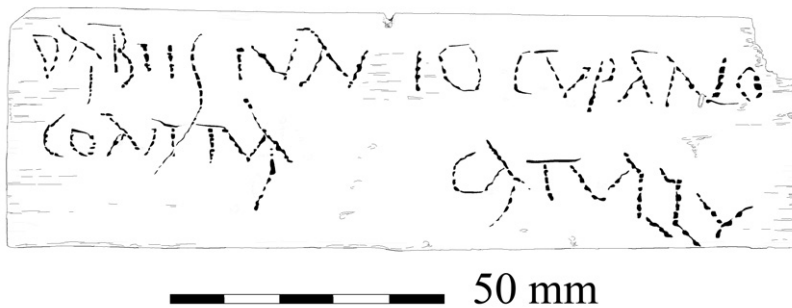


Fig. 8. London stylus tablet addressed to a cooper (*T. Bloomberg* 14).
Drawing by R.S.O. Tomlin.

dabes Iunio cupario
contra Catullu(m)

.

‘You will give (this) to Junius the cooper, opposite (the house of) Catullus.’

Catullus, whose house is used to locate Junius’ workshop, is London’s first named ‘householder’. Barrel-making is also implied by an account⁴³ which prices large quantities of beer (*ceruesa*), and by another tablet⁴⁴ addressed ‘to Tertius the *bracearius*’. *bracearius* is a rare term, found also in the Vindolanda Tablets, which derives from *bracis*, a kind of grain, and means either ‘maltster’ or ‘brewer’.⁴⁵ ‘Tertius’ is quite a common name, which happens also to be scored on a barrel-stave found at another site in London.⁴⁶ But coupled with *bracearius*, it is found at Carlisle, where a stylus tablet is addressed ‘to Domitius Tertius *bracearius*, at Carlisle’.⁴⁷ This must surely be the same man, who has now extended his business empire from London to the northern frontier: the

⁴² Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.33. The whole episode is assigned to the year 61, but commentators have argued that it began in 60, a ‘longer’ chronology which *T. Bloomberg* 45 now supports.

⁴³ *T. Bloomberg* 72, identified as *ratio Crispi*.

⁴⁴ *T. Bloomberg* 12, *Tertio bracea|rio*.

⁴⁵ *T. Vindol.* III 646.back 2 (with note).

⁴⁶ Tomlin & Hassall 2006:478, No. 33 (20–30 Gresham Street), TIIR TIO.

⁴⁷ *RIB* II.4, 2443.4, *Domitio Tertio braceario Luguvalio*.

Romans reached Carlisle in the early 70s. Trade was following the flag. It is easy to be reminded of the Vindolanda ink letter – another written by that cavalry troop-commander to Iulius Verecundus – which ends with the plea: ‘My fellow-soldiers have no beer. Please order some to be sent.’⁴⁸

Nothing can be read on the inner face of these addresses, but other scraps of business correspondence have been intercepted which imagination can translate into modern terms: problems of transport, cash flow, unwise investment. Taurus, for example, writes to Macrinus that someone has ‘come and taken the beasts of burden away, investments which I cannot replace in three months ...’ Apparently he was at Diadumenus’ house (another London ‘householder’) the very day the man arrived unexpectedly.⁴⁹ Incidentally he calls himself ‘Taurus’, but ‘Taurinus’ is also written there: one name is written over the other, indicating that one had been erased and corrected. The termination they share suggests that ‘Taurinus’ was a false anticipation of ‘Macrinus’, as if the writer were unfamiliar with his own name, but the explanation is surely that he was dictating to a secretary; another tablet is a receipt written by the slave Florentinus ‘by order of my master’.⁵⁰

The fragment of another letter begins abruptly: ‘... I ask you by bread and salt that you send as soon as possible the twenty-six *denarii* in *victoriati* and the ten *denarii* of Paterio ...’⁵¹ The writer uses the unique phrase *per panem et salem*, perhaps appealing to ties of hospitality; but he refers to specific sums of money, as if writing to a business partner or his bank manager, and poses a question for numismatists to answer. *victoriatus* was an informal term for the *quinarius*, the half-*denarius* coin originally minted as equivalent to the Greek drachma, but when this tablet was written (in the 60s, judging by the archaeological context), *quinarii* had not been minted for fifty years; and hoards suggest they were rare. About this time, however, Nero had reduced the silver content of the *denarius*: was someone now hoarding antique silver coins for their silver content, or was *victoriatus* a term also used of Celtic coins?

Another imminent financial disaster is implied by a letter which was posted even earlier, since it was found in a pre-Boudican context, before 60/61. This fragment starts in mid-sentence: ‘... because they are boasting through the whole market that you have lent them money.’⁵² Is the phrase *per forum totum* a metaphor for ‘the Market’, in modern terms, or is the writer referring expressly to London’s new forum on Cornhill? The letter is unfortunately too fragmentary to reveal who ‘they’ were, but (again to use a modern term) their credit-rating was clearly not good.

These are intriguing scraps of business correspondence, but other fragments hint more soberly that London was the seat of civil administration and a military transit-point. Although Camulodunum (Colchester) was formally the capital, after the Boudican revolt it was being displaced by London because of its superior strategic location. The prime evidence is the tombstone of the newly-appointed procurator Iulius Classicianus, who was buried there when he died in office.⁵³ The Bloomberg tablets can now be added, as two examples will show. The first is

48 *T.Vindol.* III 628.ii.4–6, *ceruesam commilitones non habunt quam rogō iubeas mitti.*

49 *T.Bloomberg* 29, ... *cum uenerat Catarrius et ... iumenta aduxerat, conpe<n>dia quae messibus tribus reficere non possum* [ʔadʃ]ueram [ʔhe]re a[d D]iadumenum set ille superuenit unum diem ...

50 *T.Bloomberg* 50, *Florentinus Sex(ti) Cassi [...]*ti seru[u]s scrips[i] iussu domini mei.

51 *T.Bloomberg* 31, ... *rogo* [te] *per panem et salem ut quam primum mittas* (denarios) uiginti sex in *victoriat(is)* et (denarios) decem *Paterionis* ...

52 *T.Bloomberg* 30, *quia per forum totum glorianur se te faeneras<s>e.*

53 *RIB* I, 12; compare Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.38.

a document formally dated 22 October 76, which begins: ‘Responsibility (for the case) between Litugenus and Magunus on 9 November having been given by the Emperor, my preliminary judgement is ...’.⁵⁴ Unfortunately it breaks off at this point, but it is clearly the preamble of a *praeiudicium*. The writer is the civil judge appointed to hear a lawsuit, who is making a judgement on a preliminary point of law. His appointment ‘by the Emperor’ is a form of words: he must in fact have been appointed by the governor (who was Iulius Frontinus), or perhaps by the *iuridicus*, although the first such is attested a little later, Salvius Liberalis probably in 78. The judge was not appointed by local magistrates, a point which bears on the status of London at this time. The parties, Litugenus and Magunus, both have Celtic names, and are probably not Roman citizens, but we cannot tell whether they were native Britons or Gallic immigrants. It may be added, however, that they are both men: not a single woman is named in all the tablets, nor is there any reference to religion.

The second example is more slight, but has wider implications. It is the bottom of a ‘page’, preserving a few words out of context: ‘... Classicus, commanding the Sixth Cohort of Nervians’.⁵⁵ The archaeological context is 65/70 – 80, immediately after the Boudican revolt. The cognomen *Classicus* is surprisingly rare, and the only equestrian officer of this name to be attested is the famous Iulius Classicus, who was commanding a cavalry regiment in 69 when he joined the Batavian Revolt.⁵⁶ This *ala* would have been his third equestrian command, implying that his first, the prefecture of a cohort, was in the early 60s. The new Procurator of Britain was then Iulius Classicianus, whose very grand tombstone (now in the British Museum) reveals that he married the daughter of Iulius Indus of Trier; he was evidently a Treveran noble like Classicus, who came from Trier and was of ‘royal’ descent, according to Tacitus. The similarity of their names and origin has long suggested that they were related, and it now appears that Classicianus found a post for his kinsman Classicus in his new province, the first step in a career which would lead to his rebellion from Rome. His cohort, the Sixth Nervians, was already known to be part of the British garrison. It can now be seen that, like the Vangiones, it was one of those transferred to Britain in 61.

The Bloomberg tablets contain glimpses of Britain’s new relationship with the continent of Europe, which is not surprising, since they are British only by geography; they were surely written by immigrants, whether soldiers, officials or businessmen, their slaves and freedmen, and some may even have been written in Gaul. They represent the first generation of literacy in Britain, which makes it fitting to conclude with two tablets which illustrate these new skills being learnt. The first looks like another ‘address’, but is actually an alphabet incised in capital letters (with ‘II’ for E), the sort of lettering that would be used, not only for addresses, but also for document-headings and transcribing poetry (Fig. 9).⁵⁷

The second is even more decorative: it looks rather like stylised flower-heads. In fact they are numerical symbols in two columns (Fig. 10).

54 *T.Bloomberg* 51, *opera in V Id(us) Novembres | inter Litugenum et | Magunum data ab | Ca[c]sare praeiudico ...*

55 *T.Bloomberg* 33, ... *Classico praefecto <o>hor|tis VI Nerviorum*.

56 Devijver 1976: I 46 (citing Tacitus’ *Histories*).

57 *T.Bloomberg* 79. For some instances from Vindolanda of ‘literary hands’, see *T.Vindol.* II 118–121 and IV.1 854–856.

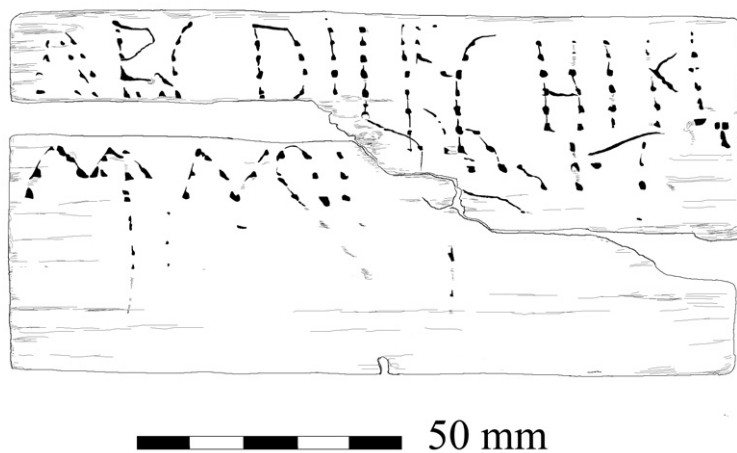


Fig. 9. London stylus tablet with alphabet (*T.Bloomberg 79*).
Drawing by R.S.O. Tomlin.

The second is even more decorative: it looks rather like stylised flower-heads. In fact they are numerical symbols in two columns (Fig. 10).

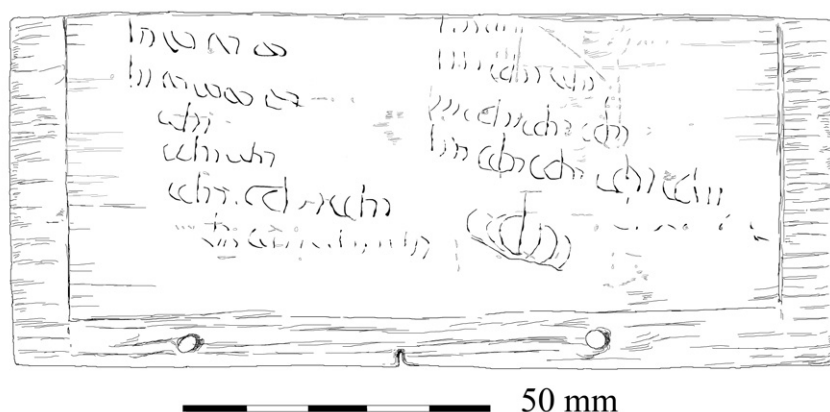


Fig. 10. London stylus tablet with numerals (*T.Bloomberg 78*).
Drawing by R.S.O. Tomlin.

The basic unit is CIO (C, I, reversed C), which originated as a Greek numeral for '1,000' but was developed by the Romans into a figure resembling (modern) '8' on its side or even capital M, which conveniently was also an abbreviation of *mille*. The first column, reading downwards, goes: 8,000

| 9,000 | 10,000 | 20,000 | 30,000 | 40,000; the second is 60,000 | 70,000 | 80,000 | 90,000 | 100,000.⁵⁸

Obviously this is not an account. Like the symbols on an abacus, it is the numerals that will be used for keeping an account. Like the alphabet, it is a piece of self-conscious practice in literacy by the first generation of ‘Londoners’.⁵⁹ The Romans and their allies introduced the necessary skills, and these two tablets show them being assimilated. They are immigrant skills and not distinctively ‘British’, just as the London tablets themselves are legible because of what has been found already so abundantly in Italy and Switzerland.

58 The first four figures in Column (ii) transcribed in Tomlin 2016: 238 should begin with IOOO, not IOO. The third O was omitted inadvertently.

59 ‘Londoners’ (*Londinienses*) lived in London, without necessarily being born there: Tiberinius Celerianus describes himself as a ‘Londoner’ in his dedication at Southwark (Tomlin & Hassall 2003: 364, No. 5), but he came from Gaul (*c(ivis) Bell(ovacus)*).

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TRANSFORMATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

FRÜHMITTELALTERLICHE RELIQUIENAUTHENTIKEN AUF METALL

Kirsten Wallenwein

Der frühmittelalterliche Geschichtsschreiber Gregor von Tours († 594 n. Chr.) hat nach eigener Aussage acht Wunderbücher geschrieben, eines zum Ruhm der Märtyrer, ein weiteres über die Passion und die Wunder des heiligen Märtyrers Julian, vier Bücher über die Wunder des heiligen Bischofs Martin, einen *Liber vitae patrum*, in dem von dem Leben gallischer Heiliger berichtet wird, und als achttes Buch eines über den Ruhm der Bekenner.¹ Vielleicht etwas weniger bekannt sein dürfte, dass er sich mit Hilfe eines syrischen Dolmetschers als Übersetzer der Siebenschläferlegende betätigt hat.² Der Inhalt ist schnell erzählt: Sieben junge Christen weigern sich den heidnischen Göttern zu opfern und suchen während der decianischen Verfolgung Zuflucht in einer Höhle, die darauf verschlossen werden soll. Dieser Schrift, aus der Gregor von Tours auch ein Exzerpt für seinen *Liber in gloria martyrum* angefertigt hat, ist die folgende Passage entnommen:

Commotus deinde imperator, dixit suis: ‚Ite itaque et oppilate os cavernae, ne rebelles illi deorum aditum egrediendi habeant‘. Abeuntibus autem qui os speluncae deberent oppilare, praecesserunt eos duo viri, Theodorus et Ruben christiani, qui propter minas imperatoris Christum latenter colebant. Hi scribentes in tabulis plumbeis omnem historiam sanctorum, posuerunt eas in introitu cavernae intrinsecus, nemine sciente, dicentes: ‚Quandoque Deus voluerit beatos artus athletarum suorum populis revelare, haec doceant, quae pro eius nomine pertulerunt‘. Venientes autem qui missi fuerant, advolventesque lapides magnos, concluserunt aditum antri, abieruntque, dicentes: ‚Hic fame deficiant propriisque se morsibus devorent, qui contempserunt diis nostris debita exhibere libamina‘.³

- 1 Gregor von Tours, *Liber in gloria confessorum*, Praefatio (Krusch 1885, MGH SS rer. Merov. I 2, 298). Der Verfasser zählt sie dort der Reihe nach auf, die Nennungen entsprechen I. *Liber in gloria martyrum*, II. *Liber de passione et virtutibus sancti Iuliani martyris*, III.–VI. *Libri I–IV de virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi*, VII. *Liber vitae patrum*, VIII. *Liber in gloria confessorum*.
- 2 Gregor von Tours, *Liber in gloria martyrum*, cap. 94 (Krusch 1885, MGH SS rer. Merov. I 2, 102): *Quod passio eorum, quam Siro quodam interpretante in Latino transtulimus, plenius pandit*. – ‚Ihre Passion, die ich mit Hilfe eines Syrsers ins Lateinische übersetzt habe, legt das ausführlicher dar.‘, cf. hierzu Berschin 1980, 133–134.
- 3 Gregor von Tours, *Passio sanctorum martyrum septem dormientium apud Ephesum*, cap. 5 (Krusch 1885, MGH SS rer. Merov. I 2, 399–400). – ‚Aufgebracht sagte hierauf der Kaiser zu den Seinen: ‚Geht also und verschließt den Eingang der Höhle, damit jene, die sich gegen die Götter auflehnen, keine Möglichkeit haben, um hinauszugehen.‘ Während aber diejenigen, die den Eingang der Höhle verschließen sollten, weggingen, kamen ihnen zwei Männer zuvor, die Christen Theodorus und Ruben, die wegen der Drohungen des Kaisers Christus heimlich verehrten. Diese schrieben auf Bleitafeln die ganze Geschichte der Heiligen, legten sie in den Eingang der Höhle auf der inneren Seite, ohne dass es jemand wusste, und sagten: ‚Wann auch immer Gott die seligen Leiber seiner Wettstreiter den Völkern enthüllen will, mögen diese [Bleitafeln] lehren, was sie um seines Namens willen ertragen haben.‘ Aber diejenigen, die geschickt worden waren, kamen und wälzten große Steine heran und verschlossen den Zugang zur Höhle. Sie gingen weg und sagten: ‚Hier mögen an Hunger zugrunde

Ob es sich bei diesen *tabulae plumbeae* um Reliquienauthentiken handelte, kann und soll hier nicht entschieden werden. Dass Gregor von Tours sie als solche verstanden haben könnte, geht aus der bereits erwähnten Epitome in seinem Buch über die Märtyrer hervor: [...] *quidam christianus in tabula plumbea nomina et martyrium eorum scribens, clam in aditu cavernae, priusquam oppilaretur, inclusit.*⁴ – „Ein Christ schrieb ihre Namen und ihr Martyrium auf eine Bleitafel, und deponierte sie heimlich im Eingang der Höhle, bevor er verschlossen wurde“, soweit Gregor von Tours.

Reliquienauthentiken sind Zertifikate, mit denen Reliquien zum Zweck dauerhafter Identifikation beschriftet worden sind. Im Mittelalter werden verschiedene Termini zur Bezeichnung dieser Schriftstücke verwandt. Es kommen beispielsweise sehr häufig *breve*, *brevis* oder *brevicula*, *pittacium*, *cedula* oder *scedula* vor. Daneben tauchen *littera*, *membranula*, *carta*, später dann auch *carticula* oder *cartulina* und *billa* auf, wenn von Schriftstücken die Rede ist, die bei den Reliquien gefunden oder gerade nicht gefunden wurden (*sine billis*). Aber auch von *lamina* und *tabula* oder der *tabula plumbea* ist mehrere Male die Rede.⁵ Die Etikettierung heiliger Hinterlassenschaft erfolgt in vielen Fällen mit einem länglichen Pergamentstreifen, auch größere Pergamentstücke werden zum Beschriften und als Umschlag von Reliquien benutzt. Dass Metalle, Papyrus, Stoff oder Stein als Beschreibstoff scheinbar weniger häufig Verwendung finden, hängt mit der Überlieferungssituation, dem Erschließungszustand und deren Dokumentation zusammen: Denn obwohl die Beschreibstoffe Papyrus und Pergament im Schriftwesen der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters lange parallel benutzt wurden,⁶ haben sich zum einen nur wenige Papyrusauthentiken erhalten,⁷ zum anderen ist die Mehrheit der vor dem Jahr 800 entstandenen und bereits in den *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores* verzeichneten Reliquienauthentiken auf Pergamentstreifen tradiert. Zeitgleich und zum Teil noch früher werden Schriftstücke auf Metall Reliquien zum Zweck dauerhafter Identifizierung beigegeben.⁸ Beobachtungen zur Materialität und Paläographie dieser Authentiken stehen im Fokus des folgenden Beitrags.

I. Beispiel

Datierungen auf Reliquienauthentiken sind eine Seltenheit und daher besonders wertvoll. Den Herausgebern der *Codices Latini Antiquiores* galten datierte handschriftliche Zeugnisse gar als

gehen und sich mit eigenen Bissen verschlingen, die es verachtet haben, unseren Göttern die geschuldeten Opfer darzubieten.“

4 Gregor von Tours, *Liber in gloria martyrum*, cap. 94 (Krusch 1885, MGH SS rer. Merov. I 2, 101). Krusch weist ebd., Anm. 3 darauf hin, dass die Bleitafeln auch bei Jakob von Sarug in den *Acta Syriaca* erwähnt werden; die lateinische Übertragung des Jesuiten P. Benedetti findet sich in den AA SS Iul. VI, 387–389, hier 388–389.

5 Zu den Begrifflichkeiten cf. auch Bertrand 2006, 365 sowie Ferro 2021, 59–76.

6 Zum langen Übergang von Papyrus zu Pergament Licht 2018, 13–17.

7 Papyrusauthentiken sind in den Beständen von Monza (ChLA XXIX 863 – zwölf Einzelaauthentiken und eine Inventaraauthentik), Cantù (ChLA XXIX 862), Saint-Maurice und im Lateranpalast Sancta Sanctorum (ChLA XXII 725–726) überliefert, cf. Smith 2015, 242 und Galland 2004, 113, 131 und 143. Im Jurakloster Baumes-Messieurs wurde lange Zeit ein Papyrusfragment einer Urkunde aufbewahrt, weil man es für eine Reliquienauthentik hielt; es ist inzwischen verschollen (ChLA XVIII 666). Cf. dazu auch Gasnault 1969, 254–255.

8 Zu Authentiken auf Metall und insb. auf Blei cf. Meier 2002, 178–181; Favreau 1999, 56–59; Tjäder 1982, 202–203; Ehrentraut 1952, 211–214 und 218–221. Der Aufsatz Ehrentrauts ist ein Auszug aus dessen maschinenschriftlicher Dissertation von 1951 und führt v. a. spätere Beispiele an. Jüngere Reliquienauthentiken auf Blei nennen auch Banti 1990, 297–319 und Treffort 2007, 28–33. Von den im Folgenden zu besprechenden Authentiken werden nur die Authentiken aus Grado (und auch nur von Tjäder) erwähnt.

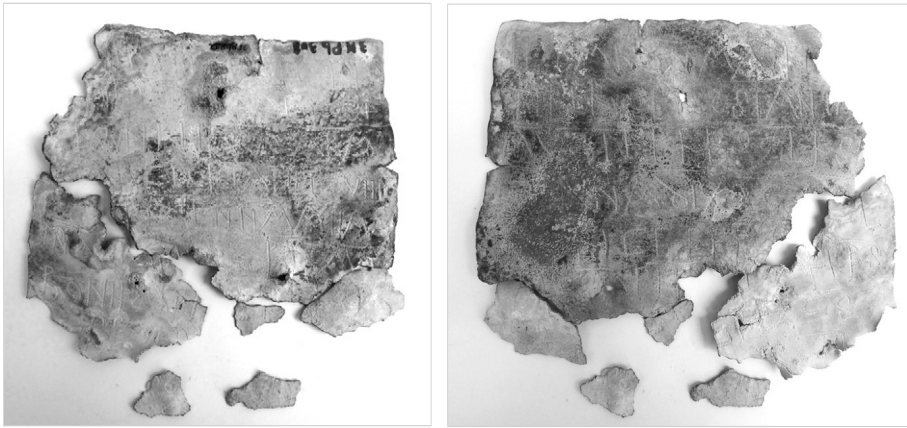


Abb. 1. Vorder- und Rückseite einer Bleiauthentik aus Sila (Constantine, Musée Public National Cirta, A2S760), Breite ca. 16,5 cm, Höhe ca. 15 cm, Dicke 1 mm. © Musée Public National Cirta de Constantine.

„Rückgrat“, „Lebenselixier“ und „Meilensteine“ der Paläographie.⁹ Ein solcher „milestone in Latin palaeography“ ist aus dem antiken Sila, dem heutigen Bordj el Ksar in Algerien überliefert. Bei den Grabungen, die dort 1935 stattfanden und von Fernand Logeart und André Berthier anschließend publiziert wurden, fand man in einer Kirche mehrere Reliquienensembles.¹⁰ Zwei von ihnen wurden von insgesamt drei Bleiauthentiken begleitet, die über den Inhalt der Reliquiare Auskunft geben. Alle sind auf der Vorder- und Rückseite beschriftet worden und werden heute im Musée Public National Cirta von Constantine aufbewahrt (Abb. 1).

Die Rückseite der Inventarauthentik (Abb. 2) enthält die für die Jahresdatierung erforderliche Präzision: Über die Angabe der Kaiserherrschaft in Kombination mit der auf der Vorderseite angegebenen dritten Indiktion und der Tagesangabe nach dem römischen Kalender erhält man die genaue Datierung auf den 6. Mai 585 n. Chr. Außer zur Durchführung der Reliquiendeposition und Entstehung der Reliquienauthentik liefert die Zeitangabe nähere Informationen zu Gennadius.¹¹ Üblicherweise wird das Schriftstück als Zeugnis für die Verleihung der Ehrenkonsulwürde an Gennadius gewertet, die andernorts allerdings nicht belegt zu sein scheint.¹² Gennadius

9 CLA VII, vi: „Since dated manuscripts are the backbone of palaeography“; CLA VIII, viii: „Dated and placed manuscripts are the life-blood of palaeography“ und CLA XI, ix: „Dated manuscripts are of prime interest to the palaeographer. A [...] milestone in palaeography [...]“.

10 Logeart – Berthier 1935/1936, 235–284. Zu der im Folgenden zu besprechenden Authentik cf. ebd., 254–260, cf. auch Duval 1982, Bd. 1, 215–220 sowie AE 1937, 148, 57–58; AE 1946, 241, 67 und ILAlg II 2, 7200, 688.

11 Zu Gennadius cf. Durliat 1981, 66–71 sowie Martindale 1992, 509–511.

12 Ebd., 510.

war um 578 *magister militum in Africa*¹³ und spätestens ab Juli 591 *exarchus Africae*.¹⁴ Auf die Bezeichnung als afrikanischer Heermeister folgt in der Reliquienauthentik aus Sila die Stelle, die Gennadius den Titel *exconsul* zuschreiben soll.¹⁵ Die Restitution und Auflösung der nur teilweise erhaltenen vier Buchstaben als *EXCL* bereitet allerdings Schwierigkeiten: Zum einen wäre zu überlegen, ob sich die Abkürzung nicht auch als *excellentissimi* auflösen ließe,¹⁶ zum anderen ist eine Lesung als *ECCL* vorstellbar, die dann die Wiedergabe der Kürzung mit *ecclesiae* nahelegen würde.¹⁷ Für diese Lösung spräche auch der folgende Heiligenname (*Felcissimi presbyteri martyris*), der ansonsten ohne Bezug folgen würde.¹⁸ Um welchen Felicissimus es sich hier handelt, lässt sich schwerlich ermitteln.¹⁹

13 Johannes von Biclaro, *Chronicon*, ad a. 577 (Cardelle de Hartmann 2001, CCSL 173A, 69): *Anno II Tiberii imperatoris, qui est Leouegildi regis annus X, Gennadius magister militum in Affrica Mauro uastat, Garmulem fortissimum regem, qui iam tres duces superius nominatos Romani exercitus interfecerat, bello superat, et ipsum regem gladio interficit*. Die Ausgabe von Cardelle de Hartmann ersetzt die vorangegangenen von Campos 1960, 77–100 und Mommsen 1894, MGH Auct. ant. 11, 211–220, die beide den Eintrag dem Jahr 578 zuordnen. Die Datierungsschwierigkeiten, welche die Chronik des Johannes von Biclaro bietet, werden diskutiert bei Cardelle de Hartmann 2001, CCSL 173A, 135*–139*, weswegen Collins im historischen Stellenkommentar, der der Ausgabe beigegeben ist, konstatiert: „it would be unwise to give too precise a date to this“ (ebd., 127). Zu Gennadius als *magister militum* cf. Durliat 1981, 66–71. Zum Amt im Allgemeinen Durliat 1979, 306–320 sowie zu Gennadius 311–313. Durliat glaubt, dass die Funktion des *magister militum Africae* „existait dès 578 d’une part parce que Gennadius semble bien avoir été le premier et le seul titulaire de cette fonction, d’autre part parce que le témoignage de Jean de Biclar qui le désigne comme magister militum in Africa en 578 n’est contredit par aucun autre document et enfin parce que le même changement semble s’être produit en Italie pendant la même période“. Durliat lässt die anderen Nennungen bei Johannes von Biclaro und den *magister militum Africae* Gaudiosus bei Gregor dem Großen, *Registrum epistularum* I 74, nicht gelten.

