



THE COMMON ANCESTOR (?)

**Latin Letters in Late Antique Papyri
and Late Prose**

Why am I here today?

Why am I here today?

- A work still in progress, **open** to debate (and correction)

Why am I here today?

- A work still in progress, **open** to debate (and correction)
- Latin **documentary** texts from Late Antiquity (vs. literary)

Why am I here today?

- A work still in progress, **open** to debate (and correction)
- Latin **documentary** texts from Late Antiquity (vs. literary)
- Increasingly weakening separation between documentary and literary papyri in late Antiquity (**Fournet**)

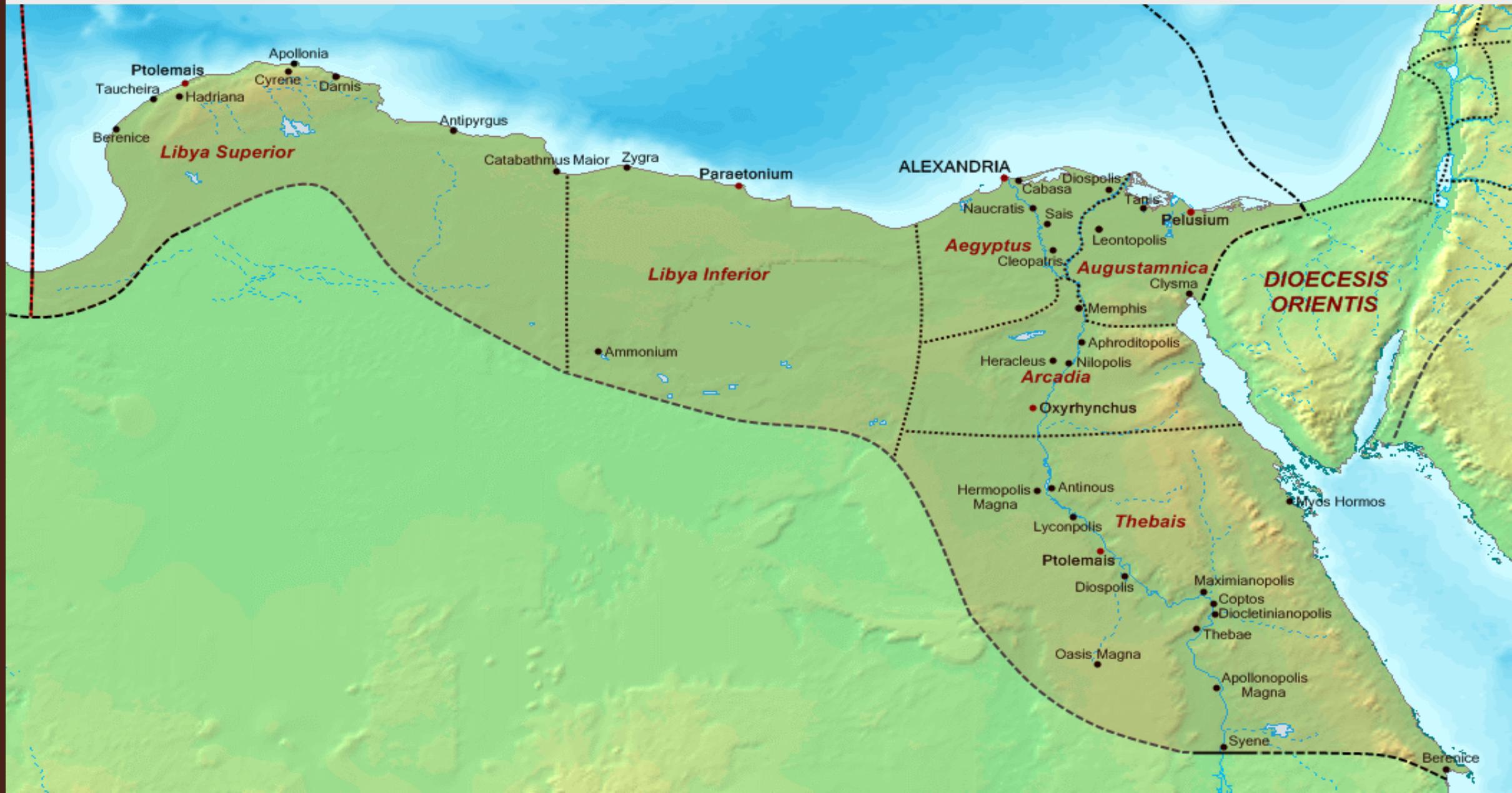
Why am I here today?

- A work still in progress, **open** to debate (and correction)
- Latin **documentary** texts from Late Antiquity (vs. literary)
- Increasingly weakening separation between documentary and literary papyri in late Antiquity (**Fournet**)
- Latin literature as we know it (**authors**) vs. Latin texts, produced in style and appropriate verbiage in Late Antique chanceries, but not meant to stay

Why am I here today?

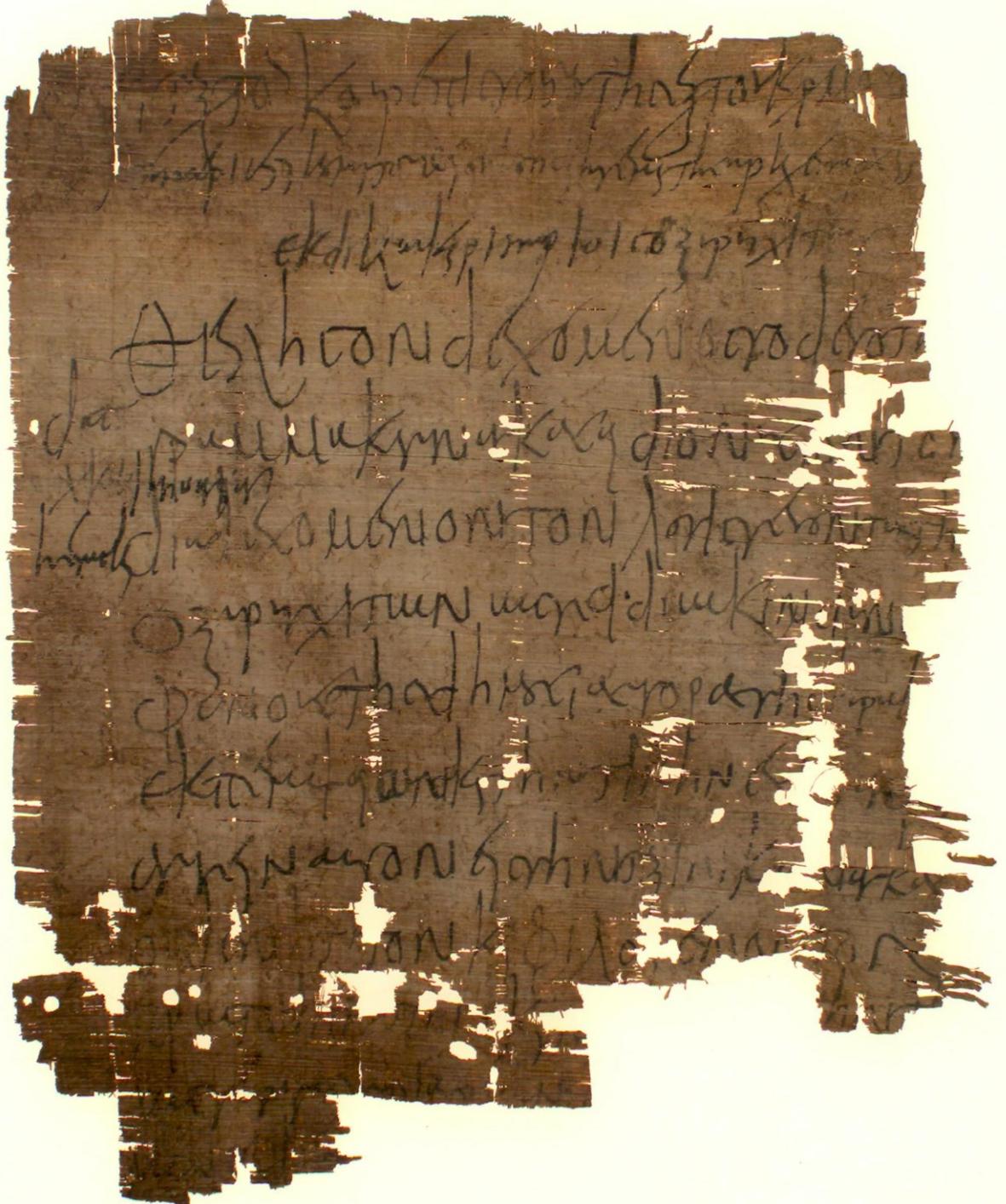
- A work still in progress, **open** to debate (and correction)
- Latin **documentary** texts from Late Antiquity (vs. literary)
- Increasingly weakening separation between documentary and literary papyri in late Antiquity (**Fournet**)
- Latin literature as we know it (**authors**) vs. Latin texts, produced in style and appropriate verbiage **in Late Antique chanceries**, but not meant to stay
- No Vergil, Terence, Cicero, Sallust, Juvenal – see **PLATINUM** for that

**Latin RElics in a GReek Egypt (MSCA-IF-GF n° 895634):
Latin in Egyptian documents between Diocletian and Heraclius**



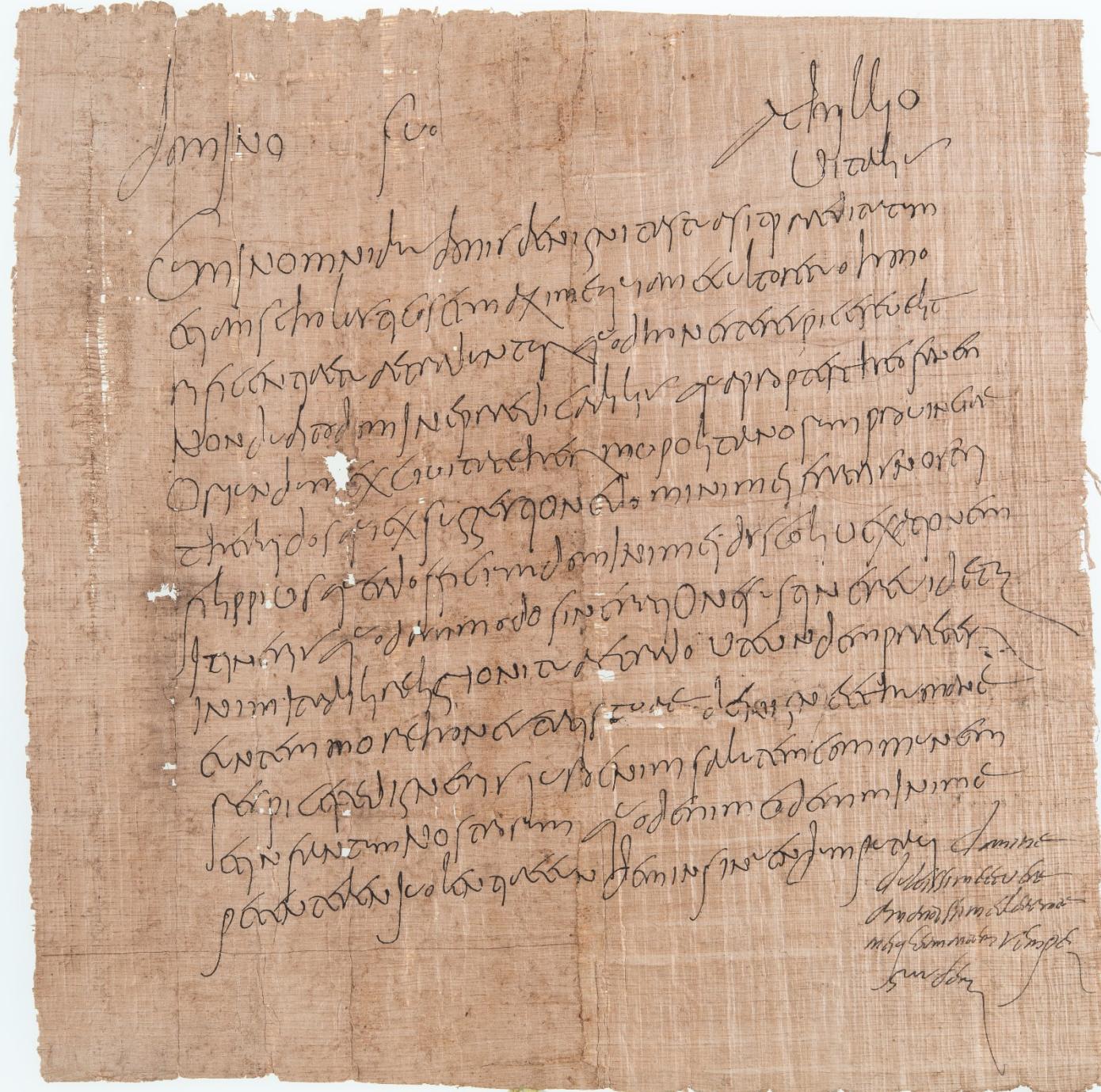
Latin in Late Antique Egypt

- a) **Prozeßprotokolle** – bilingual records of (court) proceedings
- b) Copies of legal texts (*Codex Theodosianus, Corpus Iuris etc.*)
- c) Latin literature (Cicero, Sallust, Terence, Juvenal et al.)
- d) Latin official texts (from military or civilian bureaus)
- e) Greek texts with **Latin dating formulae**
- f) Greek texts with Latin personal names
- g) Greek texts with **Latin tags and seals** (*legi, recognoui, bene uale...*)
- h) Greek texts with the ***di emu*** formula



