

Giulio Iovine  
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***DIE GESCHÄFTE DES HERRN JULIUS CAESAR***  
**A SURVEY OF THE FIRST CENTURY BC – THIRD CENTURY AD**  
**LATIN AND LATIN-GREEK DOCUMENTS REFERRING**  
**TO ROMAN CITIZENS AND THEIR BUSINESS IN EGYPT\***

1. INTRODUCTION

**T**HIS PAPER DEALS WITH LATIN and bilingual Latin-Greek papyri from Roman Egypt, which can even remotely refer to business or economic activities of any sort. By presenting an updated list of the available items, it aims at providing more data, and informing future discussion, on what type of business or economic enterprise was practised by Roman citizens – or at any rate, Western people – in the newly-acquired province of Egypt, in the first three centuries of Imperial presence. It also attempts to reconstruct, in each case, the reasons and purposes of using the Latin language, or alphabet, in these very documents.

\* The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Grant agreement no. 636983); ERC-PLATINUM project 'Papyri and Latin Texts: INsights and Updated Methodologies. Towards a philological, literary, and historical approach to Latin papyri', University of Naples 'Federico II' – PI Maria Chiara Scappaticcio. We wish to thank Lucia C. Colella (Naples 'Federico II'), Alberto Dalla Rosa (Bordeaux Montaigne) and Peter van Minnen (Cincinnati) for helpful suggestions. Sections 1–2 have been mainly written by G. Iovine, and 3–5 by O. Salati; the responsibility for the whole paper and its content and conclusions is jointly taken by both of us.

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Here we are not discussing Roman citizens in Egypt *in general*, or drawing conclusions from their legal lives and economic activities. This sort of analysis cannot avoid taking into consideration several other sources, such as the Greek documents, the material and archaeological context (coins, valuable objects, remnants of houses and towns), which are beyond the scope of this work. Moreover, there are illustrious precedents, among whom only the most relevant can be quoted here. The detailed study of Rafał Taubenschlag as far back as 1930 was able to provide a clear division between Roman citizens in the province of Egypt (full citizens, veterans, freedmen), and a full array of sources on where were they living, and what their occupations were, before setting out to analyse their usage of Roman private law.<sup>1</sup> Years later, Iza Biezuńska-Małowist, while examining the business of Roman citizens in Oxyrhynchus, provided some wider detail on their presence in particular areas of Egypt and on their propensity for commercial agriculture.<sup>2</sup> John E. G. Whitehorne, building

<sup>1</sup> R. TAUBENSCHLAG, 'Geschichte der Rezeption des römischen Privatrechts in Ägypten', [in:] *Studi in onore di Pietro Bonfante nel XL anno d'insegnamento*, Milan 1930, pp. 367–440 (= *Opera minora*, vol. I, Warsaw 1959, pp. 181–289). In the first section, 'Die Römer in Ägypten vor der *Constitutio Antoniniana*' (pp. 181–193), he outlines this tripartite division, which comes, in fact, from the papyri themselves: οἱ ὑπογεγραμμένοι οὐετρανοί, Ῥωμαῖοι (which, in turn, can be split between full citizens – 'Vollrömer' – and legionaries) and ἀπελεύθεροι. After listing the Egyptian regions where one can find 'Romans' and their typical professions ('ihrem Berufe nach gehören die Vollrömer zunächst der höchsten Beamtschaft an; in den niedrigeren Stellen, vom Strategen herab, kommen sie nur vereinzelt vor. Sehr stark machen sie sich dagegen im Grundbesitz geltend. Auch als Geschäftsleute, Bankiers, Ärzte, Juristen, Gutsverwalter sind die Vollrömer tätig, doch treten diese Berufe im Verhältnis zu den Grundbesitzern völlig in den Hintergrund', pp. 185–187), he maintains that citizens and non-citizens were in Roman Egypt distinctly separated from each other as far as social standing was concerned ('die so zusammengesetzte römische Bevölkerung schneidet sich von den anderen ethnischen Gruppe Ägyptens scharf ab', p. 193). Further sections of the paper deal with the legal condition of these Roman citizens before Caracalla's constitution, the impact of this constitution on them, and subsequent developments in Late Antiquity. A rich bibliography is attached to this account.

<sup>2</sup> I. BIEŻUŃSKA-MALOWIST, 'Les citoyens Romains à Oxyrhynchus aux deux premiers siècles de l'Empire', [in:] J. BINGEN, G. CAMBIER & G. NACHTERGAEEL (eds.), *Le monde grec. Pensée, littérature, histoire, documents. Hommages à Claire Préaux*, Brussels 1975, pp. 741–747. Despite being sceptical from the very beginning on the feasibility of such a research topic – 'les citoyens Romains d'Égypte (exception faite des hauts fonctionnaires de l'administration impériale) ne formaient pas un groupe distinct dans les structures sociales de la population

on this precedent, has discussed the quantity and the economic impact of 'Romans' – meaning 'private Roman citizens' on first-century AD Oxyrhynchus.<sup>3</sup> Richard Alston devoted a relevant portion of his book to the social standing of Roman veterans in Egypt as citizens, and to their relationship with the surrounding Graeco-Egyptians.<sup>4</sup> The important problem of Latin

de ce pays' (p. 743) – she concludes that most of the undoubtedly Roman citizens in Egypt (not just in Oxyrhynchus) were veterans and offspring of those veterans; that they are mainly attested as landowners between 2nd and 3rd centuries AD; and that their apparent propensity for the Arsinoites (Karanis, Philadelphiea and Theadelphia) rather than the Oxyrhynchites can be explained because landowning and commercial agriculture were more easily accomplished in the Fayum ('les documents de localités mentionnées ci-dessous montrent que les citoyens romains, en grande partie des vétérans, possédaient surtout des terres de jardinage. Prédominaient, dans leurs propriétés, les vignobles, les oliviers et les jardins. Ces cultures se développaient mieux dans le Fayoum que dans les autres terrains de l'Égypte', p. 747). Documents of 1st century AD, she noted on the contrary, referred to members of the Imperial family administering their lands through freedmen and slaves. Here she quoted *P. Oxy. IV 737*, which will be discussed below.

<sup>3</sup> J. E. G. WHITEHORNE, 'Soldiers and veterans in the local economy of first century Oxyrhynchus', [in:] R. PINTAUDI (ed.), *Miscellanea Papyrologica in occasione del bicentenario dell'edizione della Charta Borgiana*, vol. II [= *Papyrologica Florentina* 19], Florence 1990, pp. 543–557. Three sub-categories of citizens found in the Oxyrhynchites are mentioned: Romans acting in the capacity of public officers; citizens who became Roman citizens after having attained – or having been born – Alexandrian citizens (when social status brought citizenship); and veterans, discharged through the *honesta missio* (when citizenship brought social status). This last subgroup is the main object of the contribution. Whitehorne shares Biezuńska-Małowist's scepticism – 'whatever the locality, in Egypt the Romans themselves never constituted a single homogeneous economic group which we can immediately identify as occupying a particular niche in an area's business life (p. 544)' – but is willing to concede to Roman veterans some local economic relevance: 'the diversity and the geographical spread of their interests [...] suggests that soldiers and veterans quickly came to occupy an important niche in the micro-economy of first century Oxyrhynchus. [...] they brought a new and probably much needed stimulus to the business and commercial life of the metropolis and its surrounding nome' (p. 557). He reconstructs a number of activities in which those veterans were involved and which did not include farming: lending money, trading commodities, shipping transport, buying and selling slaves, and the weaving industry (pp. 543–544, 550–552).

<sup>4</sup> R. ALSTON, *Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt. A Social History*, London – New York 1995. He confirms the arrival of the first veterans in the Arsinoites roughly from Domitian's reign; and provides an explanation for the majority of Roman veterans settling there. That *nomos* was not only rich in veterans; it was also a favourite place for recruiters. Auxiliary units from Egypt were apparently full of recruits from this very *nomos*, and those recruits, after their *honesta missio*, usually returned to their homeland (pp. 39, 50–51). Alston also discusses the

literary texts found in Oxyrhynchus – legal companions, Latin literature such as Cicero, Vergil and Livy – and their relationship to Roman citizens dwelling there has been brought up by James D. Thomas.<sup>5</sup> Like Alston, also Fritz Mitthof focused on soldiers and veterans in Roman Egypt in its first two centuries as a province, particularly on the ethnic components of legions (mainly Eastern provinces: Syria, Asia Minor, etc.) and *auxilia* (mainly Egyptians from Arsinoites and Antinoopolis, who after their discharge tend to return home). He dwelled extensively on their economic activities and social standing in the regions they inhabited.<sup>6</sup> This particular

possibility that those veterans, in their capacity as Roman citizens, did or did not think of themselves as a separate community in the places they settled in. He apparently endeavours to reconcile two opposite opinions: ‘the Romans were, in general, wealthier than the Egyptians, but the difference was not substantial and there is little sign of Egyptians deferring to Romans, acting as clients, or otherwise being dependent upon the Roman community. The Romans did not control the village administration, nor was access to judicial authority, higher administration or economic resources controlled by the Romans of the village. The veterans were not a caste [...]. It is, however, true that the Romans remained in some respects separated and attempted to assert a higher status than their Egyptian neighbours’ (pp. 140–142). He seems, however, happier with the prospect of a fused community: ‘the Roman community was united for legal matters and the veterans may have felt some mutual loyalty due to military service, but Karanis was not a divided village’ (p. 142).

<sup>5</sup> J. D. THOMAS, ‘Latin texts and Roman citizens. Appendix: Latin texts from Oxyrhynchus’, [in:] A. K. BOWMAN, R. A. COLES, N. GONIS, D. OBBINK & P. J. PARSONS (eds.), *Oxyrhynchus. A City and Its Texts*, London 2007, pp. 231–243. Among the three groups he identifies – Roman high officials, absentee landowners, and veterans – only the third counted actual residents in Oxyrhynchus; but they were not the owners and perusers of the Latin literature found there. Thomas has pointed out that Romans from Oxyrhynchus, when literate at all, were literate in Greek, and that a set of Latin-reading ‘lawyers’ was responsible for both writing Latin documents for citizens and owning the Latin works, like Gaius’ *Institutiones* or Livy’s *Ab urbe condita*, whose fragments have been found nearby Oxyrhynchus (pp. 236–239). A similar picture may be given credit for Arsinoites too, as well as for any other Egyptian location where Roman citizens lived. All Latin literary texts from Oxyrhynchus, along with documentary ones, are collected in the appendix (pp. 239–243).