14 Als solcher wird er in mehreren Briefen Gregors des Großen bezeichnet (I 59, I 72–73, IV 7, IX 9). Ein weiterer Titel, mit dem er versehen wird, ist *patricius*, cf. ebd. (I 59, I 72–73, IV 7, VI 62, VII 2–3), cf. auch Durliat 1981, 68–71 und 77–78.

15 Zur Ehrenkonsulwürde Courtois 1949, 37–58, zu Gennadius ebd., 52.

16 Gennadius wird in zwei Briefen Gregors des Großen als *excellentissimus* bezeichnet, VII 2: [...] *vir excellentissimus filius noster Gennadius patricius* [...] (Norberg 1982, CCSL 140, 444) und IX 11: [...] *excellentissimo filio nostro Gennadio* [...] (Norberg 1982, CCSL 140A, 572). Zum Epitheton *excellentissimus* Koch 1903, 89–93 (die beiden zitierten Stellen sind hier nicht verzeichnet). Am häufigsten begegne das Prädikat im Zusammenhang mit dem „Exarchen, [...] in dem wir den magister militum unter verändertem Namen wiederfinden“, außerdem erscheine es auch einige Male zusammen mit *gloriosissimus* (ebd., 92), zu diesem Titel ebd., 58–73, bes. 68–70. Auch die griechische Entsprechung zu *excellentissimus* wird einigen der höchsten Beamten zugeschrieben cf. Begass 2012, 285–286.

17 Diese Möglichkeit wurde während des Workshops diskutiert. Ich danke den Proff. Tino Licht und Andrea Jördens für diesen Hinweis.

18 Duval 1982, Bd. 1, 218 folgt den Auflösungen von Logeart – Berthier 1935/1936, 256, hat aber Zweifel, dass an dieser Stelle „l’on ait abrégé un saint nom“, da alle anderen Eigennamen ungekürzt wiedergegeben sind (ebd., 220). Es erscheint unwahrscheinlich, dass hier die Aufzählung der Reliquien (recto lin. 3–4) fortgesetzt wird, was von Duval als eine der „hypothèses fragiles“ diskutiert wird.

19 Gemeinsam verehrt werden die römischen Märtyrer und Diakone Felicissimus und Agapitus (BHL 7801, cf. auch BHL 2852), die an einem 6. August in der Praetextatatsakombe beigelegt wurden. Ein weiterer Felicissimus erlitt gemeinsam mit Rogatianus an einem 26. oder 31. Oktober unter Valerianus und Gallienus in Afrika den Märtyrertod (BHL Novum Suppl., 753). In Nikomedia wurde am 14. März ein Felicissimus gemeinsam mit Dativus und Frontina gemartert. Unter den Gefährten des Ariston in Kampanien am 2. Juli befand sich ebenfalls ein Felicissimus. Eines gleichnamigen Heiligen von Apulien wird am 13. September, Felicissimus von Perugia am 24. November gedacht, i. d. R. zwei Tage später kommemoriert man den Heiligkeitag der Märtyrer von Capua; unter ihnen findet sich ein Felicissimus (Mart. Hier., 143, 504, 618 und 621); weitere Felicissimi im Mart. Hier., 59, 113, 274, 639; zum 5. Mai werden *in Africa Gregori, Archilai et Felicissimae*

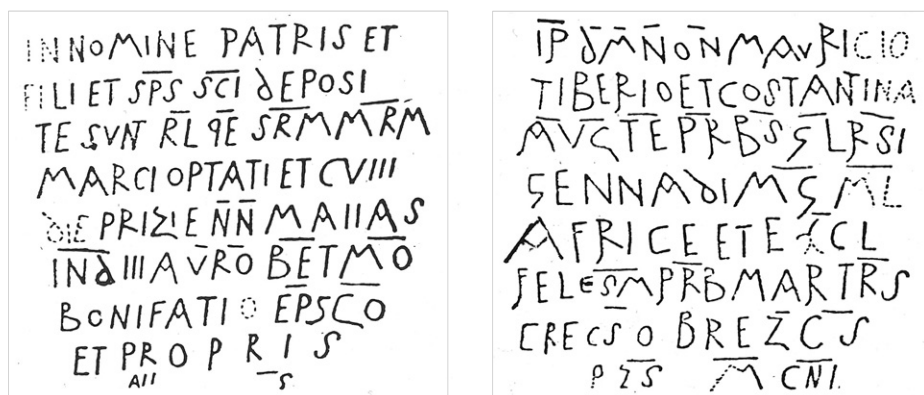


Abb. 2. Umzeichnungen von Constantine, Musée Public National Cirta, A2S760 aus Duval 1982, Bd. 1, 218, Fig. 145.

In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti deposite sunt reliquie sanctorum martyrum Marci, Optati et CVIII die prizie nonas maiias indictione III a viro beatissimo Bonifatio episcopo et propriis [...] imperantibus domno nostro Mauricio Tiberio et Costantina Augustis temporibus gloriosi Gennadi magistri militum Africe et ecclesiae Felicissimi presbyteri martyris [...].²⁰

Im Namen des Vaters und des Sohnes und des Heiligen Geistes wurden die Reliquien der heiligen Märtyrer Marcus, Optatus und der 108 am Tag vor den Nonen des Mai in der dritten Indiktion vom hochseligen Herrn Bischof Bonifatius [...] beigesetzt [...] unter der Herrschaft unseres Herrn Kaisers Mauricius Tiberius und der Kaiserin Constantina, zu Zeiten Gennadius, des ruhmreichen afrikanischen Heermeisters und [...] der Kirche des Märtyrers Felicissimus presbyter [...].

Auffällig sind die vielen Kürzungen. Neben dem Nomen sacrum *spiritus sancti* kommen die Kontraktionskürzungen *reliquie sanctorum martyrum*, *nonas*, *viro beatissimo* [...] *episcopo*,

verzeichnet (ebd., 231), was Delehaye folgendermaßen kommentiert: *nomina haec tria ad Africam referenda esse [...] nec affirmare nec negare audent*. Die Bibliotheca sanctorum V, Sp. 601–604 nennt sechs Heilige dieses Namens, das BBKL zwei, einer – Felicissimus von Nocera – scheidet jeweils zeitlich aus. Keinem dieser Märtyrer mit Namen Felicissimus wird indessen der Weihegrad eines Presbyters attestiert. Nur die *Prosopographie de l'Afrique chrétienne* (Mandouze 1982, 405) verzeichnet auf Grundlage von CIL VIII 23037 (*Felicissimus presbyter in pace positus V kalendas iunias*) einen *Felicissimus presbyter* „(IV^e/VI^e s.)“; in der *Prosopographie de l'Italie chrétienne* (Pietri – Pietri 1999, 767) wird auf einen römischen Presbyter verwiesen, der in der *Vita Silvestri* (BHL 7725) gemeinsam mit anderen Priestern und Diakonen erwähnt wird.

²⁰ Die ausführlichste Lesung der in Anm. 10 genannten Werke findet sich in den ILAlg II 2, 7200, 688: hier *et propri(i)s* / *[m]an[ibus]* für das Ende der Vorderseite, *et ex c(onsu)ll(e)* als weiterer Titel des Gennadius sowie *fele(cis)s(i)m(i) pr(es)b(yl)teri mart(y)r(i)s* / *Cresc(oni) ob redi(bi)c(ione)s* / *p(ri)z(ie)s M CNI* für die drei letzten Zeilen der Rückseite.

imperantibus domno und *temporibus gloriosi* [...] *magistri militum* sowie die Suspensionskürzungen *indictione, nostro* und *augustis vor*.²¹

Ludwig Traube († 1907) hat seine letzte Studie den *Nomina sacra* gewidmet. Darunter sind Kontraktionskürzungen zu verstehen, die der besonderen Hervorhebung dienen. Platzgründe spielen hierbei keine bzw. allenfalls eine untergeordnete Rolle.²² Traube weist darauf hin, dass „die afrikanischen Schreiber eine Reihe eigentümlicher auf Kontraktion beruhender Formen den italienischen Bildungen entgegen[stellten]“.²³ Die Art, diese Kürzungen durchzuführen, bezeichnet er dem Eindruck nach als eine hebraisierende.²⁴ Hierüber lassen sich *EP(I)SC(OP)O*, *R(E)L(I)Q(VI)E S(ANCTO)R(V)M M(ARTY)R(V)M* und *TE(M)P(O)R(I)B(V)S GL(O)R(IO)SI* erklären.

Bei der römischen Datierung kommt die geläufige Suspensionskürzung *IND* für *indictione* vor, außergewöhnlich hingegen ist *NN* für *nonas*, das weitere Male in nordafrikanischen Inschriften auftaucht²⁴ und sich um das zweite Drittel des VII. Jahrhunderts auch in spanischen Inschriften findet.²⁵ Die datierte Bleiauthentik zeigt somit mit *NN* ein weiteres afrikanisches Symptom, allgemeine lautliche Phänomene werden in *PRIZIE* und *MAILAS* bewahrt.²⁶

Mit der bereits besprochenen Reliquienauthentik korrespondiert eine Einzelauthentik aus Blei: *Ic abentur reliquie sanctorum C et VIII* – „Hier findet man die Reliquien der heiligen 108“ (Abb. 3). Das Protokoll ist unauffällig: *Ic* steht für *hic*, Wegfall von *h-* im Anlaut ist seit jeher zu beobachten. Das gleiche Phänomen ist bei *abentur* für *habentur* zu konstatieren.²⁷

21 Hälvä-Nyberg 1988, 97, Anm. 358 zählt insgesamt „19 Kontraktionen; auf der Rückseite des Steines [sic] sind die zwei letzten Zeilen der Inschrift als zu unsicher hinsichtlich der Les- und Auflösungsart [...] unberücksichtigt gelassen worden“. Je nachdem ob man sich für *exc(e)l(lentissimi)* oder *ecd(esiae)* statt *exc(onsu)l(is)* entscheidet, müsste die Zählung korrigiert werden.

22 Traube 1907, 245.

23 Ebd., 168–174, bes. 172–173 und 192, das Zitat 244. Den Ursprung der hebraisierenden Kürzungen sieht Traube „in der polysyllabaren Suspension vom Typus DMN. (= *dominus*)“. Er listet im Folgenden u. a. *EP[S]CPS* (CIL VIII 11645) für *episcopus* auf, die Vorderseite der Reliquienauthentik bietet am Ende der siebten Zeile *EPSCO*, zu den Kürzungen für *episcopus* cf. ebd., 255 sowie Hälvä-Nyberg 1988, 144–145.

24 Africa proconsularis – Ammaedara: AE 1946, 33; AE 1975, 893 und 903; Belalis Maior: AE 1974, 694; AE 1981, 873; Sufetula: AE 1914, 52; AE 1971, 500.

25 Baetica – Corduba: CIL ²II 7, 704 (3. Mai 632); bei Solia: CIL ²II 7, 779 (4. November 650).

26 Inschriftlich belegt ist *PRIZIE* in der Africa proconsularis – Ammaedara: AE 1975, 925 und 928. Die Graphie *GENNAZIO* findet sich einmal bei Durlat 1981, 77, die Inschrift (CIL VIII 12035/ILCV 793) gilt inzwischen als verloren. Einen weiteren Beleg liefert AE 1975, 915 (*Genazius*). Dass assibiliertes *z* an die Stelle von *d(i)* tritt, kommt spätantik häufiger vor, cf. Stotz 1996, 323–324. Die Doppelschreibung *maïias* bildet die halbvokalische Aussprache ab, cf. ebd., 139–140.

27 Es gibt reguläre Doppelformen wie *barena* und *arena*; allerdings sind im Vulgärlatein v. a. einsilbige Wörter wie etwa *hic* betroffen, cf. Stotz 1996, 156–157. Weitere spätere Beispiele: Baume-les-Messieurs, Mairie, 10, cf. auch Brune 1899, 117: *Ic sunt reliquias sancti Verani de dentes eius*; Saint-Maurice, Archives de l'Abbaye, CHN 64/1/22: *Ic sunt reliquias sancti Leodegario* (ChLA I 35: saec. VIII¹); Solignac, Église abbatiale Saint-Pierre, 1, cf. auch Lemaître 1985, 130: *Ic sunt reliquias sancte Marie vel sancti Petri vel sancti Stefani et de ilo monumento, ubi dominus fuit, et de illa munera, quem magi abstulerunt domino*. Zur bleiernen Reliquienauthentik aus Sila cf. Logeart – Berthier 1935/1936, 253–254; Duval 1982, Bd. 1, 220–221 sowie AE 1937, 147 und ILAlg II 2, 7210.



Abb. 3. Vorder- und Rückseite einer Bleiauthentik aus Sila (Constantine, Musée Public National Cirta, A2S757), Breite 14 cm, Höhe 2,5 cm, Dicke 1 mm: *IC abentur reliquie sanctorum C et VIII*.

Abb. und Umzeichnungen aus Duval 1982, Bd. 1, 221, Fig. 146–147.

Wer die 108 Heiligen sind, ist unklar; diese Gruppe von Märtyrern scheint ansonsten unbekannt zu sein. Duval hielt wegen der anonymen Bezeichnung eine lokale Tradition für wahrscheinlich, überlegte aber auch, ob es sich um die 18 Heiligen aus Saragossa handeln könnte, unter denen ein Optatus, allerdings kein Marcus, anzutreffen ist.²⁸ Die Übereinstimmung der Einzelauthentik (*C et VIII*) mit der Inventarauthentik (*CVIII*), die Marcus und Optatus zusätzlich aufführt, lässt dies unwahrscheinlich erscheinen. Beide Schriftzeugnisse weisen die gleichen Kürzungsgewohnheiten auf – *r(e)l(i)q(ui)e, s(ancto)r(u)m* – und wurden wahrscheinlich von derselben Person punziert.²⁹

Im größten Gefäß befand sich eine weitere Bleitafel, welche insgesamt acht Heilige auflistet (Abb. 4).³⁰ Auf der Vorderseite werden die drei Märtyrerinnen *sancta Maxima*, *sancta Secunda* und *sancta Donatilla* genannt,³¹ auf der Rückseite *sanctas tres Ispes, Fides, Caritas*. Bei *Ispes* ist eine

28 Duval 1982, Bd. 2, 734–735. Die Zahl 108 scheint keinen symbolischen Gehalt zu haben und taucht nicht häufig in der Literatur auf. Stephan I. soll einmal 108 Personen getauft haben: *Iussit itaque beatus Stephanus: ut altera die in cripta nepotiana omnes congregarentur. Et facto conuenticulo in eadem cripta inuenti sunt promiscui sexus uiri ac mulieres centum et octo [...]* (*Passio sancti Stephani papae et martyris*, cf. Mombritus 1910, 495–500, hier 496).

29 Duval 1982, Bd. 1, 220. Es verwundert, dass die Einzelauthentik zwar bei den Reliquienbehältnissen gefunden, aber nicht in einem von ihnen verwahrt wurde, während man die Inventarauthentik verschlossen in der „urne au couvercle intact“ entdeckte, cf. Logeart – Berthier 1935/1936, 254.

30 Zur dritten Bleiauthentik cf. Logeart – Berthier 1935/1936, 260–261, Duval 1982, Bd. 1, 222–225 sowie AE 1937, 149 und ILAlg II 2, 7202.

31 Sie werden gelegentlich auch zusammenfassend als Jungfrauen und Märtyrerinnen von Tuburbus bezeichnet, wo sie 304 unter Maximian hingerichtet worden sein sollen. Der Tag ihrer Passio, der 30. Juli, wird im karthagischen Kalender und im Martyrologium Hieronymianum vermerkt; cf. Duval 1982, Bd. 2, 692–693. Zu Maxima, Donatilla und Secunda cf. Mandouze 1982, 715–716, 288–289 und 1047; cf. auch Tilley 1996, 13–24 mit einer englischen Übersetzung der Leidensgeschichte ebd., 17–24. Die *Passio sanctarum Maximae, Donatillae et Secundae* (BHL 5809) wurde von De Smedt 1890, 110–116 ediert. Mit Ergänzungen aus dem

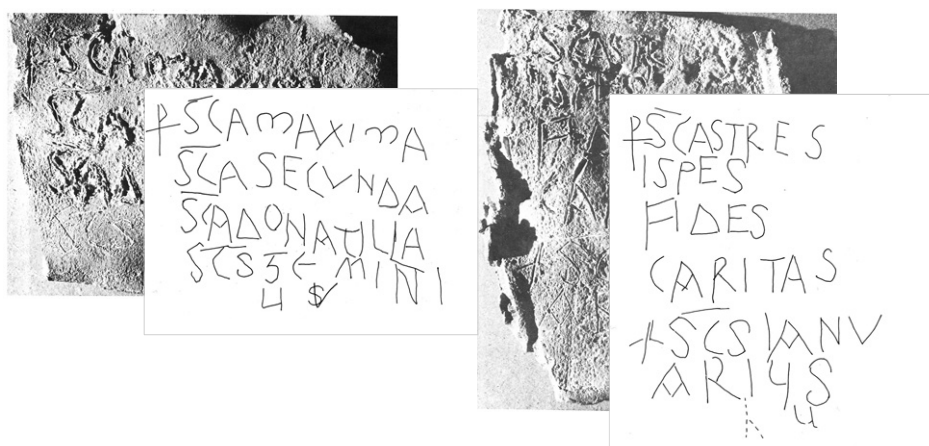


Abb. 4. Vorder- und Rückseite einer Bleiauthentik aus Sila (Constantine, Musée Public National Cirta, A2S756), Breite 14 cm, Höhe 11 cm, Dicke 4 mm: *S(AN)C(T)A MAXIMA, S(AN)C(T)A SECUNDA, S(AN)C(T)A DONATILLA. S(AN)C(TV)S GEMINIVS* (recto); *S(AN)C(T)AS TRES ISPES, FIDES, CARITAS. S(AN)C(TV)S IANVARIIVS* (verso).

Abb. und Umzeichnungen aus Duval 1982, Bd. 1, 223–224, Fig. 149–150b.

Prothese zu konstatieren. Die Identifikation von Spes, Fides und Caritas als römische Heilige, die zur Zeit des Kaisers Hadrian (117–138) in Rom das Martyrium erlitten haben sollen, gelang Henri-Irénée Marrou, der darauf aufmerksam machte, dass sich ihre Verehrung an der Wende zum VII. Jahrhundert anhand der Monzener Papyrusauthentiken auch andernorts belegen lässt.³²

Zuvor war man davon ausgegangen, dass Spes, Fides und Caritas als Tugenden den Märtyrerinnen Maxima, Secunda und Donatilla entsprechen sollten,³³ denkbar wären auch eine lokale Tradition oder die Verwendung von Verlegenheitsnamen gewesen. Die nachgetragenen Heiligennamen *sanctus Geminus* (recto) und *sanctus Ianuarius* (verso), letzterer durch ein Kreuzeszeichen eingeleitet, lassen keine eindeutige Identifikation zu.³⁴ Dennoch kann man an ihnen gut sehen, wie das ursprüngliche Ensemble zweier Reliquiengruppierungen um zwei weitere Reliquien ergänzt

Martyrolog des Erzbischofs Ado von Vienne und einer französischen Übersetzung ist sie bei Maier 1987, 92–105 zu lesen.

32 Marrou 1963, 179–180. Die Papyrusauthentiken befinden sich im Museo e Tesoro del Duomo di Monza. ChLA XXIX 863 IV: [...] *sancta Spes, sancta Fides, sancta Caritas* [...] sowie ChLA XXIX 863 I: [...] *sancta Sofia cum tres filias suas* [...]. Beide Nennungen werden auch von der zugehörigen Inventarauthentik (ChLA XXIX 863) verzeichnet (*Notitia de olea sanctorum martyrum, qui Romae in corpore requiescunt* [...]). Der Stoff der *Passio sanctorum virginum Fidei, Spei et Caritatis* hat mehrere Bearbeitungen gefunden (BHL 2966sq.), daneben existieren griechische (BHG 1637x–1639), syrische und armenische Fassungen (BHO 1082–1085). Fides, Spes und Caritas werden gemeinsam mit ihrer Mutter Sophia am 1. August im Martyrologium Romanum kommemoriert. Duval 1982, Bd. 2, 693, Anm. 174 weist in diesem Zusammenhang auf die Nähe des Heiligtages zu dem der anderen drei Jungfrauen Maxima, Donatilla und Secunda hin und überlegt: „y a-t-il un lien entre la proximité des fêtes et le groupement, à Sila, des reliques?“.

33 Logeart – Berthier 1935/1936, 261.

34 Duval 1982, Bd. 2, 737–738 stellt fest, dass im afrikanischen Sanktorale mehrere Heilige des Namens Ianuarius auftauchen.

wurde. Die Namen wurden im Zuge dessen auf der Inventarauthentik nachgetragen: Die jeweils oberen drei Zeilen der Reliquienauthentik sind stärker in das Blei eingegraben. Nach einem Staurogramm, das auf der Vorderseite tiefer eingeritzt wurde als auf der Rückseite, folgen die Namen der Heiligen mit vorangestellten Nomina sacra *sancta* und *sanctas* bzw. in den beiden Ergänzungen jeweils ein *sanctus*. Wie deutlich sich die oberen von den unteren Zeilen unterscheiden, erkennt man nicht nur am Duktus, sondern auch an den Buchstabenformen: oben unziales M, zweimal in *Maxima*, unten Capitalis-M, bei dem der rechte Schrägschaft auf dem linken aufsetzt. Beide Schreiber zeigen überdies je eine Auffälligkeit: Der der oberen Zeilen verwendet alle Male, wo dies möglich ist, den griechischen Großbuchstaben Delta (Δ) für D (recto: *Secunda* und *Donatilla*, verso: *Fides*). Der Schreiber der unteren Zeilen ritzt ein flachgedecktes g in *Geminus*.

II. Beispiel

Im Dom von Grado hat man 1871 unter einer Marmorplatte im Altarraum zwei Reliquienbehältnisse gefunden, eine runde und eine ovale Pyxis. Bei beiden war über den Inhalt durch eine außenlaufende Inschrift Rechenschaft abgelegt.

Die Inschrift der runden Pyxis (Abb. 5) nennt die Jungfrau Maria sowie die Heiligen Vitus, Cassianus, Pancratius, Hippolyt, Apollinaris und Martin. Sie verläuft zweizeilig; in der oberen Zeile steht jeweils das Attribut *sanctus* oder *sancta*, in der zweiten Zeile findet sich der entsprechende Heiligenname. Die Nomina sacra werden einheitlich als Suspensionskürzung *sanc(-tus/-ta)* wiedergegeben. Diese Gewohnheit ist spätestens seit dem V. Jahrhundert zu beobachten.³⁵ Das Innere des Reliquiars ist in insgesamt sieben Trennfächer gegliedert: ein rundes im Zentrum, um das sich die übrigen sechs speichenförmig gruppieren.³⁶ In ihnen befanden sich einzeln beschriftete Goldplättchen mit Heiligennamen, von denen sieben mit den außen genannten korrespondieren; vier weitere nennen die Heiligen Agnes, Severus, Trophimus und Sebastian. Bei diesen insgesamt elf Etiketten handelt es sich wohl um einige der ältesten erhaltenen Authentiken. Sie zeigen – bis auf die Authentik der *domna Maria*³⁷ – die jüngere Kürzungsgewohnheit *S(AN)C(TV)S/ S(AN)C(T)A* und sind daher wohl erst nach Anfertigung der Pyxis entstanden. Dafür spricht auch die Gliederung des Behältnisses in sieben Fächer, die der Anzahl der außen genannten

35 Traube 1907, 201–202. Er nennt als das „wohl älteste epigraphische Zeugnis“ für *SANC* eine heute verlorene Inschrift (*Deo sancto Christo uni* [...]) aus dem Coemeterium des Apronian an der Via Latina, die De Rossi mit den Streitigkeiten unter Papst Calixtus I. († 222) in Verbindung gebracht hatte, cf. De Rossi 1866, 86. Das älteste datierte Zeugnis liefert AE 1896, 74: *IN HOC LOCO SVNT MEMORIE SANC(TORVM) MARTIRVM LAVRENTI, IPPOLITI, EVFIMIE, MINNE ET DE CRVCE D(OMI)NI DEPOSITE DIE III NONAS FEBRARIAS AN(NO) P(ROVINCLAE) CCCXXXV*, was dem Jahr 474 n. Chr. entspricht, cf. auch Traube 1907, 201–202 mit weiteren Belegen für *SANC* und *SANCS*. Zusätzliche Vorkommnisse dokumentieren AE 1937, 152a, b, d bzw. ILAlg II 2, 7203: *SANC(TORVM)* [...], 7208–7209: *SANC(TI)* [...], die Kürzungen *SANCT* und *SANCS* finden sich in AE 1904, 3.

36 Eine Abbildung findet sich beispielsweise auch bei Marocco 2001, 13, cf. auch ebd., 5–15 eine Beschreibung des Reliquienarrangements.

37 *Domnus/domna* findet sich auch auf anderen vor 800 entstandenen Reliquienauthentiken: ChLA XVIII 668 (Chartres); ChLA XVIII 669 XXVIII, CXVI (Chelles); ChLA XIX 682 XXVII, XXIX, XXXVI bis, LXII (Sens); ChLA XIX 683 V (Solignac); Lüttich, Trésor de la Cathédrale Saint-Lambert, A 27 (cf. George 2021, 118 und Saint-Maurice, Archives de l'Abbaye, CHN 64/2/99 als Et. 68 bei Smith 2015, 248. Das Mittellateinische Wörterbuch verweist von *domna* nach *domina* bzw. von *domnus* nach *dominus* und nennt dort, „3 de sanctis [...]“ (Mlat. WB III, Sp. 967), einige Belege für das Heiligenattribut *domnus/domna*. Zum weiteren Gebrauch von *domnus/domna* cf. Berschin 2020, Bd. 2, 22–23 und Bd. 5, 34 sowie die zahlreichen Registereinträge ebd., 140.



Abb. 5. Umzeichnung der runden Pyxis und Reliquienauthentiken aus Grado nach De Rossi 1872, tav. XII. Runde Pyxis (saec. V/VI, Grado) und Reliquienauthentiken (saec. VI¹, Grado).

Heiligennamen entspricht.³⁸ Dass dort die Nomina Sacra nicht als Kontraktionskürzung, sondern als Suspensionskürzungen aufgeführt sind, ist auffällig; ein Brauch, der für das VII. Jahrhundert nicht mehr denkbar und für das VI. Jahrhundert schon extrem konservativ ist.³⁹

Das Heiligentableau gibt zunächst Rätsel auf. Während vier Personen ohne größere Schwierigkeiten zugeordnet werden können (Maria, Martin von Tours, Agnes von Rom und Sebastian von Rom), lassen die anderen mehrere Möglichkeiten zu: Cassianus, Hippolyt, Bitus (Abitus, Vitus), Pancratius, Apollinaris, Severus und Trophimus. Bei sechs von ihnen ist eine römische Provenienz denkbar, bei vieren wahrscheinlich (Cassianus von Imola, Vitus, Pancratius und Hippolyt). Für Severus ist zunächst nicht zu entscheiden, ob es sich um Severus von Rom oder von Ravenna handelt. Apollinaris bezeichnet mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit den ravennatischen Heiligen und ersten Bischof der Stadt. Trophimus bzw. *Trofomus* wurde bisher mit dem angeblich ersten Bischof von Arles identifiziert,⁴⁰ den später Ado von Vienne († 875) mit dem Paulusschüler (Act 20,4)

38 Ähnliches vermutet auch Marocco 2001, 14 auf Grundlage der unterschiedlichen Graphie des Pancratius (Goldauthentik: *BRANCATIVS*): „È possibile che reliquiario e targhette siano state realizzate in tempi o luoghi diversi“.

39 Traube 1907, 201 reiht das Gradeser Reliquiar unter die frühen Belege für *SANC* ein. Ebd., 199 vermerkt er bezüglich der Kontraktion *SCS*: „Das jedoch darf behauptet werden, daß das etwa am Anfang des 5. Jahrhunderts erfundene *SCS* im 6. Jahrhundert überall angenommen war“.

40 Zur bisherigen Identifikation der auf den Authentiken genannten Heiligen: Hahn 2012, 62; Cuscito 1973, 311–312 und Marocco 2001, 14–15.