Latin in Late Antique Egypt

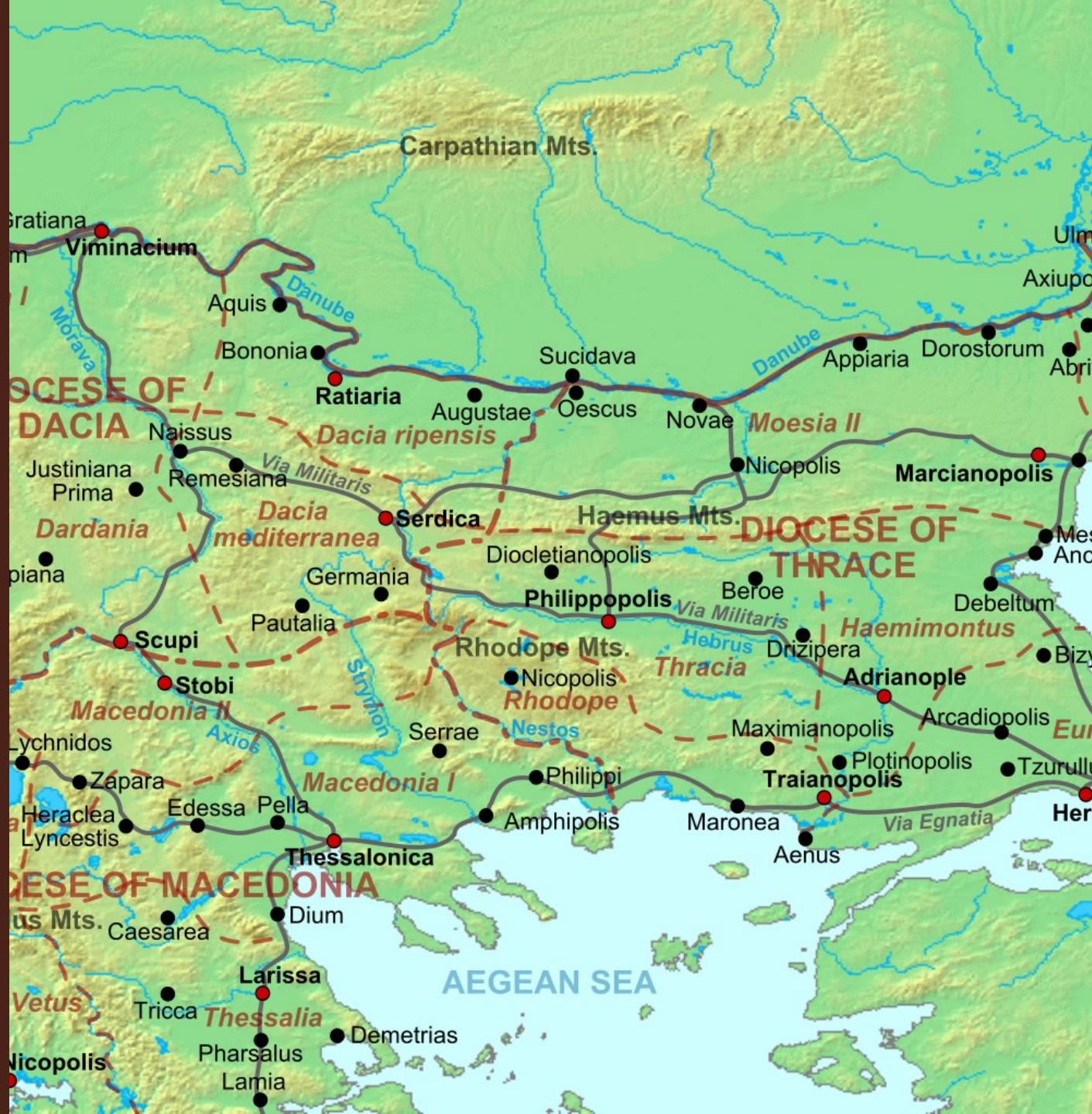
- a) **Prozeßprotokolle** – bilingual records of (court) proceedings
- b) Copies of legal texts (*Codex Theodosianus*, *Corpus Iuris* etc.)
- c) Latin literature (Cicero, Sallust, Terence, Juvenal et al.)
- d) **Latin official texts** (from military or civilian bureaus)
 - e) Greek texts with **Latin dating formulae**
 - f) Greek texts with **Latin personal names**
 - g) Greek texts with **Latin tags and seals** (*legi*, *recognoui*, *bene uale...*)
 - h) Greek texts with the ***di emu* formula**



Latin official documents: an overview

1. From Roman and Early Byzantine army offices

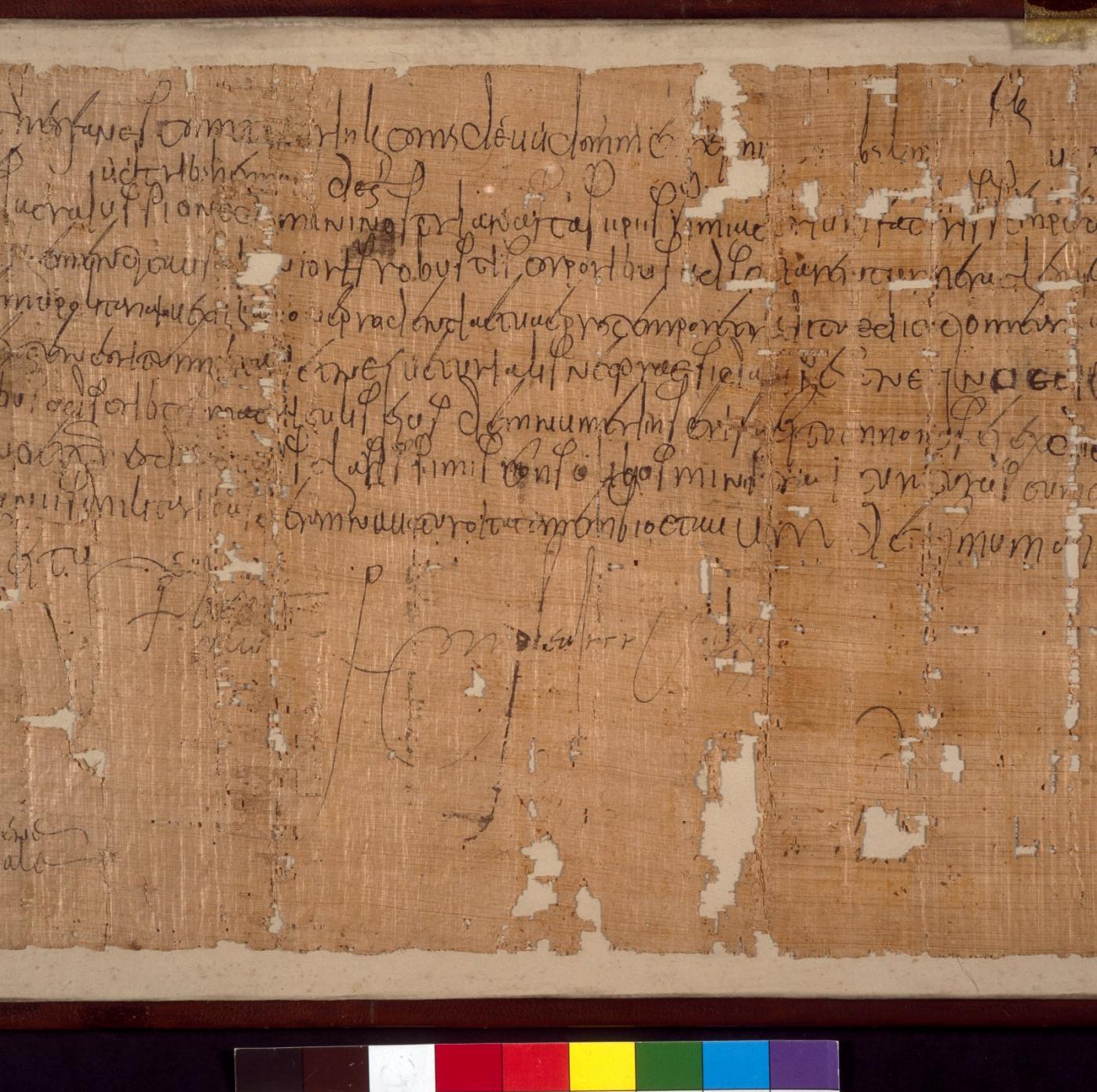
Strictly related to the internal proceedings of the army



1. From Roman and Early Byzantine army offices

- Letters containing orders:
notably *epistulae probatoriae*,
ordering a military commander
to enlist a recruit (in fact, the
recruit's credentials)

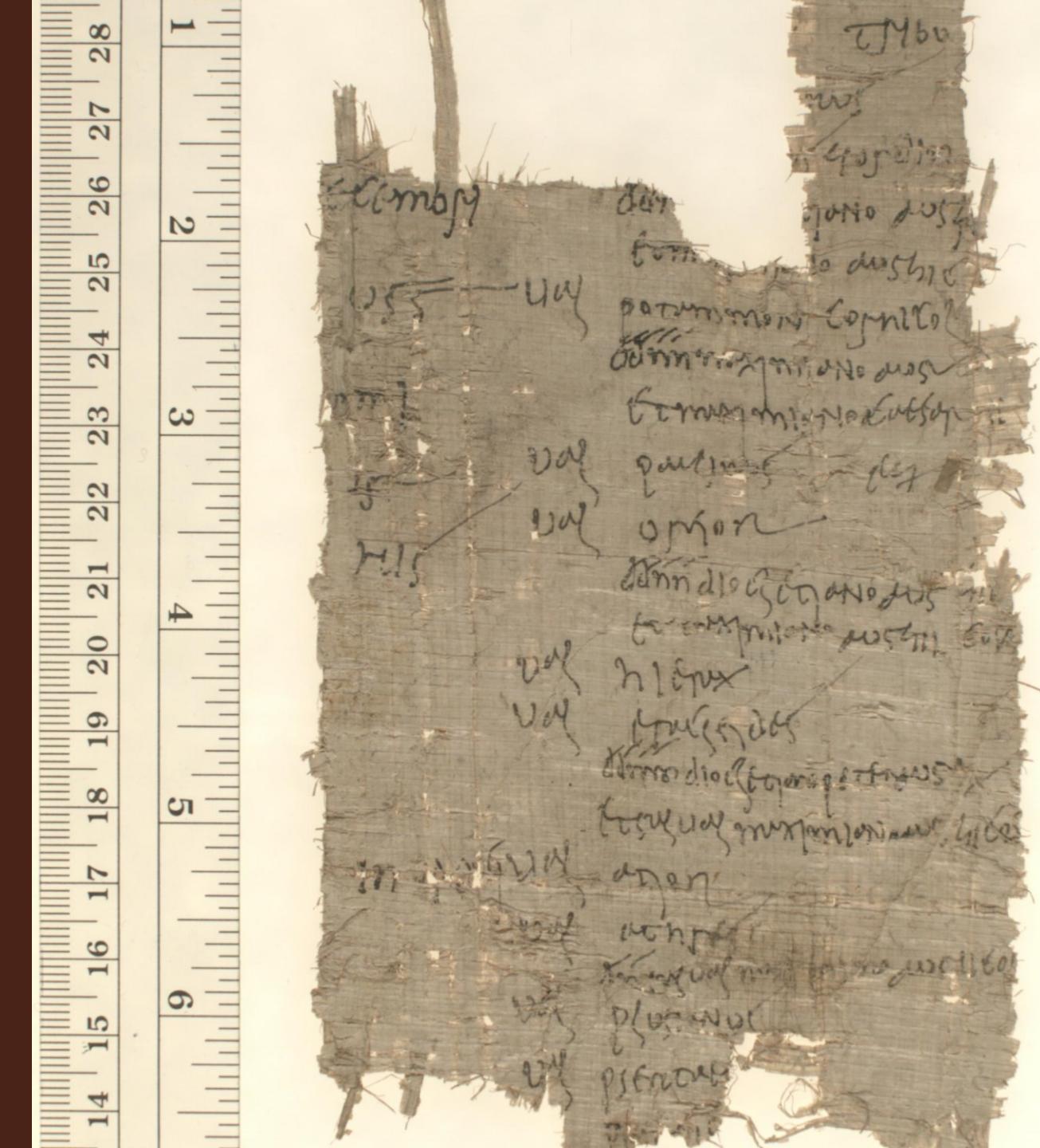
P.Ryl. IV 609 (AD 505)



1. From Roman and Early Byzantine army offices

- Letters containing orders: notably *epistulae probatoriae*, ordering a military commander to enlist a recruit (in fact, the recruit's credentials)
- Lists of soldiers (only eight after Diocletian)