<sup>6</sup> F. MITTHOF, ‘Soldaten und Veteranen in der Gesellschaft des römischen Ägypten (1.–2. Jh. n. Chr.)’, [in:] G. ALFÖLDY, G. DOBSON & W. ECK (eds.), *Kaiser, Heer und Gesellschaft in der Römischen Kaiserzeit. Gedenkschrift für Eric Birley*, Stuttgart 2000, pp. 377–405. He notes how during the Antonine age Egyptian legions started to be locally recruited from the offspring of auxiliary veterans (now citizens), therefore the ethnic complexity of the first two centuries became more uniform (pp. 381–382, 386, 390). Their activities after the *bonesta missio* would mainly consist in administering the land they had bought with the

path of studies we intend to provide with further and more clearly contextualized data through the evidence we now discuss in this paper.

Among the Latin, or bilingual Latin-Greek texts, or texts where Latin is present even at an elementary level (the alphabet, some words, a formula), we have consulted to produce this survey, we have purposely selected the documents concerning business, on a twofold criterion:

1) those documents which lack an immediate connection – and in most cases, are certainly un-connected – to the Roman army;

2) those documents which, though belonging to the well-known apparatus of Latin texts – wills,<sup>7</sup> *professiones*, *testationes* and *manumissiones* on papyrus and wax or wooden tablet<sup>8</sup> – which from the second till mid-third

money they received on being discharged (pp. 384–389). The contribution terminates with a list with commentary of the most relevant and best known among the veterans from Egypt. Mitthof is to our knowledge the only one who bluntly declares that Roman citizens felt an actual urge to form an élite, in order to provide a defence against ill will from neighbouring Graeco-Egyptians: ‘landsässigen Veteranen blieb die feine Gesellschaft der Stadt geschlossen; im dörflichen Milieu sahen sie sich in die Rolle von Außenseitern gedrängt. Es scheint daher verständlich, daß sie ihre Position durch engeren Zusammenschluß mit ihrem Standesgenossen und durch Schaffung von Bindungen persönlicher und rechtlicher Art mit anderen Militärfamilien zu festigen suchten’ (pp. 390–391).

<sup>7</sup> Wills of Roman citizens were probably required to be drawn up in Latin – with Greek translations or summaries – in order to be valid. See Gai. *Inst.* 2.281: *item legata Graecae scripta non ualent; fideicommissa uero ualent*, and a detailed discussion in M. AMELOTTI, *Il testamento romano*, Florence 1966, pp. 111–117. After the *Constitutio Antoniniana* turned all inhabitants of the Empire into citizens, this rule must have been felt as unfeasible; Severus Alexander allegedly removed it, as seems to be gathered from the testament preserved from P. Vindob. inv. G 2034 (= *SB* I 5294), ll. 12–14: τὴν διαθήκην ἐποίησα γράμμασιν | Ἑλληνικοῖς ἀκο[λου]θῶς τῆι θείαι κ[ε]λε[ύ]σει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Αὐτοκράτορος Μάρκου Αὐρηλίου | Σεουήρου Ἀλεξάνδρου (AD 235).

<sup>8</sup> Birth certificates of legitimate (*professiones*) and illegitimate (*testationes*) children are abundant from Latin documents: see for instance *T. Mich.* III 166 (AD 128; TM 78515); *T. Mich.* VII 436 (AD 138; TM 78521); *BGU* VII 1692 (AD 144; TM 69747); *T. Mich.* III 169 (AD 145; TM 11979); *P. Oxy.* XXXI 2565 (AD 224; TM 16888); *SB* VI 9200 (AD 242; TM 17869); and so on. Latin *manumissiones* are instead quite rare: see, e.g., the unpublished P. Vindob. inv. L 98 recto (before AD 152; TM 70101); P. Mich. inv. 5688c (mid-3rd c. AD, probably after AD 212), published in A. STORNAIUOLO, ‘An unpublished *manumissio inter amicos* (P. Mich. inv. 5688c)’, *Analecta Papyrologica* 31 (2019), pp. 43–59; T. Amh. inv. s.n. (= *Cbrest. Mitt.* 362 = *FIRA* III II [AD 221; TM 23523]); there are also Greek samples. A full survey with detailed discussion is in M. PEDONE, ‘A proposito delle nuove acquisizioni testuali in tema di *manumissio inter amicos*’, *Index* 47 (2019), pp. 23–46.

century AD regularly witness the necessities and habits of soldiers and veterans, nevertheless do specifically mention business in any form (landowning or other economic activities).

## 2. FIRST CENTURY BC – FIRST CENTURY AD: BANKING AND TRADING

It has long been acknowledged that after entering a newlyconquered province, Romans materialized themselves in two ways: people destined to assume political control, that is soldiers and administrative personnel; and merchants, traders, bankers and the like, who organised factories and workshops and bought land, and often managed their business and properties through slaves and freedmen from their *familiae*. One instance of a particularly traumatic process is provided by Tacitus in his *Agricola*: a *procurator* lays waste over the *bona* of the Britons, and uses insults, violence, and servants to force them to do his bidding.<sup>9</sup> This might have been true for Egypt too; but to content oneself with what the documents say, what one gathers from them is that slaves and freedman of Italian origin, Latin – and perhaps also Greek – native speakers (in some cases, able to write in Latin) are, in fact, attested to in the province from the earliest onset of Roman power. A document which testifies to their presence, but is not specifically connected with their business, is P. Med. inv. 68.87 (AD 7; TM 18163),<sup>10</sup> so far the second<sup>11</sup> earliest dated Latin (in this case, Latin-Greek) papyrus from Egypt. The main text is in Greek, but is followed by a summary of the same text, this time in Latin. The content is clear: Rufio, slave

<sup>9</sup> Tac. *Agr.* 15.1-3: *namque absentia legati remoto metu Britannii agitare inter se mala seruitutis, conferre iniurias et interpretando accendere: nihil profici patientia nisi ut grauiora tamquam ex facili tolerantibus imperentur. Singulos sibi olim reges fuisse, nunc binos imponi, e quibus legatus in sanguinem, procurator in bona saeuiret. Aequae discordiam praepositorum, aequae concordiam subiectis exitiosam. Alterius manus centuriones, alterius seruos uim et contumelias miscere. Nihil iam cupiditati, nihil libidini exceptum.*

<sup>10</sup> Editions and some commentary in S. DARIS, 'Ricerche di papirologia documentaria', *Aegyptus* 56 (1976), pp. 47-95; R. MARICHAL in *CbLA* XXVIII 840 (1988); P. CUGUSI in *CEL* III 12 bis (2002).

<sup>11</sup> For the earliest one, see below.

of a Gaius Vibidius, declares null and void any document referring to himself which is in possession of his fellow servant *Αἴμων*. The context of this request regrettably escapes us,<sup>12</sup> but we can gather a few implicit data:

- Rufio is residing in Egypt at the moment;
- he is more comfortable with Latin than Greek. The document of annulment which Rufio needed had to be drafted in Greek, or it would not have been valid in the province – or readable at all, for that matter – but for Rufio or his colleagues to understand it, there had to be some lines in Latin explaining what the content of the Greek text was;
- Rufio's master has a very Roman sounding name, and whether he lives or not in Egypt, he is a Roman citizen. Both Vibidius and Rufio are a good instance of Western, Latin-speaking people involved in some sort of unspecified economic enterprise in Egypt.

Now for the documents which testify to actual involvement in business. Before we begin, a disclaimer must be made. The papyri listed below are small fragments of an original number of documents, which must have been decidedly larger than what we can read today. Whatever business the protagonists of these documents seem to be involved in, it cannot be argued that it was their only business, or even the main one. That said, the most attested economic activity Latin papyri testify to, as conducted by slaves and freedmen, is that of banking – they were probably working for the local branches of the Italian-based banks of their masters – and/or, more generally speaking, private money-lending, without the mediation of a bank.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Perhaps what Haemon had in his hands was an acknowledgment of debt. See, e.g., Scaev. *Dig.* 2.14.47: *Lucius Titius Gaium Seium mensularium, cum quo rationem implicitam habebat propter accepta et data, debitorem sibi constituit et ab eo epistulam accepit in haec uerba: 'ex ratione mensae, quam mecum habuisti, in hunc diem ex contractibus plurimis remanserunt apud me ad mensam meam trecenta octoginta sex et usurae quae competierint. Summam aureorum, quam apud me tacitam habes, refundam tibi. Si quod instrumentum a te emissum, id est scriptum, cuiuscumque summae ex quacumque causa apud me remansit, uanum et pro cancellato habebitur'*. Rufio might be testifying to *Διογενίδης* that Diogenides paid his debt to Rufio – or the other way around, if Rufio himself was the debtor – and therefore any document concerning that debt – at the moment in possession of the *conseruus* Haemon – is no longer valid. We thank Dr Michele Pedone (Naples 'Federico II') for the valuable suggestion.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. J. ANDREAU, *Banking and Business in the Roman World*, Cambridge 1999, pp. 30–63, for a more precise distinction between money-lenders.



(I) *P. Oxy. XLIV 3208* (late 1st c. BC – early 1st c. AD; TM 78573)<sup>14</sup> is a private letter, written entirely in Latin, between two slaves: Suneros is the sender, and Chius the addressee. Once again there is little business discussed in the document: the letter is a private one, and its content only discloses that an otherwise unknown Epaphras is not very honest in discharging his office – that he is accumulating money from a very small initial quantity, and may want to get rid of his master. However, three important details connected to each other are to be remarked upon:

– Chius is styled in the address on the verso as *Chio Caesaris*, ‘to Chius (the slave of) Caesar’. Chius, whatever his provenance, is an imperial slave – perhaps his fellow Suneros is too – and is in Egypt to superintend either some business on behalf of the imperial family, or some private affairs of his own.<sup>15</sup>

– One of the individuals mentioned in the letter – Horapis,<sup>16</sup> who has a very Egyptian-sounding name – is described as a *regius mensularius* in the Oxyrhynchite nome. This in all likelihood translated the Greek βασιλικὸς τραπέζιτης. In Ptolemaic Egypt, this civil servant superintended the βασιλικὴ τράπεζα, that is the royal bank that collected the taxes due from the subjects in the nome and the revenues from the royal land, in the form of money.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Editions and some commentary in P. CUGUSI, ‘Note esegetiche, linguistiche e testuali su papiri latini’, *Aegyptus* 81 (2001), pp. 307–321; H. HALLA-AHO, ‘Linguistic varieties and language level in Latin non-literary letters’, [in:] T. V. EVANS & D. D. OBBINK (eds.), *The Language of the Papyri*, Oxford 2010, pp. 171–183.