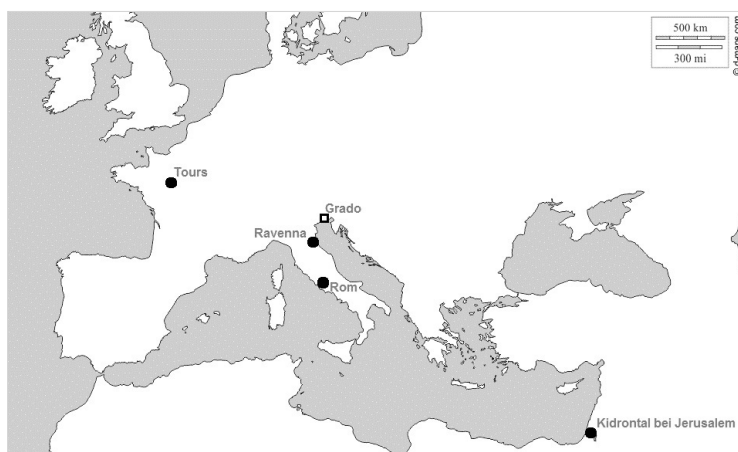


Abb. 6. Herkunftsorte der Gradeser Reliquien.
Karte: K. Wallenwein.

gleichsetzen sollte.⁴¹ Frühmittelalterliche Itinerare erwähnen indes die Grabstätte eines römischen Märtyrers *Trophimus* oder *Trifomus* in der Via Latina in Rom.⁴²

Geht man davon aus, dass das ursprünglich sieben Heilige umfassende Reliquienensemble auf einmal um die Heiligen Agnes, Severus, Trophimus und Sebastian vermehrt wurde, so wird auch für Severus Rom als Herkunft wahrscheinlich.

Neben die paläographischen Beobachtungen zu den Nomina sacra treten ereignisgeschichtliche Erwägungen: Das Konzil von Ephesus (431) markiert einen wichtigen Punkt, indem es Maria als *theotokos* (Gottesgebärerin) bestätigt.⁴³ Die Gottesmutter war bereits im IV. Jahrhundert von Autoren wie Ambrosius von Mailand oder Hieronymus als *beata* oder *sancta Maria* bezeichnet worden. Als *domna Maria* findet sie in der einem *Theodosius archidiaconus* zugeschriebenen Schrift *De situ terrae sanctae* (CPL 2328) Erwähnung, die um die Mitte des VI. Jahrhunderts entstanden sein soll.⁴⁴ Für Marienreliquien wird *domna Maria* auf den Authentiken vor 800 nur

41 Ado von Vienne, *Martyrologium*, IIII Kal. Ianuarii (Dubois – Renaud 1984, 20–21): *Natale sancti Trophimi, de quo scribit apostolus ad Timotheum: Trophimum autem reliqui infirmum Mileti. Hic ab apostolis Romae ordinatus episcopus, primus ad Arelatensem urbem Galliae ob Christi Evangelium praedicandum directus est. Ex cuius fonte, ut beatus papa Zosimus scribit, totae Galliae fidei rivos acceperunt qui apud eandem urbem in pace quieverunt.* Zum heiligen Trophimus von Arles Levillain 1927, 145–189; Duprat 1940, 146–198 und 1941, 87–125; Prinz 1997, Sp. 1044–1045; Krüger 2002, passim, v. a. aber 33–36 und 42–90.

42 Die Stellen finden sich in der zwischen 625 und 649 entstandenen *Notitia ecclesiarum urbis Romae*, cap. 17 (Valentini – Zucchetti – Glorie 1965, CCSL 175, 307): [...] *et longe in antro Trophimus martir.* Ebenfalls in das zweite Viertel des VII. Jahrhunderts datiert *De locis sanctis martyrum*. Ebd., cap. 14, 317: [...] *et Trophimus cum multis martyribus sepulti dormiunt.* Das *Itinerarium Malmesburiense* wird im Rahmen der *Gesta regum Anglorum* von Wilhelm von Malmesbury tradiert, soll aber bereits zwischen 648 und 682 verfasst worden sein. Ebd., cap. 9, 326: *Iuxta eam quiescunt in una ecclesia martyres [...] Trifomus.*

43 De Fiore² 1996, 122–128; Wellen 1961, 11, Abb. der Pyxis aus Grado ebd., 222, Abb. 42d.

44 Theodosius, *De situ terrae sanctae*, cap. 8 (Geyer 1898, CSEL 39, 142, 1965 wieder abgedruckt in CCSL 175, 114–125, hier 119): *Iuxta piscinam probaticam ibi est ecclesia domnae Mariae*, cap. 10 (CCSL 175, 119): *Ibi est*

dieses eine Mal verwandt,⁴⁵ einen weiteren Beleg liefert eine Weiheinschrift des V. Jahrhunderts aus der spanischen Provinz Baetica.⁴⁶

In Ravenna wird im Jahr 549 die Basilika Sant'Apollinare in Classe über dem Grab des heiligen Apollinaris geweiht.⁴⁷ Ungefähr zu dieser Zeit nahm die Auseinandersetzung um die Drei Kapitel gerade ihren Anfang. Als ‚Drei Kapitel‘ werden ein Brief des Ibas von Edessa († 457), die Schriften des Theodoret von Kyrrhos (~ † 466) und des Theodor von Mopsuestia († 428/429) bezeichnet, die sich alle drei gegen den Monophysitismus richten und deren Positionen in die Akten des Konzils von Chalkedon (451) eingingen. Unter dem Begriff ‚Dreikapitelstreit‘ fasst man die Auseinandersetzungen um diese Theologen zusammen, welche sich über einen längeren Zeitraum erstreckten, der um die Mitte des VI. Jahrhunderts beginnt und bis zur Synode zu Pavia 698/699 reicht.⁴⁸

Kaiser Iustinian (527–565) hatte sich ein erstes Mal mit dem Edikt von 543/544 gegen die Drei Kapitel gewandt, womit er sich den Beschlüssen des Konzils von Chalkedon widersetzte.⁴⁹ Zu einer endgültigen Verurteilung der Drei Kapitel kam es auf dem II. Konzil von Konstantinopel 553, das der Kaiser zwar einberufen hatte, an dem er selbst aber nicht teilnahm.⁵⁰

Maximianus († 556/557), der die bereits erwähnte Kirchweihe von Sant'Apollinare in Classe vorgenommen hat, stand von Beginn an auf Seiten Ostroms.⁵¹ Anders verhielt es sich mit den Bischöfen von Mailand und Aquileia: Datius von Mailand († 552) war einer der Ersten, der sich gegen die Verurteilung der Drei Kapitel durch das Edikt von 543/544 aussprach.⁵² Mit Papst Vigilius (537–555), der sich zunächst zu den Drei Kapiteln und Chalkedon bekannt hatte, soll er

ecclesia domnae Mariae matris Domini und cap. 28 (CCSL 175, 124): *Dum domna Maria mater Domni iret in Bethleem, descendit de asina et sedit super petram et benedixit eam.*

45 Maria ist auf den vor 800 entstandenen Authentiken aus Chelles, Sens, Rons und Sancta Sanctorum vertreten: ChLA XVIII 669 LXXII–LXXVIII; ChLA XIX 682 IV, XII–XIII, XXXVIII; ChLA XLIII 1240 I; Rom, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 15294, foll. 23^r, 38^r und 39^r; cf. auch Galland 2004, 117 und 130, Nr. 66, 96 und 97 sowie Sens, Trésor de la cathédrale (CEREP-Musées), J 104, cf. auch Prou – Chartraire 1898, 146, Nr. 23. Zu den Reliquien Marias Beissel 1909, 292–304; Lucius 1904, 466–468; König 1897.

46 CIL ²II 5, 715: a) *In nomine domini Iesu Christi consecratio domnorum Petri et Pauli die XIII kalendas iunias in quorum basilica* b) *requiescunt reliquiae sanctorum, id est domne Mariae, domni Iuliani, domni Istefani, domni Laurenti, domni Martini, domne Eulalie, domni Vincenti, domnorum trium.*

47 CIL XI 1, 295: *In hoc loco stetit arca beati Apolenaris sacerdotis et confessoris a tempore transitus sui usque diae qua per virum beatum Maximianum episcopum translata est et introducta in basilica quam Iulianus argentarius a fundamentis aedificavit et dedicata ab eodem viro beatissimo die VII iduum maiarum indictione duodecima octies post consulatum Basili iunioris*, cf. auch Agnellus, *Liber pontificalis ecclesiae Ravennatis*, cap. 77 (Mauskopf Deliyannis 2006, CCCM 199, 244–245). Zu Agnellus und seiner Reihenbiographie ravennatischer Bischöfe cf. Berschin ²2020, Bd. 2, 155–158 und Bd. 5, 103. Zur Verehrung des Apollinaris von Ravenna Will 1936.

48 Zum Dreikapitelstreit Chazelle – Cubitt 2007; Licht 2018, 157–164.

49 Das Edikt von 543/544 als „supposito primo editto contro i tre capitoli“ bei Amelotti – Migliardi Zingale 1977, 129–135.

50 Cf. hierzu das Vorwort von Johannes Straub zu den Konzilsakten von 553 in Schwartz – Straub 1970, XXXII–XXXIV, cf. auch Iustinians früheres Schreiben gegen die Drei Kapitel (CPG 6882) sowie sein Edikt aus dem Jahr 551 über den rechten Glauben (CPG 6885) in Schwartz 1939, 47–69 sowie 72–111, zu den Datierungen der beiden Dokumente ebd., 114–117.

51 Zu Maximianus von Ravenna Agnellus, *Liber pontificalis ecclesiae Ravennatis*, cap. 69–83 (Mauskopf Deliyannis 2006, CCCM 199, 238–251), cf. auch van Hoof 2016, 259–276, bes. 267–269 mit weiterer Literatur in Anm. 46.

52 Sotinel 2005, 315.

gemeinsam das Schicksal der Verfolgung geteilt haben.⁵³ Selbst als auch der Nachfolger Vigilius', Pelagius (556–561), das II. Konzil von Konstantinopel und damit die Verurteilung der Drei Kapitel anerkannt hatte, blieb der Widerstand der ligurischen und lombardischen Bischöfe ungebrochen.⁵⁴ Erst im Jahr 571/573 kehrte Mailand an die Seite Roms zurück.⁵⁵ Aquileia verharnte noch bis 698 im Schisma mit Rom.⁵⁶

Als die Langobarden in Italien einfielen, war Paulus I. von Aquileia nach Grado geflohen und hatte dorthin den gesamten Kirchenschatz mitgenommen.⁵⁷ Ob sich darunter bereits die oben genannten Authentiken samt Reliquien befanden, lässt sich nicht mit Sicherheit sagen, ist aber aufgrund der skizzierten historisch-politischen Entwicklung anzunehmen. Die Präsenz von Authentiken römischer Heiliger in Grado lässt einen Erwerb dieser Reliquien für die erste Hälfte des VI. Jahrhunderts sehr wahrscheinlich erscheinen. Der schriftgeschichtliche Befund sowie die Schreibweisen *Apollonaris*, *Bitus*, *Brancatius*, *Trofomus* und *Sabastianus* widersprechen dem nicht (Abb. 6).

III. Beispiel

Die letzte Reliquienauthentik (Abb. 7), die hier ausführlicher besprochen werden soll, begleitete den Leib des heiligen Bekenner Lubentius (*Hic requiescit corpus sancti Lubentii confessoris*).⁵⁸ Lubentius war als Knabe von seinen Eltern Martin von Tours († 397) übergeben worden, der ihn bei einem gemeinsamen Aufenthalt in Trier dem dortigen Bischof Maximinus anvertraut haben soll, der Lubentius später zum Priester in Koblenz an der Mosel (*in vico Cubruno*) bestellte. Nach dem Tod Maximins von Trier in Aquitanien sorgte Lubentius dafür, dass dessen Leib nach Trier überführt werden konnte. Er selbst stirbt nach seiner Rückkehr in Koblenz, wo sich der Heilige

⁵³ Cazzani ²1996, 37.

⁵⁴ Krahwinkler 1992, 70–71.

⁵⁵ Ebd., cf. auch Picard 1988, 412, Anm. 43.

⁵⁶ Das Jahr ergibt sich aus der Erwähnung der *Aquilenses* im *Carmen de synodo Ticinensi*. Es findet sich von der gleichen Hand in zwei Handschriften – Mailand, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, E. 147 sup., p. 114 und 116 (CLA III 26b+c) und C. 105 inf., fol. 121^{rv} (CLA III 323b) – und wurde ediert von Bethmann 1878, MGH SS rer. Lang. 1, 189–191 und Strecker 1923, MGH Poetae 4/2, 728–731. Holder-Egger bemerkte als erster das Akrostichon *Stefanus*, cf. Bethmann 1878, MGH SS rer. Lang. 1, 189. Je zwei aufeinanderfolgende Strophen bieten den gleichen Anfangsbuchstaben. Lehmann 1958, 469–471 schlug vor, *MM* der Strophe 17 und 18 mit *monachus* aufzulösen, die letzte Strophe mit dem Anfangsbuchstaben G gehörte für ihn als Schlussstrophe mit Doxologie und Fürbitte nicht mehr dazu. Zu diesem Gedicht cf. auch *TE.TRA.* I, 411–414 sowie Smolak 2005, 533–534.

⁵⁷ Diese Nachricht findet sich bei Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* II 10 (Bethmann – Waitz 1878, MGH SS rer. Lang. 1, 78): *Aquileiensi quoque civitati eiusque populis beatus Paulus patriarcha praeerat. Qui Langobardorum barbariem metuens, ex Aquileia ad Gradus insulam confugit secumque omnem suae thesaurum ecclesiae deportavit*. Auch die *Cronica de singulis patriarchis nove Aquileie*, das *Chronicon Gradense* und die *Cronaca Veneziana* des Iohannes diaconus Venetus berichten darüber; sie wurden ediert von Monticolo 1890, 5–16, 19–51 und 59–171. Das *Chronicon Gradense* (ebd., 49) und die *Cronica de singulis patriarchis nove Aquileie* (ebd., 6: *afferens secum corpora sanctorum martyrum Hilari et Taciani et reliquorum*) geben zusätzlich an, dass Paulus von Aquileia die Leiber der heiligen Märtyrer Hilarius und Tatianus und anderer mit sich führte, die Chronik von Venedig vermerkt, dass es die von Hermachor und anderen gewesen seien (ebd., 62: *secumque beatissimi martiris Hermachore et ceterorum sanctorum corpora, que ibi humata fuerant, deportavit et apud eundem Gradensem castrum honore dignissimo condidit*). Den Patriarchentitel soll Paulus sich selbst beigelegt haben; er wird als solcher bezeichnet von Pelagius I., *Epistula* 24 (Gassó – Batlle 1956, 74), cf. auch Lenel 1911, 101–103 sowie Villotta Rossi 1958/1959, 136.

⁵⁸ Zu Lubentius cf. Kloft 2007, 68–77.

aber nicht beisetzen lassen will. Erst nach einer längeren Lahnfahrt trifft er am erwähnten Bestattungsort Dietkirchen ein.⁵⁹

Die Historizität ist der Vita früh schon aberkannt worden: Zum einen lässt sich die gleichzeitige Nennung von Martin von Tours und Maximin von Trier chronologisch nicht in Einklang bringen;⁶⁰ zum anderen fußen große Teile der *Vita Lubentii* auf der älteren *Vita sancti Maximini* (BHL 5822), die im Jahr 839 eine karolingische Überarbeitung erfuhr.⁶¹ Die ältere Vita, die wahrscheinlich um 770 im Kloster St. Maximin in Trier entstanden ist, und die *Vita II* des Lupus gelten als älteste Zeugnisse für Lubentius.⁶² Ihm wird im Kalender des Psalteriums von St. Maximin an zwei Tagen gedacht (6. Februar und 13. Oktober). Beide Einträge stammen aus

59 Cf. die *Vita S. Lubentii presbyteri confessoris* (BHL 4968). Der Text wird nach einer Handschrift wiedergegeben in den AA SS Oct. VI, 202–203. Eine Übersetzung findet sich bei Müller 1969, 30–39. Schaus 1907, 164–167 hat ihn unter Hinzuziehen der *Vita S. Maximini* (BHL 5824) des Lupus von 839 auf schmalere handschriftliche Grundlage herausgegeben. Zu dieser Bearbeitung des Heiligenlebens cf. Berschin ²2020, Bd. 3, 188–193, zu dessen Handschriftenüberlieferung cf. auch *TE.TRA.* III, 445–451, wo allerdings das bei Berschin ²2020, Bd. 3, 188, Anm. 252 genannte „Weissenauer Passionale“ (Cologne, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 127, foll. 223^v–228^r) und der fünfte Band des 1945 vernichteten „Legendar von Böödeken“ († Münster, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, 214^{III}) nicht zitiert werden, weiter ist Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 5294 nicht „il ms. che ora appare il più antico“, sondern Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 576, an dem Trierer und Lorschener Hände beteiligt waren, cf. Hoffmann 1986, 495–496, die Datierung saec. X² bei Bischoff ²1989, 132. Die Wiener Handschrift (Sigle *1a* bei Krusch 1896, MGH SS rer. Merov. 3, 74) bietet auf fol. 13^v *Incipit prologus Lupi episcopi in vitam sancti Maximini episcopi*, was die Neuausgabe von Romano 1995, 68 ohne *Lupi episcopi* wiedergibt. Auch bei Sigehard in den *Miracula sancti Maximini* (BHL 5826) wird dem Autor der Maximinsvita der Weihegrad eines Bischofs zugeschrieben: *post editum a Lupo episcopo de vita sancti Maximini librum* (AA SS Maii VII, 25, cf. auch Waitz 1841, MGH SS 4, 230). Im Kalender des Psalteriums von St. Maximin wurde Abt Waldo als Adressat der Vita mit dem heiligen Lupus von Troyes († 478) in Verbindung gebracht, indem der Nachtrag *Obitus Uualdonis abbatis, presbyteri et monachi* am 30. Oktober (Manchester, The John Rylands Library, Latin MS 116, fol. 6^v) um *ad quem sanctus Lupus episcopus de Treca vitam sancti Maximini scripsit* ergänzt wurde, cf. auch fol. 4^v. Es lassen sich mindestens zwei gleichnamige Bischöfe um das Jahr der Abfassung nachweisen: Lupus von Châlons, den Traube mit dem Briefempfänger Gottschalks des Sachsen identifizierte (Traube 1896, MGH Poetae 3, 723–724), cf. auch Duchesne 1915, 98, sowie Lupus von Chieti, der als Teilnehmer einer Bischofsversammlung am 15. Juni 844 in Rom erwähnt wird, cf. Hartmann 1984, MGH Conc. 3, 24–26, hier 25 mit Anm. 19, cf. auch Gams 1873–1886, 875. In der Forschung wird das Werk aufgrund stilistischer Merkmale Lupus von Ferrières († ~862/863) zugeschrieben, auch wenn letzterer Abt und nicht Bischof war, cf. Winheller 1935, 24–26.

60 Cf. Berschin ²2020, Bd. 3, 191–192. Romano 1995, 87, Anm. 17 hat erneut vorgeschlagen im Martin der Maximinsvita Martin von Mainz zu sehen, cf. auch Schaus 1907, 168 mit Anm. 18. Ohne präzisierende Ortsangabe lässt sich aber bei der Bezeichnung *opinatissimus confessor Martinus* schwerlich an jemand anderen als Martin von Tours denken. Zur Verehrung dieses Heiligen Ewig 1979, 355–370 sowie ebd., 371–392. Der Name Martin ist auf den Reliquienauthentiken vor 800 gut vertreten. Nur zweimal findet er sich in Verbindung mit einem Ortsattribut zur Präzisierung der Herkunft – Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, Archives nationales, AB/XIX/3971, Nr. 80 (ChLA XVIII 669 LXXX): *Reliquias sancti Martini papa Romensis et marteres* und Sens, Trésor de la cathédrale (CEREP-Musées), J 70 (ChLA XIX 682 LIV): *Sancti Martini Torronici*.

61 Die ältere Vita ist noch immer in den *Acta Sanctorum* zu lesen (AA SS Maii VII, 21–25). Winheller 1935, 10 und 21 nennt drei Handschriften, welche den Text oder Teile davon überliefern – Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 15029, foll. 14^v–21^v und lat. 3809A, foll. 249^v–251^v sowie Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Hs. 137/50 8^s, fol. 192^v [194^v]; die beiden letzten bieten einen anderen Prolog (BHL 5823). Zur Datierung der *Vita prima* cf. Winheller 1935, 19 sowie Berschin ²2020, Bd. 3, 66–67, zur Vita ebd., 64–70. Zur karolingischen Überarbeitung bereits oben, Anm. 59.

62 Cf. Kloft 2007, 68. Zum Klosterheiligen cf. auch Resmini 2016, 593–605.



Abb. 7. Bleiauthentik aus dem Lubentiussarkophag (Limburg, Diözesanmuseum, Inv. Nr. L 279), Breite 11 cm, Höhe 4,9 cm: *Hic requiescit corpus sancti Lubentii confessoris*. Foto: Michael Benecke, Nentershausen/Ww.

der Zeit seiner Anlage im zweiten Drittel des IX. Jahrhunderts.⁶³ Später wird man in Dietkirchen am 6. Februar seine Translation commemorieren.⁶⁴

Folgt man der Datierung Bernhard Bischoffs so liegt mit der Bleiauthentik des heiligen Bekenners Lubentius ein Zeugnis aus der zweiten Hälfte des VIII. Jahrhunderts vor.⁶⁵ Es soll nicht verschwiegen werden, dass es auch andere Datierungsvorschläge gibt, so treten Konrad Bauer, Wilhelm Lotz und Friedrich Schneider für das X. Jahrhundert ein.⁶⁶ Die jüngste paläographische Untersuchung stammt von Wolf-Heino Struck und orientiert sich an einer kopialüberlieferten Urkunde für das *monasterium sancti Lubentii* aus dem Jahr 841. In diesem Jahr sieht Struck den Terminus ante quem für die Authentik und die gleichlautende Sarginschrift gegeben. Die Datierungsspanne lässt er mit folgenden Argumenten vom Ende des VIII. bis zur ersten Hälfte des IX. Jahrhunderts reichen:

Die Schriftformen stehen deutlich unter dem Einfluß der karolingischen Renaissance, mit der seit dem ausgehenden 8. Jh. die römische Kapitale der Kaiserzeit als Monumentalschrift wiederbelebt wurde [...]. Die Buchstaben sind nicht mehr wie meist im 6. und 7. J. in einer den Runen verwandten Art nach oben und unten verlängert. [...] Das eckige C läßt sich sogar bis ins 11. Jh. beobachten. Bedeutsam für die Bestimmung des terminus ante quem ist das S in Form eines

63 Manchester, The John Rylands Library, Latin MS 116, fol. 2^r: *VIII idus februarias* [...] *Et natalis sancti Lubentii confessoris*, fol. 6^r: *III idus octobres natalis sancti Lubentii presbyteri confessoris*. Zur Datierung der Handschrift Bischoff 2004, 170, Nr. 2679.

64 Struck 1986, 206. Der Eintrag – *Translatio (sancti) Lubentii* – findet sich im Nekrologium I (Wiesbaden, Hessisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Bestand 19 Nr. 341), cf. Joachim 1877, 255 und im Nekrologium II (Wiesbaden, Hessisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Bestand 19 Nr. 342), cf. Struck 1969, 26.

65 Die paläographische Beurteilung von Bernhard Bischoff findet sich bei Becker 1967, 18–19. Eine ähnliche Einschätzung Bischoffs bietet auch Müller 1969, 78–79.

66 Struck 1986, 54.

spiegelverkehrten Z; es kommt seit dem 7. Jh. auf und läuft Mitte des 9. Jh. aus. Deuten die lockere Fügung der Buchstaben und ihre Steilheit mehr auf die Zeit vor 800, so spricht die Anwendung von Enklaven (die Einsetzung von kleinen Buchstaben zwischen die normalgroßen Formen), wie es die karolingische Schrift nach antike Vorbildern liebte, eher für das fortgeschrittene 9. Jh.⁶⁷

Auffällig an Strucks Argumentation ist die starke Abgrenzung zu den Runen: Nicht nur seien die Buchstaben nicht mehr verlängert, sollen also nicht mehr die vertikale Betonung der Schäfte aufweisen; sondern er betont weiter in Unterscheidung zum rautenförmigen Runen-O, dass O wieder rund sei, R auf der Grundlinie aufsetze und folglich nicht über eine verkürzte Cauda verfüge. Bei beidem ist ihm natürlich zuzustimmen. Nur fällt die Streckung der Capitalisbuchstaben, „ihre Steilheit“, bei nahezu allen Buchstaben auf. Nicht von der Hand zu weisen sind auch das eckige C und das S in Form eines spiegelverkehrten Z, das Struck für seinen Terminus ante quem heranziehen möchte – doch es taucht auch noch später auf.⁶⁸ Und dennoch taugen gerade diese beiden Buchstaben zu einem weiteren Vergleich: So weist der Trierer Ludubertusstein aus dem VIII. Jahrhundert ebenfalls spitze S und eckige C auf.⁶⁹ Gleiches findet sich in einer Handschrift des ausgehenden VIII. Jahrhunderts.⁷⁰ Wenig Probleme bereitet das Q, das aber wohl eher als gestrecktes unziales Q anzusprechen ist. Es handelt sich um den einzigen Fremdbuchstaben in der stilisierten Capitalis. Eher ein frühes Merkmal sind im Übrigen die eingestellten Buchstaben.⁷¹ Nimmt man die einzelnen Beobachtungen zusammen, gebührt der Datierung von Bischoff der Vorzug. Zusammen mit der *Vita Isancti Maximini*, in welcher der *beatus Lubentius* eine herausragende Rolle bei der Translation spielte, belegt die Bleiauthentik eine Verehrung des Heiligen im ausgehenden VIII. Jahrhundert.

Ausblick und Fazit

Fragt man nach der ältesten Authentik aus Metall, so ist bei Xavier Barbier de Montault zu lesen:

Le plus ancien exemple, actuellement existant, du *pitacium* latin, gravé sur plomb, a été découvert à Augsbourg dans le sarcophage anépigraphie de l'illustre martyre Afra et il ne porte autre chose que son nom écrit en majuscules romaines: AFRA.⁷²

Gefunden wurde die Bleitafel (Abb. 8) im Jahr 1804 als eine Kommission am 15. August im Rahmen der 1500-Jahr-Feierlichkeiten des Martyriums Afras Gebeine erheben ließ.⁷³

67 Zitat aus Struck 1959, 1. Zu Sarkophag, Authentik und Reliquien Struck 1986, 202–205, zur Datierung der Inschriften ebd., 54.

68 Cf. beispielsweise die Grabinschrift des 1048 verstorbenen Abtes Isarnus (Marseille, Saint-Victor) in Favreau – Michaud – Mora 1989, Pl. XXXI, Fig. 63.

69 Zum Ludubertusstein cf. Marrou – Gauthier 1975, Nr. 29A.

70 London, British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius C II, fol. 126^v (CLA II 191): *SVCCCESSIT*, cf. auch Koch 2007, 98.

71 Zu diesem Phänomen in Handschriften Becker – Licht 2016, Taf. 4: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 11627, fol. 180^v (saec. VIII², Corbie) und Taf. 13: Rom, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 170, fol. 57^v (saec. VIII ex., Lorsch). In Taf. 22: Rom, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 1449, fol. 27^v (ante a. 837, Lorsch) sind die eingestellten Buchstaben nahezu aussortiert.

72 Barbier de Montault 1895, 50.

73 Ein Kupferstich der Bleiplatte findet sich als Tafel in Braun 1805, ebd. auch das „Notariats-Instrument über die geheime Untersuchung des Grabes, und die Erhebung des heil. Leibes der heil. Märtyrinn Afra, in lateinischer Sprache mit gegenüberstehender deutscher Uebersetzung“, II–XV sowie das „Notariats-



Abb. 8. Bleiauthentik aus dem Afrasarkophag (Augsburg, St. Ulrich und Afra).
Foto: Renate Mäder, Augsburg.