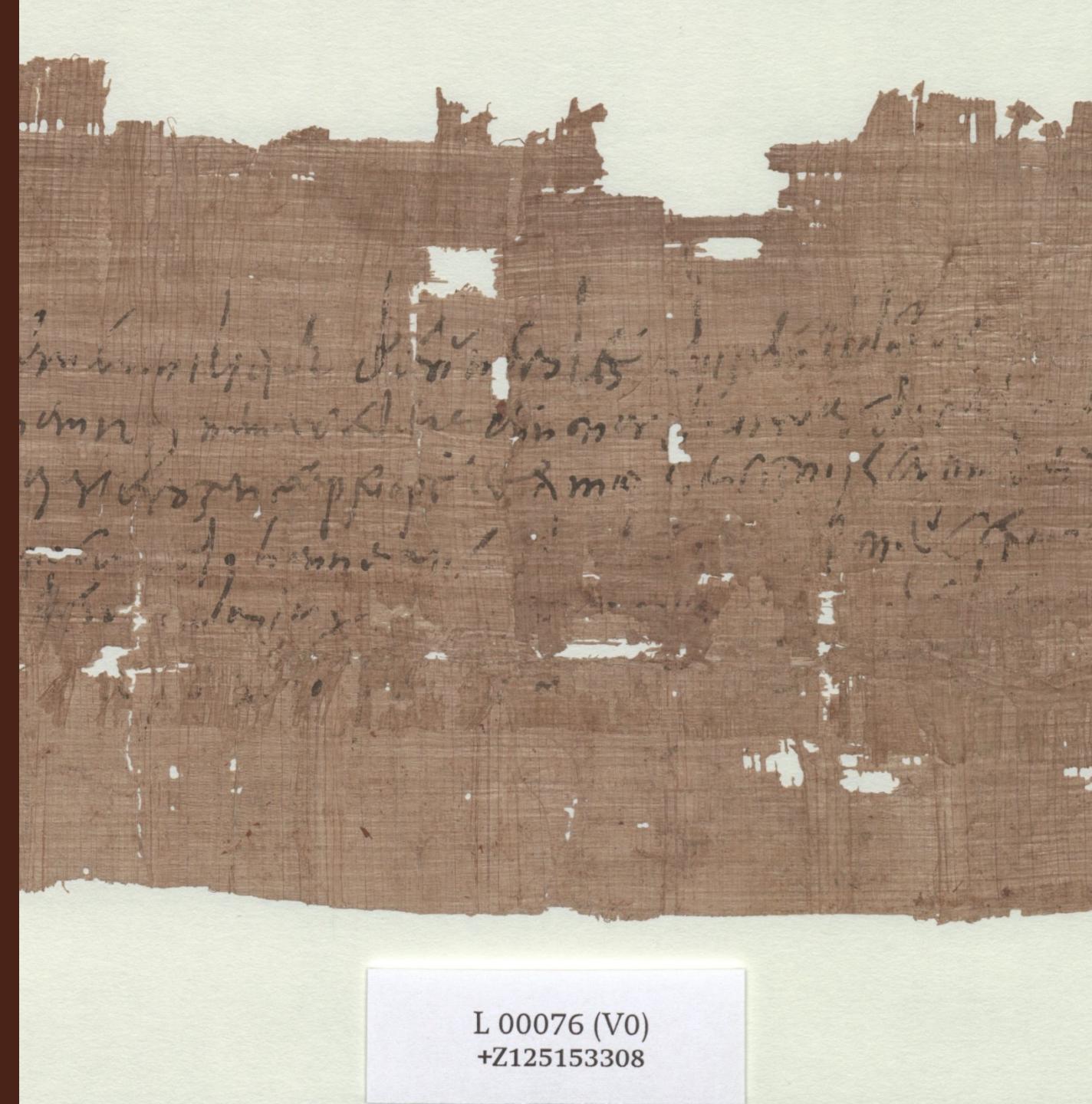
P.Mich. X 592 (AD 311-21)



1. From Roman and Early Byzantine army offices

- Letters containing orders: notably *epistulae probatoriae*, ordering a military commander to enlist a recruit (in fact, the recruit's credentials)
- Lists of soldiers (only eight after Diocletian)
- Receipts, mainly from the *annonae*-system of military provisions: see F. Mitthof's *Annona militaris. Die Heeresversorgung im Spätantiken Ägypten*

P.Vindob. inv. L 76 (IV–V AD)



L 00076 (V0)
+Z125153308

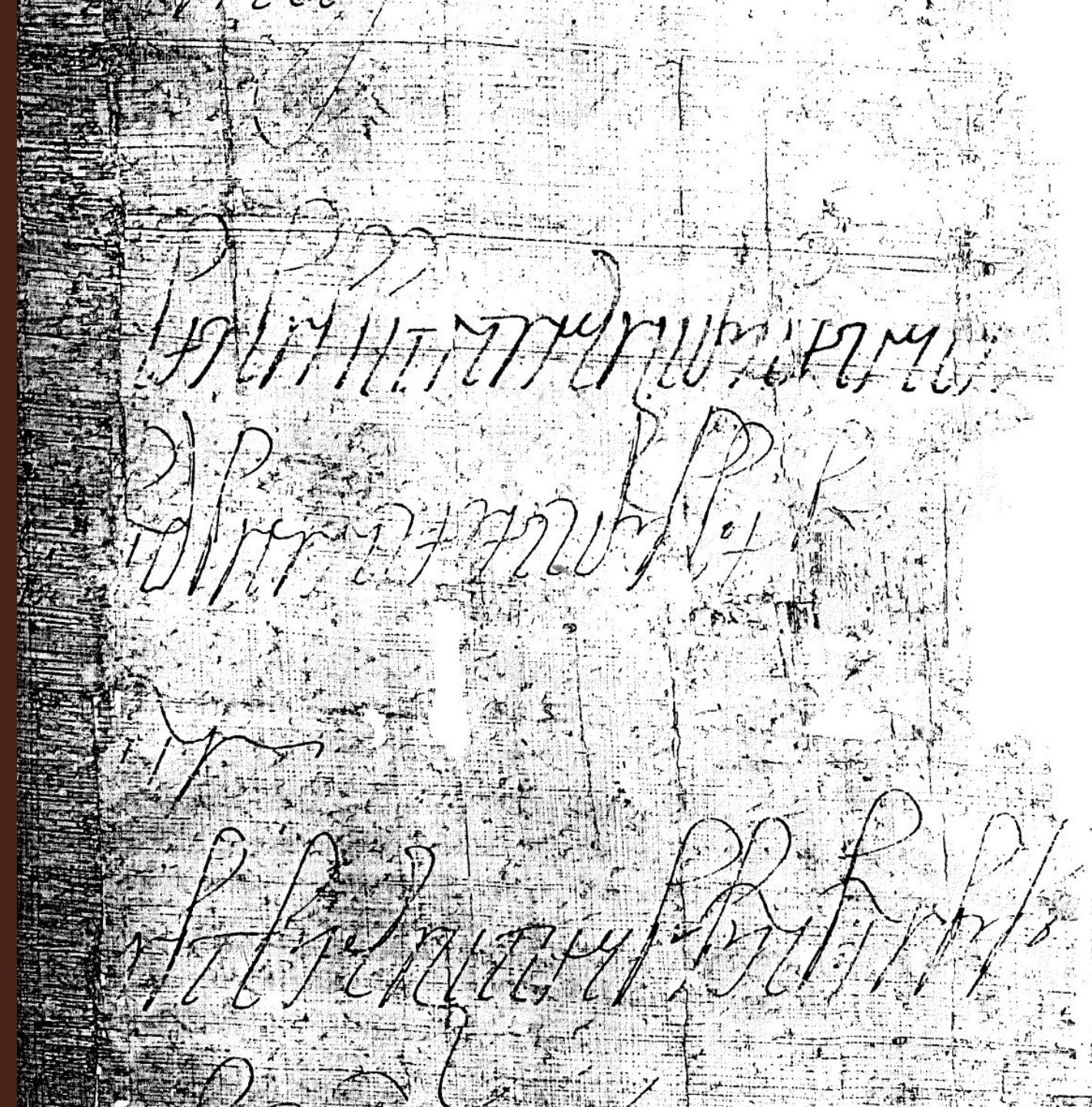
2. From chanceries

- From the **highest powers** of Late Antiquity - the Emperor(s), the *praefecti praetorio*, the *praesides provinciae* – to any military or civilian office in the provinces



2. From chanceries

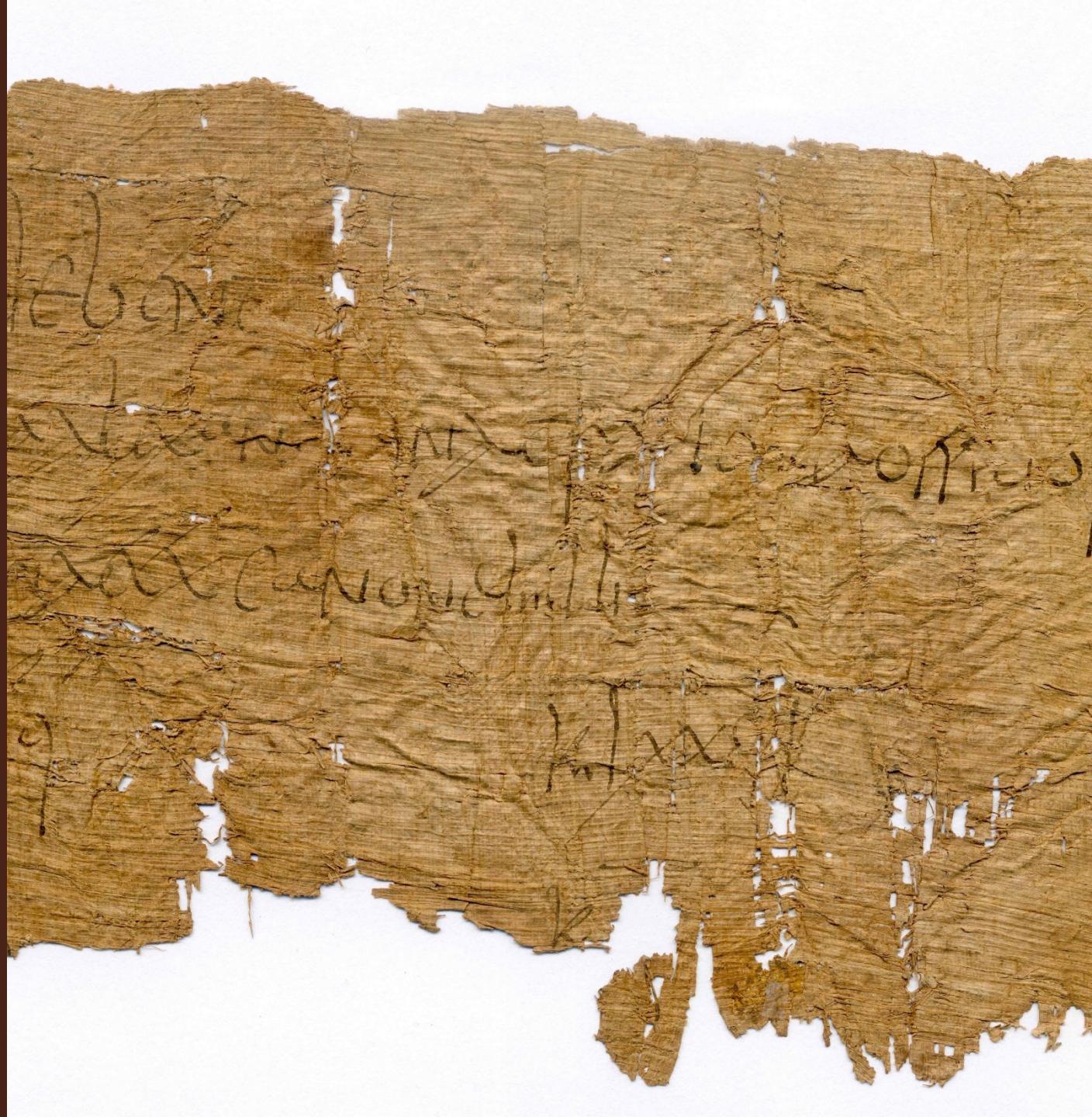
- From **Imperial chanceries**: *rescripta* (often answers to petitions), *constitutiones* and the like
- Except for **ChLA XVII 657** (AD 436-50 – see photo), all of them are **copies**



2. From chanceries

- From Imperial chanceries:
rescripta (often answers to petitions), *constitutiones* and the like
- From Prefectorial chanceries:
e.g. this order for grain delivery to Constantinople, emanated by the *praefectus urbi Constantinopolitanae*

PUG inv. 1156 recto (IV–V AD)

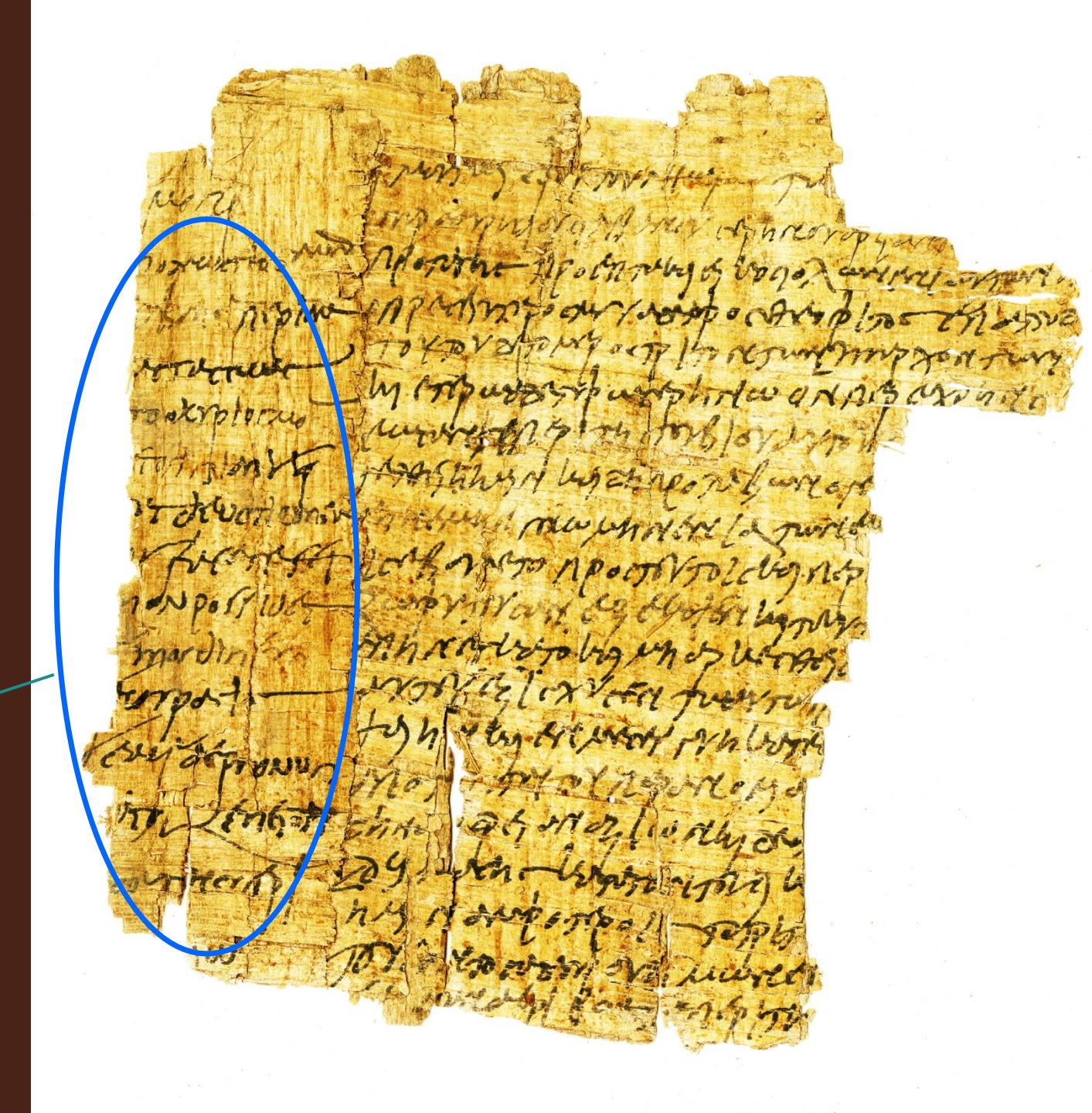


2. From chanceries

- From Imperial chanceries: *rescripta* (often answers to petitions), *constitutiones* and the like
- From Prefectorial chanceries
- Probably also from the *praeses prouinciae*?