<sup>15</sup> Imperial freedmen could do both, in fact. See G. CAMODECA, ‘Sulle proprietà imperiali in Campania’, [in:] D. PUPILLO (ed.), *Le proprietà imperiali nell’Italia romana: economia, produzione, amministrazione*, Florence 2007, pp. 143–167, esp. 147–148. Cf. also P. R. C. WEAVER, *Familia Caesaris. A Social Study of the Emperor’s Freedmen and Slaves*, Cambridge 2008 (2nd ed.), pp. 42–54, esp. 48–52 on *Caesaris* and *Augusti* after names of imperial slaves and freedmen.

<sup>16</sup> The name has been so far read ‘Ohapis’; Andrea Bernini, who is re-publishing the papyrus on the forthcoming *Latin Texts on Papyrus: A Corpus (CLTP)*, prefers to construe it as a mistake for the more common ‘Horapis’.

<sup>17</sup> On the βασιλικὴ τράπεζα, see R. BOGAERT, ‘Le statut des banques en Égypte ptolémaïque’, *L’Antiquité classique* 50 (1981), pp. 86–99, esp. 99 (‘sous Ptolémée II au plus tard, avant 265, un réseau de banques royales a été établi dans les villes et les villages dépendant directement ou indirectement du βασιλικόν. C’étaient en même temps des caisses de l’État et des banques, puisque des personnes privées pouvaient y avoir des comptes’).

– These slaves are literate in Latin. If Suneros did not write the letter himself, he and certainly Chius could read it, and presumably needed to deal with each other in a language they shared, which was neither Greek nor Demotic. The background of at least one of them was not Egyptian; one of them, or both, probably came from the West, perhaps from Hellenised Italy.<sup>18</sup>

One might imagine a context in which the emperor has seized control of the former royal bank of the Ptolemies, which now does for Rome what it did for them; and a network of slaves is sent from abroad to Egypt in order to handle the new business. Among these slaves, at least Suneros and Chius were included, or maybe just one of them; the other people mentioned – Theo, Horapis, Epaphras – may well be all Graeco-Egyptians.

(2) *P. Oxy. XXXVI 2772* (AD II; TM 16563)<sup>19</sup> is a complete letter in which Iulius Lepos addresses the banker Ἀρχίβιος, on whose bank he has an account, and asks him to re-route to himself 1953 drachmae from another account he has in the bank of Ἀρποκρατίων. There is little more to this document than meets the eye: a Roman citizen (Iulius Lepos) has

Some notes on this also in IDEM, ‘Banques et banquiers à Thèbes à l’époque romaine’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 57 (1984), pp. 241–296, at 245. See also V. BROWN, ‘A Latin letter from Oxyrhynchus’, *Bulletin of the Institute for Classical Studies* 17 (1970), pp. 136–143, at 141–142; then, e.g., K. GEENS, ‘Financial archives in Graeco-Roman Egypt’, [in:] K. VERBOVEN, K. VANDORPE & V. CHANKOWSKI (eds.), *Pistoi dia tèn technèn. Bankers, Loans and Archives in the Ancient World. Studies in Honour of Raymond Bogaert*, Leuven 2008, pp. 133–152, esp. 134–135; and K. VANDORPE & W. CLARYSSE, ‘Egyptian bankers and bank receipts in Hellenistic and Early-Roman Egypt’, *ibidem*, pp. 153–168, at 166–167.

<sup>18</sup> Despite the important conclusions of J. AUSTIN, ‘School hands in Early Roman Egypt’ (paper accessible on-line at <[https://www.academia.edu/676277/School\\_Hands\\_in\\_Early\\_Roman\\_Egypt](https://www.academia.edu/676277/School_Hands_in_Early_Roman_Egypt)> [accessed 9 December 2020]), about teaching of Latin writing to Graeco-Egyptians in the earliest years of Roman Egypt, it is still likely that at least one of these slaves was a Latin native speaker. This is a private letter, not a business one. In business – as we shall see below – Latin was sometimes required if the business itself was owned by a Roman; therefore, the written Latin we see on these documents might have been learnt by Graeco-Egyptians who had to use it. But a private letter is normally written in a language both the addressee and sender share; there is no fixed requirement. In Egypt, that language would normally be Greek or Demotic. If the language used is Latin, this means that either Suneros or Chius was more at ease with Latin – that at least one of the two was a Latin native speaker.

<sup>19</sup> Some commentary by J. R. REA *ap. P. Oxy. XXXVI*, and in J. KRAMER, ‘Testi greci scritti nell’alfabeto latino e testi latini scritti nell’alfabeto greco: un caso di bilinguismo imperfetto’, [in:] *PapCongr. XVII*, pp. 1377–1384.

deposited money in Egyptian banks, and needs them for his business. In this instance, we can only be sure that the client was Roman (or at any rate, from the West); nothing is known of Archibios and Harpocraton, who might have been Greeks as well as Graeco-Egyptians. Since they are referred to as *collybistae* = *κολλυβισταί*, their banks were probably those *τράπεζαι κολλυβιστικάι* identified by Raymond Bogaert as a typology of bank which did not differ much from private banks, but whose origin could be traced back to Ptolemaic Egypt, where such banks specifically functioned as bureaus of exchange.<sup>20</sup> The letter has attracted the attention of language scholars, because it is in Greek language and Latin script. We cannot know whether it was written by Iulius Lepos – assuming he knew Greek but could not write or read it – since this letter might have been written by others for him; but the intended addressee Archibios, though he understood Greek as far as language goes, was most likely not at ease, or preferred not to deal, with the Greek alphabet. One might wonder why these people did not resort directly to the Latin language, instead of using only the alphabet. That Archibios could also speak, not just read Latin, cannot be determined. Perhaps in this letter the business purpose was intermixed with an educational one. Archibios, his colleagues, and the slaves or scribes they employed to draft documents, might have been learning Latin in those years, as they found themselves increasingly involved with Latin-speaking clients such as Iulius Lepos; and the first step of learning Latin, according to educational material from Egypt and elsewhere, was the alphabet.<sup>21</sup> They might have begun, when dealing with Romans, to draft their documents with the Latin alphabet, in order to get better acquainted – through practice – with the new language. Further stages of the process would have entailed documents in Latin language, not just the alphabet.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> R. BOGAERT, 'Les κολλυβιστικάι τράπεζαι dans l'Égypte gréco-romaine', *Anagennesis* 3 (1983), pp. 21–64, at 21–23. For banks in Roman Egypt (with some further notes on the *κολλυβιστικάι τράπεζαι*), see also IDEM, 'Les banques affermées de l'Égypte romaine', [in:] *Studi in onore di Cesare Sanfilippo*, vol. III, Milan 1983, pp. 37–61.

<sup>21</sup> Abundant material (and a detailed commentary) in M. C. SCAPPATICCIO, *Artes Grammaticae in frammenti. I testi grammaticali latini e bilingui greco-latini su papiro. Edizione commentata*, Berlin – Boston 2015, pp. 65–90.

<sup>22</sup> According to AUSTIN, 'School hands' (cit. n. 18), there was a specific alphabet taught in the earliest decades of Roman penetration in Egypt to those Graeco-Egyptians who chose,

(3) **PSI inv. 3244 = ChLA XXV 790** (1st c. BC – 1st c. AD; TM 70007)<sup>23</sup> is a list of mostly Greek names in Latin language. Some of the names are associated with the formula *nomine cuiusdam* ('under the name of ...', ll. 16–20); others with *ex ratione* (l. 4); others qualified, once again, as *collybitae* (ll. 7, 9, 18); an *auctio* is mentioned with the genitive of the person who superseded to the purchase or was the object of the purchase itself. We may have here an account from the archives of a businessman of Italian origin, or of his steward in Egypt: both must have been more comfortable with Latin than Greek, therefore they needed their paperwork in Latin. Servants as handymen employed as stewards can be also seen: see l. 9 *per Saluium ser(uum)*, for instance, and the name *Caesaris* (ll. 10, 24), which suggests once again, as in *P. Oxy.* 3208, the involvement of imperial slaves. At the right end of the column, now lost, we might well have seen the amounts of money every person granted to the master.

(4) **P. Tebt. II 586** (AD 20–21; TM 14399)<sup>24</sup> is a contract establishing an antichretic loan: someone lends someone else some money, and until the interests have been fully paid, he earns a right to live in his debtor's house. In this case, the lender is Gaius Iulius Fuscus – again, most likely a Roman citizen; and the debtors (for 84 drachmae) are a *Ψενκῆβκικς*, who allegedly can write and read only in Demotic, and a *Μαρεψῆμις*, who is illiterate.<sup>25</sup> The contract is entirely written in Greek, but the provenance of Gaius Iulius Fuscus is revealed by the verso, where someone has written this formula in Latin letters: *enegoisis · Psengebgis · 'ke' Marheus*:

or were required, to deal with businessmen and administrators from the West; the earliest Latin papyrus from Egypt, which she lists in her paper, would bear traces of this alphabet, a simplified version of ancient Roman cursive with majuscule forms heavily intruding the set of letters.

<sup>23</sup> Soon to be re-published by M. Stroppa in the volumes of the *PSI* and recently studied by O. SALATI, 'Su alcuni documenti latini su papiro delle collezioni di Firenze', *Analecta papyrologica* 30 (2018), pp. 79–94, esp. 79–83.

<sup>24</sup> For some comments, see J. G. KEENAN, 'Two papyri from the University of California collection', [in:] *PapCongr.* XIII, pp. 207–214.

<sup>25</sup> Ll. 7–9: ἔγραψεν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν | Μαρεψῆμις Μαρεψῆμις λ[εσώνου δια τὸ τὸν μὲν] | Ψενκῆβκικῶν Αἰγύπτια γρ[άφειν, τὸν δὲ ἄλλον μὴ εἰδέναι] | γράμματα.