Diese wurden aus einem „Sarg von einem aschenfärbigen Marmor“ (*sarcophagus vivo e marmore exsculptus coloris cinericii*) geborgen und in eine hölzerne Bahre übertragen, nachdem die „eingegossene Masse“ (*massa infusa*) entfernt worden war, welche den Leib zuvor überzogen hatte. Während dieser Prozedur entdeckte man „eine bleyerne Platte, welche neben dem Haupte der heil. Märtyrinn lag“ (*lamina plumbea, quae jacuit prope caput S. Martyris*). Erwähnt werden die „altrömische[n] Charaktere“ (*characteres antiquo-romani*), durch die kein Zweifel mehr an der Identität der Heiligen geblieben sei.⁷⁴ Die Augsbургische Ordinari Postzeitung vermeldete neun-einhalb Monate später zum 27. Mai 1805:

Gestern nahm in der Kirche der heil. Ulrich und Afra die Uebersetzungs-Feyerlichkeit der heil. Märtyrin und Schutzpatronin Augsburgs, Afra, ihren Anfang. Es wurde mit den Reliquien der Heiligen, welche 8. Priester in Dalmatiken abwechselnd trugen, eine glänzende Prozession bey sehr günstigem Wetter nach dem Dom gehalten [...]. Die heil. Reliquien sind ganz einfach nach griechischem Geschmack im weissem Schleyer, mit goldenen Spitzen garnirt, gekleidet. Ein roth damastener, und mit Gold gestickter Gürtel umgiebt die Lenden, und ein blauer

Instrument über die feyerliche Rekognition der heil. Gebeine der heil. Märtyrinn Afra, in lateinischer Sprache nebst deutscher Uebersetzung“, XVI–XXIX. Die Bleiplatte wird erwähnt ebd., IX und XI sowie XX und XXVI. Eine Abbildung des Kupferstichs von 1805 wurde verkleinert wieder abgedruckt in Metzger – Thöner 2004, 52. Herzlich danken möchte ich Renate Mäder (Diözesanmuseum St. Afra), die geduldig meine Anfragen beantwortet und mir die hier abgebildete Photographie zur Verfügung gestellt hat.

⁷⁴ Cf. das eben zitierte „Notariats-Instrument über die geheime Untersuchung des Grabes [...]“, VI–XI.

schön gestickter Mantel von Atlas bedeckt beyde Seiten. Das Haupt ist mit einem silbernen grün lackirten Lorbeerkrantz umwunden; einen Palmzweig hält die Heilige in der rechten, und eine Fackel in der linken Hand. Mehrere Ringe, Nadeln, Hals- und Ohrenschmuck von Topas, Rosetten und Smaragd, dann goldene Ketten schmücken das Haupt, die Brust, die Hände und Füße. Dieselbe sind in einem geschmackvoll gearbeiteten kupfernen und vergoldeten, und mit silbernen Rosetten, Guirlanden etc. gezierten Glaskasten verschlossen. An der Fußstelle sieht man die bey der Erhebung vorgefundene bleyerne Platte, auf welcher der Name Afra mit schönen römischen Kapitalbuchstaben eingegraben zu lesen, und zwo alte, und zwo neue auf diese Feyerlichkeit verfertigte Münzen.⁷⁵

Die Bleiplatte war inzwischen vom Kopf an die Füße gewandert, wo sie sich auch heute noch befindet. Alle Zeugnisse über ihre Entdeckung zu Beginn des XIX. Jahrhunderts betonen das hohe Alter der Buchstaben, die als römisch oder gar altrömisch charakterisiert werden. Aufgegriffen wird dieses Urteil von Barbier de Montault, der sich auf De Rossi beruft, für den das Fehlen christlicher Attribute eine zusätzliche Authentifizierung darzustellen scheint.⁷⁶ Dennoch gilt auch hier Wilhelm Wattenbachs Warnung, dass bei „Tafeln aus Gräbern, welche die Namen hervorragender oder gar als heilig verehrter Persönlichkeiten tragen, [...] große Vorsicht und sorgfältige Unterscheidung nothwendig“ ist, „da sie auch bei einer früheren Oeffnung des Grabes hineingelegt sein können“.⁷⁷ Im Fall der heiligen Afra wissen wir von einer solchen Graböffnung: Als Bischof Embrico von Augsburg (1064–1077) im ersten Jahr seiner Amtszeit die Kirche der seligen Afra bis auf die Grundmauern niederriß und dabei einen viereckigen steinernen Sarkophag auf fand (*ecclesiam beatae Afrae a fundamentis destruxit; et inventum est corpus eius in lapideo sarcophago de quadro mirae magnitudinis*), wurde darin der Leib der Heiligen, der einst mit strahlend weißem Mörtel überzogen worden war, unversehrt aufgefunden (*corpus eius integrum repertum est et quodam candidissimo caemento obductum*).⁷⁸ Aus dieser Zeit stammt zumindest einer der beiden ‚alten‘ Münzfunde, welche die zitierte Augsburgerische Ordinari Postzeitung erwähnt.⁷⁹ Sie werden wie die Bleiplatte und die beiden Jubiläumsmedaillen auf rotem Samt auf liegend von Goldborte gerahmt (Abb. 8). Links und rechts neben der Authentik sind je zwei Prägungen zu sehen, von denen die rechts unten anlässlich der Feierlichkeiten des Jahres 1804

75 Augsburgerische Ordinari Postzeitung Nro. 127. Dienstag, den 28. May. Anno 1805, [3–4].

76 De Rossi 1864, 98: „Del pari silenziosa è l'arca della celebre martire Afra in Augusta. Dentro essa è stata rinvenuta una lamina di piombo con buone lettere quadrate romane: nè cotesta lamina nel segreto della tomba osò dire altro, che AFRA, senza segno veruno di cristianità. Una cautela sì grande, e quest'alto silenzio dicono più ch'io non saprei spiegare“.

77 Wattenbach ³1896, 48.

78 Cf. den Inventionsbericht (BHL 115) in den AA SS Aug. II, 53 und 63–64. Ähnliches berichten die *Annales Augustani*, ad a. 1064 (Pertz 1839, MGH SS 3, 127–128). Cf. auch die anderen Zeugnisse bei Volkert 1977, 109–110. Zur Unversehrtheit heiliger Leiber Angenendt 1991, 320–348.

79 Cf. oben mit Anm. 75, cf. auch Braun 1805, 23 sowie den in Anm. 73 bereits erwähnten Kupferstich, hier Fig. b und c.

angefertigt wurde.⁸⁰ Die Münze darüber zeigt das gekrönte Brustbild Heinrichs IV. (1056–1106),⁸¹ die links oben wohl „ziemlich undeutlich einen Kopf“.⁸² Eine Beigabe der Münzen oder der Bleiplatte wird von der Überlieferung nicht erwähnt, ebenso wenig wird im Zusammenhang mit der *inventio* berichtet, dass man ein Schriftzeugnis zur Identifikation der heiligen Afra vorgefunden hätte.

Eine Schwierigkeit für die Datierung stellt die Knappheit des Schriftzeugnisses dar. Sie ist aus vier Buchstaben zu ermitteln, von denen zwei gleich sind und „der erste Buchstabe A durch so viele Jahrhunderte verzehrt und nicht mehr so sichtbar war“.⁸³ Die Inschrift zeigt eine Capitalis quadrata, die in den Beschreibstoff geritzt wurde. Der Mittelbalken des A ist nur leicht zu sehen, sein rechter Schrägschaft weist beide Male eine Konturierung auf. Auch F und R sind teilweise konturiert. Inschriften mit Konturierung sind nicht häufig, kommen aber bereits in der Spätantike vor.⁸⁴ Die im Sarkophag der Afra aufgefundene Bleitafel zeigt in Paläographie, Formular und Layout keine Ähnlichkeit zu den bei Hartmut Ehrentraut verzeichneten Stücken. Das gemeinsame Protokoll führt „in der Regel mindestens Name und Stand des Bestatteten“ an. Belege mit bloßer Namensnennung sind bei ihm nicht zu finden.⁸⁵

80 Der Revers trägt die achtzeilige Inschrift: *FÜNFZEHENTES IUBELIAHR DES MARTERTODES DER HEIL. AFRA IN AUGSBURG*, cf. auch die Abbildung auf dem Kupferstich ebd., Fig. g. Der auf dem Kupferstich wiedergegebene Avers, der auch links unten von der Bleiplatte zu sehen ist (Abb. 8), zeigt einen Sarg mit Kreuz, welcher seitlich die Inschrift *S. AFRA* trägt; darüber schwebt die von einem Strahlenkranz umgebene Märtyrerkrone. Umlaufend die Inschrift *ERHEBUNG DER HEILIGEN AFRA. DEN 15 AUG. 1804*, die hier wegen der Einfassung mit einer Goldborte nicht zu sehen ist. Auf dem anderen Avers ist mit der gleichen Inschrift die „von Strahlen umgebene heilige Afra, auf einem brennenden Scheiterhaufen stehend, in der Rechten einen Oelzweig und in der Linken einen Baumstamm haltend“ dargestellt (Beierlein 1857, 52), cf. auch die als Fig. f des Kupferstichs dokumentierte und hier anzunehmende Bildseite der rechten Medaille. Gefertigt wurden die beiden Jubiläumsmünzen vom Augsburger Medailleur Neuß, cf. Braun 1805, 73.

81 Während bei Braun 1805, 23 noch von einer „Umschrift [...] FINIAS und +“ die Rede ist, wird der Denar von Heiß 2004, 52, Anm. 5 unter Vergleich eines Exemplars bei Dannenberg 1876, 214 mit Taf. XXIII, 546 mit einer Münze des Bischofs Wilhelm I. von Utrecht (1054–1076) identifiziert, deren Umschrift dort mit + *VVHHEINIVS* wiedergegeben wird.

82 Braun 1805, 23.

83 „Notariats-Instrument über die geheime Untersuchung des Grabes [...]“ in Braun 1805, IX.

84 Zu dieser Einschätzung cf. Kaufmann 1917, 26, Anm. 1. Einige römische Beispiele sind ICUR N.S. I 1577 und V 14059 mit Tab. XXVII c 7, hier die auch bei Kaufmann 1917, 34 (Bild 31) abgebildete Inschrift aus der Praetextataskatakombe, sowie Correra 1894, 98, Nr. 231 und 1895, 212, Nr. 349. Eine Übersicht über (teilweise) konturierte Inschriften fehlt, auch die zeitliche Entwicklung von Konturschrift wurde bisher nicht in den Blick genommen. Eine der Inschriften, die sich heute in Wolfenbüttel, Braunschweigisches Landesmuseum, Abt. Ur- und Frühgeschichte findet (Fragment C), wurde konturiert in den Putz geritzt. Sie wird ins IX. Jh. datiert, cf. Lampe – Wulf 2016, 443 mit Abb. 387. Die bleierne Grabauthentik des Trierer Erzbis. Bertulf († 883) weist teilweise konturierte Formen auf, cf. Fuchs 2006, Tab. 14, Fig. 52, und wird in die Mitte des XI. Jh. datiert, cf. ebd., 170. Die konturierte Inschrift der Grabauthentik des Bremer Erzbischofs Liemar (1072–1101) bietet den Todestag des Verstorbenen: *XVII KALENDAS IVNII LIEMARVS ARCHIEPISCOPVS OBBIT CON-STRVCTOR HVIVS AECLESIAE* (Kat. 1992, 339 mit der unteren Abb. auf 340). Zeilenlinierung zeigt auch die ebenfalls bleierne Hilariaauthentik, die mit *s(ancte) Hilarie ma(rtyri)s* Afras Mutter benennt (Augsburg, Diözesanmuseum St. Afra, DMA 6128, Maße: 12,6 x 3,7 cm). Ich danke Renate Mäder für die Mitteilung der Maße sowie das Übersenden einer Photographie des Dokuments. George 1989, 92 datiert die Inschrift eines sehr kleinen Silberreliquars (4,0 x 1,4–1,8 x 1,0 cm), dessen Inschrift den Erzmärtyrer Stephan nennt, saec. XII ex. – XIII in.

85 Weder in der Dissertation noch im 1952 erschienenen Beitrag lässt sich ein passendes Vergleichsbeispiel ermitteln. In seinem Artikel resümiert er: „Die Form der Bleitafeln ist keineswegs einheitlich. Am häufigsten kommen

Die heilige Afra ist früh schon verehrt worden. Aus dem ausgehenden VI. und der ersten Hälfte des VII. Jahrhunderts haben sich literarische Zeugnisse erhalten,⁸⁶ und auch aus den darauffolgenden Jahrhunderten sind uns Kultzeugnisse bekannt.⁸⁷ Die alleinige Beschriftung der Bleiplatte mit *AFRA* ohne Heiligenattribut, die schon De Rossi stützen ließ,⁸⁸ macht eine Entstehung zum Begräbniszeitpunkt wahrscheinlich.⁸⁹ Mit der Afraauthentik würde somit nicht nur der früheste schriftliche Beleg ihres Lebens vorliegen, sondern auch die derzeit älteste Grabauthentik, die durch ihre spätere Rezeption zur Reliquienauthentik wurde.

Die betrachteten Zeugnisse stehen auf Metall. Bei den Authentiken aus Sila und aus dem frühmittelalterlichen Frankenreich handelt es sich um Bleitafeln, bei denen aus Grado um Goldplättchen. Es sind ferner Beschriftungen auf Messing und später auch Silber überliefert. Wenn man sich überhaupt zu verallgemeinernden Schlussfolgerungen hinreißen lassen darf, dann besteht eine ‚Uniformity‘ hinsichtlich des Beschreibstoffes, der sich über die Regionen und die Jahrhunderte hält.⁹⁰ Die Zertifizierung auf Blei erfolgt für ganze Reliquienensembles in Form von Inventarauthentiken, aber auch für einzelne Reliquien, darunter Körper von Heiligen. Der Regionalismus zeigt sich in der Schrift. Lokalisierungen und Datierungen der Schriftträger erweisen sich hierbei von unschätzbarem Wert.

Das älteste datierte Beispiel einer Reliquienauthentik auf Metall stammt aus dem antiken Sila im Norden des heutigen Algeriens. In der Inventarauthentik aus dem Jahr 585 werden afrikanische Schriftmerkmale greifbar: Neben hebraisierenden Abkürzungen lassen sich einzelne typische Abkürzungen extrahieren wie z. B. NN für *nonas* oder das Nomen sacrum für *episcopus*. Das Auftreten von großem Delta für D scheint ebenfalls ein afrikanisches Symptom im VI. Jahrhundert zu sein. Der Blick auf die Kürzungsgewohnheiten, insbesondere auf die Nomina sacra lohnt sich, wie auch im Falle von Grado deutlich wird. Hier zeigen die goldenen Einzelaauthentiken jüngere Kürzungsgewohnheiten als die Pyxiden. Dennoch sollte man Abstand von vorschnellen Verallgemeinerungen nehmen, wie das Beispiel der Lubentiusauthentik zeigt. Das Zusammenspiel der Merkmale trägt letztlich dazu bei, Entstehungsort und -zeit des jeweiligen Schriftzeugnisses zu bestimmen.

Rechtecke und Kreuze vor. In Köln begegnen im 11. Jahrhundert zwei kreisrunde Platten“ (Ehrentraut 1952, 215).

86 Hierzu Berschin 2004, 34–41 und 1982, 108–121.

87 Zur Verehrung bis ins XII. Jh. Pötl 2004, 52–61. Zum Afrakult im hochmittelalterlichen Katalonien mit einer Erstedition der *Vita S. Narcissi* Berschin 2020, 75–96.

88 De Rossi 1864, 98.

89 Ich danke Prof. Licht, der mich in diesem Zusammenhang auf St. Petersburg, Publichnaia Biblioteka, Q v I 3 (CLA XI 1613) aufmerksam gemacht hat. Der Codex, der schon Chatelain als älteste Augustinushandschrift galt, konnte von Green 1959, 191–197 in die Jahre 396–426 datiert werden. Wie aus dem Addendum zu seinem Artikel hervorgeht, war bereits zuvor von Olga Dobiaš-Roždestvenskaja angemerkt worden: „the colophon ‚explicit augustini episcopi‘, and not ‚sancti augustini‘ has the appearance of being contemporary with the author“.

90 Zur Beständigkeit verschiedener Materialien und der Analysekategorie Dauer cf. Allgaier – Bolle – Jaspert – Knauber – Lieb – Roels – Sauer – Schneidereit – Wallenwein 2019, 181–244.

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AA SS: Acta Sanctorum.

AE: L'Année épigraphique.

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THE ‘HABIT’ OF WRITING ON SLATE IN LATE ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES

Isabel Velázquez Soriano

1. Introduction: Hard materials for inscriptions

It is traditionally accepted that there is a close relationship between an inscription’s text and the material on which it is inscribed.¹ Although this is not a systematic principle and various exceptions to this rule exist, it is clear that certain materials are preferred over others for particular types of text. Stone is, without a doubt, one of the most used materials: marble, limestone, sandstone, granite or any other kind. The selection of one kind of stone over another is conditioned by the monumentality of the area or building where the inscriptions are to be located and the importance of the text, as in the case of many votive inscriptions or those commemorating triumphs or the ancestry of the people honoured in them. And a key factor in the choice of one particular type of stone is the availability or accessibility of materials in the geographical surroundings.

The use of bronze, on the other hand, is decisive for inscriptions with a legal content, especially in the Roman West.² Lead is inevitably associated with the *tabellae defixionum*, although they were not all written on lead. Materials such as pottery sherds, unfired clay, mud, jewels, bones, wood and others are linked to domestic *instrumenta* and objects of different types and wide-ranging content.³

We know of certain famous collections of Latin inscriptions, such as the *tabellae defixionum*, which were mainly (though not exclusively) written on lead and have been edited by Audollent (Audollent 1904). Other collections include the wooden Vindolanda tablets (Bowman & Thomas 1974; 1994; 2003) and Tablettes Albertini (Courtois 1952), or the various sets of ostraca dotted across the Roman Empire, both in the East and the West.⁴

It is precisely in these collections that the concept and definition of epigraphy itself falls under scrutiny. Indeed, the blurred nature of the boundaries between epigraphy, palaeography and other disciplines related to writing comes to the fore. The exception comes in the exclusive difference of the materials used, their formats and types of writing and even the *ordinatio* of the texts on the materials.⁵ Let us recall here, for example, how the corpus of Greek and Roman *epistulae* edited by

1 This study has been carried out as part of research projects HAR2015-65649-C2-1-P (Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness) and H2019-HUM/5742 (Comunidad de Madrid). I would like to thank Dr Olivia Cockburn for translating the article into English.

2 A number of ‘bronze legal tablets’ have been discovered in Roman Hispania, although stone was very common in the East for recording laws, cf. Beltrán Lloris 1999.

3 All manuals on epigraphy should mention the writing materials used. See, for example Andreu Pintado 2009, with its bibliography of reference. On epigraphic materials in Hispania see, amongst others, Mayer 1992; Mayer & Rodà 1998; Rodà 2004; Caballos Rufino 2008; Andreu Pintado 2011; Simón Cornago 2013.

4 Cf. Ast, this volume, for references to ostraca from North Africa.

5 See Velázquez Soriano 2008a.

Cugusi covers *epistulae* written on ostraca, *tabulae* and papyrus, all with similar content and functions (Cugusi 1992).

It is therefore often the content that conditions the epigraphic or non-epigraphic nature of some of these texts written on hard materials.

Despite this, the epigraphic or non-epigraphic nature of these texts can be accompanied by other formal characteristics of significance. The first of these is the writing style used. Although we cannot generalise completely, epigraphic texts *sensu stricto*, are usually written in capital letters and their texts have a particular *ordinatio* across the surface. They are written with greater or lesser skill, although they are sometimes inscribed so crudely that they are hard to make out. In contrast, ‘non-inscriptional texts’ are usually written in lower-case letters and cursive script, their layout on the surface simply respects the margins and follows lines, as we see on soft materials, but without the *impaginatio* typical of the latter.⁶

It may be that the idea that epigraphy is ‘exposed’ writing with a communicative function (Susini 1982: 3; Donati 2002: 7–8), to be read aloud and in public, is its basic defining feature. It is essential for us to view epigraphic texts as messages written on materials that are usually labelled ‘hard’ since, as I have mentioned elsewhere, ‘epigraphy is communication that is visible and permanent’.⁷

2. Writing on slates in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages

2.1 The use of slate as a writing material

Most of the materials employed in antiquity continued into the late and medieval periods, although the methods and styles used in inscriptions changed, in some cases substantially so. This is partly because of the penetration of Christianity and is also due to various functional changes, as we see, for example, in monumental inscriptions, which adapted to the new times and circumstances.

Slate was not used frequently in Spain in Roman times, despite it being a material on which incisions could easily be made. There have been finds from the Roman period, between the first and third centuries AD, in areas close to the Roman Riotinto mines (Huelva). Their content relates to the price of a certain product (Gimeno Pascual & Stylow 2007: 183–191). Other Roman tablets, which contain personal names, have been found in El Sauzón and El Manchego (Villanueva del Duque, Cordoba) (García Romero 1997).

Given their low numbers in the Roman period, the relatively high concentration of collections of slates from the Visigothic period (5th to 8th c.) is somewhat surprising at first glance. Judging from the information we have on their findings and locations, we can deduce that slate began to be used relatively frequently in Visigothic Spain. As a writing material, it was convenient, easy to inscribe and could be transported without issue. The latter is particularly important in order to explain some collections of slates, especially those known as the Lerilla or numerical slates.

Before we focus our attention on the ‘Visigothic slates’ in particular, we should recall the impressive sepulchral find held in the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid that contains

6 I refer here to the drawing of guidelines, lines for writing which ran vertically or horizontally, since those that are sometimes found in inscriptions on hard materials are different from those found on parchment and codices.

7 Velázquez Soriano, 2008a. I do still have a few doubts about my own assertion, however: How should we view inscriptions placed in hidden areas or on objects where noone should see them? What should we make of written texts on fabrics that were to be displayed publically, for example, on medieval tapestries?

the epitaph of the Presbyterian Crispin and dates back to 731 (= AD 693). The piece is a *carmen epigraphicum* written in hexameter, with a few mistakes. Verses 11 to 17 on the inscription adapt verses from the epitaph of Queen Reciberga, which was composed by Eugenius of Toledo. As we know, this magnificent inscription was found in 1858 in a church in Las Huertas de Guarrazar, near Guadamar (Toledo), in an entrance leading to where the Guarrazar treasure was found.⁸

This sepulchral inscription shows that slates were also used as materials for traditional inscriptions, just like other kinds of stones, although this was not commonplace. Despite this, we should bear in mind that slate slabs have been used to cover tombs ever since this period and sometimes to mark out or signal burials in necropoleis. However, Crispin's inscription is exceptional, as it differs in size and dimension (178 × 74 cm) from the so-called 'Visigothic slates' that we will deal with in what follows.

2.2 Typology and Chronology of the 'Visigothic Slates'

The 'Visigothic slates' can be classified into three groups: textual tablets (also called Diego Álvaro tablets, as this is where the largest finds were made), numerical tablets (or Lerilla tablets, for the same reason) and drawing tablets (Díaz y Díaz 1966; Velázquez Soriano 2000 & 2004).⁹

Whilst more than 180 textual slates have been found,¹⁰ there are well over 1,000 fragments of numerical slates, although it is possible that several of these could be joined together to make larger pieces. Drawing slates are less common, although they have not really been counted nor studied in a systematic way to date.¹¹

One of the most interesting features of these slates is their relatively small and irregular size, which is very different from the slate slab used for Crispin's inscription. Only a few are of significant size and thickness and these sit in vast contrast with the great majority. In general, they are pieces of slate whose size makes them fit into the palm of the hand easily. They are neither thick nor too heavy, meaning that they could be handled with ease and several could be transported together without too much issue. It is true that most are simply fragments, but some slates with text on them can give us an idea of their size.

The question regarding the size and form of the slates has not received sufficient attention until now and it may be that it can provide us with more information than seems possible at first glance. Even though we might not be able to prove it, it is likely that larger and thicker pieces of slate were chosen if the content to be incised on them was destined to remain *in situ* and not be moved elsewhere. The opposite may have been the case for some of the numerical slates, according to hypotheses about their use, which with certain improvements and further research I believe could be

8 For an edition of the text, see Velázquez Soriano 2001: 340–346; I have recently published it in the new edition of *CIL* II2 13,1 158 (= Abascal Palazón & Alföldy 2019: 79–80). See also Velázquez Soriano 2004.

9 These labels are used in scientific literature on the subject.

10 To date I have personally edited 163 slates, but I am currently working on more from different locations and periods. I have also helped archaeologists with readings of very sparse fragments from La Legoriza and other areas in Salamanca and Cantabria that they have come across in their digs.

11 Some of these are printed in Morín 2014. One of the most important ones is published in Santonja Gómez & Moreno Alcalde 1991–1992. A thesis is currently being written on this matter, under the tutelage of Prof. Santiago Castellanos at the Universidad de León.



Fig. 1. Map of the Iberian Peninsula with slate findings. © I. Velázquez Soriano.

correct. These slates have been studied in recent years, in particular as a result of findings at some archaeological sites that are better known than others.¹²

Most of the numerical slates clearly date to between the sixth and seventh centuries AD, although some go back to the fourth and fifth centuries and Roman Late Antiquity. These include a collection of more than 50 slates from ‘Los Azafranales’, close to the city centre of Coca (*Cauca*) in Segovia. It is likely that these slates were used for taxation and accountancy purposes, linked to the tax collection authorities of Cauca itself. In ‘Las Pizarras’, a place close to the suburbs of Coca, a collection of numerical slates has also been found at what seems to have been a late-Imperial villa, abandoned in around the fifth century.¹³ Perhaps these slates are nothing more than proof of some kind of domestic bookkeeping, but they do show that slates were used to record accounts. In 2003, in San Pelayo (Aldealengua, Salamanca), a villa was excavated dating back to the end of the third–beginning of the fourth century and abandoned in the fifth. There, a numerical slate was also found (Dahí Elena 2007; Martín Viso 2013: 3).

To the numerical slates from before the sixth to seventh centuries, we should add two from Braga in Portugal, which survive only as fragments but contain *defixiones*. I believe that these tablets date no later than the fifth century, given the type of lettering used.¹⁴ Their discovery near

12 The most important studies are undoubtedly Martín Viso 2006; 2008; 2013; 2015, with the fundamental bibliography in 2018. See also Díaz & Martín Viso 2011; Ariño Gil 2011, amongst others.

13 Cf. Sáez Sánchez 1985; Blanco García 1998; Pérez González & Reyes Hernando 2009. See also Martín Viso 2013: 6–7.

14 Cf. Velázquez Soriano 2000; 2004: nos. 151 and 152. From this point onwards, I reference slates according to the numeration given in these editions.



Fig. 2. Map of the most important places where Visigothic slates were found in the provinces of Avila, Salamanca and the north of Cáceres. © I. Velázquez Soriano.

ancient Bracara Augusta in the province of Gallaecia (Fig. 1), somewhat far from the area where most Visigothic slates are concentrated, shows that in Late Antiquity slate was a common and popular writing material. The type of writing is the same, a common cursive script, although somewhat more primitive. These last slates confirm something that I have always maintained, that slate is a useful and simple medium for writing, but that the accumulation of slates at a specific time and place on the Duero plateau, in different areas of the current provinces of Salamanca, Avila and the north of Cáceres, is evidence of frequent and routine use in this period and region (Fig. 2). This is surely due to the accessibility of the material and perhaps also to the lack of other materials on hand or the expense in their preparation, and because slate was easy to write on. It may also be because there was a need to make a written note of finances, as well as for business matters, such as to record purchases and sales, exchanges, lists of animals, persons and objects. There may also have been a need to use them as materials for school or declamation exercises. It is even possible that their extended use and convenience for recording accounts, for payments or taxes, or other kinds of financial registers, had made the use of the material commonplace, while before that time it had not been used often.