Latin sentence from a *praeses*, included in a Greek petition?

P.Ant. I 35 (IV AD)



3. Letters

- Not specifically related to military business: civilians or military men writing to colleagues, **higher or lower in the social ladder**



Byzantine Empire, 580 AD

Aramaic

Armenian

Anatolian Languages

Proto-Balcanic Languages

3. Letters

- From high to low: a **reprimand** for having mismanaged the tax collection in **two identical drafts** (a stock document, clearly: **they copied it when needed, and just added the names**)

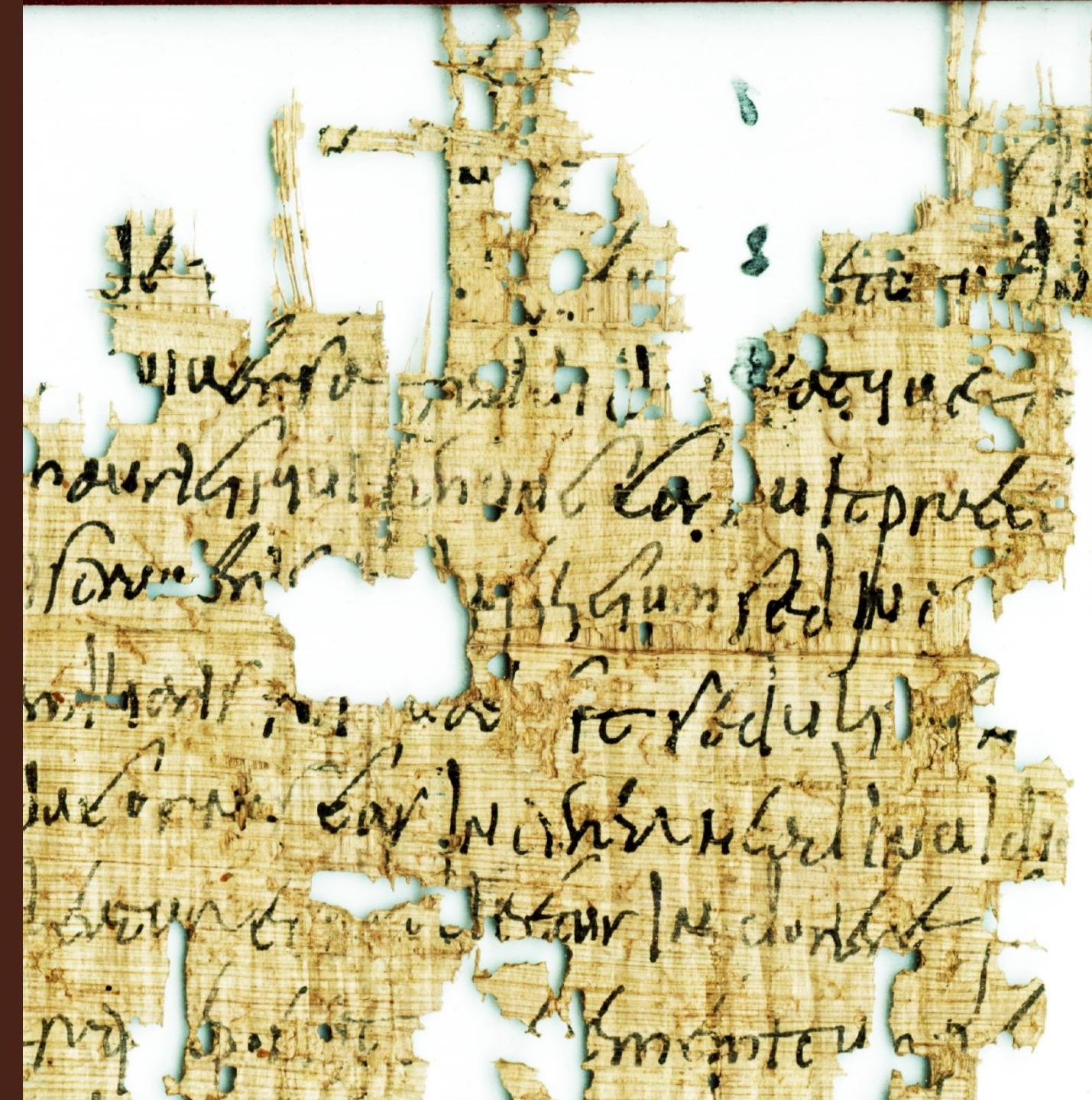
P.Lips. inv. 2632 (IV AD)



3. Letters

- From high to low: a **reprimand** for having mismanaged the tax collection in **two identical drafts** (a stock document, clearly: they copied it when needed, and just added the names)

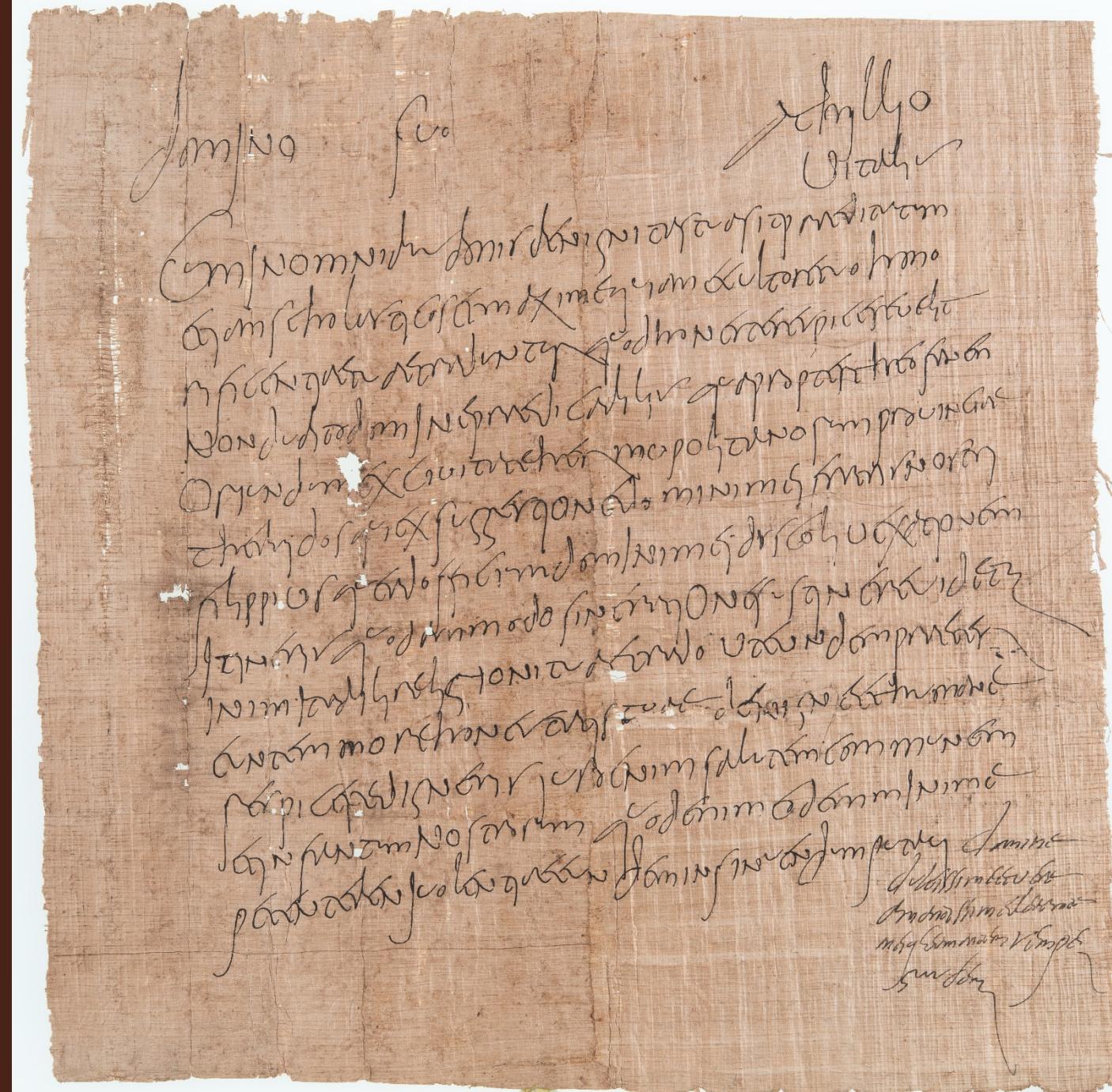
P.Lips. inv. 270 (IV AD)



3. Letters

- From **high to low**: a reprimand for having mismanaged the tax collection in two identical drafts (a stock document, clearly: they copied it when needed, and just added the names)
- From **low to high**:
recommendation letters...

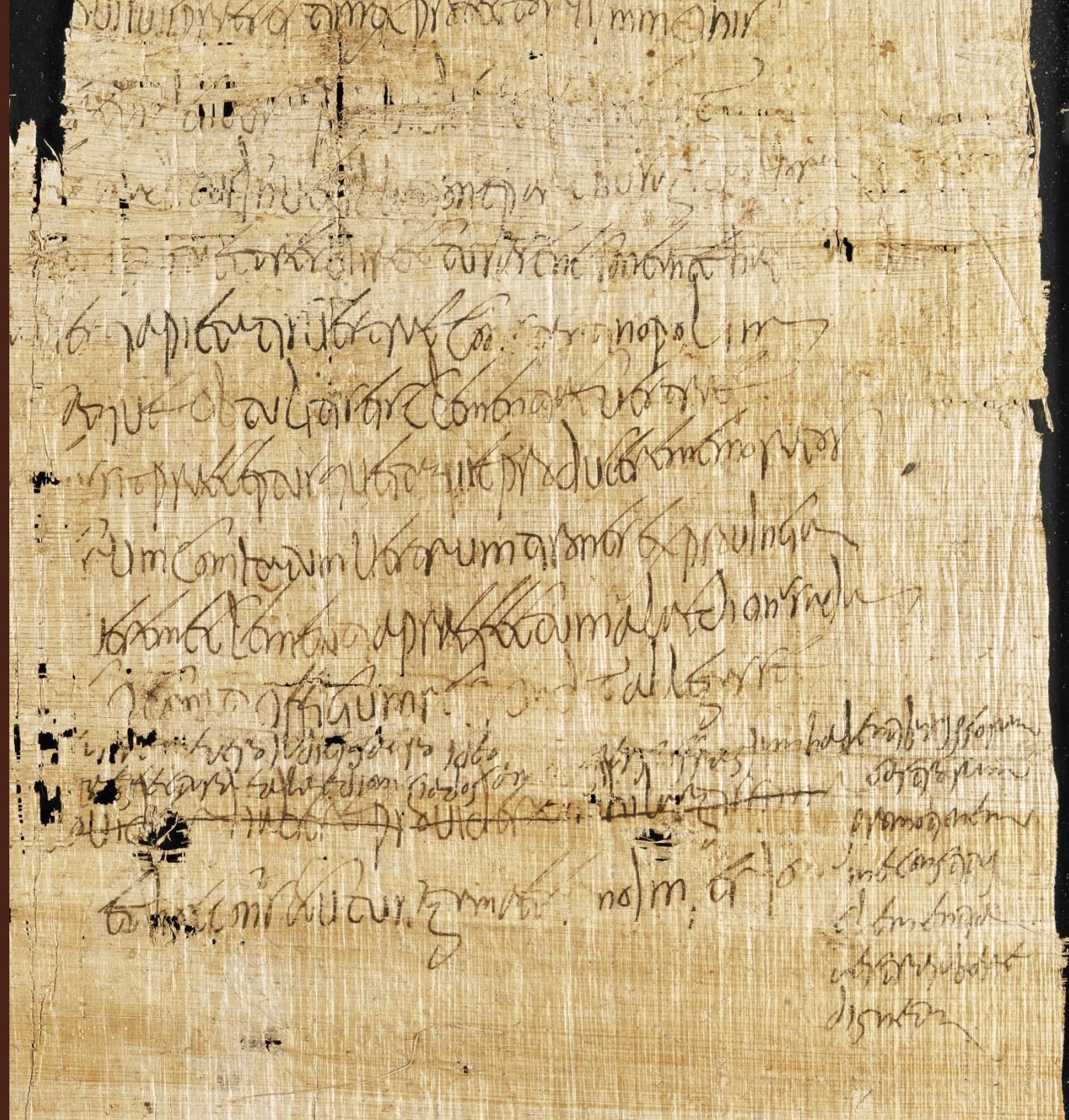
ChLA XIX 687 (AD 314-325)