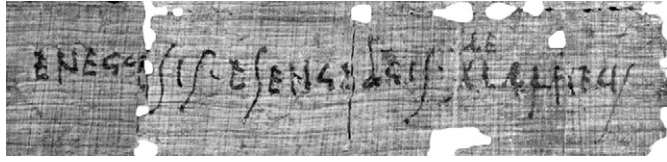


Fig. 1. Fragment of *P. Tebt.* II 586  
(courtesy of Bancroft Library, Berkeley)

This is Greek in Latin script, as in *P. Oxy.* 2776. The formula is a rudimentary transliteration for ἐνοίκησις Ψενκῆβκισ καὶ Μαρεφήμιος, which in turn signifies the typology of the contract (ὁμολογία δανείου καὶ ἐνοικῆσεως) and specifies the actors of the contract itself. The use of *interpuncta* betrays a scribe who learned to write in a Latin educational environment.<sup>26</sup> The name of Iulius Fuscus is absent; only those of his debtors, who entered in an agreement with him, are noted. This suggests that we are facing an archival annotation, written for the perusal of somebody who was more comfortable with the Latin alphabet, though able to speak Greek: Fuscus himself, or a steward of his. As for *P. Oxy.* XXVI 2772, an educational purpose – Fuscus’ steward might be learning Latin, and in so subscribing, practising the alphabet – could be added as a further reason.

(5) *BGU XI 2116* (AD 25 or 26; TM 9619) is the acknowledgment of a debt: Cosmus lends money to Petermuthis. The papyrus is entirely in Greek, and by no means would feature in this list but for the fact that Cosmus has composed, in Latin letters and Greek language, his subscription at the bottom of the document *d[ed]anica tas procim[enas argyriou drachma]s · hebdemeconta dio* (ll. 20–22), perhaps followed by *ε[λ]αθος procite*; a transliteration, that is, of the expected *δεδάνεικα τὰς προκειμένας ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς ἑβδομήκοντα δύο*, perhaps followed by *καθὼς πρόκειται*. As in the preceding document, there are some spelling mistakes (e.g. *ει*, pronounced [i:], is consistently transcribed as *i*). This betrays a preference, on Cosmus’ side, of the Latin alphabet, despite his knowledge of the Greek

<sup>26</sup> No other reason could be given for the *interpuncta* which are typical of Roman writing culture, and distinctly non-Greek, in a Greek formula: see S. AMMIRATI, *Sul libro latino antico. Ricerche bibliologiche e paleografiche*, Pisa – Rome 2015, p. 44.

language; and suggests, either that he needed this subscription as a specific reminder for himself – a reminder he could read – or that he was employing the alphabet for a superior in rank, who would have needed Latin letters to understand the content of the contract. To sum up, either Cosmus comes from the West, or he is dealing with (or serving under) Romans. In the latter case, an educational purpose – as in *P. Oxy.* XXXVI 2772 and *P. Tèbt.* II 586 – might be added.

Latin or bilingual Latin-Greek papyri are also found concerning other activities, such as the textile industry. The only Latin witness in this respect is:

(6) *P. Oxy.* IV 737 (31–38 BC; TM 69905). The papyrus contains three partially preserved columns from an account-book. Every entry of the account begins with a dating formula, and then reports the height of wages paid that day to three different categories of personnel in a workshop of weavers: one can see ‘hired personnel’ (under the generic noun of *conductei*), ‘weavers’ (*textores*), and ‘foremen’ (*magistri*), all offices within the workshop.<sup>27</sup> The chronological order of the dating formulae, arranged in columns, is descending: from some day before the nones of July, to the Nones themselves, down to the days before the ides, and then the days before the kalends of August.<sup>28</sup> This account-book belonged to some sort of a steward or representative who administered payment to the workers; he, or the proprietor(s), must have been natives of Italy or from the West, otherwise there would have been no need for drafting the accounts in Latin.

Latin ostraca, instead of papyri, happen to be employed as registers for commercial activities: some Romans appear to have been at least partially involved in commerce as traders in wine, be that their full-time or occasional occupation.

<sup>27</sup> The height of wages and the situation of these workers within the frame of the textile industry in Roman Egypt has been discussed by A. C. JOHNSON, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. II: *Roman Egypt*, Baltimore 1936, pp. 301–324, esp. 306; and E. WIPSZYCKA, *L'industrie textile dans l'Égypte romaine*, Wrocław 1965, pp. 78, 88.

<sup>28</sup> Or rather *Sextilis*, as August is still called in this papyrus. Incidentally, this provides a chronological fork: *Sextilis* became *Augustus* in 8 BC, which must be a *terminus ante quem*.

(7) *O. Berenike III 478* (1st c. AD; TM 89253)<sup>29</sup> features a business letter where the sender asks the addressee either for a quantity of wine amphorae, or for money to pay for some wine supplies. Ornella Salati, who has recently studied this item, has clarified how it cannot be connected with the Roman army, which was certainly present in the area, and must refer to Roman merchants who exported Italian and Laodicean wine to India through the Egyptian harbours on the Red Sea.<sup>30</sup> Once again, at least in this case represented by the *O. Berenike*, they communicate with each other and their inferiors through the one language they have in common, that is Latin. Other ostraca in Greek language from the Berenike collection reveal to us the presence of the *familia Caesaris*: pottery referring to Tiberius Claudius Dorion and Claudius Philetos (*O. Berenike I 50–67*; 89–92), two imperial freedmen, is attested and points to the – at least, indirect – involvement of the imperial house in the wine trade. Note also *O. Berenike II 184–188*, where a Gaius Iulius Epaphroditos appears, ‘slave to Delias, slave to Aeimnestos, slave to Caesar’.<sup>31</sup>

So far it has been possible to connect the relevant papyri to some specific activity. Egypt has also yielded, however, documents which, while showing the business of Romans in Egypt, do not refer to any particular trade – mainly because of their bad state of conservation.

(8) *P. IFAO inv. 314* (8 BC; TM 70029) is the earliest dated Latin manuscript from Egypt. It is very fragmentary and offers but little information. Allegedly, someone must have (*habere*) some money or valuable goods (?) from someone else.<sup>32</sup> One might be spotting the remnants of an account book or, perhaps, of a contract of mortgage or loan: e.g. [*scripsi me accepisse*

<sup>29</sup> Full edition of all the Berenike material in *Documents from Berenike*, vols. I–III, ed. R. S. BAGNALL *et alii*, Brussels 2000–2016. For a detailed commentary on this ostrakon, with attached bibliography, see O. SALATI, ‘Consumo e commercio di vino a Berenike durante il I sec. d.C.: osservazioni su *O. Berenike III 478*’, [in:] G. D. MEROLA & P. SANTINI (eds.), *LAWINE. Comercio e consumo di vino nel mondo antico. Aspetti giuridici. Atti del simposio internazionale, Napoli, 17–18 gennaio 2019*, Naples 2020, pp. 169–180..

<sup>30</sup> See SALATI, ‘Su alcuni documenti latini’ (cit. n. 23).

<sup>31</sup> See in particular *O. Berenike II 184*: Ἐπαφρόδειτος Δηλίου | Ἀμυνήστου Καίσαρος | Πακοίβι κωτανησίωι χ(αίρειν) κτλ.

<sup>32</sup> The text lacks the top and right margin: [---]|-irem . . [---] | *habere* | *ex T(ito) Marcio Terentio* [---] | *C(aio) Marcio Censor(ino)* (?). The last visible line probably contains a consular

*mutua et] habere ex T(ito) Marcio Terentio* etc., akin to the Greek formula ἔχειν παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνα κτλ.<sup>33</sup>

(9) P. Duke inv. 96 recto (1st c. BC – 1st c. AD; TM 70138) probably contained an account in the Latin language. Almost nothing survives on this document: however, the figure 63 can be seen in fr. a, col. I, l. 3, together with serpentine-like symbol for *semis* (S) and the symbol for two *trientes* (=).<sup>34</sup>

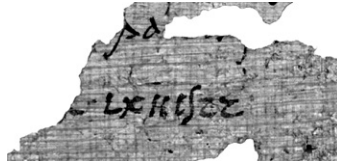


Fig. 2. Fragment of P. Duke inv. 96 recto, fr. a (courtesy of Duke University Library)

(10) **PSI XIII 1321** (1st half of 1st c. AD; TM 25149). This is a much larger and more complete fragment than the preceding two items, showing a list – notably, not arranged in columns – of Roman names, all referred to in a very Roman fashion, with *tria nomina*, father's name and the *tribus*; and all followed by a figure or by an indication of some action they did, probably concerning money as well; see, e.g., l. 5: *e[t] exactos n[u]mm[o]s nom[i]ne C(ai)i Naeui*, or l. 8: *de hereditate*, which suggest – as in PSI inv. 3244 – that the holder of the document – who, once again, was probably a Latin native speaker, as he needed his paperwork in that language – received money from several sources. Also *liberti* (ll. 4, 8) and a *patronus* (l. 2) are mentioned, another clue for the connection of the original document's holder to that web of slaves and freedmen which administered business in the newly-conquered province. As for the business beyond the document, it is impossible to ascertain; a strong candidate remains banking, as Gilliam rightly pointed out.<sup>35</sup>

dating formula. See R. HAENSCH, 'Die älteste Datierung nach consules auf einem lateinischen Papyrus aus Ägypten', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 128 (1999), p. 212.

<sup>33</sup> We are indebted to Jakub Urbanik (Warsaw) for this important suggestion.

<sup>34</sup> See parallels in *P. Flor.* II 129 recto, ll. 3–4.

<sup>35</sup> J. F. GILLIAM, 'Notes on Latin texts from Egypt', [in:] BINGEN, CAMBIER & NACHTERGAEL (eds.), *Le monde grec* (cit. n. 2), pp. 766–774, at 774.



The next item opens a section of papyri which still feature Roman business in Egypt, but are no longer connected with trade or banking; instead, it anticipates what will be the main subject of Latin business document in the centuries following the first, that is land, agriculture and husbandry.