Even if this is true, however, it is also the case that the same kinds of slates could appear in places farther away, as has happened recently. We also find them dating to different periods, and thus should understand slate as a writing material, just like wood, wax or papyrus. Because of its specific qualities, slate is particularly suitable for 'documents' and texts with numbers and drawings, which were etched onto it. In fact, the geographical map for slates has broadened in recent years in the same areas already known about since the first findings, in other provinces and

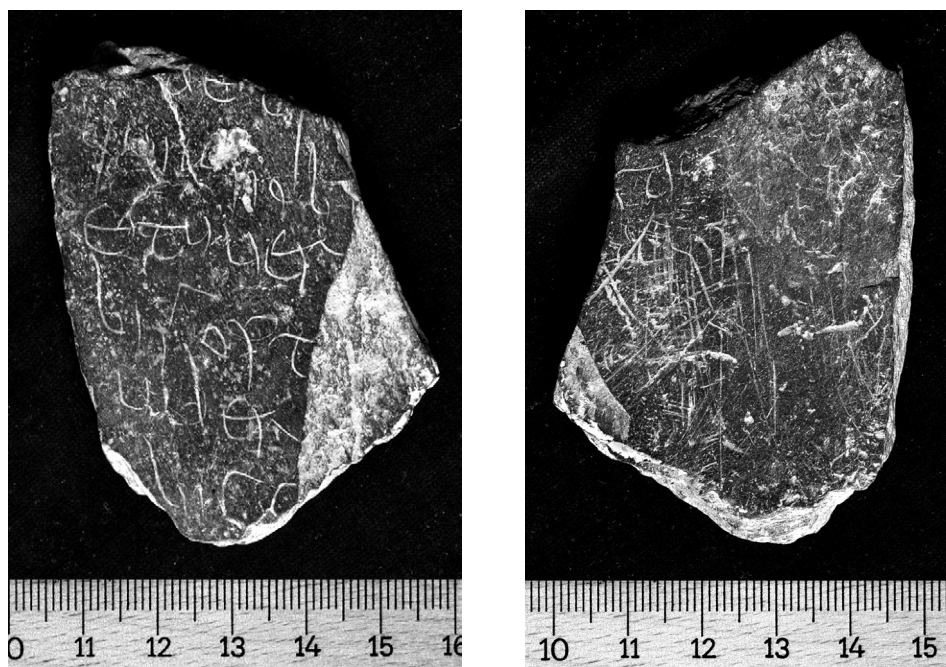


Fig. 3. Slate from Toledo. Photos courtesy of Juan Manuel Abascal (*CIL* II² 13,1 78).

even in urban areas in some cases. Numerical slates have been found in places such as Madrid, Valladolid and also in the city of Avila.¹⁵

In addition to these slates, including the textual slate mentioned above that has yet to be edited, we should quote a small fragment here found at Vega Baja in Toledo (Fig. 3). This fragment extends the area where Visigothic slates were found and, moreover, it is a slate found in a city, at present the only one aside from the above-mentioned unpublished piece from Ávila. It is a small fragment, probably from the sixth or seventh century AD, as can be seen from the type of writing. It is not possible to know what the content is, due to its fragmentary state, although the few words preserved suggest a private document. Perhaps some names of people were written on the side B.

15 Martín Viso (2013: 5) tells us of the discovery of slates from a construction called Episcopio, next to the city walls, where the slates were found alongside some fragments of decorated pottery (stamped pottery) dating back to between the 5th and 7th centuries and a gold coin (tremis) depicting Chindasuinth (642–649). I should add to this that at the Avila Museum there is a slate with a very fragmentary text, which includes a date and was found in the city itself. The then director of the museum, María Mariné, gave me this information, although I cannot identify whether it was found in the same place as the numerical tablets. I hope to go back and see the tablet soon and publish on it.

The text runs as follows:¹⁶

Side A

 DEC+ [---]
 quia nobi[s ---]
 e tu ver[---]
 biş opt[---]
 5 vider[e? ---]
traces

Side B

 [---]stiuş [---]E [---]
 [---]ari II [---] *vac.*?
 A [---] *vac.*
vac.

Returning now to numerical slates, three possible basic uses have been suggested for these, linked to specific archaeological contexts:¹⁷

1. High locations or *castella*, that is, fortified settlements that controlled passages, either via river or livestock routes. They may appear in areas that are not very urban, such as those close to ancient *civitates*. The significant number of numerical slates discovered might reflect payments (or collections) of taxes from local regional authorities, which highlight the power held by local elites in the area of the Duero plateau from the fifth century AD onwards (Ariño Gil & Díaz Martínez 2014). This would be the case for the discovery of hundreds of fragments in Lerilla (Salamanca),¹⁸ the more than 100 tablets found at El Cortinal de San Juan (Salvaterra de Tormes, Salamanca) and the tablets from Cabeza de Navangil (Solosancho, Ávila) and El Cancho del Concesionario (Manzanares el Real, Madrid). It has been suggested that 'accounting offices' may have existed in these locations, linked to the *castella*, run by the local elites who had control over the land (Martín Viso 2015: 297–299). In other words, these were places where political power was centered for the purpose of managing indirect taxes.
2. City centres, where far fewer numerical slates have been found, surely were places that accumulated surplus (mainly agricultural) products, which could be used to pay taxes *in specie* (Martín Viso 2015: 299) although it could reflect a different kind of power at play, specific to city centres. Scholars refer in this sense to the cities of Avila and Toledo.
3. Rural areas linked to the production of olive oil, cereals, metals, to the rearing of livestock, etc., as in the case of Monte el Alcaide (Monleón, Salamanca), La Legoriza (Salamanca), La Genetosa (Casillas de Flores, Salamanca), El Pelicano (Arroyomolinos, Madrid), La Cárcava de la Peladera (Hontoria, Segovia), Las Henrrenes (Cillán, Avila), La Llosa (Valladolid), Los Nuevos (Valladolid), Dehesa del Aguasal (Valladolid).

16 News of the inscription was given, along with a sketchy reading in: https://www.abc.es/espana/castilla-la-mancha/toledo/abci-descubierta-vega-baja-primera-pizarra-visigoda-200907200300-922671454065_noticia.html. For my part, I published this small fragment provisionally in Velázquez Soriano 2016, a publication of little diffusion. The new edition can be seen in *CIL* II2 13,1 78 (= Abascal Palazón & Alföldy 2019: 42).

17 I mainly follow the proposals given by Martín Viso 2013; 2015; 2018.

18 However, the nearly 1,000 fragments found in Lerilla should be first studied in order to see which join into larger pieces so as to calculate approximately how many slates there might have been. On the other hand, as I have already mentioned on other occasions, they may originate in other areas in the province of Salamanca, since they were gathered together by Serafín Tella, who travelled the province on numerous occasions looking for and finding antiquities of all kinds. On this topic, see Morín de Pablos 2014.

These were, therefore, rural peoples who would have used the slates as writing materials to jot down accounts quickly. The slates were not expected to last and were not maintained but were used for a kind of private domestic bookkeeping without tax implications or anything else.

As mentioned previously, these hypotheses seem plausible. However, the idea that a kind of tax ‘office’ may have existed for local control, which is based on the numerous findings in areas such as Salvatierra de Tormes, remains hypothetical. It is easy to suppose that we need to find an explanation for so many tablets, rather than assuming they are just the domestic accounts of certain *villae* or farming or fishing centres owned by *domini*. In this sense, it is plausible that some larger and heavier slate slabs, such as several found in Salvatierra de Tormes and other places, may be linked to tax records, which needed to be kept permanently, in contrast to other, lighter slates.

Despite the above, the abundance of small findings of numerical slates in other places, such as those listed above in section 3, as well as others found in places that preserve tablets containing texts and/or drawings, clearly point towards the presence of domestic bookkeeping in different rural areas. It may be that in these areas there was a need to record accounts, for payments or collections, or simply for counting livestock or crops, etc. In my opinion, there is still a need for a comparative study of slates containing lists of names alongside quantities, especially such as those found in Diego Álvaro (Ávila), or lists of personal names documented in Pelayos (Salamanca) and in Salvatierra de Tormes. The syntax used in these slates is so laconic that we cannot clearly ascertain their content. I believe that they are notes of payments in kind from peasants or, alternatively, a collection of such notes, as suggested by some of the phrases in, e.g., tablet no. 45b:

... Erugio s(e)s(tarium) I/ Murildi s(e)s(tarium) I/ ⁵Domnus magior s(e)s(tarium) I / Domnella p(er) mandato sui d[om]ni [- - -] / uu[- - -]la [- - -]s sesta[ri]um unum? - - -] / semis Valeria sestarium u[num - - -] / Serena p(er) ma[n]dato domn[i sui? - - -] / ¹⁰sestarium unu[m - - -] / mandato Teodadus [- - -] / unum Aiutor / Feruodus in alio cus[so - - -] / Aroculus sestarium p[- - -]...

‘... Erugio one sextarium, Murilda one sextarium, Domnus the elder one sextarium, Domnella by her lord’s command [- - -], W[- - -]la[- - -] one(?) sextarium [- - -] a half, Valeria one sextarium, Serena, by her lord’s command [- - -], one sextarium, [by] command, Teodadud [- - -], one [sextarium] Aiutor, Fervodus in another field [N sextaria?], Aroculus one sextarium [by command of his lord?].’

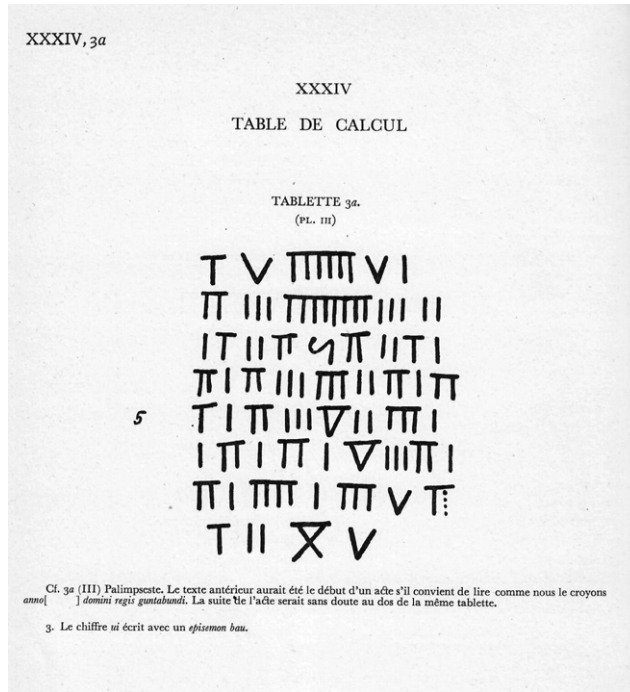
Or as we see even more clearly in the short but interesting text from another slate (no. 52a):

Aurili{an}anus alebat [- - -] / sestari<u> unu (uac.) / (uac.) / notitia de ceuaria quot deues e[- - -] / Leontius sestaria VI / ⁵[si]cera qua<r>taria tre<s> / [- - -]us sestaria dua / (uac.)

‘Aurelianus provided food [- - -] a sextarium. Notice of cereal that you must [pay?]. Leontius six sextaria; cider, three quartaria, [- - -]us, two sextaria.’

These pieces in particular are large in size¹⁹ and without doubt not suitable for transporting. In my opinion, they were to be kept in some kind of ‘office’ or ‘archive’ in which records of financial transactions were preserved.

19 Slate no. 45 is made up of two fragments. The larger measures 39 × 22 × 1 cm and the smaller 20 × 26 × 1 cm, a size similar to other slates. Slate no. 52 measures 48 × 29 × 1.4 cm.

Fig. 4. Numerical Table *T.Alb.* 34.

Another slate tablet from Portillo (Salamanca) (no. 139), which is of medium size and thus 'transportable', lists names of people alongside *sestaria* and *modii*, and its layout recalls a list-like arrangement of accounts.

On the other hand, it is clear that some slates mention the payment of taxes and we can even read the names of certain taxes on them, such as the transport imposts *angariae* and *pedaticum*, etc.²⁰ Here we see the link between the precious information that textual slates can offer us, both from an economic point of view and from the perspective of law, and the information given by numerical tablets and even tablets containing drawings or illustrations.²¹

Occasionally we witness the close relationship between the slates and the Albertini tablets. For example, *T.Alb.* 34 shows the same numerical system used on the Visigothic slates, where the numbers I, V, X seem to be entries for quantities of products or payments, etc (Fig. 4). We should also add here the great similarity between the content of some slates and *ostraca* from the north of Africa, found in areas around Tebessa, in present-day Algeria. These *ostraca*, which have recently

20 For example, slate no. 5, from Peralejos de Solís (Salamanca), reads in l. 5: *[leua?]uit Ioannis in angarias mod(ios) LX* ('John paid (?) 60 *modii* for *angaria*'). Slate no. 2, from Santibáñez de la Sierra (Salamanca), has: *Gratus fecit urbat / qui lesserit pedat[icum?] in soca bo<u>ina* ('Gratus did it: he made a fence to block the passage of the cattle'); for discussion of this passage, see Velázquez Soriano 2008b: 124–125.

21 Martín Viso (2013; 2015) references these lists, although he does not establish an actual link between them. This is a study that needs to be done and that I believe this author is well equipped to carry out. Some remarks can be seen in Velázquez Soriano 2000: II 40–43 and in particular in Pérez-Prendes Muñoz de Arraco 2005; see also Everett 2012: 63–94.



Fig. 5. Slate from Crestelos. Photo I. Velázquez Soriano.

Side A

 +++ auertas cu[- -]
 +++++]el Pinuel a seminata directa ad ++ [- -]
 +++++ ER +[f?]ilio et ispiritum +in[- -]
 [- -]cura aut nominata fuerit N N U O R I O S N N
 5 [- -]inunt sive in pecoribus animalib(us)?? ad RO sine ma[- -]
 [- -]I U+++ US sive in regionem agri tuis ONICIS ut in [- -]
 [- -]a iuro vos per Patrem et Filium et [Spiri?]tus [Sanctum?] ☆ †
 [- -]c est Ih(su)s Xp(istu)s ++ aga e ad r e u s o c u n nu
 [- -]inn el t + + s ius pede capite et +++++ cr[- -]
 10 [- -]r tua +++++ et Pinel et Arta[- -]+++++ cines nto

Side B

 [- -]ve arata [- - c. 18/20 -]+inuis ter a[- -]
 [- -]los ubi quod serpes a ual[- -]
 [- -] est [- -] minaci[- -]e[- -]di s condenes de anici
vac. di[- -]vi iustum alia[- -]
 5 [- -]dictas ut oras [- -]u vagis ita III ua[- -]
 [- -]bus pervalidu[- -]suo III ++ ronec ubi quod [- -]
 [- -]bus corti res et vide ne fines
 [- -]ci pluminis O R+ + + + a

Despite the difficulty of making out the writing on the slate, we can be sure that it is a text containing religious invocations and is probably magical in some way: a kind of spell and/or superstitious expression. In this respect, it has parallels with the slate tablet found in Carrio (Asturias), which dates to the tenth century.²⁶

It is possible that the use of slates spread to many other areas that have not yet been discovered. Likewise, it is probable that many reflect the custom of writing with a degree of immediacy to cover the need to document private activities ranging from the bookkeeping in certain settings (mostly rural or related to fishing and farming) to legal business and commercial transactions and activities relating to education and schooling. Most of these slates contain, in particular, features that are not necessarily characteristic of epigraphic texts, but are more like what Ast (2016: 8) labels as ‘non-inscriptional texts’.

As I have already noted elsewhere (Velázquez 2008a: 10), Visigothic slate texts illustrate well the fact that the boundary between epigraphy, with its hard material substrates, and palaeography, which is generally associated with soft writing surfaces, is not insurmountable. I have mentioned the ease with which slates can be inscribed; it is a hard material and as such is long lasting, but at the same time cheap. There is no need to prepare it or polish its surface. All you need to do is select fragments that are more or less suitable for what you want to write. It is possible that this is exactly what was done in some cases. Perhaps some pieces with an ochre or brown colour, on which incised letters are much easier to see, were used deliberately for certain legal documents and for

²⁶ On this slate (no. 104), see below.

accounting notes. Whatever the case may be, what does seem clear is that the material is ideal for writing.

It is also probable that this custom of writing, for reasons we do not know, began to be used in certain areas and then spread into others. It is important to note that, while in one location (e.g., Salvatierra de Tormes) there is an abundance of slate, there are other areas where this material is not so easy to come by and may not even be present, and yet slates have been found there. Perhaps its use spread so far that the material even began to be transported. We should also add here that if the numerical tablets were used for payments of local taxes or any other kinds of duties, it is easy to imagine that these accounting documents should 'travel' from one place to another.

The concentration of textual slates in Diego Álvaro, and even in Pelayos, may be considered a kind of 'stone archive' from different areas, perhaps linked to ecclesiastical centres that acted as custodians of documents (Martín Viso 2013: 12–14). In this sense, we should consider the possibility that legal texts, on which we can make out the signatures of judges and witnesses, for example, slates nos. 39–42 found in Diego Álvaro, were there precisely because it was an official(?) local archive for this kind of documents perhaps as a guarantee for the interested parties or those affected by the legal business of the area.

The almost intact opisthographic slate found in El Barrado (Caceres) (no. 103), which contains a letter written by *Faustinus* to *Paulus*,²⁷ may be an example of a letter that travelled from the sender's location to the receiver's, although we do not know where these were. In the area in which it was found there is no significant abundance of slates.

These texts could be considered epigraphic in nature, in the sense that they are written just once and are intended to be long lasting. They share no other characteristics with epigraphic texts, however, *sensu stricto*, as public, exposed writing. As noted above, even the type of writing used is characteristic of documents and not of conventional epigraphic texts, since they are written in new Roman cursive in its evolution into Visigothic cursive script. Most of the slates are comparable to documents written on papyrus or parchment in cursive script – 'nueva cursiva común romana' ('the new common Roman cursive script') as it is called in Spanish. In this respect, they differ from epigraphic texts, which traditionally are in capital, more-or-less Rustic script (Mallon 1952: 87–122; Favreau 1997: 12–16).

There are, however, some pieces whose texts we can consider epigraphic, in the conventional sense of the term. I refer here to those that contain curses (*defixiones*), like the two found in Braga mentioned above. We can also consider some funeral inscriptions to be epigraphic, since they were buried in the tomb, such as slate no. 15 from Navahombela (Salamanca), which contains Psalm 15.²⁸

3. Medieval Slates: other places, other periods

Slates were used as a writing material in later periods and in similar ways. This shows that, although we can refer to an individual phenomenon such as the collection of 'Visigothic slates', the stone actually became a common writing material in other periods for various uses, particularly for texts like those that we have discussed here.

27 No. 103 is perhaps the best known because the letter inscribed on it replicates the spoken language of the time.

28 The importance of this slate is that it conveys the liturgical version of Psalm 15 and not that of the Vulgate Bible. It is also a very remarkable testimony of the state of the language, since, in my opinion, this text has been written from memory or dictated, and contains quite a few language errors.

Certain medieval slates have been identified in Spain. One of these is the so-called 'Carrio slate' (no. 104). This has always been published alongside the others because, although it was thought to be of later date, it was nevertheless dated to around 750. However, I now feel that it most likely belongs to the tenth century. The Carrio slate contains a spell against hail and is a *phylacterium* to protect the fields. It invokes the angels (called patriarchs) to free a village and its people from hail, cursing the devil and exhorting him to leave the villa alone. It evokes fragments of the passion of Saint Bartholomew and Saint Christopher, the latter referring to the decapitation of the martyr, undoubtedly evoking the purifying strength of bloodshed on the earth. It is also interesting to see that, at the beginning, the text is written in the first person. It is as if the slate itself – the *phylacterium* – comes alive and speaks for itself.

The type of writing used on this piece is very similar to that of the Visigothic slates but is more advanced. It uses language that already points to a scant knowledge of Latin.

Another slate with similar content comes from Fuente Encalada in the province of Zamora. It was dated by Esparza and Martín Valls to the tenth century due to its reference to the Passion of Saint Bartholomew, which began to be documented in manuscripts at that time. The text is similar but appears to follow a different textual tradition from the Carrio slate. The type of lettering used is also very different; it is in a book, not cursive, style and clearly belongs to a later date than the others.

In addition, I am currently studying another text that was discovered in Huerga de Frailes in the León province. The slate is very peculiar and its writing hard to make out. The type of lettering used is closest to the book style observed in the Fuente Encalada slate. It probably does not date earlier than the tenth to eleventh centuries. It again mentions the angels Gabriel, Raphael and Michael, and the first side starts with the words 'the book is written' (*liber est scriptus*). It might be a type of *phylacterium* imploring the aid of superior forces to protect the fields.

I am also currently studying another text that I hope to publish. It is of a legal nature and was discovered several years ago by a young student in Aldeanueva del Camino, a small town in the province of Cáceres. It contains an account of a robbery and lists witnesses to the crime. Among these is the name 'Ordoño', a medieval name. Also interesting is the fact that it is written in a Visigothic cursive.

There is a small slate tablet fragment from Roc d'Enclar (Andorra) that we should mention here, since it extends the map for discoveries of slates considerably (Fig. 6). It is also written in cursive script, like the Visigothic tablets, but the lettering is more developed and it most likely dates back to the ninth century. It is so fragmentary that we cannot be sure of its content. Only a few words have been preserved:

 [---]que abit aci[---]
 [---]ic adiect(?) q(uonia?)m [---]
 [---]inuocau[---]

The fragment from Roc d'Enclar appeared at an archaeological site that we can date to the eighth to ninth centuries. Other slates were found alongside it with drawings etched on them and some that seem to be boards for tabletop games. This use is also characteristic of Visigothic slates and surely goes back to the Roman era, indicating that the material was also used for daily activities, such as representing images – whatever the purpose may have been – and even making them into accessories for games or leisure. Thus the slate fragments from this archaeological site represent a tradition of using slates for purposes besides writing, as exemplified also by slates with holes for fishing (Velázquez Soriano 1997: 421; 2000; 2004: 462–463, no. 153; Ripoll-Martín 1997: 155–165, 221–228).

It is also interesting to note that slates are not exclusive to the Iberian Peninsula. Archaeological findings have confirmed that they were in fact also used in other locations for similar purposes.

In the Irish monastery of Smarmore (Louth County) several pieces from the thirteenth to fifteenth century have been found and published by Bliss (1965). These slates are interesting as they are written both in Latin and Old English. There are religious texts clearly used for scholastic exercises as well as musical notations, cooking recipes and general information regarding plants. The author also mentions other slates from the thirteenth century from Nendrum in Maehee Island, kept at the Belfast Museum. The latter slates mainly contain Celtic drawings but do have some fragments of letters. These were published by Lawlor in 1925.

To conclude this short summary, I would like to mention here that over 20 years ago an interesting article appeared in a Spanish newspaper (*El País*, 16/08/1998). It detailed the discovery of a slate at Tintagel Castle (UK) containing the name ARTOGNOV, which was supposedly interpreted at the time as King Arthur. Although we cannot enter into this question here, this slate represents use of the material for writing at a similar time as the pieces studied here. The slate also displays similar graphic features, although it is mainly written in capital letters and is very rustic in its execution.

To summarise, it is my belief that these late pieces demonstrate that the custom of writing on slate evident in the Visigothic age went on for centuries afterwards, albeit to a lesser extent, and continued to the Mozarabic period. In these periods, too, slates provided people with a useful material for leaving written records of their activities, their schooling and even their fears.



Fig. 6. Fragment from Roc d'Enclar.
 Photo I. Velázquez Soriano.

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ZUR FRÜHGESCHICHTE DER WESTGOTISCHEN MINUSKEL UND ZUR BEWERTUNG DES „SINAI-PSALTERS“

Tino Licht

Eine Hauptschwierigkeit bei der Beschreibung der Regionalisierung im Schriftwesen der Übergangszeit besteht in der Überlieferungssituation. Es ist ein erhebliches Hindernis, dass ausgerechnet für das Jahrhundert, in dem die entscheidenden Transformationsprozesse stattgefunden haben, die Überlieferungslage schlecht ist. An der römischen Kurie z. B. entwickelte sich im 7. Jahrhundert n. Chr. eine markante Urkundenschrift, die als Kuriale beschrieben wird und zurecht einen eigenen Namen trägt. Sie entstand, weitgehend ohne dass wir in der Lage wären, die Übergänge dieser Schrift beobachten zu können. In dem ältesten datierbaren Zeugnis aus den Jahren 731–741 n. Chr., einem Eintrag auf dem Schmutzblatt einer italienischen Unzialhandschrift, den Bernhard Bischoff entdeckt und beschrieben hat,¹ tritt uns die Schrift in einem fortgeschrittenen Stadium entgegen (Abb. 1). Sie zeigt bereits das offene a, das einem Omega unerwünscht ähnlich sieht, und ein stark verfremdetes q.²

Als dieses Zeugnis der Kuriale entstand, hatten sich also schon zwei der vier Kennbuchstaben a, e, t und q abschließend entwickelt, ohne dass wir insbesondere für das kuriose q belegen könnten, wie es zu dieser Form gekommen ist.³ Für die Kuriale gilt deshalb etwas, was für viele Schriftarten jener Zeit gilt: Jedes noch so kleine Zeugnis, jede noch so winzige Schriftprobe hat einen erheblichen Dokumentationswert. Eine Reliquienauthentik auf Papyrus aus Cantù, die noch gut lesbar ist, scheint aus diesem Grund eine denkwürdige Position einnehmen zu dürfen: Sie gehört zu den ältesten erhaltenen Zeugnissen der Kuriale überhaupt (Abb. 2). Grund für diese Zuweisung ist das der Omegaform angenäherte a in einer sonst ganz unauffälligen Halbkursive. Die Datierung ist nach Tjäder „um 700 zu verlegen, könnte möglicherweise aber auch etwas früher sein.“⁴ Eine Lokalisierung nach Rom kann sich auf diese Buchstabenform stützen, außerdem darauf, dass das älteste Ensemble in Cantù aus Reliquien römischen Ursprungs besteht: Die „Annahme, dass sämtliche Reliquien aus Rom stammen, bleibt ... die weitaus wahrscheinlichste.“⁵

1 Bischoff 1946, 421–422.

2 Vgl. Rabikauskas 1958, 42–58.

3 Intensiv diskutiert wird in diesem Zusammenhang eine in Ravenna zwischen 642 und 666 ausgestellte Urkunde ChLA XXII 721 (= Rom, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, pap. lat. 18), in der Tjäder (Z. 4 letztes Wort: *aliqua*) einmal das q der Kuriale gefunden hat; dem Zeugnis fehlt das omegaförmige a; misslich ist auch, dass es wegen seiner Herkunft nicht als Zeugnis der Schriftentwicklung in der päpstlichen Kanzlei dienen kann; zur Urkunde vgl. Tjäder 1982, 172–179.

4 Ebd., 225.

5 Ebd., 224.

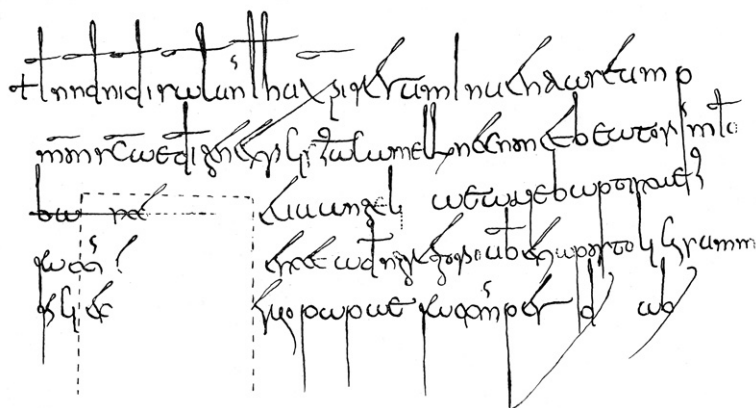


Abb. 1. St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 1394; Rom, a. 731-741 (Umzeichnung nach Rabikauskas 1958, 44); die stark veränderten Buchstaben q und a stehen in der Mitte der zweiten Zeile nebeneinander unter einem Kürzungsstrich *q(uae) a(ppellatur)*.



Abb. 2. Cantù, Chiesa prepositurale di S. Paolo di Cantù, Sacristia (nach ChLA XXIX 862 I); *sancti uictores* (statt *uictoris*) zeigt das omegaformige a der Kuriale.

Was hier beispielhaft für die Kuriale demonstriert wurde, die Einordnung eines randständigen Zeugnisses an eine Spitzenposition der Schriftgeschichte, soll in diesem Aufsatz für die westgotische Minuskel unternommen werden. Dabei kann man sich darauf berufen, dass das Zeugnis zwar bekannt, aber in der Literatur zur westgotischen Minuskel nicht erwähnt und ausgewertet worden ist: Rodney Robinson,⁶ Agustín Millares Carlo,⁷ auch neuere Studien erwähnen es nie;⁸ selbst Bernhard Bischoff hat es aus der Diskussion um die Ursprünge der westgotischen Minuskel herausgehalten;⁹ warum, ist nicht zu sagen.