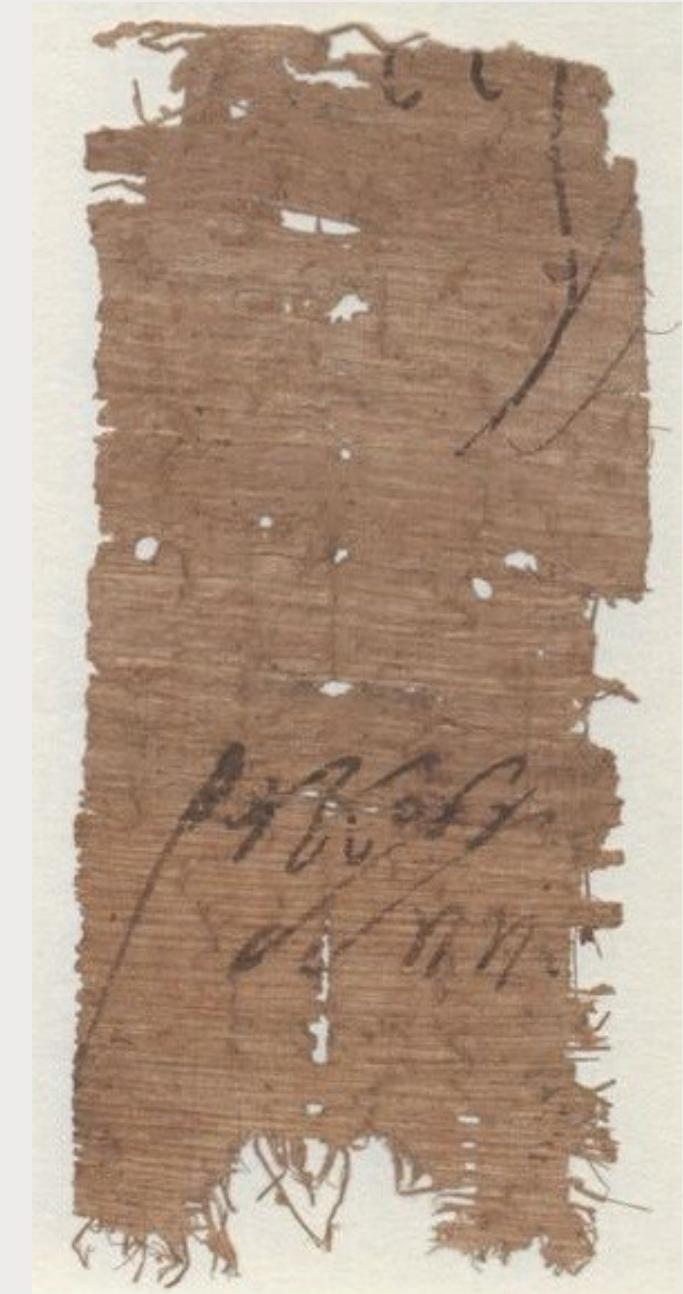
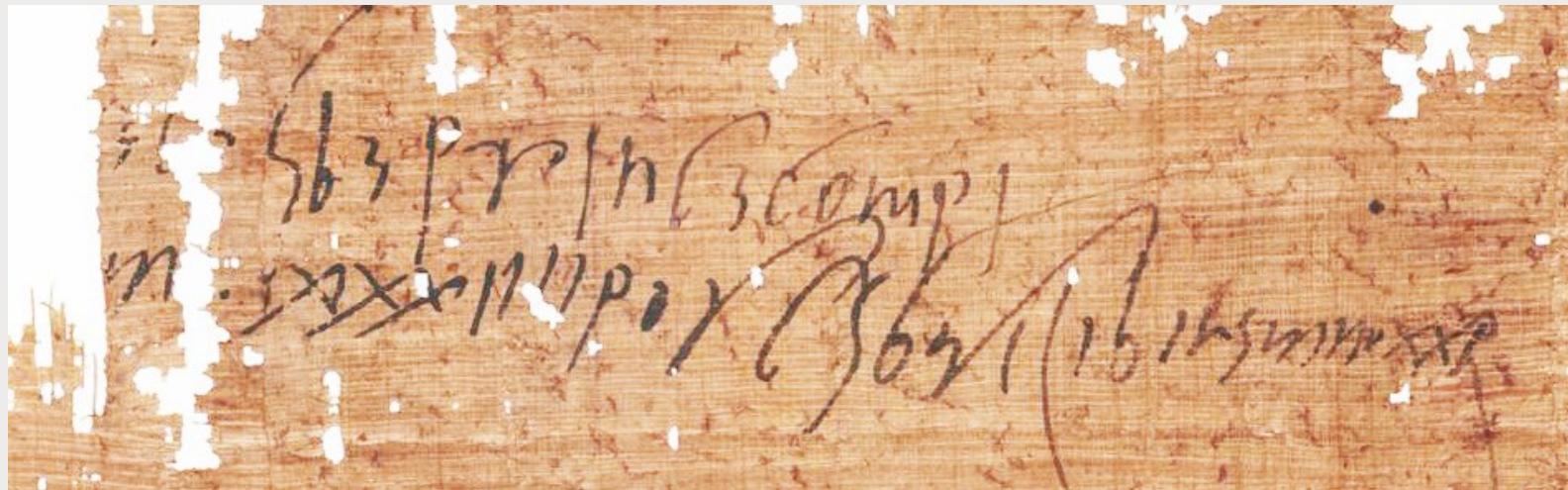


3. Letters

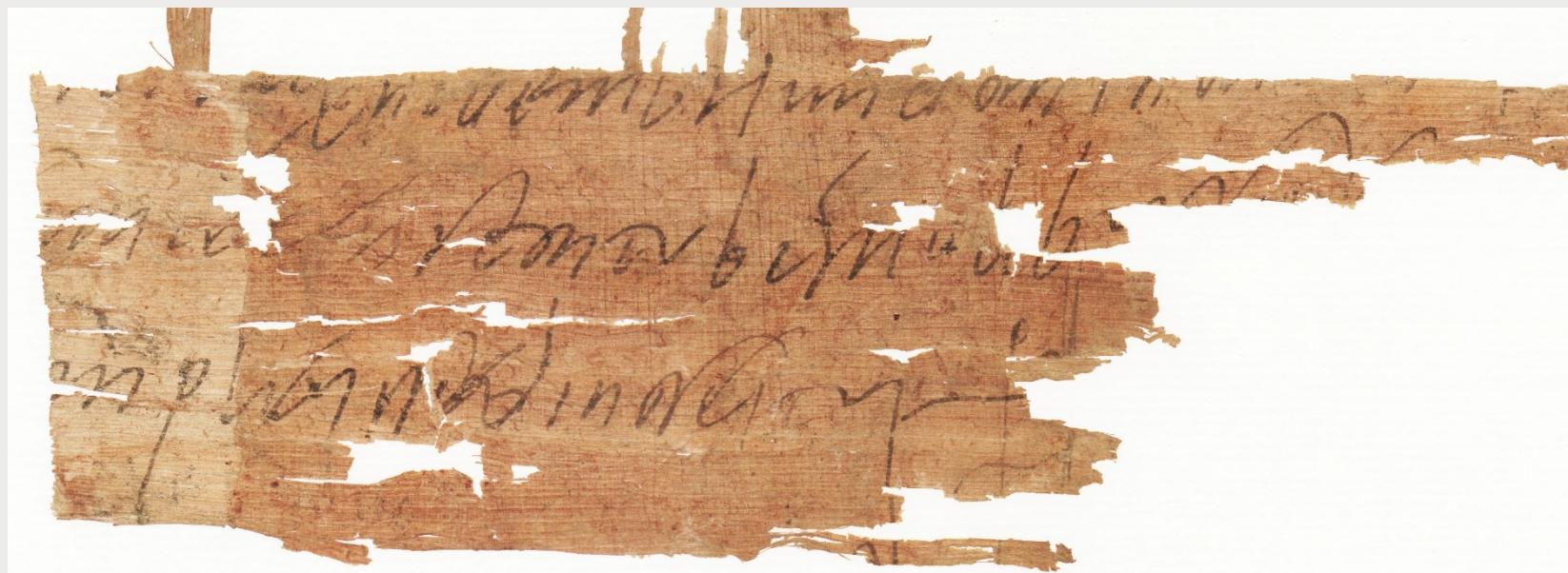
- From **high to low**: a reprimand for having mismanaged the tax collection in two identical drafts (a stock document, clearly: they copied it when needed, and just added the names)
- **From low to high**: recommendation letters...
- ...and **petitions**

P.Abinn. 1 (AD 340-342)





...and a vast amount of fragments



Preliminary remarks

Preliminary remarks

- Excepting lists of soldiers and military receipts, in a way a continuation of older typologies, the post-Diocletian Latin documents on papyrus are all **communications**: Latin, the language of power (Adams)?

Preliminary remarks

- Excepting lists of soldiers and military receipts, in a way a continuation of older typologies, the post-Diocletian Latin documents on papyrus are all **communications**: Latin, the language of power (Adams)?
- They demonstrate the writing skills of clerks in the provincial offices: several beautiful samples of **new Roman cursive**

Preliminary remarks

■ They often are full of **mistakes**:

- 1) ... *iuidem, praeces, scripto, necuit, parentium, insinuendum, gaudear, Blemniorum, vestia, obtulitis, aduxi, Dionysada, praedocisses, redditeris, nonc, carruit, manstrauerris, dispentio, inpertienda, comolos, uitheatur, iuidiem, senox, Aprelis, prepositis, prebere, debotis, imfra, inuecillo, tamem*, etc.
- 2) ...*praeditus in omnibus bonis* (in omnes bonos or omnibus bonis!), *iuro quod putaui, soliti contemplatione* (solita!), *castiget in te* (te castigabit!), *iuxta annuo consuetudine* (annuam consuetudinem!), *auctoritas tua faciat ut eos absolui* (absoluat!), *cum opdulero sacra iussione* (cum obtulerim sacram iussionem!), et.

Preliminary remarks

- Excepting lists of soldiers and military receipts, in a way a **continuation** of older typologies, the post-Diocletian Latin documents on papyrus are all **communications**: Latin, the language of power (Adams)?
- They demonstrate the writing skills of clerks in the provincial offices: several beautiful samples of **new Roman cursive**
- They often are full of **mistakes**
- They are widespread **mostly in the IV cent. AD**; after AD 395, they decline in number (but **persist till Heraclius!**)

Preliminary remarks

- Excepting lists of soldiers and military receipts, in a way a **continuation** of older typologies, the post-Diocletian Latin documents on papyrus are all **communications**: Latin, the language of power (Adams)?
- They demonstrate the writing skills of clerks in the provincial offices: several beautiful samples of **new Roman cursive**
- They often are full of **mistakes**
- They are widespread **mostly in the IV cent. AD**; after AD 395, they decline in number (but persist till Heraclius!)
- **Bombastic, flamboyant, unnecessarily convoluted** in syntax and verbiage: among the most artificial samples of Latin prose we have

ChLA XIX 687: Vitalis to Achillius (AD 317-24)

|¹ Domino suo Achillio |² Vitalis.

|³ Cum in omnibus bonis benignitas tua sit praedita, tum |⁴ etiam scholasticos et maxime qui
a me cultore tuo hono-|⁵-rificentiae tuae traduntur **quod honeste respicere uelit** |⁶ non dubito,
domine praedicabilis. Quapropter **Theofanen** |⁷ oriundum ex ciuitate Hermopolitanorum
prouinciae |⁸ Thebaidos, qui ex suggestione domini mei fratris nostri |⁹ Filippi usque ad
officium domini mei Dyscoli **uxationem** |¹⁰ **itineris** quodammodo **sine ratione sustinere**
uidetur, |¹¹ **inimitabili religioni tuae trado**, ut eundem praeter-|¹²-euntem more honestatis tuae
benigne et humane |¹³ **respicere digneris**. Iuro enim salutem communem |¹⁴ et infantum
nostrorum, quod enim eodem minime |¹⁵ petente beniuolentiae <tuae> eundem insinuendum
putaui.

Domine |¹⁶ **dulcissime et uere** |¹⁷ **amantissime**, beatum te |¹⁸ meique amantem semper |¹⁹
gaudear.

'To his lord Achillius, Vitalis.

Since in all matters your kindness is endowed with good intent, I have no doubt of its willingness to respect and honor learned men and especially those who are entrusted to your honored self by me, your servant, my commendable lord. On this account I entrust to your inimitable conscience Theophanes, from the city of Hermopolis in the province of the Thebaid, who at the instance of my lord, our brother Philippus, is undertaking – in some way, it appears, without an official allowance – the burdensome labor of a journey to the office of my lord Dyscolius, and ask that you deign to show him your Honor's habitual kindness and humanity as he passes on his way. For by the good health of us all and of our little children, I avow that it was indeed without a request of any sort from him that I thought it right to introduce him to your benevolence.