(II) *P. Oxy. II 244* (AD 23; TM 20513). The document is a Greek letter from the slave *Κήρινθος* to *Χαιρέας*, *strategos* of the Oxyrhynchite nome, which – at Cerinthus' bidding – was then forwarded by Chaereas to the *strategos* of the Kynopolites, *Ἐρμίας*. Cerinthus needs to transfer cattle – number and race of which he pens down in detail – from the Oxyrhynchite to the Kynopolite nome for pasture. In fact, he must cross the Nile with them: *βουλόμενος μεταγαγεῖν | ἐκ τοῦ Ὀξυρυγχίτου εἰς τὸν Κυν[ο]πολίτην | νομὸν νο[μῶ]ν χάριν ἃ ἔχω ἐν ἀπογρα(φῆ)ι | ἐπὶ τοῦ Ὀξ[υρυγ]χίτου ἐν τῶι ἐνεστῶτι | ἐνάτωι ἔτει Τιβερίου Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ | πρόβατα τριακόσια εἴκοσι καὶ αἶγας | [ἐκατ]τὸν ἑξήκο[τ]α καὶ τοὺς ἐπακολουθ(οῦντας) | ἄρνας [κ]αὶ ἐρίφους* (ll. 3–10). Therefore, he writes to one *strategos* and then asks him to re-direct the letter to the other, in order to alert both *strategoī* that he is passing through their supervised regions. Now, even if land is not directly in the document, the presence of cattle implies shepherds, husbandry, land devoted to pasture, and perhaps agriculture. The interesting point is that the letter, addressed to two Greek-speaking local officers, is naturally in Greek, but Cerinthus has added a subscription partially in Latin, partially in the Greek language (but in Latin script): *Ceri[ntus] Antoniae · Drusi · ser(uus) | epid[e]doca · anno · VIII · Tib(eri) | Caesaris Aug(usti) · Mechir · die · oct(avo)* (ll. 15–17). But for *epidedoca*, which stands for *ἐπιδέδωκα*, the subscription is entirely in Latin. That Cerinthus qualifies himself as a servant of Antonia the Elder, wife to Drusus, is no wonder, as we are well informed about Antonia's possessions in the East, and particularly in Egypt, from a number of Greek papyri.<sup>36</sup> This is no pri-

<sup>36</sup> She possessed money and land inherited from her father Mark Anthony and/or granted to her by Octavian (it is less likely that she bought them herself). See, e.g., S. SEGENTI, 'Antonia Minore e la *Domus Augusta*', *Studi Classici e Orientali* 44 (1995), pp. 297–331 (particularly concerning the thick web of servants and freedmen working on her extensive property: Pallas and Caenis kept being important under Claudius and Vespasian); and a full survey in N. ΚΟΚΚΙΝΟΣ, *Antonia Augusta. The Portrait of a Great Roman Lady*, London 1992 (particularly chapter III: 'The papyri of Antonia', pp. 68–86).

vate herd of cattle, but *patrimonium Caesaris* – or at least they would have been so once Claudius, son of Antonia, had become emperor. One wonders at the choice of Latin from Cerinthus; this letter would presumably have remained in the archives of the *strategoï* involved (who probably did not know any Latin), rather than be preserved in Cerinthus' or any other Latin-speaking steward's personal archive. The Latin language might have served as a validating mark, or a proof that the sender was who he said he was, that is an imperial slave – and therefore, entitled to deal with the higher ranks of local administration; Latin, in this respect, would effectively function as the 'language of power' described by James Adams.<sup>37</sup> The use of *epi-dedoca* instead of a Latin verb (*dedi?*) in a subscription otherwise entirely in Latin, suggests that Cerinthus was not a native speaker, but learned his (at least written) Latin in Egypt; while subscribing his letter, he probably forgot the required Latin verb, and replaced it with a transliterated Greek one.

### 3. SECOND–THIRD CENTURY AD: LANDOWNERS AND INSPECTORS

In comparison to the abovementioned papyri of the first century BC – first century AD, the surviving evidence of the second and early third century AD clearly shows the role that ownership of land and of immovable properties in general had in the economic life of Roman citizens in Egypt. We can find witnesses of this economic activity particularly in a set of testaments, which are both related to military and non-military personnel.

(12) **P. Berol. inv. 7124 = ChLA X 412** (AD 131; TM 69914) is the opening protocol of the will of M. Sempronius Priscus.<sup>38</sup> The testator was probably a member of the Roman army, as suggested by internal elements – all

<sup>37</sup> J. N. ADAMS, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language*, Cambridge 2003, particularly chapter 5.III and 5.IV, pp. 545–576.

<sup>38</sup> Edited by S. DE RICCI, 'Un papyrus latin inédit', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 58/6 (1914), pp. 524–533. See also G. CASTELLI, 'Un testamento romano dell'anno 131 d.C.', [in:] *Studi della scuola papirologica*, Milan 1917, pp. 80–94, and some notes in AMELOTI, *Il testamento* (cit. n. 7), pp. 34–35. We take advantage of the revised text by our colleague Lucia C. Colella, who will republish it in the *CLTP* and in a journal article.

witnesses were still serving in the military – who could already have been citizen on enlistment or have received citizenship upon his discharge.<sup>39</sup> He made his testament in Karanis (see col. II, l. 3: *factum*) · *Arsinoite vico Car[anid]e*), and wrote it in the form of the *testamentum per aes et libram*.<sup>40</sup> It is, therefore, not surprising that the document is entirely in Latin. Sempronius did not master Latin,<sup>41</sup> but he turned to a professional scribe or a notary to use the language (and the standard formulae) of all testaments of Roman citizens until the reign of Severus Alexander.<sup>42</sup> Even the signatures of the four witnesses are, thus, in Latin (see col. II, ll. 16–19). Among the two surviving columns, the former one, badly preserved, is more interesting for us, since it contains the testamentary dispositions in favour of the four daughters of Sempronius (see, e.g., col. I, ll. 7–8: *f[ili]abus meis quattuor · d(o) l(ego) aequis partib[us]*). In this section, two properties at least are certainly mentioned:

– at l. 1, the phrase *circa u[er]cum Magdolon iugera fru[m]ent[ar]ia septe semis* points to arable land (7 iugera and a half) in the region of *Μάγδωλα*. The toponym, which indicates different places, likely refers to the modern Medinet Nehas, located in the Arsinoite nome, in the *μερὶς Πολέμωνος*;<sup>43</sup>

– at ll. 2–3, in a place probably still in the Arsinoite nome, another toponym ending with the sequence *-ia* is signalled, in which a plot of land of

<sup>39</sup> It is impossible to infer the kind of unit to which Silvanus belonged. Overall, the legal status of members of the Roman army is still much debated; see in this respect S. WÄEBENS, ‘The legal status of legionary recruits in the Principate: A case study (Lucius Pompeius Niger, A.D. 31–64)’, [in:] Ch. WOLFF (ed.), *Le métier de soldat dans le monde romain. Actes du V<sup>e</sup> Congrès de Lyon (23–25 septembre 2010)*, Paris 2012, pp. 135–153, who analyses the case of L. Pomponius Niger during the 1st AD and concludes that: ‘legionary veterans, who had been peregrine recruits, did no longer receive the *ciuitas*, *connubium* and *ciuitas liberorum* privileges upon discharge from the mid-second century onwards (...), but they had been granted Roman citizenship upon their enlistment’ (pp. 152–153).

<sup>40</sup> On this type of will, typical of republican and imperial times, see the well-known passage of Gai. *Inst.* 2.102–103 with the remarks of M. NOWAK, *Wills in the Roman Empire. A Documentary Approach* [= *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 23], Warsaw 2015, pp. 19–34.

<sup>41</sup> He wrote his declaration in Greek; see. col. II, ll. 8–11. See AMELOTTI, *Il testamento* (cit. n. 7), p. 35.

<sup>42</sup> On Greek signatures in Latin wills, see also NOWAK, *Wills* (cit. n. 40), pp. 64–65.

<sup>43</sup> In this respect see DE RICCI, ‘Un papyrus latin inédit’ (cit. n. 38), p. 531.

2 and a half *iugera*<sup>44</sup> is located (*circa* · | [*vicum* - -] · | *r* . . . . . *ia iugera dua et sem[is]*): not at all a small property.

On these bases, one is persuaded to conclude that Sempronius invested (part of) his money in purchasing lands in the very same nome in which he did his military service or in which he settled down after his discharge.<sup>45</sup>

(13) The so-called *T. Keimer* = *T. Cair. inv. JdE 72033* (AD 142; TM 70160)<sup>46</sup> preserves the testament of Antonius Silvanus, cavalryman of the first Mauretanian *ala* of Thracians. This document, written in Alexandria on wax tablet, but found in Philadelphia, is well-known among scholars, especially of Roman law, because it is the only extant *testamentum per aes et libram* fully preserved. Like the preceding will, it is also written in Latin, apart from Silvanus' subscription, which is in Greek (ll. 70–71). Like Sempronius, Silvanus was thus not a native Latin-speaker and was allowed to sign in his own language, but he employed Latin for the whole document because of its bureaucratic significance. As for the economic status of the cavalryman, he designated his son, M. Antonius Satrianus, as the sole heir of his entire estate, and specified the deadline before which he should have accepted the inheritance by a *cretio* clause.<sup>47</sup> He also appointed a *procurator*, with the task of collecting all camp goods and to consign them to Antonia Thermutha, his partner and the mother of Antonius Satrianus. To this woman the cavalryman bequeathed money using a *legatum per vindicationem* (ll. 28–30: *do lego Antonia(e) Thermutha(e) | matri heredi(s) mei s(supra) s(cripti) (denarios) argenteos | quingentos*).<sup>48</sup> Regrettably, Silvanus did

<sup>44</sup> DE RICCI, 'Un papyrus latin inédit' (cit. n. 38), p. 531, does not offer any reading for this passage of the text, whereas R. MARICHAL in *CbLA* X 412 reads *CC a*.

<sup>45</sup> On the tendency of veterans to settle down at or very near the military camp where they had been stationed, see WAEBENS, 'The legal status of legionary recruits' (cit. n. 39), p. 148 n. 76, with further bibliography.

<sup>46</sup> It has been edited by O. GUÉRAUD & P. JOUGUET, 'Un testament latin per aes et libram de 142 après J.-C. (Tablettes L. Keimer)', *Études de papyrologie* 6 (1940), pp. 1–20. See also *FIRA* III 47; AMELOTTI, *Il testamento* (cit. n. 7), pp. 38–39.

<sup>47</sup> On this clause, its purpose and various forms in papyrological evidence, see NOWAK, *Wills* (cit. n. 40), pp. 147–153.

<sup>48</sup> Perhaps Antonia received such a sum as a refund for her dowry. See S. E. PHANG, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers* (13 B.C. – A.D. 235). *Law and Family in the Imperial Army*, Leiden – Boston – Cologne 2001, p. 223, who argues that the return of legal dowry was usually

not list his properties in detail, but he only made mention of civilian assets together with camp property (ll. 4-6: *omnes bona mea castrensia et domestica*). This, however, shows that the cavalryman had set up a household for his family.<sup>49</sup> An interesting detail concerns one of the individuals mentioned in the will: the slave *Κρονώων* (ll. 31-36) had the task of acting as agent of Silvanus and oversaw his estate (*si omnia recte tractauerit et tradiderit heredi meo supra scripto vel procuratori*).