6 Robinson 1939, 29.

7 Millares Carlo 1999.

8 Den Forschungsstand zur westgotischen Minuskel dokumentiert Alturo 2004, 347–386.

9 Bischoff 2009, 130–136.

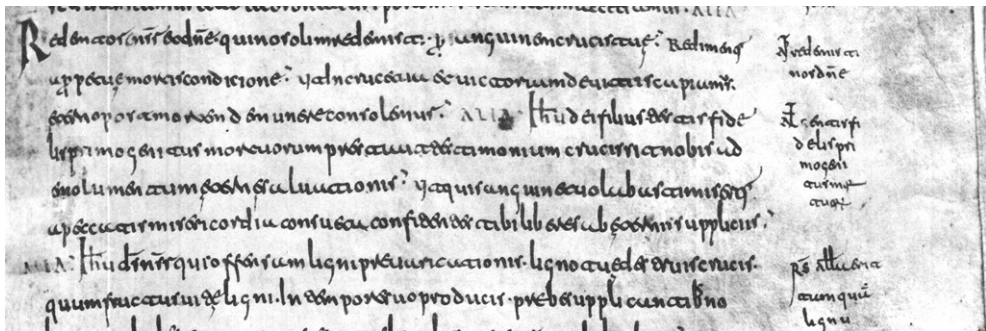


Abb. 3. „Orationale Mozarabicum“, Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, LXXXIX (84), fol. 108^r (Ausschnitt nach Robinson 1939, Taf. 67); die vor dem Jahr 732 entstandene Handschrift ist eines der ältesten datierbaren Zeugnisse in westgotischer Minuskel, deren Kennbuchstabe das Majuskel-G ist (letzte Zeile *ligni*); ‚westgotisch‘ sind auch die s-förmige Kürzung bei *-bus* (letzte Zeile *supplicantibus*) und der Gebrauch der Kürzungsform *pro* für die Kürzung von *per* (erste Zeile *per sanguinem*).

Eine Annäherung an das Zeugnis soll in drei Schritten erfolgen: 1. Der älteste datierbare Codex der westgotischen Minuskel, die Kennzeichen seiner Schrift und ihr Entwicklungsstand. 2. Fragen zur Entstehung der westgotischen Minuskel. 3. Ihr schriftgeschichtlich vielleicht frühestes Zeugnis.

1. Der älteste Codex der westgotischen Minuskel, der einen Datierungshinweis trägt, ist eine Handschrift, die heute in Verona aufbewahrt wird und einen historisch unzutreffenden, aber suggestiven Namen trägt, das „Orationale Mozarabicum“ in Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, LXXXIX (84). Seine Datierung ergibt sich aus der Abwicklung eines kleinen Kaufgeschäfts, dessen Gegenstand eine Amphore guten Weins war und das auf fol. 3^v quittiert wurde: *Mauzezo caneuarius fidiiosor de anfora uino de bonello in xx anno liutprandi regis*. „Maurizio, Mundschenk, bürgt für eine Amphore guten Weins im zwanzigsten Regierungsjahr König Liutprants.“ Man erhält aus diesem Eintrag gleich zwei wichtige Informationen: Die Handschrift ist vor dem Jahr 731/732 n. Chr., dem zwanzigsten Regierungsjahr des Langobardenkönigs Liutprand entstanden und schon früh ist sie aus dem westgotischen Kulturkreis nach Italien gelangt. Möglicherweise – der Eintrag ist kaum noch zu lesen – gab es eine Zwischenstation auf Sardinien, denn auf fol. 1^r hat ein *Flavius Sergius bidadominus sanctae ecclesiae Caralitane* – also der Kirche von Cagliari – unterschrieben. Die Hauptschrift des „Orationale Mozarabicum“ ist eine fortgeschritten kalligraphierte westgotische Minuskel, an der man den Kennbuchstaben, das Majuskel-G, durchgehend demonstrieren kann (Abb. 3). Weitere Merkmale spanisch-westgotischer Schriftkultur sind das hochgestellte, s-förmige Kürzungszeichen bei den Endsilben *-bus* und *-que* und der Gebrauch der Kürzungsform *pro* für die Kürzung von *per*.

Im Haupttext der Handschrift nicht nachzuweisen sind zwei weitere Merkmale der westgotischen Minuskel, nämlich das epsilonförmige a und das offene e. Beide finden sich dafür auf Seiten, die ergänzende Messtexte tragen, nicht von den Hauptschreibern stammen und in denen man eine westgotische Minuskel sieht, die der Kursive näher steht (Abb. 4).

Der Kennbuchstabe G ist der ‚crucial point‘ der gesamten Entwicklungsgeschichte der westgotischen Minuskel. Denn es lässt sich zurecht fragen, wie dieser Majuskelbuchstabe, der so ganz

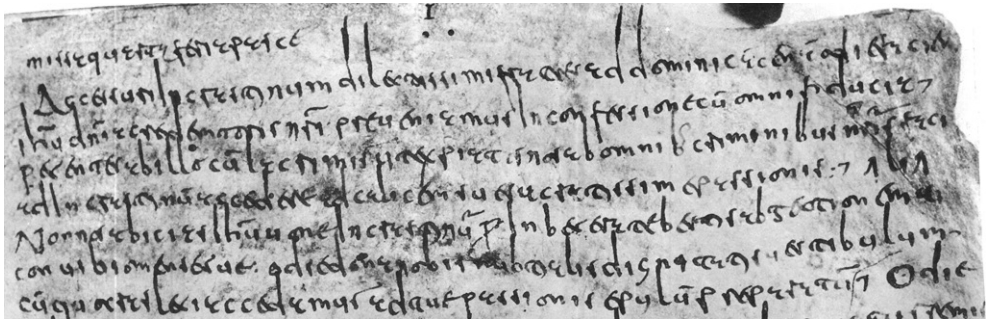


Abb. 4. „Orationale Mozarabicum“, Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, LXXXIX (84), fol. 1^r (Ausschnitt nach Robinson 1939, Taf. 63); in der Schrift der Messzusätze finden sich das epsilonförmige a und das offene e in isolierter Stellung (erste Zeile *pasce*); das Majuskel-G (vorletzte Zeile *dignitatis*) wird bisweilen von einem flachgedeckten g flankiert (drittletzte Zeile *abjectionem* [für *abiectionem*]).

den Entwicklungstendenzen aller anderen lateinischen Minuskeln widerspricht und uns maßgeblich dazu berechtigt, von einer westgotischen Minuskel zu sprechen, diesen singulären Weg ins Alphabet gefunden hat. Er scheint dem Entwicklungsmodell zu widersprechen, das wir inzwischen für die Formierung der frühmittelalterlichen Minuskelalphabet als Standardmodell akzeptiert haben, dass sich nämlich ihr Buchstabenbestand aus der Kalligraphierung der Jüngeren Römischen Kursive in ihren regionalen Varianten ergibt und etabliert.¹⁰ Wie kommt das Majuskel-G in die westgotische Minuskel?

2. Entstehung. Die Frage zu klären, erscheint angesichts der angesprochenen Überlieferungssituation aussichtslos. Nur in absoluten Ausnahmefällen kommen wir überhaupt über Handschriften in die Schriftkultur der Hispania im 7. Jahrhundert zurück. Solch ein Sonderfall ist in St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 226 zu bestaunen, denn dort hat sich eine Papyrushandschrift in Unziale der zweiten Hälfte des 7. Jahrhunderts erhalten, die neben zwei Predigten die Synonyma des Isidor enthält. Sie ist eine von insgesamt elf literarischen Papyrushandschriften,¹¹ die in abendländischen Bibliotheken überlebt haben, ein Rarissimum. Die spanische Herkunft ist mangels Vergleichsbeispielen nicht aus der Schrift zu begründen, sondern muss über eine Kürzung plausibel gemacht werden. Auf p. 37 steht eine Pro-Kürzung, die mit *per* aufzulösen ist.¹² So also kann man sich die

10 Ebd., 130–131: „Die neue westgotische Minuskel ... stellte sich nicht einfach als Kalligraphisierung der vorausgegangenen Kursive dar.“

11 Die Zahl ist gegeben nach den zehn bei Tjäder 1955, 39–42 aufgeführten Zeugnissen (die zwei Glossare und zwei juristischen Texte ebd., 37–38 sind nicht mitgezählt) und vervollständigt mit einem um 600 entstandenen Papyrusfragment der *Homiliae* in *Evangelia* Gregors des Großen in London, British Library, Cotton Titus C. XV; vgl. Licht 2018, 222–223.

12 Leider ist das Merkmal nicht so eindeutig, wie man sich das wünschen würde; manche Handschriften aus Frankreich tragen im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert ebenfalls diese Kürzung; in den CLA VII 929 ist deshalb eine (wegen Septimanien immer auch als westgotisch mitzudenkende) südfranzösische Herkunft der Handschrift vorgeschlagen worden; zumindest auf einen Zwischenaufenthalt in dieser Übergangslandschaft deuten die Zusätze in ‚merowingischer‘ diplomatischer Kursive hin, die ein eher ‚spanisches‘ Sprachmerkmal, den Wegfall des Vokals (Aphärese) vor *s-impura*, aufweisen (p. A): *Domine probicius stu michi pektorem* ... für *Domine, propitius esto mihi peccatori* ...; die verheerende Transkription dieses Zusatzes in ChLA II 174 ist verbessert in ChLA XLVIII 174.

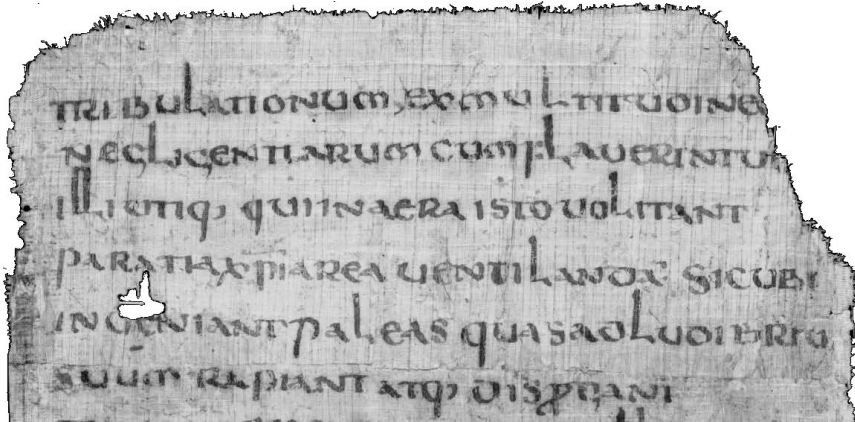


Abb. 5. St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 226, p. 37 (Ausschnitt nach www.e-codices.ch); der in der zweiten Hälfte des 7. Jahrhunderts entstandene Papyruscodex in Unziale weist die auf eine westgotische Herkunft deutende Pro-Kürzung für *per* auf (letzte Zeile *disperant*).

typische spanische Handschrift des 7. Jahrhunderts vorstellen: Unziale auf Papyrus (Abb. 5). Auch Halbunziale ist aus dem 7. Jahrhundert überliefert, allerdings auf Pergament.¹³ Man erkennt ein ganz traditionelles spätantik-frühmittelalterliches Schriftwesen. In diesem Schriftwesen scheint die westgotische Minuskel nicht vorzukommen. Man könnte sich damit trösten, dass dies an den Verlusten bei Papyrushandschriften liegt, auffällig und schmerzlich bleibt die Lücke dennoch.

Im Jahr 1950 schien dann ein Sensationsfund ein neues Licht auf die Entstehung der westgotischen Minuskel zu werfen.¹⁴ Inzwischen signiert als Slavica 5 war in der Bibliothek des Katharinenklosters auf dem Berg Sinai ein kleinformatiges Psalterium (16,5 × 10,5 cm) entdeckt worden, das – anders als die Signatur es suggeriert – in Latein geschrieben war.¹⁵ Es stand in einer Minuskel, deren Kennbuchstabe ein Majuskel-G ist. Auch sonst gab es Bezüge zur westgotischen Schriftgewohnheit, etwa den Gebrauch eines hohen T zur Bildung einer IT-Ligatur. Auf der anderen Seite zeigten sich genug signifikante Unterschiede, Gewohnheiten, die von der westgotischen Minuskel gar nicht bekannt waren, etwa die Form des geschlossenen, größtenteils halbunzialen a, oder die inverse ro-Ligatur (Abb. 6). Spanisches in Kombination mit Unbekanntem und die Überlieferung in einem isolierten Bücherbestand ließen Großes vermuten: Was, wenn hier die Traditionen einer regionalen Schriftkultur sichtbar wurden, die sonst nirgendwo erkennbar waren, und was, wenn sich die Nähe zu den Formen der westgotischen Minuskel mit der Heimat dieser Schrift in Nordafrika erklären ließen? Bernhard Bischoff hat diese plausible Erklärung prominent vertreten: „Nicht unwahrscheinlich ist aber“, schreibt er, „das Bestehen einer lokalen lateinischen Tradition auf dem Sinai als eines Restes der christlichen Kultur Nordafrikas, zumal

13 Das betrifft den unter der Nummer CLA VI 727a angezeigten Teil (foll. 16–62) der Handschrift Autun, Bibliothèque Municipale, 27 (S. 29) mit Isidors *Quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum*, von dem zwei Blätter durch Guglielmo Libri (1803–1869) gestohlen wurden und sich nun als foll. 21 und 22 in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, nouv. acq. lat. 1629 befinden; zur Bewertung der Handschrift vgl. Licht 2018, 278–281.

14 Clark 1952, 21.

15 Eine deutschsprachige Ausgabe des zuerst 1977 in Jerusalem erschienenen Faksimiles liegt vor als Altbauer 1978.

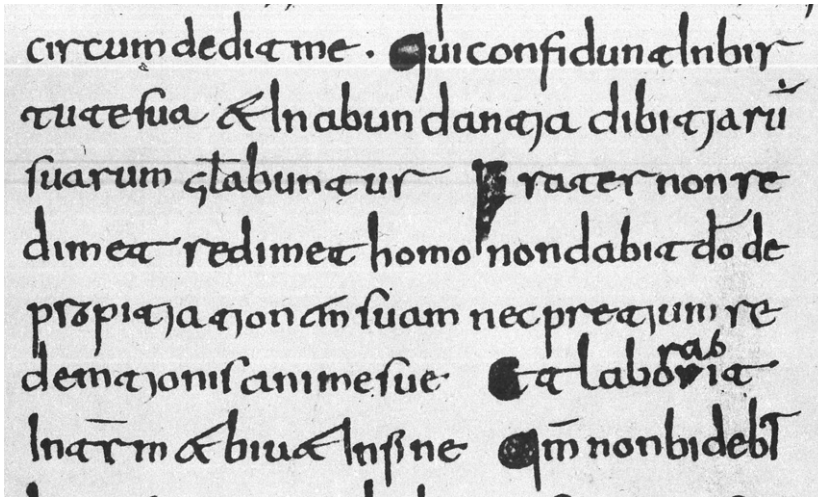


Abb. 6. „Sinai-Psalter“ Sinai, Bibliothek des Katharinenklosters, Slav. 5, fol. 38^r
(Ausschnitt nach Altbauer 1978); Schriftmerkmale der Handschrift sind Majuskelligatur IT (letzte Zeile *bidebit* für *uidebit*), halibunziales a (Zeile 3 *gloriabuntur*), Majuskelligatur IT (letzte Zeile *bidebit* für *uidebit*), halibunziales a und inverse ro-Ligatur (Zeile 5 *propitiationem*).

das Kalendardes ‚Sinai-Psalters‘ den dortigen Festkalender aus der Zeit kurz vor der arabischen Eroberung wiedergeben kann. Durch diese Eroberung veränderte sich auch die kulturelle Situation Spaniens, da im VII. Jahrhundert eine bedeutende Emigration aus Nordafrika nach Spanien stattgefunden haben muß, die die vielleicht in der ersten Hälfte derselben entstandene Minuskel mitgetragen haben kann. Das Problem ihres Zustandekommens ist mit dieser Erklärung der unbestreitbaren Verwandtschaft der Sinai-Minuskel mit der spanischen nur verlagert, aber man ist nicht mehr gezwungen, eine Ableitung aus spanischen Voraussetzungen zu versuchen.¹⁶ Damit wäre über den „Sinai-Psalter“ ein anderes Entwicklungsmodell der westgotischen Minuskel etabliert: Entstehung als Regionalstil in Afrika um 600, Übertragung mit der Fluchtbewegung nach Spanien im 7. Jahrhundert, Rezeption desselben im ausgehenden 7. Jahrhundert, früheste Zeugnisse um oder bald nach 700.

Ein erster Einwand gegen diese Erklärung resultiert aus der Tatsache, dass wir für Afrika den singulären Fall einer frühmittelalterlichen Schriftbezeichnung nach einer Region belegen können. Es gibt *litterae Africanae*. Das Frühmittelalter verstand darunter die Halibunziales, und dass die Halibunziales in der *Africa propria* entstanden ist, kann man belegen.¹⁷ Der Regionalstil der *Africa propria* war also die Halibunziales, auch wenn diese noch einmal ab dem ausgehenden 5. Jahrhundert eine quasi ‚internationale Verbreitung‘ gefunden hat. Die westgotische Minuskel hieß *littera Toletana*, zumindest im 11. Jahrhundert;¹⁸ das ist noch kein Beweis gegen die afrikanische Herkunft, aber ein Indiz.

¹⁶ Bischoff 2009, 132.

¹⁷ Licht 2018, 55–57 und 112–119.

¹⁸ Dieser Schriftname taucht in den Akten des Konzils von León auf, das (anders als in den paläographischen Lehrwerken rezipiert) im Jahr 1091 stattfand; siehe dazu (mit Textausschnitt) ebd., 278 mit Anm. 700.

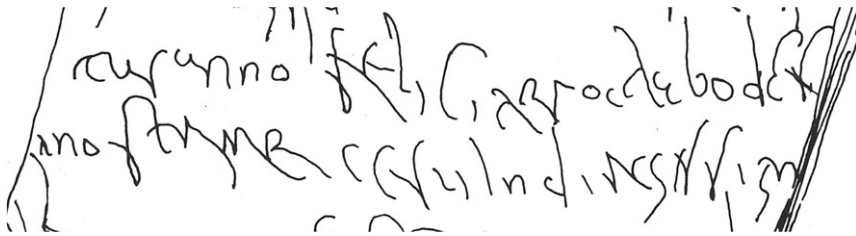


Abb. 7. Ávila, Museo Arqueológico Nacional, 68/32 (Ausschnitt der Umzeichnung bei Velázquez Soriano 1989); die westgotische (Halb-)Kursive dieser auf das Jahr 667 zu datierenden Urkunde weist ein epsilonförmiges a (Ende der Zeile 1 *octavo*), ein Majuskel-G in isolierter und ein flachgedecktes g in ligierter Stellung auf (Zeile 2 *nostri reccesuindi regis sign*) auf.

Ist es wirklich nicht möglich, die Buchstabenformen und Gewohnheiten der westgotischen Minuskel aus spanischen Voraussetzungen zu erklären? Für das 7. Jahrhundert besteht eine Möglichkeit, das zu prüfen, nämlich anhand der ‚pizarras‘, der Schiefertafeln.¹⁹ Es ist ein Glücksfall der Überlieferung, dass sich durch ein Schiefervorkommen um Salamanca im Frühmittelalter eine regionale Kultur der Schieferurkunden ausgebildet hat. Mehr als hundert solcher ‚pizarras‘ aus dem 6.–8. Jahrhundert sind erhalten.²⁰ Wenn auf diesen Schiefertafeln die Entwicklung der Buchstabenformen nachvollziehbar wäre, die in der westgotischen Minuskel ankommen, wenn also die Kalligraphierung dieser Kursive das Erscheinungsbild der Minuskel plausibel erklärt, wären wir der afrikanischen These enthoben. Und diese Buchstabenentwicklung ist nachvollziehbar. Zu prüfen ist zunächst der Innovations- bzw. Kennbuchstabe, das Majuskel-G. Dazu gibt es eine Schiefertafel, die in das 18. Regierungsjahr des Königs Recceswinth, also in das Jahr 667, und wohl in den August datiert werden kann.²¹ Auf ihr zeigt das G in isolierter Stellung Majuskel-form, in ligierter Stellung die vertraute flachgedeckte Form (Abb. 7). Würde man die Schrift auf diesem Stand kalligraphieren, käme ein Majuskel-G in das Alphabet. Auf die Frage, wie das Majuskel-G in die westgotische Minuskel kommt, gibt es also die simple und erwartete Antwort: Es ist in der regionalen Kursive Normalbuchstabe.²² Und wir sind in einer Zeit, in der die arabische Eroberung der lateinischen *Africa propria* gerade erst begonnen hat. Ähnlich deutlich liegen die Verhältnisse beim a. Es zeigt in der Minuskel neben einem cc-a ein epsilonförmiges a. Dass diese Epsilonform aus der Kursive kommen muss, ist selbstverständlich. Aber sie ist auf derselben Schiefertafel aus dem Jahr 667 schon als isolierter Buchstabe nachzuweisen. Wenn die beiden Kennbuchstaben der westgotischen Minuskel in der regionalen Kursive, für die zurecht der Name westgotische Kursive verwendet wird, vorgebildet sind, ist die Entstehung der westgotischen Minuskel auf die iberische Halbinsel zu lokalisieren. Afrika scheidet aus.

19 Siehe dazu auch den Artikel von Velázquez Soriano in diesem Band.

20 Das Corpus der Schiefertafeln ist mustergültig erfasst durch Velázquez Soriano 1989; inzwischen liegt mit Velázquez Soriano 2000 eine verbesserte Auflage vor.

21 Velázquez Soriano 1989, 212–213, Nr. 43.

22 Die Bemerkung bei Bischoff 2009, 131 Anm. 7 „nur die jüngste, nach dem Einbruch des neuen Stils geschriebene Schiefertafel ... zeigt das unziale G in der Kursive“ ist mit diesem Befund nicht in Übereinstimmung zu bringen; diese jüngste Schiefertafel trägt bei Velázquez Soriano 1989, 312–313 die Nr. 104 und datiert ungefähr in das Jahr 750.

3. Das unbeachtete Zeugnis. Aus dieser Zeit, dem ausgehenden 7. Jahrhundert, stammt eines der frühesten Zeugnisse der westgotischen Minuskel, das bisher unbeachtet geblieben ist. Die Schrift ist Teil eines berühmten abendländischen Manuskripts, einer Zimelie der Schrift- und Kulturgeschichte. Es handelt sich um den „Hilarius Basilicanus“, der laut einer Subskription aus dem Jahr 509/510 in Cagliari entstanden und von katholischen Bischöfen der *Africa propria* in Auftrag gegeben worden ist.²³ Hauptinhalt ist ein Traktat zur Dreifaltigkeit, nämlich *De trinitate* von Hilarius von Poitiers. Damit ist der Codex ein Dokument gegen die arianische Konfession der herrschenden Vandalen. Seine Hauptschrift ist die Halbunziale. Seine Bedeutung als Reliquie der arianisch-katholischen Auseinandersetzungen während der Vandalenherrschaft muss früh erheblich gewesen sein. *Liber iste sanctus est* hat auf fol. 201^v eine Hand in einer diplomatischen Kursive eingetragen, wie sie in der fränkischen Königskanzlei ca. 770 geschrieben worden ist.²⁴ Schon anhand dieses Eintrags kann man schließen, dass der Codex an vielen Stationen haltgemacht hat: Mitte des 8. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. im Umkreis des fränkischen Hofes, später vielleicht in einem ostfränkischen Benediktinerkonvent, denn auf fol. 33^v steht eine Ekkehart I. von St. Gallen zugesprochene Benediktsequenz.²⁵ Und ein weiterer Aufenthaltsort ist anhand von Nachträgen erkennbar, nämlich die iberische Halbinsel. Man beobachtet das auf dem restaurierten fol. 12 anhand einer Schrift, die um Imitation der Halbunziale bemüht ist, deren Schreiber aber immer wieder in sein vertrautes, westgotisches Register übergeht. Dass man sicher im westgotischen Kulturraum ist, sieht man an den *-que*-Kürzungen, die in den Buchstabenkörper hineinragen. Eine frühe Datierung für diesen Aufenthalt ergibt sich aus der Scriptura continua, die noch nicht aufgelöst ist, und aus dem fränkischen Eintrag in diplomatischer Kursive als *terminus ante quem*. In den frühen Zustand passt, dass die *-bus* bzw. *-que* Kürzungen ältere Formen aufweisen und den Weg zur s-Form in den westgotischen Codices noch nicht zu Ende gegangen sind (Abb. 8).²⁶

Nimmt man alles zusammen und stellt in Rechnung, dass in der westgotischen Restauration auch halbkursive Passagen zu sehen sind, dann bewegen wir uns in jener Zeit, in der die westgotische Minuskel ihre Versuchsphase, ihre ‚tentative period‘ absolviert,²⁷ also im letzten Drittel des 7. Jahrhunderts. Die westgotische Restauration im „Hilarius Basilicanus“ reiht sich in die ältesten Zeugnisse der westgotischen Minuskel ein, das „Orationale Mozarabicum“ (Abb. 3 und 4) in Verona und die Zusätze im halbunzialen Codex von Autun, Bibliothèque Municipale, 27 (S. 29), scheint diese sogar anzuführen.

Bleibt der „Sinai-Psalter“. Wie ist die Stellung des „Sinai-Psalters“ innerhalb der Schriftgeschichte der westgotischen Minuskel zu bewerten, kann er etwas zu ihrer Frühgeschichte beitragen? Der „Sinai-Psalter“ ist leider ein Zeugnis von nachgeordneter Relevanz.²⁸ Sein Wert wird schon dadurch gemindert, dass die Provenienz nichts Isoliertes verrät. Wir wissen durch Einträge auf Arabisch, dass er erst um 1230 in das Katharinenkloster auf dem Sinai gelangt ist, und eine

23 Zur Subskription und ihrer Datierung vgl. Wallenwein 2017, 213–214.

24 Licht 2018, 94–95.

25 Ebd., 95.

26 Die frühe Form des Kürzungszeichens sieht man auch in den halbkursiven Partien des Codex Autun, Bibliothèque Municipale, 27 (S. 29), fol. 63^v; vgl. Robinson 1939, Taf. 27.

27 Die Beschreibung der Findungsphase eines Regionalstils und Benennung als ‚tentative period‘ wurde für die Beneventana vorexerziert durch Lowe 1980, 122–123.

28 Eine jüngere Zusammenfassung der Forschung zum „Sinai-Psalter“ samt Bibliographie entnimmt man der Vorrede zur Edition von Gryson – Thibaut 2010, 7–26.

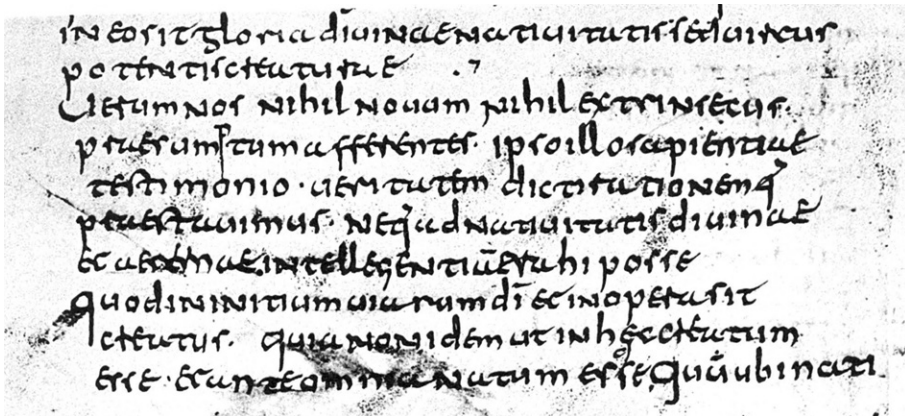


Abb. 8. „Hilarius Basilicanus“ Rom, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Arch. Cap. S. Pietro D. 182, fol. 12^v (nach CLA I, 1); die Imitation der Halbunziale erkennt man am flachgedeckten g und dem unsicheren Majuskel-N (Zeile 1 *gloria diuinæ natiuitatis*); wo die Imitation nicht gelingt, gibt sich der westgotische Schreiber zu erkennen, etwa beim Minuskel-n und dem offenen e (fünftletzte Zeile *diuinæ*); bisweilen läuft ihm das vertraute Majuskel-G und somit der Kennbuchstabe der westgotischen Minuskel in die Feder (viertletzte Zeile *intelligentiam*); die aufgesetzten -que-Kürzungen sind auf dem Weg zur westgotischen s-Form (Zeile 5 *rationemque*); bisweilen ist die Schrift noch auf dem Stand der Halbkursive (viertletzte Zeile *æternæ*).