Gentlest and most affectionate lord, may I rejoice in your happiness and affection for me'.

|¹ Domino suo Achillio |² Vitalis.

|³ Cum in omnibus bonis benignitas tua sit praedita, tum |⁴ etiam scholasticos et maxime qui a me cultore tuo hono-|⁵-rificentiae tuae traduntur quod honeste respicere uelit |⁶ non dubito, domine praedicabilis. Quapropter Theofanen |⁷ oriundum ex ciuitate Hermopolitanorum prouinciae |⁸ Thebaidos, qui ex suggestione domini mei fratris nostri |⁹ Filippi usque ad officium domini mei Dyscoli uexationem |¹⁰ itineris quodammodo sine ratione sustinere uidetur, |¹¹ inimitabili religioni tuae trado, ut eundem praeter-|¹²-euntem more honestatis tuae benigne et humane |¹³ respicere digneris. Iuro enim salutem communem |¹⁴ et infantum nostrorum, quod enim eodem minime |¹⁵ petente beniuolentiae <tuae> eundem insinuendum putaui.

Domine |¹⁶ dulcissime et uere |¹⁷ amantissime, beatum te |¹⁸ meique amantem semper |¹⁹ gaudear.

P.Abinn. 1: Abinnaeus to the Emperors (AD 340-2)

¹ Clementia piet[ati]s uestrae domini perp[etui] ² Constanti et Con[sta]ns uictores semper [Augusti ±20 militi]bus suis praesertim ex protectoris immo his ³ qui al[ac]riter [o]bsequium suum exh[ibentes benefi]cia ue[stra ipsi mer]ere uidentur prouidere subuenit. ⁴ Ego rem queo[. . .]e . . . e ex tabel[l]io[n ±9]gente [. . .] [.] traditus in uexillatione Parthusagittariorum ⁵ degentium Diospoli provinciae The[bā]idos superioris ue[ru]m e[mensos po]s[t] a[nn]os triginta et tres directus a Senecione antehac ⁶ comite limitis eiusdem prouinciae ducere Blemniorum gentis refugas ad sacra uestia pietatis uestrae Constantinopolim. ⁷ Eo pe[rr]eximus cumque c[omi]te eiusdem lim[i]t[i]s, atque obtulitis eis clementiae uestrae ⁸ me e ducenario diuinitas uestra uenerandam purpuram suam ador[ar]e [i]ussit. Praeceptusque itaque producere memoratos ⁹ leg[atos in p]atriam suam cum quibus trienn[i] tempus exigi remeandoque [ad sa]crum comitatum uestrum tirones ex prouincia ¹⁰ Thebaidos ad[u]xi quos Hierapoli tradidi et ita data uacione mihi [promo]juere me clementia praefectum alae Dionysada ¹¹ prouinciae Aegypti uestra dignata est. Verum insinuatis sa[cri]s litter[is Vala]c[i]o comiti, officium respondit allegasse ¹² al[i]osque huiuscemodi epistulas homines. *uacuum* [[Ideo]] ¹³ Cumq[ue pateat] ex suffragio eos pro[motos] fuisse me uero iudicio sacro ideo' soliti contemplatione memoratorum' iuxta s[u]pra[dictos] apices uestros tribun[um pr]aefecturae alae Dionysiados amotis per suffragium habentibus ipsorum castrorum promotionem me constitui clementia uestra iubere dignetur [[laborum meorum et quos sedes [re]cto uide[o]r habere prouidere mihi largissima ¹⁴ pietas uestra dignetur unde possim cotidianum uictum adquirere]] *uacuum* Et hoc consecutus agam aeterno imperio ¹⁵ uestro maximas gratias.

P.Abinn. 1: Abinnaeus to the Emperors (AD 340-2)

|¹³‘Cumq[ue pateat] ex suffragio eos pro[motos] fuisse me uero iudicio sacro ideo’ **soliti contemplatione memoratorum** ‘iuxta s[u]pra[dictos] apices uestros tribun[um pr]aefecturae alae Dionysiados amotis per suffragium habentibus ipsorum castrorum promotionem **me constitui clementia uestra iubere dignetur**’ **[[laborum meorum** et quos sedes [re]cto uide[o]r habere prouidere mihi largissima |¹⁴ pietas uestra dignetur unde possim cotidianum uictum adquirere]] *uacuum* Et hoc consecutus agam aeterno imperio |¹⁵ uestro maximas gratias.

However, being evident that they were promoted by suffrage, whereas I (was promoted) by Your holy decision, therefore, **in the light of my mentioned** [deleted: ‘**of my tasks** and may Your very munificent piety deem worthy to provide me with the places (?) ... that seem suitable to me, so that I can obtain the daily food’], **according to Your aforementioned letters, may Your clemency deem worthy to order me** to be appointed to the tribunate (?) of the prefecture of the ala of Dionysias, being relieved those who by suffrage were promoted to the same military camp. And having obtained this, I will render the greatest thanks to Your eternal power.’

P.Abinn. 2: Valacius to Abinnaeus (AD 343)

|¹ [Flaui]us Valacius 'Fl(auio)' Abinneo suo |² salutem.

|³ [. . .]ario ex protectoribus iuxta diuinitus sancita subrogato [ti]bi eo quod |⁴ [impe]rii iam tempora
c[o]nplexesse suggereris et milites alae quam nuncusque |⁵ [duxis]se uideris et signa dominica solidamque
inarmationem eorundem |⁶ [actut]um trade. De singulis etiam pro tutela publica obseruandis instruere |⁷
[cura] ne quam sub primitiis saltem suis erroris titubantium incurrat |⁸ [hisq]ue obseruatis deposita
administratione supradicta propriis |⁹ [atten]de u[t]i[li]tatibus. Bene ual[e].

'Flavius Valacius to his Flavius Abinnaeus, greetings.

Being appointed ..., who comes from the protectors, in your place, according to the orders coming from the emperor, **for you are supposed to have already ended your mandate**; give up forthwith the soldiers of the *ala* **that you happen to have commanded up to now**, along with the imperial ensigns and their intact military equipment. Take care to teach him also about all the issues concerning public safety, **lest he should stumble in the uncertainty of a mistake, at least in the first moments in the job**. After having fulfilled these instructions and resigned your official function, pay attention to your private interests. Farewell.

ChLA XLIII 1248: Fl. Pulcher to Fl. Gerontius (AD 395)

|¹ Flauius Pulcher 'Fl(auio)' Gerontio f[ratri] |² praef(ecto) k(astri) Psofthis.

|³ Omnis ordo[.] . . . [.]s . [±25] |⁴ muniend[. . n]eque eni[m] . . [±15] |⁵ loco quem
uiduari merito la[boru]m m[ilitaris] patitur |⁶ **disciplina** in eoque Sarapionem m[u]nificem in schola |⁷
catafractariorum debere constitui harum auctoritate |⁸ cognosce, **ut prae**sentis indeptus mer[i]tum
dignitatis |⁹ **deuotionem** al[ac]rius exerceat **militarem** ex die itque |¹⁰ inl(ustri) Aprel[is] post
[con]sulatum domin[o]rum nostrorum Arcadii ter |¹¹ et Hon[o]rii iterum perpetuorum Augustorum relatus,
ut |¹² dictum est, matriculis dignitatis propriae consequatur |¹³ annonas.

|¹⁴ Exemplum.

'Flavius Pulcher to his brother Flavius Gerontius, prefect of the fortress in Psoft(h)is.

Every rank ... guard ... in fact, not ... **the place which the military discipline suffers to be deprived because of the merit acquired by toil**, and in this respect may you know that Sarapion, who is worth performing duties, must be included in the ranks of the mail-clad soldiers thanks to the authority of this letter so that, **after having obtained merits in this rank, he practices the military devotion more actively** and, assigned to his roles, as it has been said, from ... April (?) of the year following the consulship of our lords Arcadius for the third time and Honorius for the second time, our perpetual Augusti, he may receive the means of subsistence for his own rank.

Copy.'

ChLA XVII 657 (AD 436-50)

[- - -] |¹ ab inquis eorum detentoribus s[i]b[i] restitui. |² In sup[e]r etiam precatur |³ empti[on]ale instrumentum, quod per ui[m a]c necessitatem legibus inimicam |⁴ uili p[r]etio dato super possessionib[u]s ad se pertinentibus conf[ectum sit], |⁵ null[um] sibi praeiudicium gen[er]are |⁶ sed e[xiguo p]retio quod re uera da[tum] est cum legitimis usuris refuso |⁷ [eas se cum d]ebitis fruc[tibus re]cuperare. |⁸ [Denique] // |⁹ [idem petitor de]siderat solacia ex militia sua debita |¹⁰ [ab Isidoro praefato u]surpatore sib[i] restitui. |¹¹ [. carissi]me ac iucundissime, |¹² [laudabilis itaque e]xper[i]entia tua, |¹³ [si preci illi uerita]s inest |¹⁴ [et si res ad iurisdi]ctionem suam pertineret, |¹⁵ [praefatum Isidorum a]d solutionem debiti uix tandem sine ulla uana dilatione |¹⁶ [cum petitore celebrandam iu]xta legum tenorem **constringi**, // |¹⁷ iniquos uero **detentores** mancipiorum ad eum pertinentium |¹⁸ portionem ipsi debitam **resarcire**, |¹⁹ nec **ullum precatorem** ex instrumento emptionali |²⁰ pro memorata narratione per uim confecto praeiudicium **pati**, |²¹ sed hoc uiribus uacuato |²² possessiones ad ipsum pertinentes cum debitis fructibus |²³ minimo pretio quod re uera accepisse probatur |²⁴ cum legitimis usuris reddito ab inquis detentoribus // |²⁵ eum **recipere praecipiat**, |²⁶ **praefato scilicet Isidor[o]** |²⁷ solacia siue emolumenta ex militia supr[a dicta petitori debita] |²⁸ quae perperam in suum lucrum dicitur [uertisse] |²⁹ **restituere compellendo**. |³⁰ Ita tamen ut personae ad ius spectabilitati[s tuae pertinentes] |³¹ cessante militari apparitionis suaे a[u]xili[o] |³² in prouinciali iud[icio - - -]

P.Ryl. IV 609 (AD 505)

|¹ [Fl(auius) Cons]tantinus Theofanes com(es) et uir inl(ustris) com(es) deuu(otissimorum)
domm(esticorum) et rei mil(itaris) Th[e]b(aici) lim(itis) 'Fl(auio)' Ver't'e siue Theodoti[o] |²
u(iro) d(euotissimo) trib(uno) Hermupoli deg(enti).

|³ [Cum] opdulero sacra iussione domini nostri Anastasii piissimi ac triumfatoris semper
Augusti |⁴ [e qua n]umeris supplementi causa i[u]nioreſ robustis corporibus adsociarentur,
Heracleon fili(um) C[on]stantinii |⁵ [ortum e] ciuitati H[er]mopolitana 'in' uexillatione
prudentiae tuae pro tempore credita edictio mea militare prae[cip]it, |⁶ [eiusq]ue nomen si ex
gen<t>e oritur militari et neque curialis nec praesid*i*alis est nec inuecill[o c]orpore n[ec] |⁷
[inualid]us nec censibus adscribtos matriculis eiusdem numeri inseri facito, annonas ei ex
die Iduum |⁸ [.]um Sabiniano et Theodoro uiris clarissimis consulibus ministrari
curaturus cum ceteris [con-]⁹tuberna]libus suis muniis militaribus o[p]eram nauaturo ita
tamem si octauum decimum annum |¹⁰ [compleui]sse dinoscitur.

P.Ryl. IV 609 (AD 505)

|³ [Cum] opdulero **sacra iussione** domini nostri Anastasii piissimi ac triumfatoris semper Augusti
|⁴ [e qua n]umeris supplementi causa i[u]nioreſ robustis corporibus **adsociarentur**, Heracleon
fili(um) Constantinii |⁵ [ortum e] ciuitati Hermopolitana ‘in’ uexillatione prudentiae tuae pro
tempore credita **edictio mea militare p[re]cipit**, |⁶ [eiusq]ue nomen si ex gen[er]t[e] oritur militari et
neque curialis nec praesid*ia*lis est nec inuecill[o c]orpore n[ec] |⁷ [inualid]us nec censibus
adscriptos matriculis eiusdem numeri **inseri facito**, annonas **ei** ex die Iduum |⁸ [.]um
Sabiniano et Theodoro uiris clarissimis consulibus **ministrari curaturus** cum ceteris [con-]
tubernalibus suis muniis militaribus **o[p]eram nauaturo** ita tamem si octauum decimum annum
|¹⁰ [compleui]sse dinoscitur.

Since I received a sacred order of our lord Anastasius, the most pious and triumphant, semper Augustus, according to which young men of strong physique are to be attached to units to bring them up to strength, my order instructs Heracleon, son of Constantinius, from Hermopolis, to serve in the vexillatio at the present entrusted to your care. If he is of a military family, is neither of curial nor of gubernatorial rank, and is not of weak physique nor an invalid, and is not enrolled on the census lists (as dependent on someone else), see to it that his name is entered on the register of the same unit, while you shall be taking care that he is supplied from the Ides of ... in the consulate of the most splendid Sabinianus and Theodorus with the military provisions together with his other fellow soldiers, while he shall apply himself to his military duties, provided that he is perceived to have completed his eighteenth year'.

Abundantly flourishing texts...