(14) One further example is provided by **BGU VII 1696** (TM 69751),<sup>50</sup> preserved on wax tablet as well. Such testament is related an unknown character who certainly dwelled in Philadelphia during the second century AD (see A l. 1).<sup>51</sup> Because of its poor state of preservation, the tablet is uninformative about the size and value of the assets of the testator, his economic status and his mode of management. However, the surviving section, entirely in Latin and concerning appointment of heirs, shows that he had three properties located in or near the same village where he lived (B ll. 1, 7-8). Particularly, a plot of land (B l. 3: *iuger]um unum et dimidium*; ll. 5-6: *dimidiam partem*) and two houses are recorded (B ll. 7-10). Although with such lapses, the document surely testifies that ownership was among the economic activities of the testator, fitting in with the above-mentioned evidence.

(15) The last testament to take into account is **P. Diog. 10 = P. Coll. Youtie I 64 = ChLA XLVII 1403** (TM 10689).<sup>52</sup> It is the opening protocol of the will of L. Ignatius Rufinus, made on 3 June AD 211, and preserved in the archive of Lucretius Diogenes. The original will was written in Philadel-

described as legacy in wills. One should also note the sentence 'mother of my heir' (*matri heredi(s) mei*) used by Antonius Silvanus to refer to his woman. As is well-known, Roman soldiers were legally not allowed to marry until Septimius Severus removed the ban. On this topic the literature is particularly extensive; for a comprehensive discussion see Phang's aforementioned study and bibliography attached.

<sup>49</sup> B. CAMPBELL, *The Roman Army, 31 BC - AD 337. A Sourcebook*, London - New York 1994, p. 160.

<sup>50</sup> See also AMELOTI, *Il testamento* (cit. n. 7), pp. 50-51. We take advantage of the re-edition of our colleague Lucia C. Colella.

<sup>51</sup> The date rests only on palaeographical features.

<sup>52</sup> See also A. BOWMAN & J. D. THOMAS, 'P. Lond. inv. 2506: A reconsideration', *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 14 (1977), pp. 59-64.

phia, while the opening protocol took place at the *forum Augustum* in *Arsinoiton polis* (*Ptolemais Euergetis*). The testator was a Roman citizen as well as a citizen of Antinoopolis: he left the major part of his estate to his brother L. Ignatius Nemesianus (l. 3: *heres esto omnium bonorum meorum*). In addition, he had a house and a small piece of land; both these goods were bequeathed by Ignatius to his wife Lucretia Octavia (see ll. 7–8: *frumentaria V semis in loco Potamoni secundum Sereni la[ε]us et | partem dimidiam domum meam*).

Economic practices of Roman citizens in Egypt can also be reconstructed from other documentary typologies, such as deeds, lists, and accounts. Although several details of the activities escape us, these items confirm the importance of land and agriculture in economic life of Roman Egypt, and the involvement both of military and of non-military personnel.

(16) In this respect, an interesting example is featured by **P. Vindob. inv. L 74**, a document coming from the Arsinoites or Herakleopolites and dating back to the second – early third century AD.<sup>53</sup> It features a *negotium paratbecae* (l. 3), that is a contract of deposit. The items in question include some unspecified *muliebria* (perhaps womanly things, i.e. clothes, jewellery and the like), money (l. 4), perhaps bronze (*aere*[ at l. 5]), and more importantly a portion of land, recognizable through the words *partibus* and *iugera* at l. 7. In addition, even if the involved parties do not survive in the extant text, a daughter (or more) is recorded (l. 8: *filia*). It seems very likely that we are dealing with a hidden dowry under a contract of deposit. Such practices were run in situations in which a marriage was not legally possible, such as between a soldier and a civilian woman.<sup>54</sup> In this respect, two points are to be noted: first, the reference to arable land, that among the mentioned items was certainly the most valuable goods item; second, the choice of language, as Greek was usually employed in such contracts

<sup>53</sup> G. IOVINE, 'A Latin private document on papyrus (*CbLA* XLIV 1300 recto)', *Tyche* 32 (2017), pp. 59–72. Some new considerations in IDEM, 'Preliminary inquiries on some unpublished Latin documentary papyri (P. Vindob. inv. L 74 recto; 98 verso; 169 recto)', [in:] *PapCongr.* XXVIII, pp. 638–643, who however has ruled out the interpretation here proposed, that is of a contract of deposit (p. 368).

<sup>54</sup> For similar cases of attempted marriages of soldiers, see J. URBANIK, 'Husband and wife', [in:] P. J. DU PLESSIS, C. ANDO & K. TUORI (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Law and Society*, Oxford 2016, pp. 473–486, esp. 477–479.

of deposit. In this instance Latin had a symbolic force or was connected to one of the parties, suggesting therefore a link with the Roman army or the Roman veteran community.<sup>55</sup>

(17) Parcels of funds are also mentioned in a still unpublished contract, **P. Phil. inv. Lat. 06.10**. The papyrus, coming from the antiquarian market, belongs to the collection of Philadelphia University and can be assigned to a period between the second and third centuries AD on a palaeographical basis.<sup>56</sup> In the surviving text, the property is indicated through sentences *septem et dimidium* at l. 3 and *alia iugera septem* at l. 4. Its boundaries are likely recorded at l. 6, where the word *terminus* can be read. However, neither the exact size nor the economic value of the property in question survive. As for the parties involved in the transaction, the man called Nomissianus at l. 2 seems to be the owner of such land. The *cognomen* is particularly common, also in our chronological scenario, but it is more probable than not that he was a Roman citizen, because he has a Roman *cognomen*. That would explain also why the document is in Latin, instead of in Greek. Together with Nomissianus, the document shows the involvement of another character called Ofellius, twice mentioned (l. 1 and l. 5).

(18) Further information on ownership of land is provided by **P. Mich. VII 453 = ChLA V 289** (TM 42958), a document of uncertain nature drawn up in the second century AD. Henry A. Sanders, the first editor of the papyrus, framed it as a will, on the account of the word *partem* at l. 8 and l. 9.<sup>57</sup> The extant text, however, does not contain the customary clauses of wills.<sup>58</sup> It mentions only land parcels with their former owners. Some of these parcels were located in the Memphite nome (l. 7) and near Philadelphia (l. 8). On this evidence, one may suggest that such a document was

<sup>55</sup> IOVINE, 'A Latin private document on papyrus' (cit. n. 53), p. 65.

<sup>56</sup> No TM number. The *editio princeps* of this item will be provided by O. SALATI in *CLTP*.

<sup>57</sup> See SANDERS in *P. Mich.* VII, p. 89.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. V. ARANGIO-RUIZ & A. M. COLOMBO, 'Documenti testamentari latini della collezione di Michigan', *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 4 (1950), p. 123. The document has been construed as a record of purchase by A. D'ORS, 'Review of Latin papyri in the University of Michigan collection by H. Sanders / J. E. Dunlap', *Emerita* 16 (1948), pp. 355–362, at 362, and by J. F. GILLIAM, 'Review of Latin papyri in the University of Michigan collection by H. A. Sanders', *American Journal of Philology* 71 (1950), pp. 432–438, at 436.

written out to record changes of ownership. If so, perhaps the new owners were also mentioned. It would be interesting to know if these new owners were the heirs of the former ones, as one might have expected.<sup>59</sup> At any rate, it seems improbable that the Latin language was connected to their identity; the nature of the information but also the original context in which that information was conveyed determined the choice of language.

(19) The last document concerning ownership and exploitation of land is **P. Berol. inv. 14090 = *CbLA X 436*** (3rd c. AD; TM 69934). Its full understanding is hindered by the conditions of the papyrus, in which scanty portions of a single column survive, and by the use of several abbreviated words. Despite that, it is clear that quantities of arable land and grains are here listed, because of the evidently recognizable word *modius*. Furthermore, the words *diametr(-)* and *epimetr(-)*, both in abbreviated form, occur to indicate lack and surplus of food, respectively;<sup>60</sup> lastly, the document mentions a *dispensator* (l. 10 and l. 11), in abbreviated form too. As is well known, the *dispensator* was an imperial slave or freedman who was in charge of the funds in a particular department or *ratio*, most of which were in the provinces.<sup>61</sup> We are tempted to believe that this document was drawn up to take note of the grain coming from lands under imperial control. In such a case the use of Latin would be not surprising at all. However, the surviving text does not provide any useful information on location and size of lands or on the exact amount of crop production. In addition, we may also consider a second possibility, since in provinces the *dispensator* could be also part of the staff of the *procurator* (*officium procuratoris*) and was responsible for payments to the troops.<sup>62</sup> In these cases, he also followed units in their expeditions and movements. If we accept this hypothesis, we should

<sup>59</sup> Further considerations on this document in IOVINE, 'Preliminary inquiries' (cit. n. 53), pp. 638–639.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. *CTb* 13.9.5 and 12.6.5. Among Greek documents, the word occurs in some documents of the 3rd century BC and concerning bookkeeping: see *P. Corn.* 3, ll. 25–26 (263–229 BC; TM 2303); *P. Hib.* I 110 recto, l. 14 (259–253 BC; TM 7817); *P. Cair. Zen.* IV 59669, l. 4 (255–247 BC; TM 1298); *P. Cair. Zen.* III 59333, ll. 31 and 75 (248 BC; TM 976).

<sup>61</sup> See J. CROOK, *Law and Life of Rome*, Ithaca, NY 1967, p. 187; WEAVER, *Familia Caesaris* (cit. n. 15), p. 202.

<sup>62</sup> See P. HERZ, 'Finances and costs of the Roman army', [in:] P. ERDKAMP (ed.), *A Companion to Roman Army*, Malden – Oxford – Victoria 2007, pp. 306–322, at 312.



conclude that the present document was written out in a military context to record the delivery of regular and basic provisions to Roman soldiers. If so, that would explain the choice of Latin for an official document. The text, however, is too scanty to allow for any conclusion regarding the origin of such provisions. We may only note that the general pattern, in which the same entries are repeated, points to a record or a receipt of cereals, in which probably the single items were arranged in chronological order, as usual. The use of the third singular person (see the abbreviation for *debet* at l. 3 and l. 9 and *habet* at l. 4) does not belie this interpretation.