Verbindung nach Jerusalem oder gar ein Aufenthalt dort ist ebenfalls möglich.²⁹ In den „Sinai-Psalter“ sind Entwicklungen eingeflossen, die das frühmittelalterliche lateinische Schrifttum insgesamt betreffen. Er ist zum Beispiel Zeuge einer Innovation der westeuropäischen Regionalschriften, die frühestens um 800 vonstatten gegangen ist. Die Rede ist von der graphischen Kennzeichnung eines Lautphänomens, nämlich des assibilierten ti vor Vokal. Um 800, meistens aber sehr viel später wird in den Regionalstilen die lautliche Unterscheidung dadurch wiedergegeben, dass für die unterschiedenen Laute unterschiedliche Ligaturen gebraucht werden. Im az-Typ von Laon, dem Regionalstil, der diesen Entwicklungsschritt nach unserer Kenntnis als erster vollzieht, steht bei regulärem ti wie in *stetit* ein t in Epsilonform, bei assibiliertem ti wie in *statio* ein reguläres ti.³⁰ Im „Sinai-Psalter“ ist reguläres ti das Zeichen für Normalaussprache, t mit i-Longa das Zeichen für assibiliertes ti. Die westgotische Minuskel verhält sich im Übergang zum 10. Jahrhundert n. Chr. analog.³¹ Wie sollte das mit einer isolierten Position der Handschrift einhergehen? Auch die Initialen des „Sinai-Psalters“ gehorchen Modellen des westeuropäischen Frühmittelalters: Vogelinitialen, wie wir sie aus den fränkischen Skriptorien kennen, geometrische Formen, wie sie in

29 Die beiden arabischen Einträge sind abgebildet, transkribiert und übersetzt im Faksimile von Altbauer 1978, 8–9. Ein Eintrag reflektiert die Übergabe Jerusalems an Friedrich II. im Jahr 1228/1229, ein zweiter die Ankunft des Psalters im Katharinenkloster (und vielleicht Schenkung durch den Mönch Gorasma) im Jahr 1230.

30 Lindsay 1914, 22.

31 Regel und resultierendes Datierungsargument wurden 1910 von Lowe erstmals beschrieben und sind in seinen gesammelten Aufsätzen nachzulesen: Lowe 1972, 41–42: „That the practice of making the ti-distinction in Visigothic manuscripts dates from about the year 900 is established beyond a reasonable doubt ...“.

norditalienischen Handschriften auftauchen.³² Wie soll man sich vorstellen, dass die Initialen sich in einer isolierten Schriftkultur genauso entwickelt haben wie im sonstigen abendländischen Schriftwesen? Wahrscheinlich ist der „Sinai-Psalter“ in einem mediterranen Konvent mit spanischer Verbindung oder spanischer Tradition – man denke etwa an San Fruttuoso an der ligurischen Küste – entstanden.³³ Und selbst wenn man auf der afrikanischen Herkunft beharren wollte, für die es keinen Beweis gibt, hat der Codex nichts ‚Isoliertes‘, sondern spiegelt allgemeine Entwicklungen des lateinischen Schriftwesens. Dadurch aber büßt er jede Aussagekraft zum älteren Schriftstand in der *Africa propria* ein.

Bleibt die Frage der Datierung zu erörtern. Die bisherigen Ansätze lagen in der Zeit um 900 oder im 10. Jahrhundert. Letzteres berücksichtigt die Entwicklung zur graphischen Unterscheidung des assibilierten ti, die im „Sinai-Psalter“ ja vollzogen ist.³⁴ Jean Vezin hat 2003 einen wichtigen Hinweis auf zwei parallele lateinische Stücke, zwei Fragmente im Katharinenkloster erneuert.³⁵ Beide – Reste eines Antiphonars und eines Epistolars – waren schon länger bekannt.³⁶ Eines davon, die in die Handschrift Sinai, Katharinenkloster, Gr. 567 gebundenen Fragmente des Antiphonars, weist eine dem „Sinai-Psalter“ nahestehende Minuskel mit einem Majuskel-G auf, die das gleiche Skriptorium nahelegt und etwas jünger erscheint.³⁷ Der Text steht auf Papier. Die Papierverbreitung im Mittelmeerraum setzt früh ein und ist ab dem 11. Jahrhundert gut belegt,³⁸ aber das 10. Jahrhundert scheidet wohl aus. Durch die Nähe von „Sinai-Psalter“ und „Sinai-Antiphonar“ ist man gezwungen, eine jüngere Datierung des „Sinai-Psalters“ mitzudenken: saec. XI.

Zusammenfassung: Eine Restauration von fol. 12 im „Hilarius Basilicanus“ führt in die Frühzeit der westgotischen Minuskel und repräsentiert die Schrift *in statu nascendi* im ausgehenden 7. Jahrhundert. Wie sich aus dem Vergleich mit dem Material ergibt, das die spanischen Schiefertafeln bereithalten, ist die westgotische Minuskel plausibel als Kalligraphierung der regionalen Kursive zu deuten. Eine an die Interpretation des „Sinai-Psalters“ angelagerte These von der afrikanischen Herkunft der westgotischen Minuskel bestätigt sich nicht. Dagegen spricht nicht nur die Evidenz der Schiefertafeln, auch der Zeugniswert des „Sinai-Psalters“ ist erheblich niedriger anzusetzen. Seine Schrift und sein Buchschmuck spiegeln Entwicklungen der abendländischen Schriftkultur des 8. und 9. Jahrhunderts; die Provenienz könnte über einen der Kreuzfahrerstaaten gelaufen sein. Insgesamt bietet sich für das 7. Jahrhundert in Spanien die singuläre Gelegenheit, die Entwicklung der neuen Regionalschrift aus den Formen einer regional sich verändernden

32 Man vergleiche die B-Vogelinitiale im „Sinai-Psalter“, fol. 64^r mit der B-Initiale der Handschrift London, British Library, Add. 31031, fol. 55^r (az-Typ von Laon; ca. a. 800) und die D-Initiale im „Sinai-Psalter“, fol. 90^r mit der Q-Initiale in Mailand, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, B 159 sup., fol. 71^r (Unziale aus Bobbio; saec. VIII med.); Abbildungen der Mailänder und Londoner Seiten finden sich bei Zimmermann 1916, Taf. 14 und 147.

33 Italienische Schrifteinflüsse zeigen sich unter anderem in der oben schon erwähnten, inversen ro-Ligatur, die im „Sinai-Psalter“ z. B. auf fol. 95^r zweimal in der ersten Zeile steht; analoge Gewohnheit kann man in einer italienischen Handschrift Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, III (3) aus dem 8. Jahrhundert beobachten; vgl. CLA IV 478.

34 Vgl. Lowe 1972, 436.

35 Vezin 2002/2003, 313–320.

36 Sie waren in den Jahren 1964 und 1965 Gegenstand einer Edition und einer paläographischen Studie, die nachgedruckt sind bei Lowe 1972, 520–574, Taf. 120 bis 130.

37 Ebd., 557 hat Lowe die Datierung des „Sinai-Psalters“ wegen der neuen Vergleichsmöglichkeit nachjustiert: „... well into the tenth century, if not to the very end of it“.

38 Dazu vgl. Tschudin 2012, 96 und 103 sowie Basanoff, 1965, 20–21. Vezin 2002/2003, 318 referiert eine Expertise zum „Sinai-Antiphonar“ von Jean Irigoien: „Dans l'état de nos connaissances, l'interprétation la moins improbable de cet ensemble de faits me paraît être la suivante: papier du XII^e siècle de fabrication espagnole“.

Kursive zu illustrieren. Das 7. Jahrhundert ist ein Höhepunkt der Regionalisierung der römischen Schriftkultur. Kuriale, Luxeuilminuskel, westgotische Minuskel stehen negativ gesprochen für eine Parzellierung, positiv gesprochen für eine Hochphase der Schriftinnovation, die das lateinische Schriftwesen auf Jahrhunderte geprägt hat.

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SCHRIFTLICHKEIT IM ZEICHEN VON KONTINUITÄT? DIE INSCRIFTEN DER PÄPSTE ZWISCHEN SPÄTANTIKE UND FRÜHMITTELALTER

Wolf Zöllner

Dass Leo I. (440–461) dem *liber pontificalis* zufolge *apud beatum Petrum apostolum* bzw. *in basilica beati Petri* bestattet wurde,¹ ja dass sich dieser literarische Hinweis auf die allererste päpstliche Bestattung beim Grab des Apostelfürsten bezieht, ist ebenso bekannt wie die kirchenpolitische Konstellation, die gepaart mit der ausgeprägten Petrusverehrung respektive Petrusfrömmigkeit Leos I. die Wahl seiner letzten Ruhestätte entscheidend beeinflusste.² Unter anderem aus der von Johannes Hymmonides verfassten *Vita Gregors des Großen* wissen wir ferner, dass Leo genauer gesagt in dem *secretarium* links der Vorhalle der Petersbasilika bestattet worden war, und in ebenjenem, möglicherweise von Leo selbst zu liturgischen und funerären Zwecken konzipierten Anbau will der Schreiber auch dessen Grabinschrift gesehen haben.³

Was selbige über die für die römischen Bischöfe innovative Wahl des Begräbnisortes verlautbaren ließ, ja ob sie das Thema überhaupt adressierte, muss offen bleiben, denn weder der Hagiograph des 9. Jahrhunderts noch sonst eine der vielen Inscriptensammlungen des Frühmittelalters überliefert den Wortlaut des Epitaphs. Dass die Neuerung aber sehr wohl registriert worden war, zeigt die jüngere Grabinschrift Leos des Großen, die über zwei Jahrhunderte später explizit auf das traditionsstiftende Potenzial des einstmals auserkorenen Memorialorts rekurrierte und die Erinnerung an die Innovationskraft somit gleichsam reaktualisierte. Besagtes zweites Epitaph ließ Sergius I. (687–701) im Jahr 688 anlässlich der Translation der Gebeine seines berühmten Vorgängers an dem neuen Memorialplatz aufstellen. *Primum hic tumulatum* heißt es in der Inschrift über den Körper Leos I., und ebendort, in der *arx Petri*, genauer *sub extremo marmore templi*, habe er wie ein Torwächter darauf gelauert, *ne lupus vastet ovile Dei*.⁴ Die vom *pastor Leo* gehütete Schafherde

1 Duchesne 1886, 239 sowie 90 mit der älteren Fassung des verlorenen ersten Teils des Papstbuches.

2 Vgl. Borgolte 1989, 49–58; McKitterick 2013, 105–114 und hier speziell 113; Bucarelli 2015, 58–59; Blaauw 2016, 92–99.

3 Sancti Gregorii magni vita auctore Joanne Diacono, lib. 4, cap. 68 (PL 75, Sp. 221): *Hujus preterea venerabile corpus in extrema porticu basilicae beati Petri apostoli ante secretarium tunc antiquissimus, quo videlicet Leo, Simplicius, Gelasius, atque Symmachus, apostolice sedis episcopi, con nonnullis aliis tumulati, suis hactenus epitaphiis praedicantur, sepultum tali titulo decoratur [...]*.

4 Gregorovius – Hülsen 1932, 10–11, Nr. 6; Schneider – Holtzmann 1933, 22, Nr. 26; Montini 1957, 100–103, Nr. 45; De Rossi – Silvagni – Ferrua 1935, 22, Nr. 4148: *Huius apostolici primum est hic tumulatum / Quod foret et tumulo dignus in arce Petri / Hinc vatium procerumque cohors quo cernis adesse / Membra sub egregia sunt adoperta domo / Sed dudum ut pastor magnus Leo septa gregemque / Christicolam servans ianitor arcis erat / Commonet e tumulo quod gesserat ipse superstes / Insidians ne lupus vastet ovile Dei / Testantur missi pro recto dogmate libri / Quos pia corda colunt quos prava turba timet / Rugiit et pravida stupuerunt corda ferarum / pastorisque sui iussa sequuntur oves / Hic tamen extremo iacuit sub marmore templi / Quem iam pontificum plura sepulchra celant / Sergius antistes divino impulsus amore / Nunc in fronte sacrae transtulit inde domus / [...]*. Vgl.

setzte sich unter anderem aus der *cohors* bzw. dem *grex* der Christuszgläubigen zusammen, die Leos Vorbild gefolgt seien, aber auch aus der Schar seiner Nachfolger, deren *plura sepulchra* mittlerweile das Gotteshaus zierten.⁵

Kontinuität bildete ganz offensichtlich ein zentrales Thema in der inschriftlichen Verhandlung der durch Sergius I. verfüigten Umbettung der ehrwürdigen Gebeine Leos I. Angesichts des empfindlichen Eingriffs in eine gewachsene Bestattungskonvention sollte diese gewürdigt, kommemoriert, beschworen und dadurch das Fortleben der Tradition sichergestellt werden.⁶ Damit folgte Sergius einer Strategie, die schon früher in ebenjenem Zusammenhang angewendet worden war, wenn auch auf klassisch-literarischem Terrain. Denn wie Michael Borgolte überzeugend herausgearbeitet hat, steht das Begräbnis Leos I. am Anfang der im *liber pontificalis* festgeschriebenen Konstruktion einer ursprünglichen bischöflichen Bestattung beim Hl. Petrus. Sie geht wie überhaupt alle funerären Angaben im Papstbuch auf das Umfeld des ebenfalls in St. Peter beigesetzten Papstes Symmachus I. (498–514) und das dort kultivierte Argument zurück, dass der Kontinuität auf dem Stuhl Petri die Bestattung der (rechtmäßigen) Amtsanwärter in der Nähe des vornehmsten Jüngers entsprechen sollte.⁷

Zu verschiedenen Zeiten und in unterschiedlichen Kontexten sind solche und ähnliche Narrative von Seiten der Päpste in Stellung gebracht worden, dienten sie doch als Fundament eines Selbstverständnisses, das über eine lückenlose Reihe von Oberhirten und Gemeindevorstehern bis auf den Vornehmsten der Jünger zurückreichte. Es ließe sich daher von einem Kontinuitätsdiskurs sprechen, der Konventionalisierungstendenzen bei der Weitergabe von Denk- und Handlungsmustern beförderte, Überzeitlichkeit und Institutionalität stiftete und die Fragilität einer bloßen Abfolge von individuellen Präkandidaten zu überwinden half. Das Festhalten an Überkommenem, das Anknüpfen an die ehrwürdige christliche oder auch imperiale Geschichte Roms, erzeugte Autorität und Legitimität und verweist in letzter Instanz auf das für die päpstlichen Amtsvorstellungen und -ansprüche konstitutive Dogma der apostolischen Sukzession.⁸

Das Kommunikationsmittel der Schrift wurde bereits sehr früh für die Propagierung solcher Vorstellungen vereinnahmt. Die auf den Beginn des 6. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. datierten, im Umkreis sowohl des Symmachus als auch seines Widersachers Laurentius zusammengestellten ersten Redaktionen des *liber pontificalis* speisten sich aus weit älteren Aneinanderreihungen von Namen, ohne Jahreszahlen noch, die der Vergewisserung, wenn nicht der Fiktion einer mit Petrus einsetzenden ununterbrochenen Linie an römischen Oberhirten verpflichtet waren.⁹ Nach einheitlichem Schema wurden solche Bischofslisten mit Daten versehen sowie um spärliche biographische Grundinformationen, panegyrische Tugendkataloge und „ikonistische“ Beschreibungen äußerer Merkmale erweitert. Die daraus resultierenden Personenskizzen nehmen häufig topische

indes Silvagni 1943b, 86–87 mit dem metrisch richtigen Wortlaut *Ne lupus insidians* [...] in V. 8 gemäß der Sylloge Cambridge, University Library, Ms. Kk. 4.6, fol. 235v/r.

5 Ebd., 22.

6 Zur Geschichte von Alt-St. Peter während der Amtszeit Sergius' I. vgl. weiterhin Ó Carragáin 2013, 177–189.

7 Borgolte 1989, 61–71; Goodson 2010, 225–228.

8 Zum Selbstverständnis der Päpste im früheren Mittelalter einführend und problemorientiert Scholz 2006, 11–23; zur Genese päpstlicher Amtsvorstellungen und ihren theologischen Fundamenten in altkirchlicher Zeit Schatz 1990, 13–55; Schimmelpenninck 1996, 1–58; Herbers 2012, 22–38; Martin 2010, 31–35 sowie 59–109 und speziell zur Sukzessionsidee Blum 1963; 1964; Ziegler 2007 sowie die Beiträge in Schneider – Wenz 2004.

9 Zu den älteren Teilen des „Papstbuches“ siehe zuletzt Herbers 2011; Verardi 2013; 2016; Simperl 2016 sowie insgesamt zum sogenannten Laurentianischen Schisma und seinem Schrifttum Wirbelauer 1993, *passim*.

Züge an; ihre mittelalterliche Bezeichnung als *gesta pontificum* verrät ihren literarischen Charakter und gibt sie als Tatenberichte aus, in deren Mittelpunkt nicht das Individuum stand, sondern die bischöfliche Amtsführung, d. h. die Würdigung des Pontifikats unter der Voraussetzung divergierender persönlicher Prädispositionen. Die gesammelte Abfassung dieser „Viten“ bestärkte die Bemühung um Konformität zu einem kanonisierten und standardisierten Erzählmuster. Persönliche Eigenheiten einzelner Amtsinhaber erfuhren vor dem 8. bzw. 9. Jh. kaum Berücksichtigung.¹⁰ Dem entsprechen auf Seite der Bildmedien die Papsttondi in St. Peter und St. Paul vor den Mauern, die ebenfalls das Sukzessionsthema behandeln und dieses an prominentestem Ort, in den Basiliken über den Apostelgräbern, visuell zur Geltung brachten.¹¹

Wendet man den Blick von den erzählenden zu den dokumentarischen Quellen, so ließen sich die administrativen Professionalisierungs-, Standardisierungs-, und Vereinheitlichungsimpulse im kurialen Verwaltungsstab anführen, die schon allein aufgrund der Masse der an die Päpste herangetragenen Belange ein erhöhtes Maß an Routine und Stabilität im Bereich des Schriftwesens nach sich zogen.¹² Überhaupt bestand trotz aller migrationszeitlicher Transformationen, die auch in der Schriftgeschichte zu Fragmentarisierungserscheinungen und Sonderentwicklungen führten, nirgendwo sonst ein vergleichbar reichhaltiges Reservoir an kulturellen Rezeptionsmöglichkeiten wie in der ehemaligen Hauptstadt des antiken Weltreichs.¹³

Es hat somit gute Gründe, wenn die folgenden Ausführungen zu den epigraphischen Zeugnissen der frühmittelalterlichen Päpste insbesondere den Phänomenen der langen Dauer gewidmet sind. Wie eingangs skizziert, zeugen neben historio-, hagio-, und ikonographischen Quellen auch die päpstlichen Inschriften von der Reflexion und Zurschaustellung der Kontinuität im römischen Bischofsamt. Sie sollen deswegen nach der Persistenz tradierter Inhalte und Formen befragt werden, wobei ob der eingenommenen diachronen Perspektive vor allem zweierlei zu eruieren ist: Erstens, inwiefern Sprache, Schrift, Lokalisation und Materialität der Inschriften an althergebrachte epigraphische Kommunikationsmuster anknüpften respektive der Visualisierung von Beständig- und Altehrwürdigkeit Rechnung trugen, und zweitens, wie stark der gesellschaftliche Wandel die epigraphische Praxis beeinflusste oder – andersherum – (beharrliche) Reaktualisierung nicht geradezu beförderte.

Als „päpstliche Inschriften“ – so eine simple Arbeitshypothese – werden diejenigen epigraphischen Zeugnisse bezeichnet, die im Auftrag oder im näheren sozialen Umfeld der Päpste konzipiert wurden. Dies dient zunächst der sprachlichen Ökonomie, doch wäre überdies zu fragen, ob die auf die römischen Bischöfe zurückgehenden oder in ihrem Namen ausgestellten Inschriften

10 Vgl. Zimmermann 1981, 13–14; Herbers 2003 sowie die versammelten Aufsätze in Bougard – Sot 2009; zu den Bischofslisten noch immer einschlägig Caspar 1926 sowie Hofmann 1989.

11 De Bruyne 1934; Ladner 1941, 39–60; 1981, 160–163; Waetzoldt 1964, 71 mit Abb. 935–940; Andaloro 1992, 576–577; Bauer 2004, 28; Andaloro 2006a, 379–395; 2006b, 97–124, hier 97 und 100–101 sowie Abb. V und VII; Friedrichs 2015, 213–225 (St. Paul), 226–231 (St. Peter); zur künstlerischen Repräsentation und Selbstdarstellung der Päpste siehe weiterhin Herklotz 2002; Kluger 2012; Matena 2016; Gianandrea 2017.

12 Vgl. Bischoff 1996; Frenz 1989; 2000; Hiestand 1999; 2003 sowie die einzelnen Beiträge in Sisson – Larson 2016, 220–291; zum Thema Schriftlichkeit explizit Noble 1990; Herbers – Fleisch 2011.

13 Zur Transformation der römischen Welt und dem entsprechend betitelten Forschungsprojekt Wood 1997; Delogu 1999; Noble 1999; Pohl 2002; 2016; McKitterick 2015; McKitterick 2018; zur Frage von Literalität und Schriftgebrauch im Frühmittelalter Schäfer 1993; Mostert 2005; Everett 2009; McKitterick 2012a; 2012b; zur ideellen und materiellen Romrezeption nicht allein von päpstlicher und kaiserlicher Seite siehe Struve 1988; Angenendt – Schieffer 1989; Petersohn 1994; 2009; 2010; Fried 2000; 2006; Hofmann 2002; Esch 2005; 2008; McKitterick 2011; 2014; 2018; Gantner 2014; Pohl 2014.

unter Umständen gar Rückschlüsse auf spezifisch papale Formen des epigraphischen Ausdrucks zulassen, also auf einen eigenständigen „epigraphic habit“ hindeuten, wie er bereits für die römische Antike und in Übertragung auch für andere Regionen und Epochen postuliert worden ist.¹⁴

Inskriftentypologisch sollen in Stein geschlagene, commemorative und hier speziell funerar-epigraphische Quellen im Zentrum der Ausführungen stehen, sind sie doch wie das einführende Beispiel um Leo I. und sein Epitaph verdeutlicht auf Grund ihrer Verbindung zu den Begräbnis- und Memorialplätzen der römischen Bischöfe seit dem 3. Jahrhundert eng mit der Imagination und Monumentalisierung einer kontinuierlichen römischen Bischofsfolge verwoben.¹⁵ Nicht von ungefähr haben sich rege Forschungsdiskussionen um die *cripta dei papi* in der sogenannten Calixtuskatakomben oder die Genese der kollektiven Grablegen in der Peters- und der Lateranbasilika entsponnen.¹⁶ Es würde jedoch zu weit führen, hier *in extenso* die Anfänge der päpstlichen Funerärpraxis und -epigraphik nachzuvollziehen.¹⁷ Lediglich die für das Mittelalter prägenden spätantiken Traditionen seien gleichsam in einem Exkurs angerissen. Hierzu zählt die Vorstellung eines gemeinsamen Begräbnisplatzes der römischen Oberhirten, einer „Papstgruft“, die in dem nach Calixtus I. (217–222) benannten Katakombenbezirk womöglich nicht planmäßig angelegt worden war, aus der Retrospektive aber durchaus als solche erscheinen konnte.¹⁸

Diese und andere Memorien der römischen Bischöfe, Märtyrer und Bekenner übten über Jahrhunderte eine hohe Anziehungskraft aus, nicht zuletzt dank ihrer konzertierten architektonischen, bildlichen und epigraphischen Ausgestaltung.¹⁹ Der „Vater der päpstlichen Epigraphik“, Damasus I. (366–384), tat sich bei diesem Unterfangen besonders hervor.²⁰ Zwar bevorzugte er für sich und seine Familie eine gesonderte individuelle Grablege außerhalb der Papstkrypta, doch geht diese in der baulichen Form, wie sie Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts von Giovanni Battista de Rossi entdeckt und ergraben wurde, aller Wahrscheinlichkeit auf seine Konzeption zurück.²¹ Zu ihrer Ausstattung gehörten auch zwei monumentale Inskriptentafeln, eine exklusiv zu Ehren des

14 Die Begriffsprägung geht zurück auf MacMullen 1982; siehe weiterhin Witschel 2006; Trout 2009; Beltrán Lloris 2015 und für das Mittelalter Handley 2000.

15 Zu den päpstlichen Grabinschriften des Frühmittelalters siehe Schneider – Holtzmann 1933; Scholz 2005; Bucarelli 2015.

16 Zu den Papstgräbern Picard 1969 sowie einschlägig Borgolte 1989, 9–37, 49–118 und 151–178 sowie Borgolte 1993; vgl. dazu die nützlichen Revisionen bei Picard 1993; aus der älteren Literatur seien genannt Gregorovius – Hülsen 1932 und Montini 1957.

17 Vgl. im Überblick Spera 2000; Blaauw 2016 sowie die Sammlung bei Carletti 1986; zum Thema der christlichen Katakomben siehe Pergola 1997; Fiocchi Nicolai – Biscontino – Mazzoleni 2002; Fiocchi Nicolai – Guyon 2006a; Fiocchi Nicolai 2018 und zu den verschiedenen suburbikarischen Begräbnis- und Kultorte im Einzelnen La Regina 2001–2008.

18 Detailstudien zu einzelnen Arealen der Calixtuskatakomben bei Brandenburg 1968/1969; Reekmans 1988; Reekmans 1992; Nuzzo 2000 sowie Fiocchi Nicolai – Guyon 2006b.

19 Neben Anm. 16 noch immer maßgeblich De Rossi 1864–1880; Wilpert 1916; Styger 1935.

20 Die Namensgebung nach Wesch-Klein 1999.

21 Blaauw 2016, 81–82.



Abb. 1. Märtyrer-Elogium, Rom, S. Callisto. Aus Silvagni 1943a, Taf. VIII, Nr. 2

Märtyrerbischofs Sixtus II. (257–258) sowie ein weiteres Epigramm, das – abermals unter Hervorhebung des Sixtus – dem Kollektiv der in der Grabkammer bestatteten Heiligen gewidmet ist (Abb. 1).²²

Im Gegensatz zu den in den unterirdischen Zömeterien lokalisierten älteren Epitaphien mit ihrem einfachen Formular, darunter vier noch erhaltene zu Ehren der Päpste Pontian (230–235), Anterus (235–236), Fabian (236–250) und Lucius (253–254),²³ schuf Damasus unter Mithilfe des Kalligraphen Furius Dionysius Philocalus eine künstlerisch höchst anspruchsvolle und uniforme epigraphische Ausdrucksweise, die dem römischen Sakralraum dank ihrer markanten visuellen Sprache einheitliche optische Konturen verlieh.²⁴ Die durch die steigende Zahl an Heiligenkalendern zunehmend kanonisierte Kommemoration der ehrwürdigsten Mitglieder der lokalen Christengemeinde fand gewissermaßen ihre materiale Entsprechung in der Schaffung eines homogenen kultischen Schrift- und Bildraums.²⁵

Von den sogenannten *epigrammata Damasiana* sind an die 60 authentische, meist fragmentarisch erhaltene Stücke überliefert, die teils den Namen des Damasus oder des Furius Dionysius Philocalus tragen und somit auch der persönlichen Repräsentation dienen.²⁶ Sie wurden auf Marmorblöcke mit monumentalen Ausmaßen geschlagen, in einer eigens hierfür entworfenen, kunstvoll stilisierten *capitalis quadrata* angefertigt, als *tituli* konzipiert und an prominenter Stelle in Kirchen und Katakomben in Szene gesetzt. Für die sorgfältige und gleichmäßige Realisierung der Epigramme zeichnet nach gängiger Auffassung Furius Dionysius Philocalus höchstselbst verantwortlich; gleiches gilt für die mitunter als *scriptura Damasiana* bezeichnete Schrift, ihre

22 Borgolte 1989, 22; Trout 2015, 113–118, Nr. 16–17; Abbildungen der fragmentarisch erhaltenen Stücke bei Silvagni 1943a, Taf. VIII, Nr. 2 und 6; Taf. IX, Nr. 3.

23 Borgolte 1989, 22; Montini 1957, 74, Abb. 16, 76–77, Abb. 18–19 und 79, Abb. 22.

24 Diefenbach 2007, 303; Thunø 2017, 108–109.

25 Zu Damasus und dem durch ihn geförderten Märtyrerkult Ferrua – Carletti 1985; Guyon 1995; Ságghy 1999; 2000; 2012; Löx 2013; Trout 2014.