...for very simple points to make:

- *ChLA XIX 687*: ‘Hi Achillius, Theofanes is coming through your province, please take care of him while he’s there’.
- *P.Abinn. 1*: ‘Someone wants to steal my job – would you tell him not to, since I have been working for you all my life?’
- *P.Abinn. 2*: ‘You’re old. We’re replacing you with a new guy’.
- *P.Lips. inv. 270*: ‘You messed up with the tax revenues, you’re gonna pay from your own pocket’.
- *ChLA XLIII 1248*: ‘We’re short of a cavalryman. Promote Sarapio’.
- *ChLA XVII 657*: ‘Force Isidorus to pay his debts’.
- *P.Ryl. IV 609*: ‘Enlist Heracleon in your unit. Don’t mess with the paperwork’.

Latin in documents I to III AD?

Testaments (until AD 212): *P.Diog.* 10 (AD 211)

|¹ Exempl(um) test(amenti).

|² L. Ignatius Rufinus Ant(inoites) **t(estamentum) f(ecit)**. L. [Ig]natius Nemesianus fr[at]e[r] meus |³
ex asse mihi heres esto o(mnium) b(onorum) m(eorum). Ceteri [omnes] **exheredes** sunto,
cernitoque |⁴ hereditatem meam infra diem centesimum proximis qua sciet |⁵ poterit heredem esse
s(ine) d(olo) m(alo). **D(o) l(ego) ... [15 lines of legates]**

‘Copy of a will.

Lucius Ignatius Rufus, citizen of Antinoopolis, **has made a will**. My brother Lucius Ignatius Nemesianus **shall be my lawful heir to all of my belongings**. All others shall be **disinherited**. He shall claim the inheritance within one hundred days after he knows he is my heir, without evil guile.
I give and bequeath ...’

Requests for inheritances: SB I 1010 (AD 249)

|¹ [Au]relio Appio Sabino u(iro) p(erfectissimo) praef(ecto) Aegypti |² [a M.] A[u]relio Chaeremone q(ui) e(t) Didymo inpub(ere) t(utore) a(uctore) patre |³ [suo] M. Aurelio Chaeremone q(ui) e(t) Zoilo hieronica |⁴ [An]tinoense.

Rogo, domine, des mihi bonorum possessi-|⁵[-one]m matris meae Aureliae Hammonillae Heraclas |⁶ [. . .] ciuitatis Oxyryncitarum ex ea parte edicti quae |⁷ [legi]timis heredib(us) b(onorum) p(ossessionem) daturum te polliceris. Dat(um) XVIII Kal(endas) |⁸ [Octobre]s, Aemiliano II et Aquilino consulibus.

‘To Aurelius Appius Sabinus, most blameless man, prefect of Egypt, from Aurelius Chaeremon, also called Didymos, underage and under the guardianship of his father Marcus Aurelius Chaeremon, also called Zoilus, winner in the games, from Antinopolis. **I beg you, lord, that you grant me the possession of the goods of my mother Aurelia Hammonilla** ... Heraclas ... the city of Oxyrhynchus, according to that portion of the edict in which you promise to give the possession of the goods to the legitimate heirs. Given on 15 September, under the second consulship of Aemilianus and the first of Aquilinus’.

Requests for guardians: *P.Mich. III 165* (AD 236)

|¹ Meuio Honoratiano praef(ecto) [Aeg(ypti) ab Aurelia Diodora. **Rogo,**
domine, des mihi] |² **tutorem auctorem e lege I[ulia et Titia et ex**
s(enatus) c(onsulto) Aurelium Theonem. Dat(um)] |³ XII Kal(endas)
Decemb(ris), dom(ino)· n(ostro)· V[ero Maximino Aug(usto) et Pupienio
Africano co(n)s(ulibus)].

‘To Mevius Honoratianus, prefect of Egypt, from Aurelia Diodora. **I ask you, my lord, to**
give me as guardian according to the Julian and Titian law Aurelius Theon. Dated on the
XII of the Kalends of December, in the consulship of our lord Verus Maximinus Augustus
and Pupienius Africanus’.

Marriage agreements: *P.Ryl. IV 612 + P.Mich. VII 434* (II AD)

[C. Antistiu]s Nomissianus filiam suam Zenarion uirginem, e lege Iulia quae de maritandis ordinibus lat[a est liberorum procrea]ndorum causa in matrimonio eam collo[cavit - - -] M. Petronius Seruillius, eique dotis dixit et dedit ea omni[a quae infra scripta sunt pro ead]em supra scripta: ...

'Caius Antistius Nomissianus, in accordance with the Julian law enacted on marriage arrangements, has given his maiden daughter Zenarion in marriage, for the sake of begetting children, to ... and Marcus Petronius Servillius (has taken her?); to him he has promised and given as a dowry all the objects which are written below for the sake of the abovementioned girl: ...

Contracts: **PSI VI 729** (AD 77)

|¹ [C. Vale]rius Longus eques ala Apriana **emit equom Cappadocem** nigrum [n] **drachmis Augustis MMDCC** de C. Iul[io |² Ru]fo centurione legionis XX[I]I. Eum [e]quom esse, bibere, ita uti bestiam veterinam adsole[t], extra [. . .]³ di]ctum descriptum quod palam corpore esset; et si quis eum evicerit, tu[nc |⁴ quantum id erit, tantam p[ecunia]m ...]l[am] uti a[d]solet probam recte dari stipulatus est C. Valerius, sp[ecie]pondit C. Julius Rufus centurio. Eas[que |⁵ drachmas Augustas MMDCC d]ixit se accepisse et habere C. Julius Rufus centurio ab C. Valerio Lo[ngo e]mtroe, e[t |⁶ tradidisse ei suprascriptum equum]. |⁷ [Actum ±20]r [. . .] VII Idus Iu[. . .]s Imperatore Vespasiano IIX Domitiano Caesaris filio V consulibus [- - -]

‘Gaius Valerius Longus, cavalrymen from the Aprian squadron, **bought a black Cappadocian horse for 2700 Augustan drachmae from Gaius Julius Rufus, centurion of the 22nd legion.** Gaius Valerius has stipulated, and Gaius Julius Rufus has guaranteed, that this horse eats and drinks as it is customary for a beast of burden; moreover, that what is visible on (its) body has been ... rightly (?) declared and described; and if someone should contest its ownership, Valerius will be given –in good money as it is customary and right– (as much the/the double?) sum at which the horse will then be valued. These 2700 Augustan drachmae says the centurion Gaius Julius Rufus that he received and holds from the buyer Gaius Valerius Longus, and that he gave him the aforementioned horse. **Done ... on 7 June/9 July (?) under the eighth consulship of Emperor Vespasian and the fifth of Domitian son of Caesar ...’**

Official letters: ChLA X 424 (late I AD)

|¹ Priscus Petronio patri suo |² salutem.

|³ Apri duplicari **Carum duplicarium** |⁴ hominem probum **commendo** |⁵ tib[i]. Qui si qu[i]d eguerit auxili |⁶ tui rogo in meum honorem |⁷ adiuues eum salvo pudore |⁸ tuo. Opto bene ualeas. |⁹ Salutem dic nostris omnibus. |¹⁰ Salutem tibi dicunt nostri |¹¹ omnes.

|¹² [Va]lle.

‘Priscus to his father Petronius, greetings. I recommend you the *duplicarius* Carus, a good man, son of the *duplicarius* Aper. In case he would need your help, I ask you in my esteem to help him according to your good manners. I hope you are well. Send regards to all of ours. All of us greet you. Farewell.’

Latin in documents I to III AD?

- All texts available on papyri.info and re-edited in the incoming *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus* (PLATINUM)

Latin in documents I to III AD?

- All texts available on papyri.info and re-edited in the incoming *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus* (PLATINUM)
- They go immediately to the point

Latin in documents I to III AD?

- All texts available on papyri.info and re-edited in the incoming *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus* (PLATINUM)
- They go immediately to the point
- They are as short as possible

Latin in documents I to III AD?

- All texts available on papyri.info and re-edited in the incoming *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus* (PLATINUM)
- They go immediately to the point
- They are as short as possible
- They do not wander beyond those few mandatory **formulae** that documents in Latin language, consistent with **Roman law**, must have featured in order to be **valid**

Latin in documents I to III AD?

- All texts available on papyri.info and re-edited in the incoming *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus* (PLATINUM)
- They go immediately to the point
- They are as short as possible
- They do not wander beyond those few mandatory **formulae** that documents in Latin language, consistent with **Roman law**, must have featured in order to be **valid**
- Differently than in post-Diocletian samples of style, we face a culture – and its writing habits – valuing **practicality above style, exactitude above excess**

Latin in documents I to III AD?

- All texts available on papyri.info and re-edited in the incoming *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus* (PLATINUM)
- They go immediately to the point
- They are as short as possible
- They do not wander beyond those few mandatory **formulae** that documents in Latin language, consistent with **Roman law**, must have featured in order to be **valid**
- Differently than in post-Diocletian samples of style, we face a culture – and its writing habits – valuing **practicality above style, exactitude above excess**
- What if we get to those typologies where we can see the **change**?

Recommendation letters: ChLA X 424 (late I AD)

|¹ Priscus Petronio patri suo |² salutem.

|³ Apri duplicari Carum duplicarium |⁴ hominem probum commendo |⁵ tib[i]. Qui si
qu[i]d eguerit auxili |⁶ tui rogo in meum honorem |⁷ adiuues eum salvo pudore |⁸
tuo. Opto bene ualeas. |⁹ Salutem dic nostris omnibus. |¹⁰ Salutem tibi dicunt nostri
|¹¹ omnes.

|¹² [Va]le.

Recommendation letters: ChLA XIX 687 (AD 317-24)

|¹ Domino suo Achillio |² Vitalis.

|³ Cum in omnibus bonis benignitas tua sit praedita, tum |⁴ etiam scholasticos et maxime qui a me cultore tuo hono-|⁵-rificantiae tuae traduntur quod honeste respicere uelit |⁶ non dubito, domine praedicabilis. Quapropter Theofanen |⁷ oriundum ex ciuitate Hermopolitanorum prouinciae |⁸ Thebaidos, qui ex suggestione domini mei fratris nostri |⁹ Filippi usque ad officium domini mei Dyscoli uexationem |¹⁰ itineris quodammodo sine ratione sustinere uidetur, |¹¹ inimitabili religioni tuae trado, ut eundem praeter-|¹²-euntem more honestatis tuae benigne et humane |¹³ respicere digneris. Iuro enim salutem communem |¹⁴ et infantum nostrorum, quod enim eodem minime |¹⁵ petente beniuolentiae <tuae> eundem insinuendum putaui.

Domine |¹⁶ dulcissime et uere |¹⁷ amantissime, beatum te |¹⁸ meique amantem semper |¹⁹ gaudear.

|¹ Priscus Petronio patri suo |² salutem.

|³ Apri duplicari **Carum** duplicarium |⁴
hominem probum **commendo** |⁵ **tib[i]**. Qui si
qu[i]d eguerit auxili |⁶ tui rogo in meum
honorem |⁷ adiuues eum salvo pudore |⁸ tuo.
Opto bene ualeas. |⁹ Salutem dic nostris
omnibus. |¹⁰ Salutem tibi dicunt nostri |¹¹
omnes.

|¹² **[Va]lle.**

|¹ Domino suo Achillio |² Vitalis.

|³ Cum in omnibus bonis benignitas tua sit praedita,
tum |⁴ etiam scholasticos et maxime qui a me cultore
tuo hono-|⁵-rificentiae tuae traduntur quod honeste
respicere uelit |⁶ non dubito, domine praedicabilis.
Quapropter **Theofanen** |⁷ oriundum ex ciuitate
Hermopolitanorum prouinciae |⁸ Thebaidos, qui ex
suggestione domini mei fratris nostri |⁹ Filippi usque
ad officium domini mei Dyscoli uexationem |¹⁰
itineris quodammodo sine ratione sustinere uidetur,
|¹¹ **inimitabili religioni tuae trado**, ut eundem
praeter-|¹²-euntem more honestatis tuae benigne et
humane |¹³ respicere digneris. Iuro enim salutem
communem |¹⁴ et infantum nostrorum, quod enim
eodem minime |¹⁵ petente beniuolentiae <tuae>
eundem insinuendum putaui.

Domine |¹⁶ **dulcissime et uere** |¹⁷ **amantissime,**
beatum te |¹⁸ **meique amantem semper** |¹⁹ **gaudear.**

*Epistulae probatoriae (**tironum**): P.Oxy. VII 1022 (AD 103)*

|¹ Exemplum epistulae.

|² C. Minicius Italu[s] Celsiano suo |³ sal[u]tem.

|⁴ **Tirones sexs probatos a me** in |⁵ cohorte cui praees in nume-|⁶-ros **referri iube** ex
XI |⁷ Kalendas Martias, nomi-|⁸-na eorum et icon[i]smos |⁹ huic epistulae subiec[i].
|¹⁰ Vale frater karissim[e].

[*a list of the recruits follows, then a short archival note of acceptance*]

‘Copy of the letter.

Gaius Minucius Italus to his Celsianus, greetings.

Give orders that the **six recruits approved by me** should be included in the rosters of the cohort that you command, from 19 February. I have appended their names and distinguishing marks to this letter. Farewell dearest brother’.

Epistulae probatoriae (equorum): P.Dura. 56a (AD 208)

|¹ Marius Maxim[us] Valent[inus] s[uo] |² sal[ute]m.

|³ Ecum quadrimū rus(seum) person[a]tum |⁴ s(ine)· n(ota)· probatum a me Iulio
Basso eq(uiti)· coh(ortis)· XX Pal(myrenorum) |⁵ c(ui)· p(raees)· ✽ centum uiginti
[q]uinq[ue] in act[a] u[t] |⁶ mos refer· et . . . [. . . .]nota ex die [qu]ar[to . . .] |⁷
Iunias [d(omino) n(ostro) Imp(eratore) Antonino A]ug(usto)· III [e]t [[Get[a] |⁸
Caesare it[e]r[um]] co(n)s(ulibus)]

‘... Marius Maximus to his Valentinus, greetings. Enter in the record –as it is customary– a horse, four years old, reddish, masked (?) and without brands, approved by me, (and give it) to Iulius Bassus, cavalryman of the 20th cohort of the Palmyrenes which you command, at the cost of 125 *denarii* ... note it from the fourth day ... of June under the third consulship of our lord the Emperor Antoninus Augustus [erased: and the second of the Caesar Geta]’.