#### 4. SECOND CENTURY AD: TRADERS, AGAIN

It must finally be remarked that the trading activities described in section (2), despite being less testified to, do not entirely vanish. Here is an updated list of the relevant manuscripts:

(20) *PSI XIV 1448* (TM 27061), a receipt written after AD 142 probably in Mauretania Caesariensis, as indicated by the dating formula.<sup>63</sup> In this scanty document Callistianus, an imperial slave, records a sum of money concerning business of some sort: *Callistianus Aug(usti) ser[.] [.] [---]* | *Nicostrati uicari mei (denarios)* [ (ll. 3-4).<sup>64</sup> Callistianus might have been a *dispensator*, or the holder of some other clerical position, because he had a *uicarius*, Nicostratus, mentioned at l. 4. According to Vincenzo Arangio-Ruiz,<sup>65</sup> the present receipt probably concerned the sale of the *uicarius*

<sup>63</sup> In addition to the *editio princeps* in *PSI XIV 1448*, where the document is assigned to the 2nd–3rd century AD, see also – for the dating of the document and its provenance – *CbLA XXV 789*, and J. F. GILLIAM, ‘Some Roman elements in Roman Egypt’, *Illinois Classical Studies* 3 (1978), pp. 126–128, esp. 127 (= IDEM, *Roman Army Papers*, Amsterdam 1986, pp. 420–422, esp. 421).

<sup>64</sup> More specifically, ll. 3–5 were written by Callistianus himself in a competent and fluid old Roman cursive. A different hand was responsible for ll. 1–2, that are written as well in a quickly-drawn old Roman cursive, more inclined and with thicker strokes. GILLIAM, ‘Some Roman elements’ (cit. n. 63), p. 127, supplied ll. 3–4: *Callistianus Aug(usti) ser(uus) [accepi per personam] | Nicostrati uicari mei (denarios) ...*

<sup>65</sup> See the remarks of V. ARANGIO-RUIZ accepted by the first editor, V. BARTOLETTI in *PSI XIV 1448*.

himself. It is also possible, since the *uicarius* of an imperial slave could function as his deputy despite belonging to his *peculium*,<sup>66</sup> that the *uicarius* Nicostratus was simply involved in a transaction where he acted on behalf of his *ordinarius* Callistianus. Despite these uncertain points, the document allows one to emphasize further the ongoing role of imperial slaves in the economic life of the provinces well beyond the first century AD and the use of Latin for related documents. Even the fact that the papyrus is written against the fibres (*transversa charta*) gives a somehow ‘Roman’ and formal appearance to the receipt.<sup>67</sup>

(21) The presence of a further slave might be testified to in the remnants of a bilingual receipt of unknown provenance, provided by **P. Hamb. inv. Gr. 508 = ChLA XI 498** (2nd c. AD; TM 69984).<sup>68</sup> The anonymous scribe acknowledges the receipt of a sum in *denarii* (l. 4: *accepi*, and l. 5: *denarii*), but too little remains to indicate the exact kind of transaction. The presence of a slave in l. 2 is surely recorded, but we cannot be sure whether the slave was the object of the trade itself or the steward for someone else. It is also impossible to understand who the other person in the transaction was. Despite its poor state of preservation, however, the document throws light on the language choice, because the Latin section is followed by a Greek one: the correspondence between *seruum* at l. 1 and *δοῦλον* at l. 6 can indicate that a full translation or, more likely, a sort of summary with the main information was added to facilitate those who were Greek speakers. The position of the two languages within the document is also relevant, since Latin has clearly a more official status.

(22) Further transactions are testified to by **P. Princ. III 143 = ChLA IX 402** (1st half of 2nd c. AD; TM 17266). The papyrus contains at least three

<sup>66</sup> Cf. W. W. BUCKLAND, *The Roman Law of Slavery: The Condition of the Slave in Private Law from Augustus to Justinian*, Cambridge 1908, pp. 187–206; and WEAVER, *Familia Caesaris* (cit. n. 15), pp. 200–202.

<sup>67</sup> This way of drafting a papyrus sheet was typical of double documents (*diplomata*), in which the *scriptura interior* was folded and sealed, while the *scriptura exterior* remained open for consultation and unsealed. On this, see E. G. TURNER, *The Terms Recto and Verso. The Anatomy of the Papyrus Roll*, Brussels 1978, pp. 26–53, and B. E. NIELSEN, ‘A catalog of duplicate papyri’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 129 (2000), pp. 187–214.

<sup>68</sup> See also the remarks of D. HAGEDORN, ‘Bemerkungen zu Urkunden’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 84 (1990), pp. 27–29.

different records; since one of them is undoubtedly a business document, it is very likely that the other two – which are in very poor conditions – have been business documents as well. On the account of their ordered and careful writing, they were probably part of the book-roll of a businessman or of a firm. Particularly, the text best preserved features the record of the payment of a debt. Despite some syntactical oddities,<sup>69</sup> it seems that Iulius Agathaius, recorded in l. 1, has paid to Iulius Agathemerus a debt he had previously contracted for unspecified merchandise, amounting to 31,000 *denarii* (l. 2). Further details of the transaction do not survive, but it is remarkable again the use of Latin by characters with Greek names and in a document written out for personal accounting purposes.

(23) The last item of the section, and of our survey, is featured by *P. Tebt. II 687 = ChLA V 306* (TM 69903), a document of uncertain nature dating to the central decades of the second century AD.<sup>70</sup> The first editors, Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt, remain quite dubious on the exact purpose of such a list, suggesting a will, a donation, a marriage contract, or lastly a divorce contract.<sup>71</sup> The scanty evidence does not allow one to incline toward one conjecture or another. One could at any rate notice

<sup>69</sup> The main difficulty lies in the use of the dative for both characters. Two possibilities can be thought of. (1) Assuming that the dative *Iulio Agathaiō* stands for a nominative, one may gather that a Iulius Agathaios has paid to a Iulius Agathemerus a debt he had previously contracted for unspecified merchandise, amounting to 31,000 *denarii*. The syntagm *nomini in solutum* (l. 2) should therefore be interpreted as *in nomine soluti*, ‘in fulfilment of a debt’. The dative *Iulio Agathaiō* might in fact stand for the nominative *Iulius Agathaius*; since *Agathemero* (l. 3) is marked by an apex on the last vowel, one may assume the real dative is this and not *Agathaiō*. (2) Alternatively, a nominative (the debtor’s name and the subject of *numeravit*) is hidden in the lacuna in l. 1 right after the dating formula, and between the two datives *Agathemero* and *Agathaiō*, one is the receiver of the money (the creditor) and one a steward of the debtor, through whom the debtor paid the money (see R. MARICHAL in *ChLA IX*, p. 111); *nomini* (*scil. nomine*) would be preceded by a genitive (‘under the name of’, ‘in the capacity of’), and *in solutum* would simply mean ‘in fulfilment of a debt’. Be it as it may, the document stands as a receipt, and might have been written either by Agathaios or Agathemerus or a clerk of their entourage on their personal bookroll, to keep a record of the cancelled debt. A new edition of this papyrus will be provided by G. Iovine in *CLTP*.

<sup>70</sup> The papyrus is being republished by our colleague Lucia C. Colella, who has preliminarily and tentatively identified it with a marriage agreement with provisions for future offspring.

<sup>71</sup> See also R. MARICHAL in *ChLA V 306*, where the same interpretations are proposed.

that different kind of goods are also listed: both sums in *drachmae* (l. 5) and properties (*partes* in l. 17) occur, together with flasks (*ampullas* in l. 6). In addition, it should be noted that the orthography of the text is correct, and the presence of apices on long vowels (see, for instance, *Gemelló* at l. 2 and *tetartórum* at l. 4) suggests a noteworthy competence in Latin script of the scribe or clerk. The language choice was likely required by the kind of the document (if it comes from a will or a donation) or by the identity of the parties who by using Latin exhibited their Romanness.

## 5. SOME CONCLUSIONS

Considered as a whole, the Latin and bilingual Latin-Greek documents listed in this article allow one to make some remarks on activities managed by Roman citizens – or Western people – and to focus on important issues of the economic and social life of Roman Egypt in the first three centuries of Imperial presence.

*Typology of business.* Roman citizens, or at any rate businesspersons of Roman origin, appear to have been involved in economic enterprises and activities since the very creation of the Egyptian province. They made money particularly from banking and loans (*P. Oxy.* XLIV 3208; XXXVI 2772; PSI inv. 3244; probably PSI XIII 1321; *P. Princ.* III 143), trade of commodities (mostly wine, as shown by the dossier of ostraca from Berenike), buying and selling immovable and movable assets, as houses and slaves (see *P. Vindob. inv.* L 74; *P. Phil. inv. Lat.* 06.10, PSI XIV 1448; *P. Hamb. inv. Gr.* 508), manufacture (*P. Oxy.* IV 737), and – lastly – ownership and exploitation of arable land. In this respect, the most part of the papyri shows a link between landowning and Roman citizens in the Egyptian province. That is not surprising in itself, since agriculture was crucial in ancient economies. It can also be remarked, that Latin paperwork concerning Roman bankers or merchants seems to drop off after mid-second century AD, while at the same time evidence concerning landowning grows. One may suppose that business conducted or supervised by Latin-speaking stewards or overseers (coming from Italy?) was more evident in the earliest years of Roman Egypt; afterwards, Greek-speaking administrators slowly replaced the

others. However, it is also significant that during the second century AD the evidence in Latin is featured mostly by wills, suggesting a real change to the economic life of Romans.

*Social standing of the people involved.* Some of these owners were members of the Roman army or veterans (P. Berol. inv. 7124; T. Keimer; P. Vindob. inv. L 74), but also non-military personnel, belonging to the upper class of the population, seem to have played an important economic role as well (likely BGU VII 1696; P. Diog. 10; P. Mich. VII 453). Even imperial property is testified: P. Oxy. II 224 shows the involvement of a member of the emperor's family, Antonia the Elder, and perhaps P. Berol. inv. 14090 can also be connected to imperial property. Slaves and freedmen too can be spotted among the listed evidence. During the first century AD, *serui* and *liberti* acted as treasures, bankers (P. Oxy. XLIV 3208; PSI inv. 3244), and traders (O. Berenike III 478). Afterwards, between the second and third centuries AD, they mostly appear as managers of the whole estate of their masters and agents (P. Berol. inv. 7124; PSI XIV 1448; perhaps P. Hamb. inv. Gr. 508). In some cases, slaves and freedmen were the objects of such transactions (perhaps P. Hamb. inv. Gr. 508; P. Tebt. II 687). Furthermore, personnel belonging to the imperial house as well appear in our evidence (P. Oxy. XLIV 3208; PSI XIV 1448; P. Berol. inv. 14090).