26 Zu dem epigraphischen Programm siehe weiterhin Ferrua 1942; Trout 2003; Ságghy 2008 und umfassend Reutter 2009.



Abb. 2. Elogium zu Ehren des Märtyrers Eutychius, Rom, S. Sebastiano. Foto: W. Zöllner

ausgeprägten Kontraste zwischen Haarstrichen und Schattenlinien (M, C, A, D, O, N etc.), bauchigen Punzen (D, O, P, Q) und grazilen Serifen und Cauden. Die philocalianischen Lettern schöpften zwar aus dem Formenschatz der frühkaiserzeitlichen Monumentalis, tatsächlich aber bildeten sie in ihrer spielerisch dekorativen Ästhetik einen ganz eigenen, charakteristischen Stil einer dezidiert öffentlich-propagatorischen christlichen Inschriftenkultur aus (Abb. 2).²⁷

Es verwundert daher kaum, dass die damasianischen Epigramme nicht nur in mittelalterlichen Syllogen, Pilgerführern und Rombeschreibungen, sondern auch im epigraphischen Wirken der spätantiken sowie frühmittelalterlichen Päpste eindeutige Spuren hinterließen.²⁸ Freilich wäre es weit gefehlt, in ihnen ein Modell für einen standardisierten päpstlichen Inschriftentypus erblicken zu wollen, zumal die Kunstfertigkeit des Philocalus nicht ohne Weiteres zu imitieren war. Die Anklänge an die im römischen Sakralraum omnipräsenten, prächtigen Damasusinschriften offenbaren vielmehr komplexe Rezeptionsprozesse, denen man allein mit den Methoden des inschriftenpaläographischen Vergleichs und solchen Klassifizierungen wie „capitale epigrafica“, „capitale libraria“ oder gar „capitale dei papi“ deswegen nicht gerecht wird, weil die vielschichtigen Verweise ebenso Format, Layout und Beschreibstoff miteinbeziehen.²⁹

Ansetzen lässt sich unmittelbar bei der „Papstgruft“ in der Area I der Calixtuskatakomben, in der Sixtus III. (432–440) kaum mehr als ein halbes Jahrhundert nach der damasianischen eine zweite, ebenfalls der kollektiven Heiligenmemoria gewidmete Inschriftentafel anbringen ließ, und zwar an prominenter Stelle über dem Eingang zu dem *cubiculum*.³⁰ Sie verzeichnete alle *nomina episcoporum martyrum et confessorum*, deren leibliche Überreste in der Calixtuskatakomben deponiert worden waren.³¹ Lokalisation und Inhalt der Inschrift weisen deutlich auf das Anliegen hin, den in dem älteren Damasusepigramm nicht einzeln genannten Glaubenszeugen konkrete Namen zuzuordnen und selbige bei Eintritt in die Gruft an die Besucher zu kommunizieren. Für

27 Vgl. die inschriftenpaläographischen Ausführungen bei Trout 2015, 47–52.

28 De Rubéis 2009; 2010.

29 So noch Cardin 2008, 26–38 und 47–54.

30 De Rossi 1867, 37; Borgolte 1989, 24, Anm. 45.

31 De Rossi 1888, 66, Nr. 23a; Styger 1935, 90–91 sowie De Rossi 1867, 33–48 unter Abgleich mit den zeitgenössischen Kalendarien und literarischen Heiligenkatalogen.

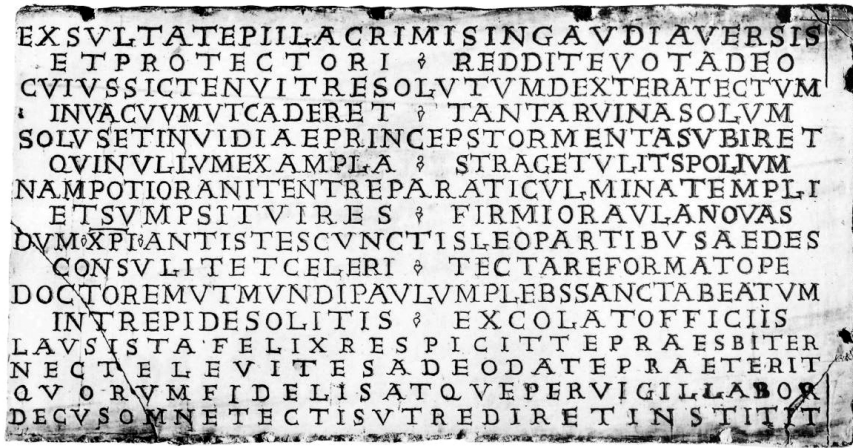


Abb. 3. Bauinschrift Papst Leos I., Rom, Museo lapidario S. Paolo fuori le mura.
Aus Silvagni 1943a, Taf. X, Nr. 5

dieses Unterfangen wählte Sixtus III. offensichtlich einen ähnlich länglichen, horizontal ausgerichteten Schriftträger wie Damasus I., wie sich aus der noch erhaltenen Einfassung rekonstruieren lässt.³² Weitere Aussagen zu möglichen Parallelen zwischen den beiden Sammeltituli müssen zwangsläufig spekulativ bleiben, da die jüngere Inschrift Sixtus' III. heute lediglich noch kopia überliefert ist. Wenn jedoch sowohl die von Sixtus III. in Auftrag gegebene monumentale, musivische Stifterinschrift in S. Maria Maggiore als auch die Taufinschrift auf dem Ziborium des Baptisteriums der Lateranbasilika (S. Giovanni in fonte) von dem Formenschatz der *scriptura damasiana* gebrauch machten bzw. visuelle Bezüge zu dieser herzustellen suchten,³³ dürfte dies erst recht für den epigraphische Namenskatalog in der Calixtuskatakomben gelten, der in unmittelbarer räumlicher Nachbarschaft zu den dortigen Damasusinschriften ausgestellt wurde. Ein solcher Rückschluss drängt sich umso mehr auf, da das Taufgedicht Sixtus' III. auch inhaltlich auf ein dem Genre nach identisches Epigramm des Damasus aus der von ebendiesem Papst gegründeten Kirche S. Lorenzo in Damaso rekurrierte.³⁴

Seinem Vorgänger gleich tat es Leo I., der zum Gedenken an seine Restauration von S. Paolo fuori le mura eine Bauinschrift anfertigen ließ, deren Schriftträger und Schriftbild sichtlich am Vorbild der damasianischen Märtyrereulogien ausgerichtet waren (Abb. 3).³⁵

Das in Marmor geschlagene *carmen* kommt in seinem Format (2,60 × 1,30 m) sowie in den Ausmaßen und Proportionen der Buchstaben ähnlich monumental daher wie seine damasianischen Vorbilder, und auch die charakteristischen Zierhäkchen sowie die mitunter deutlich

32 De Rossi 1867, 37.

33 De Rubeis 2009, 106; Thunø 2015, 186; 2017, 111; zu S. Maria Maggiore Zimmermann 2017, 130–135 und zum dortigen Triumphbogenmosaik im Allgemeinen Martin 2010, 109–173; zum Lateranbaptisterium Bruderer Eichberg 2003; Senekovic 2008.

34 Bruderer Eichberg 2003, 18; die Inschrift bei De Rossi 1888, 135, Nr. 6 (Sylloge Viridunensis); Sblendorio Cugusi 2009.

35 De Rossi – Silvagni – Ferrua 1935, Nr. 4783; Silvagni 1943a, Taf. X, Nr. 5; Papi 2011, 188, Nr. 11.

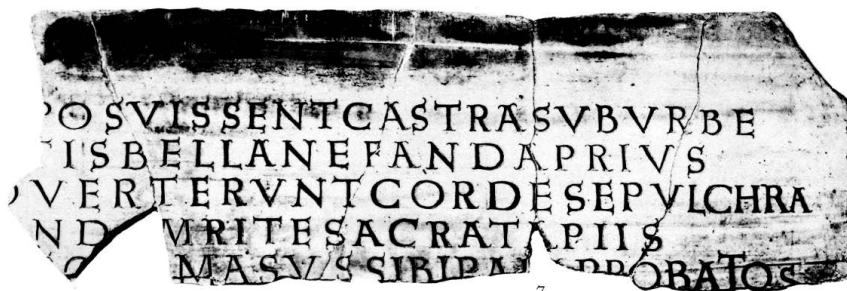


Abb. 4. Restaurationsinschrift des Papstes Vigilius, Rom, Coem. Iordanorum.
Aus Silvagni 1943a, Taf. XI, Nr. 7

dick ausgeführten Schattenlinien folgen der philocalianischen Vorlage. Ganz augenscheinlich rezipierte die Inschrift Leos I. eine im römischen Sakralraum etablierte visuelle Sprache, doch kann von einer simplen Nachahmung angesichts der durch das Metrum provozierten Einrückungen und Verzerrungen in Form von *bederae distinguentes* kaum die Rede sein.³⁶ Dennoch beabsichtigte Leo I. an der Heimstatt des Apostels Paulus die prachtvollen Restaurationsleistungen des Damasus zu evozieren und sich in der Kommemoration seiner Person und Bautätigkeit diesem hervorragenden Hüter und Bewahrer des römischen Heiligenkults förmlich anzugleichen.³⁷

Auf einem anderen Rezeptionsniveau bewegt sich wiederum die epigraphische Dichtung des Papstes Vigilius (537–555), die sich aufgrund des fragmentarischen Zustands des beschrifteten Marmorblocks nur dem Wortlaut nach vollständig erhalten hat (Abb. 4).

Gemäß der Inschrift hätten die Goten, als sie während ihrer Belagerung der Stadt vor den Mauern ihre *castra* aufschlugen, ebendort die Märtyrergräber mitsamt den Marmortituli des Damasus zerstört, woraufhin Vigilius nach der Vertreibung der Feinde das *opus* des besagten Papstes aber wieder erneuert, d. h. für die Restauration der in Mitleidenschaft gezogenen Damasusinschriften gesorgt habe.³⁸ Die Inschrift erzählt demnach von ihrer eigenen Aufstellung, sie reflektiert gewissermaßen ihre Egohistorie und fungiert auf diese Weise als steinernes Zeugnis der Bemühungen des Vigilius. Mehr noch sollte das Exemplar an Ort und Stelle, im *coemiterium Iordanorum* an der Via salaria nova und hier am Grab der Hl. Vitalis, Martialis und Alexander, den Platz eines älteren damasianischen *carmen* einnehmen, dieses also dauerhaft ersetzen, weswegen es dessen äußere Merkmale und Attribute nachbildete. Insofern eröffnet die Vigiliusinschrift einen seltenen Einblick in den konkreten historischen Kontext des Nachvollzugs der

36 Zu den Inschriften im römischen Kirchenraum am Übergang von Spätantike zu Frühmittelalter vgl. Carletti 2001.

37 Yasin 2015, 118–119.

38 Der Abgleich des bei De Rossi 1888, 100–101, Nr. 18 nach der sogenannten vierten Lorscher Sylloge rekonstruierten Textes mit dem bei Silvagni 1943a, Taf. XI, Nr. 7–8 reproduzierten, heute noch erhaltenen Fragmenten ergibt die Lesart: [Dum peritura Getae] POSVISSENT CASTRA SVB VRBE / [Moverunt Sanc]TIS BELLA NEFANDA PRIVS / [Istaque sacrileg]O VERTERVNT CORDE SEPVLCHRA / [Martyribus quo]ND[a]M RITE SACRATA PIIS / [Quos monstrante De]O D[a]MASVS SIBI PA[?]OBATOS / [Affixo monuit carmine iure coli / Sed periit titulus confracto marmore sa]NCTVS / [Nec tamen his iterum posse latere fuit / Diruta Vigilius nam mox haec papa geme]SCENS / [Hostibus expulsis omne novavit op]VS. Die Edition bei De Rossi – Ferrua – Mazzoleni 1985, Nr. 24313.

filigranen graphischen Details, der breiten, bauchigen Punzen und geschwungenen Serifen der Damasusepigramme.³⁹ Dabei repräsentiert die schriftbildliche Imitation allerdings nur eine Ebene einer multiplen epigraphischen Beziehung, die durch die Adaption des rechteckigen Querformats, den Rückgriff auf das Trägermaterial Marmor, die topologisch-räumliche Nähe und den expliziten sprachlichen Verweis konstituiert wurde.

Wie für Sixtus III. und Leo I. um die Mitte des 5. Jahrhunderts erschien ein Aufgreifen des damasianischen Inschriftenerbes auch noch zur Zeit der Gotenkriege angezeigt. Nach den verheerenden militärischen Auseinandersetzungen, die in den Forschungskontroversen um die Epochengrenze zwischen Antike und Mittelalter einhellig als tiefgreifende Zäsur angesehen werden, nutzte Papst Vigilius die Gelegenheit, als zweiter Damasus in Erscheinung zu treten. Wie seine Inschrift bezeugt, markierten die Verwüstungen der extramuralen Heiligtümer im Rahmen der gotischen Belagerung Roms 537/538 einen schmerzlichen Einschnitt in der städtischen Kultpraxis.⁴⁰ In dieser Situation inszenierte sich Vigilius als Kontinuator, indem er auf inhaltlicher und visueller Ebene die für die römische Gemeinde glanzvollen Zeiten unter Damasus heraufbeschwor und ihre Wiederkehr ankündigte. Dass es sich dabei um einen zielgerichteten epigraphischen Rückgriff handelte, beweisen die andersgearteten stilistischen Schwerpunkte, die noch wenige Jahre zuvor für das Epitaph Bonifaz' II. (530–532) und eine Inschrift Johannes II. (533–535) gesetzt worden waren.⁴¹

Die kontinuierliche Wiederaneignung des visuellen Erscheinungsbilds der damasianischen Inschriften hat Anlass dazu gegeben, von einer ikonischen Schrift der Päpste zu sprechen.⁴² Diese verkörperte in monumentaler, graphischer Form die Autorität der Bischöfe von Rom und begegnet erneut in den Epitaphien Gregors des Großen (590–604) und seines Apokrisiars und Nachfolgers Sabinian (604–606).⁴³ Denn obwohl von den beiden Grabinschriften aus dem beginnenden 7. Jahrhundert nur winzige Fragmente erhalten sind, lässt sich auch hier ein Anknüpfen an die epigraphischen Traditionen der *scriptura Damasiana* feststellen, allerdings mit deutlich abgeflachten Kontrasten zwischen feineren Haarlinien und dickeren Grundstrichen und Schäften.⁴⁴ Grabmal und Epitaph Gregors des Großen werden gewöhnlich in dem der Kirchenfassade von St. Peter vorgelagerten Narthex lokalisiert, und ebendorthin, *in fronte sacrae domus*, hatte bereits Sergius I. die Gebeine Leos I. überführt.⁴⁵ Sergius' Vita im *liber pontificalis* bezeichnet den neuen Bestattungsort als *locus publicus in denominata basilica* [scil. derjenigen von St. Peter],⁴⁶ was interessante Rückschlüsse auf das zeitgenössische Verständnis von öffentlichen und privaten Räumen sowie deren epigraphische Ausstattung und Markierung zulässt. Gemäß der Rekonstruktion der konkreten topologischen Situation in der frühmittelalterlichen Petersbasilika eignete sich die damasianische Inschriftensprache offenbar nicht allein für die Auskleidung heiliger Orte, sondern aufgrund ihrer sorgfältigen, wohl proportionierten Zeilenführung und Buchstabenanordnung auch für stark einsehbare, zugängliche und frequentierte Raumgefüge.

39 Vgl. De Rubeis 2010, 58.

40 Dazu Rota 2001.

41 Silvagni 1943a, Taf. II, Nr. 2 und Taf. XI, Nr. 5; Bucarelli 2015, 63–64.

42 De Rubeis 2009, 106.

43 Silvagni 1943a, Taf. II, Nr. 2–3; Montini 1957, 108, Abb. 31; De Rossi – Silvagni – Ferrua 1935, Nr. 4156–4157; Bucarelli 2015, 64–66; zur Paläographie De Rubeis 2009, 106.

44 Koch 2014, 221–222.

45 So zuletzt Bucarelli 2015, 58 unter Verweis auf das oben Anm. 4 zitierte jüngere Epitaph Leos I.

46 Duchesne 1886, 375.

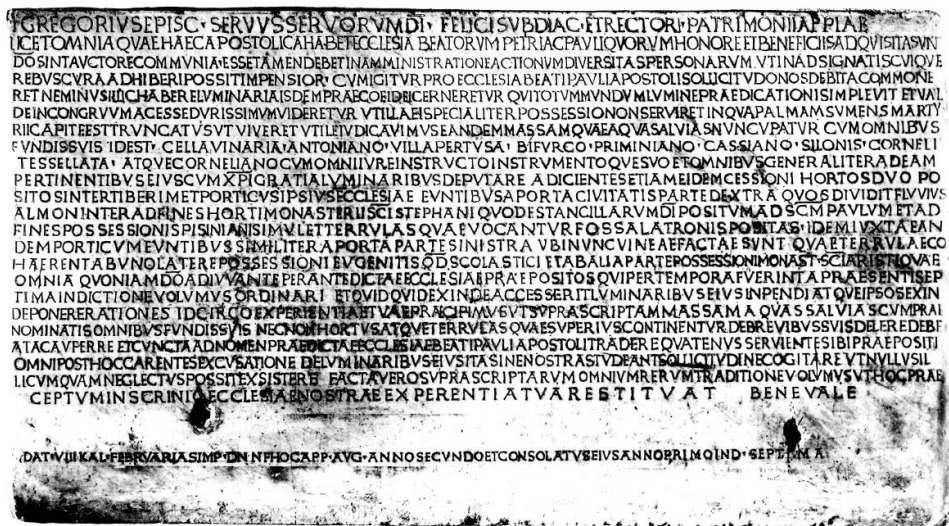


Abb. 5. Steinurkunde Gregors I., Rom, Museo lapidario S. Paolo fuori le mura.
Aus Silvagni 1943a, Taf. XII, Nr. 1

Gänzlich aus dem thematischen Rahmen fällt demgegenüber die steinerne Kopie einer Urkunde Gregors des Großen für S. Paolo fuori le mura, die weder als herausragendes inschriftliches Zeugnis der Päpste noch als Indiz für eine von diesen forcierte Fortführung einer antikklassischen Schrifttradition argumentativ vereinnahmt werden kann (Abb. 5).⁴⁷

Die Anfertigung des in Marmor geschlagene Rechtsdokuments geht nämlich ebenso wie die Impetrierung des Papyrusoriginals nicht auf die Initiative des Ausstellers zurück, sondern auf diejenige des Empfängers, d. h. auf das Bedürfnis der Mönchsgemeinschaft von St. Paul, die Zuwendung des Bischofs zum Zweck der Dokumentation oder Korroboration dauerhaft in Kirche oder Kloster auszustellen.⁴⁸ Vor diesem Hintergrund kommt es einer paradoxen Umkehrung der historischen Zusammenhänge gleich, wenn die Grabinschrift Gregors I. inschriftenpaläographisch der undifferenzierten Kategorie „capitale“, die Steinurkunde hingegen der „capitale dei papi“ zugeordnet wird.⁴⁹

Angesichts von mehr als einem Dutzend *pontifices*, die bis zum Anfang des 7. Jahrhunderts an der Schwelle zur Petersbasilika bestattet worden waren, muss die Vorhalle der Kirche samt der angeschlossenen Sakristei und ihrem Vestibül auf Grund der zahlreichen Epitaphien zu diesem Zeitpunkt einer epigraphischen Galerie geglichen haben – und eine Vielzahl weiterer Grabinschriften sollte hinzutreten.⁵⁰ Doch beweisen bereits das Epitaph Papst Bonifaz' IV. (608–615)

47 So noch zuletzt Koch 2014, 222; Reproduktion der Inschrift ebd., 234, Abb. 4; Edition bei De Rossi – Silvagni – Ferrua 1935, Nr. 4790.

48 Johrendt 2014, 358–359.

49 So Cardin 2008, 145, Tab. 16.

50 Borgolte 1989, 79–80 und 346–348; Bucarelli 2015, 60 sowie jeweils mit Auflistung des Epitaphs Montini 1957, 100–128, Nr. 45–84.

und das zum Grabmal Johannes' VII. (705–707) gehörige Inschriftenfragment, dass für den entstandenen funeren Schauplatz keineswegs durchgängig auf ein einheitliches visuelles Muster zurückgegriffen wurde.⁵¹

Das Netz aus Beziehungen zwischen epigraphischen Zeugnissen erschöpft sich allerdings nicht allein in ihren graphischen Qualitäten. Inschriften vermögen auch in anderer Hinsicht in einen Dialog zu treten. Die päpstlichen Grabinschriften in St. Peter bildeten commemorative, von langen Schrifttafeln dominierte Mikroräume, in denen sich ein Epitaph an das nächste drängte. Deren Texte wurden in aller Regel in Versform verfasst und wie die erwähnten Personenskizzen des *liber pontificalis* einem sehr engen Korsett an religiösen und literarischen Konventionen angepasst.⁵² Wenn jenseits des christlichen Totenlobs die Amtsführung des Bischofs zur Sprache kommt, muten die Papstepitaphien wie metrische Kondensate der *gesta pontificum* an.⁵³ In ihrer äußeren Erscheinung, in Format und Ausmaß, kommunizierten sie indes eindeutig die Idee der Kontinuität im römischen Bischofsamt: Übergroße, horizontal ausgerichtete, rechteckige Marmorblöcke in der Tradition der Damasusepigramme kündeten ohne viel Dekor, in kapitalen Buchstaben und mit klarer Zeilenführung von den (Amts)tugenden der Verstorbenen. Nicht in derselben, aber in gleicher Ausdrucksweise trugen die Epitaphien vor und in der Petersbasilika dazu bei, den Raum für eine *memoria* zu schaffen, die über die Erinnerung einzelner Amtsträger hinausreichte, auf die Demonstration eines Ideals abzielte und erst allmählich den Päpsten als Individuen gerecht wurde.⁵⁴

Ähnlich wie die Steinurkunde Gregors I. für die Abtei von St. Paul vor den Mauern fällt auch der berühmte *titulus* für Hadrian I. (772–795) aus dem hier zugrundegelegten Raster; er ist ein exzeptionelles Produkt äußerer Einflüsse, am karolingischen Hof geschaffen und literarisch vermutlich ein Werk Alkuins.⁵⁵ Der vertikal orientierte Schriftträger aus schwarzem Marmor mit einem umlaufenden Band aus Zierranken sucht in Rom, ja in ganz Lateineuropa zu jener Zeit seinesgleichen, und nicht zuletzt deshalb wurde die Inschrift in ihrer heutigen Form jüngst für eine Kopie des 15. Jahrhunderts gehalten, wenn auch mit wenig überzeugenden Argumenten.⁵⁶ Aber ganz unabhängig davon, ob das Epitaph als authentisches Kronzeugnis der karolingischen Renaissance gelten darf, sorgte das geistige Klima der *renovatio*, die unter Hadrian I. in Rom Einzug hielt, eindeutig für ein gesteigertes Interesse an den epigraphischen Hinterlassenschaften der Vergangenheit.⁵⁷ Was sich für den nordalpinen Raum etwa anhand der Anfertigung und Verbreitung karolingerzeitlicher Syllogien ablesen lässt,⁵⁸ führte im Umfeld der Päpste einmal mehr zu einer intensivierten Rezeption und Imitation der Damasusinschriften.⁵⁹ Heraus sticht eine Inschrift Leos III. (795–816), die in vorzüglicher *scriptura damasiana* der päpstlichen Aussmückung der *confessio* unterhalb von S. Paolo fuori le mura gedenkt.⁶⁰ Durch ihre kunstvolle Ausführung trug die Bauinschrift selbst zu dem in ihr angesprochenen *decor* bei, und durch ihre

51 Silvagni 1943a, Taf. II, Nr. 5 und Taf. XII, Nr. 6; Bucarelli 2015, 68 mit Anm. 76.

52 Scholz 2005, 89–91.

53 Ebd., 95.

54 So in Ergänzung zu Borgolte 1989, 93; 1993 und Bauer 2006.

55 Wallach 1951; 1955; Scholz 1997; Story u.a. 2005.

56 Caldelli 2016, *passim*.

57 Zur karolingischen Renaissance in Rom siehe Krautheimer 1996, 125–160.

58 Bauer 1997; 2004, 21–25; Hartmann 2015, 263–265.

59 De Rubeis 2009, 109–110; 2010, 61–63.

60 Ebd., 61–62 mit Abb. 6.

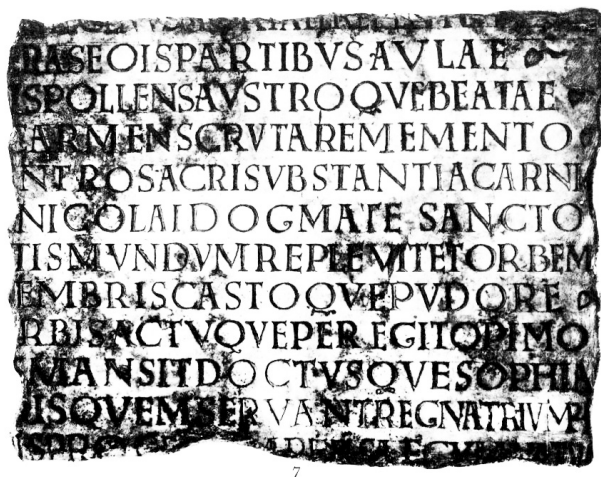


Abb. 6. Epitaph Papst Nikolaus' I., Rom, Vatikanische Grotten.
Aus Silvagni 1943a, Taf. II, Nr. 7

Platzierung am Eingang zu der Krypta gingen der graphische und topologische Rückbezug auf das damasianische Vorbild einmal mehr Hand in Hand.⁶¹ Eine ähnlich getreue Orientierung an dieser nunmehr jahrhundertealten inschriftlichen Tradition demonstriert das Epitaph Nikolaus' I. (858–867) (Abb. 6), das gerade im Vergleich zu der Grabinschrift seines Nachfolgers Hadrian II. (867–872) von einem willentlichen Rekurs auf ein autoritatives epigraphisches Register zeugt.⁶² Fraglich bleibt zuletzt, ob an der Wende zum 9. Jahrhundert tatsächlich ein im Verlauf des 7. und 8. Jahrhunderts in Vergessenheit geratener „epigraphic habit“ wiederentdeckt wurde.⁶³ Nach streng inschriftenpaläographischen Gesichtspunkten mag sich dieser Eindruck aufdrängen. Eine erweiterter Perspektive auf die räumliche Positionierung und visuelle Qualität von Geschriebenem wie sie jüngst von Erik Thunø eingenommen worden ist, legt hingegen nahe, dass die den Damasusepigrammen zugrundeliegenden Konzeptionen von Inschriftlichkeit zwischen dem 6. und 9. Jahrhundert auch auf die monumentalen, goldenen Apsisinschriften in Rom übertragen wurden.⁶⁴ Wie in den hier diskutierten Stein- bzw. Marmorinschriften fand auch in den musivischen *tituli* kunstvoll gestalteter römischer Kirchenabschlüsse ein Formular Anwendung, das allein durch die Kongruenzen zwischen der Präsenz und Materialität schrifttragender Artefakte überzeitliche Referenzen schuf. Nicht allein das Schriftbild, auch Wahl und Zuschnitt des Beschreibstoffs sowie die Inszenierung und Zurschaustellung der Inschriften ergaben wiedererkennbare, sinnstiftende Bedeutungsfelder. Durch die epigraphischen Zeugnisse der frühmittelalterlichen Päpste zieht sich ein Bekenntnis zu einem mit zahlreichen Assoziationen aufgeladenen, visuellen und materialen Erscheinungsbild, das Altehrwürdigkeit suggerierte und komplementär

61 Margarini 1654, XXXXIII, Nr. 485: *Leo gratia Dei tertius episcopus hunc ingressum sanctae plebi Dei miro decore ornavit.*

62 Silvagni 1943a, Taf. II, Nr. 7–8.

63 So noch De Rubeis 2010, 63.

64 Thunø 2015, 172–205; 2017, *passim*.

zur Sprache als Vehikel für die Kommunikation von Tradition und Sukzession fungierte. In Analogie zu der Vereinheitlichung der päpstlichen Geschichtsschreibung und der Etablierung der Kuriale im päpstlichen Urkundenwesen⁶⁵ ergibt sich also auch auf epigraphischem Terrain eine signifikante Tendenz zur Ausbildung einer markanten regionalen Schriftkultur mit maßgeblich von lokalen Gebräuchen geprägtem und etwa die *Romanitas* betonendem Distinktionscharakter.

65 Rabikauskas 1958.

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