*Geographical location.* Latin and bilingual documents provide evidence especially for the largest nomes, such as the Arsinoites and the Oxyrhynchites, as already noted by scholars quoted in section 1. Notably, the village most frequently testified to in the surviving documents is Φιλαδέλφεια (T. Keimer; BGU VII 1696; P. Diog. 10; P. Mich. VII 453). Since some of these documents are connected to soldiers and veterans (surely BGU VII 1696), the tendency by veterans to buy their properties in the same place where they settled has been clearly confirmed for the second century AD.

So far, Latin and bilingual documents reinforce what we already knew of the enterprises and the economic role of Romans in Egypt, partly mentioned in the introduction. However, one must bear in mind the usual *caveat* of papyrological evidence when considering the nature of sources at our disposal and here collected. Very few Latin documents even remotely concerning business survive from Alexandria; hence, and from the Egyptian *chora*, only private documents – wills, contracts, accounts, and the

like – are extant, rather than more official ones like tax registers and other typologies which might be more conducive to our analysis. This is also due to the particular role of the Latin language in Egypt, only employed in specific social networks, rightly delineated by James N. Adams and here repeatedly emphasized. Apart from wills, in which Latin was mandatory at least until the reign of Severus Alexander, and some other peculiarly Roman typologies,<sup>72</sup> Greek was the public language of the administration and was thus normally used in every kind of document. In addition, several written testimonies are in such poor condition as not to provide important economic and social information and, in some cases, even to allow us to understand the exact kind of business.

Despite such limits, Latin evidence here listed is undoubtedly related to different aspects of the Egyptian economy and, thus, is potentially enlightening. It provides real information about a number of small activities and circumscribed economic enterprises and how they were managed over time in the first three centuries of Imperial presence. Specifically, as for the kind of activities, Latin papyri enable us to identify the aforementioned economic trend: banking, lending money and trading particularly testified to at the beginning of Roman power, ownership and exploitation of land played a more important role from the second century AD onwards. The impact of tradesmen, merchants, and bankers – rather than, as is usually understood, of soldiers and their offspring – in the economic life of the early province can therefore be rightly emphasized.

As regards slaves and freedmen, their presence in Egyptian society was not confined to economic fields, such as agents and accountants only. Being Latin-literate, slaves and freedmen carried out clerical tasks and drew up a variety of documents. They played a more important role for the use of Latin language or alphabet and, thus, for the documentary culture in general. That is clearly shown by material and graphical features of Latin papyri, especially of the first century AD. Perhaps it can be hardly accidental that documents of this period are in the same handwriting style. As Jacqueline Austin argues, ‘it is possible that there was a directive of some

<sup>72</sup> On using Latin language in documents, see G. IOVINE, ‘Latin in Egyptian documents between Caracalla and Diocletian’, [in:] *PapCongr.* XXIX, forthcoming.

kind, coming ultimately from Rome, stipulating the dissemination in the primary schools of the Latin alphabet, as used for handwriting, in a consistent and regularized form'.<sup>73</sup>

Lastly, following a recent and very promising approach,<sup>74</sup> the papyri can be treated as parts of their archaeological context. If compared with the other related sources (e.g. documents in Greek or in other languages, coins, valuable objects), the data we have at our disposal may help to validate assumptions, even for some nomes and villages from which we already have a huge number of items. To approach an ancient economy, we need several sets of data, including all kinds of documentary witnesses, the Latin as well. Including the Latin evidence here collected in context with other sources goes beyond the boundaries of this work, but it seems surely worthwhile. Only if we get more and more sets of documents related to micro-economies, will we be able to reconstruct macro-economies and to achieve a better understanding of the economy in Roman Egypt.

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<sup>73</sup> AUSTIN, 'School hands' (cit. n. 18), p. 2.

<sup>74</sup> See P. VAN MINNEN, 'Agriculture and the taxes-trade model in Roman Egypt', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 133 (2000), pp. 205–220; A. BOWMAN, 'Quantifying the Egyptian economy', [in:] A. BOWMAN & A. WILSON (eds.), *Quantifying the Roman Economy. Methods and Problems*, Oxford 2009, pp. 177–204.

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**Abstract:** This study investigates linguistic and scriptal variation in notary signatures found in late antique contracts from Egypt, seeking to identify and interpret the potential relationship between choices in language and script. To answer this, theoretical concepts and methods from sociolinguistics, social semiotics, and multilingual studies are used, with the objective of adding a new, more linguistically-oriented perspective to existing research on notarial signatures. On the one hand, this research demonstrates how the Latin script seems to restrict notaries, resulting in transliterated Greek signatures with very homogeneous content. The familiarity of notaries with the Greek language and writing is, on the other hand, reflected in signatures written in the Greek alphabet, which are much more diverse and at times adjusted to the circumstances under which specific documents were composed. Even if notaries seem to lack confidence in freely producing text in the Latin script, they choose to do so due to its functional values, which are conveyed and perceived visually. Latin letters create an association between signatories and Roman law, adding to the trustworthiness and prestige of the signatures. Differentiating between script and language allows us to understand how the Latin script maintained the connotations that formerly accompanied the Latin language, gradually replacing it in the form of transliterated passages, at a time when the language was disappearing from papyrological

documentation. In this sense, sociolinguistics, and especially social semiotics, prove useful when dealing with visual aspects of language in papyri, as they prevent their functions and meanings from being overlooked.

**Keywords:** notary, social semiotics, digraphia, diglossia, *di emou* signatures

Amin BENAÏSSA

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**Keywords:** *coloni adscripticii*, *enapographoi georgoi*, Apion estate (Oxyrhynchus), tenancy, viticulture in late-antique Egypt

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**Keywords:** Ptolemaic papyri, petitions, letters, oil contraband, tax farming, Arsinoite nome, prisoners of war

Jean-Luc FOURNET

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them belong to the Dioscorus archive. The appendix proposes a revision of the other shipping receipts involving the Metanoia – one from the Monastery of Sabinos, the other ones from Aphrodite.

**Keywords:** Monastery of the Metanoia, *anmona civilis*, shipping receipts, Dioscorus archive

Edward M. HARRIS

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**Keywords:** expertise, Areopagus, Exegetai, Phanodemus, Apollodorus, son of Pasion, *anagrapheis* (inscribers), Lysias *Against Nicomachus*

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**Keywords:** Latin papyri, Roman citizens, Egypt, business, trade, land

Andrea JÖRDENS

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**Keywords:** murder, pre-trial detention, priests, Soknopaiou Nesos

Adam ŁAJTAR

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**Abstract:** The article presents a fragment of the cornice from the Ptolemaic Portico of the Hatshepsut temple at Deir el-Bahari discovered in 2021 in the fill of the Middle Kingdom tomb MMA 28. The fragment carries remnants of two dipinti in red ochre, of which one is illegible and the other preserves vestiges of the three first lines of the Greek inscription *I. Deir el-Bahari 196*. They show that the inscription was a *proskynema* (act of adoration) addressed to Amenotes (Greek for Amenhotep son of Hapu). The name of the author cannot be read with certainty (perhaps Pe[---]); the text also mentions a certain Menodoros, who may be the father of the protagonist of the inscription or another man. In an appendix, a fragment of another text in Greek, probably originating from the south wall of the Bark Room of the main sanctuary of Amun is presented.

**Keywords:** Deir el-Bahari, Amenhotep son of Hapu, Greek inscriptions

Adam ŁUKASZEWICZ

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**Abstract:** A Greek inscription on stone found in Alexandria in the nineteenth century and exhibited in the Alexandrian Greco-Roman Museum contains an unusual dedicatory text in honour of Mark Antony. The text was edited several times. It contains useful information which agrees with the passage of Plutarch on the lifestyle of Antony and Cleopatra, and their entourage. In this paper the author suggests the date 34–30 BC for the activity of the 'Inimitables' and adds a further commentary on the history of Antony and Cleopatra.

**Keywords:** Alexandria, Mark Antony, Cleopatra VII, Antyllus, 'Inimitables'

Grzegorz OCHAŁA

*Nubica onomastica miscellanea V:*

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**Abstract:** Unlike previous instalments of the 'Nubica onomastica miscellanea'-series which focused on correcting single names or phrases in Nubian texts, its fifth part brings the complete reedition of two more substantial

texts originally published by Giovanni Ruffini. The former is a list of witnesses to a deed of land sale (*P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 65) and the latter an account (*P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 80). While the main subject of the paper are personal names that can be found in the two documents, other elements, such as grammar, lexicon, and – especially for *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 80 – the matter of the document are also duly treated. By identifying ghost-names in Ruffini's edition and proposing the identification of new Old Nubian substantives, the paper enhances our knowledge about the vocabulary of the language. Last but not least, the new interpretation of *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 80, which – for the first time in medieval Nubia – appears to explicitly state the value of certain commodities in dirhams, is an important contribution to the studies on the monetisation of Nubian economy.

**Keywords:** medieval Nubia, Qasr Ibrim, Old Nubian documents, onomastics, ghost-names, account, Nubian economy

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**Keywords:** animal cult, priests, temple personnel, Egyptian temples, Ptolemaic period, Fayum area

Ewa WIPSZYCKA

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**Abstract:** The main question that the present paper tries to answer is as follows: since two discordant precepts concerning work were to be found in the New Testament, how did monks behave? One precept treated work as a duty, the other recommended not to care about one's maintenance. The monks followed in their behaviour either the first or the second precept. As a result of disputes that took place in the fourth century the opinion prevailed that work was the better choice. It is important for us to find out when and under what circumstances that choice was done by the majority of the monastic movement in the East. It is also important to see what arguments were used by the monks of Late Antiquity in order to settle the conflict between the two discordant precepts. This conflict worried many and caused a renewal of

a dispute that seemed to have been closed. Two ways of reasoning in favour of monastic work were generally used: monks might and should pray and work at the same time, satisfying both precepts; monks ought to work in order to be able to give alms, and this conferred to work a meaning that went beyond immediate usefulness. Praying and working at the same time was not always feasible in actual practice, but this did not bother authors of ascetic treatises.

**Keywords:** voluntary poverty, St. Anthony, Pachomius, Hirsiesee, Basil of Caesarea, Evagrius of Pontus, John Cassian, *melete*, Messalians, 'wandering and begging' monks, Rabbula, Syriac monastic rules, almsgiving