¹ Marius Maxim[us] Valent[ino] s[uo] ²
sal[ute]m.

³ Ecum quadrum rus(seum) person[a]tum ⁴
s(ine)· n(ota)· probatum a me Iulio Basso
eq(uiti)· coh(ortis)· XX Pal(myrenorum) ⁵
c(ui)· p(raees)· ✠ centum uiginti [q]uinq[ue] **in**
act[a] u[t] |⁶mos refer et [. . .] nota ex die
[qu]ar[to . . .] ⁷ Iunias [d(omin)o] n(ostro)
Imp(eratore) Antonino A]ug(usto)· III [e]t
[Get[a] ⁸ Caesare it[e]r[um]] co(n)s(ulibus)]

¹ Exemplum epistulae.

² C. Minicius Italu[s] Celsiano suo ³ sal[u]tem.

⁴ Tirones sexs probatos a me in ⁵ cohorte cui
praees in nume-⁶-ros **referri iube** ex XI ⁷
Kalendas Martias, nomi-⁸-na eorum et
icon[i]smos ⁹ huic epistulae subiec[i]. ¹⁰ Vale
frater karissim[e].

¹ [Fl(auius) Cons]tantinus Theofanes com(es) et uir
inl(ustris) com(es) deuu(otissimorum) domm(esticorum)
et rei mil(itaris) Th[e]b(aici) lim(itis) 'Fl(aui)' Ver't'e
siue Theodoti[o] ² u(iro) d(euotissimo) trib(uno)
Hermupo.li deg(enti).

³ [Cum] opdulero sacra iussione domini nostri Anastasii
piissimi ac triumfatoris semper Augusti ⁴ [e qua
n]umeris suplementi causa i[u]niore robustis
corporibus adsciarentur, **Heracleon** fili(um)
Constantinii ⁵ [ortum e] ciuitati Hermopolitana 'in'
uexillatione prudentiae tuae pro tempore credita edictio
mea militare prae[cip]it, ⁶ [eiusq]ue nomen si ex gen^te
oritur militari et neque curialis nec praesid*ū*alis est nec
inuecill[o c]orpore n[ec] ⁷ [inualid]us nec censibus
adscriptos matriculis eiusdem numeri **inseri facito**,
annonas ei ex die Iduum ⁸ [.]um Sabiniano et
Theodoro uiris clarissimis consulibus ministrari
curaturus cum ceteris [con-⁹-tuberna]libus suis muniis
militaribus o[p]eram nauaturo ita tamem si octauum
decimum annum ¹⁰ [compleui]sse dinoscitur.

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- P. Cugusi, A. Bernini and the **identity of the formulae in Late Latin papyri and Late Latin epistolography (IV-VI AD)**

DIG. 48, 10, 16, 2 sed et ceteros, qui in rationibus tabulis litteris publicis aliae qua re sine consignatione falsum fecerunt uel, ut uerum non appareat, quid celauerunt subripuerunt deleuerunt subiecerunt resignaverunt, eadem poena adfici solere dubium non esse.

CASSIAN. inst. 8, 6, 21 in eo quoque tuis praeceptis satisfacere studebo

COD. THEOD. 8, 5, 56, 390 sufficiunt iudicum potestatibus euectiones, quas a nostra serenitate vel sede inl(ustri)um praefectorum necessitatibus publicis accipiunt seruituras; 11, 1, 36, 579 excepto patrimonio pietatis nostrae, cuius quidem redditus necessitatibus publicis frequentissime deputamus, uniuersos possessores functiones in canonicis et superindicticiis titulis absque ullius beneficii exceptione agnoscere oportere censemus; 13, 7, 1, 760 cunctis per Aegyptum intimetur uiginti librarum auri multae esse subdendos eos, qui naues suo nomine uel defensione a transuectionibus publicis excusare temptauerint, publica iactura nauium quoque dominis feriendis, qui neglectis necessitatibus publicis potiorum uoluerunt patrocinii excusari; 13, 10, 5, 764 si quis census inquisitione completa grauatum se esse credit, apud prouinciae iudicem pulset quem mauult, ex die clausi renuntiatique census spatia praestituta dinumerans, ut, si necessitatibus publicis occupatus domesticis commodis defuit, cum census agitatus est, intra anniuersarii temporis circulum fiducia competitionis adsistat.

COD. THEOD. 3, 1, 4, 128 neque inanibus inmorari sinatur obiectis, ut uires sibimet locorum causetur incognitas, qui familiaris rei scire uires vel merita atque emolumenta debuerit; 12, 1, 27, 669 rarum Karthaginis splendidissimae senatum et exiguos admodum curiales residere conquestus es, dum universi indebitae dignitatis infulas foeda familiaris rei uexatione mercantur.

DIG. 2, 52, 3, 116 si intra annos, quibus in integrum restitutionis auxilium indulgetur, constitutus es vel eo tempore nomen militiae dedisti et expeditione occupatus es, continuatum beneficium restitutionis per usucaptionem, licet ante militiam suppleta sit, non patitur te dispendio rei familiaris adfligi.

DIG. 6, 1, 4, 2 quod si ad praedictam poenam soluendam is qui susceperit minime sufficiat, aestimatione competentis iudicis castigatio in eum procedat

ANON. de mach. bell. 15, 2 ex his igitur quae rettulimus, iam futuris ut arbitror designatis, pace uestra dixerim, magnum uobis munus concessu diuinitatis apporto, asserens prouidentia pietatis uestrae armorum uigorem et cunctam rem publicam praedictis remedii subleuandam; quae quidem non ignota sunt proximis uestrae clementiae, quos alia plura sollicitant a nobis aliena

FACVND. defens. 2, 2, 109 iste ille est Flauiani Magni Antiochensium sanctae Dei ecclesiae pontificis amantissimus discipulus et beati Iohannis Constantinopolitani episcopi condiscipulus, cuius memoriam rediuiuam fecistis, maximam hinc gloriam pietatis uestrae imperio facientes; 8, 5, 160 pertinet igitur ad pietatis uestrae iustitiam, ut qui non iudicatis arrogantes paternaे sententiae contemptores, qui se tantis patribus prudentius intellexisse et utilius fidei consuluisse gloriantur, multo minus me uel de cetero iudicetis

CASSIOD. var. 10, 1, 12 iungite nunc uota felicia, ut, sicut nos in imperio pietatis uestrae omnia fieri prospera desideranter expetimus, ita nobis fauere uestram beniuolentiam comprobemus; 10, 20, 2 litteras pietatis uestrae gratia, qua desiderata semper sumuntur, accepi et colloquia oris uestri muneribus omnibus celsiora reuerentissima gratulatione promerui;

CHROMAT. serm. 8, 83 alii enim praecedebant, alii sequebantur, ascidente Christo cum corpore ad caelum, congruum obsequium exhibentes tanto regi et tanto uictori;

FIRM. err. 25, 1 uos, domini imperatores, sanctarum aurium uestrarum mihi commendate patientiam, ut totum clementiae uestrae quod promittimus explicemus;

AMBR. epist. extra coll. 5, 5, 52 scimus clementiae uestrae sanctum pudorem; 5, 5, 55 quali testimonio ciues proprii prosecuti sint clementia uestra meminisse dignetur; **epist. conc. Aquil.** 2, 8 uestram fidem uestram gloriam deprecamur, ut reuerentiam imperii uestri deferatis auctori censeatisque impietatis assertores et adulteros ueritatis datis apicibus clementiae uestrae ad iudicia competentia;

COD. Theod. 13, 3, 14, 744 ea, quae principes veteres archiatris sacri palatii ... sacro et mansuro in aeternum iudicio detulerunt, et antiquorum contemplatione iussorum et laborum praesentium intuitu roborata in perpetuum manere praecipimus

LVCIF. *epist.* 2, ll. 1–4 *Florentio magistro officiorum Lucifer episcopus. Codicis perlatorem, quem memorat honorificentia tua nomine meo adisse imperatorem, a mea fuisse destinatum mediocritate, ipsum quoque codicem, ut es admonere dignatus, sollicite inspectum atque bonoso in rebus agenti perferendum traditum, his formanda fuit religiosa prudentia tua, fili carissime.*

PAUL. **NOL.** *epist.* 23, 10 *qui enim existimas satisfacere te nobis adsiduitate ista honorifcentiae ac pietatis tuae, qua praesentiam tuam nobis tam frequentibus epistolis compensare conaris; 25, 1, 21 remeante ad nos de patria commititone tuo quondam Victore speraui accepturum me scripta honestatis tuae.*

AUG. **c. Julian.** *op. imperf.* 1, 44, 1 *contentusque ero definitione, quae ad indicium bonae naturae post manicheorum secretum de ore tuae honestatis effugit.*

HIER. **Aug.** *epist.* 51, 9, 24 *decet enim honestatem tuam hanc magis habere sollicitudinem et uti scrupulositate, quae digna est ecclesiae Christi et populis, qui tibi crediti sunt.*

beniuolentiae tuae: **AVG.** *epist.* 23, 1, 4; 23, 8, 192; 33, 2, 21; 35, 3, 55; 57, 1, 6; 61, 1, 3; 84, 2, 143; 108, 1, 2; 113, 20; 151, 9; 189, 6; 235, 16; 242, 17; **HIER.** 47, 1, 3.

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- P. Cugusi, A. Bernini and the **identity of the formulae in Late Latin papyri and Late Latin epistolography (IV-VI AD)**
- **Garzya** and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters:

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- P. Cugusi, A. Bernini and the **identity** of the formulae in Late Latin papyri and Late Latin epistolography (IV-VI AD)
- **Garzya** and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters:
 1. The **pervasiveness** of the form

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- P. Cugusi, A. Bernini and the **identity** of the formulae in Late Latin papyri and Late Latin epistolography (IV-VI AD)
- **Garzya** and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters:
 1. The **pervasiveness** of the form
 2. The **rhetorical muscles** against clarity

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- P. Cugusi, A. Bernini and the **identity** of the formulae in Late Latin papyri and Late Latin epistolography (IV-VI AD)
- **Garzya** and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters:
 1. The **pervasiveness** of the form
 2. The **rhetorical muscles** against clarity
 3. The pedantic **reference to the past**

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- P. Cugusi, A. Bernini and the **identity** of the formulae in Late Latin papyri and Late Latin epistolography (IV-VI AD)
- **Garzya** and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters:
 1. The **pervasiveness** of the form
 2. The **rhetorical muscles** against clarity
 3. The pedantic **reference to the past**
 4. The **commonplaces**

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- P. Cugusi, A. Bernini and the **identity** of the formulae in Late Latin papyri and Late Latin epistolography (IV-VI AD)
- **Garzya** and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters:
 1. The **pervasiveness** of the form
 2. The **rhetorical muscles** against clarity
 3. The pedantic **reference to the past**
 4. The **commonplaces**
 5. The **style**: ceremonious detachment, mild kindness, polite detachment

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- P. Cugusi, A. Bernini and the **identity** of the formulae in Late Latin papyri and Late Latin epistolography (IV-VI AD)
- **Garzya** and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters:
 1. The **pervasiveness** of the form
 2. The **rhetorical muscles** against clarity
 3. The pedantic **reference to the past**
 4. The **commonplaces**
 5. The **style**: ceremonious detachment, mild kindness, polite detachment
 6. The sugary **protestations of love** and friendliness (*domine dulcissime et uere amantissime...*)

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- **Garzya** and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters:
 1. The **pervasiveness** of the form
 2. The **rhetorical muscles** against clarity
 3. The pedantic **reference to the past**
 4. The **commonplaces**
 5. The **style**: ceremonious detachment, mild kindness, polite detachment
 6. The sugary **protestations of love and friendliness** (*domine dulcissime et uere amantissime...*)
 7. ‘I’ll be **brief**’ (nope)

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- **Garzya** and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters:
 1. The **pervasiveness** of the form
 2. The **rhetorical muscles** against clarity
 3. The pedantic **reference to the past**
 4. The **commonplaces**
 5. The **style**: ceremonious detachment, mild kindness, polite detachment
 6. The sugary **protestations of love and friendliness** (*domine dulcissime et uere amantissime...*)
 7. ‘I’ll be **brief**’ (nope)
 8. The sender **belittles** him- or herself constantly (*mea pusillitas, mea mediocritas...*)

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- P. Cugusi, A. Bernini and the **identity of the formulae in Late Latin papyri and Late Latin epistolography (IV-VI AD)**
- **Garzya** and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters
- **The conclusion:** Latin letters on papyrus, originating almost always from Roman provincial or imperial offices, therefore having very little personal elements, and being most often **stock documents adapted for the present occasion**, follow the **conventions and style of contemporary Latin epistolography**

Meanwhile, in Latin literature...

- P. Cugusi, A. Bernini and the identity of the formulae in Late Latin papyri and Late Latin epistolography (IV-VI AD)
- Garzya and the style of Late Graeco-Roman letters
- The conclusion: Latin letters on papyrus, originating almost always from Roman provincial or imperial offices, therefore having very little personal elements, and being most often stock documents adapted for the present occasion, follow the conventions and style of contemporary Latin epistolography
- Is this a phenomenon encompassing two different genres, with two different beginnings? Or are we dealing with two different phenomena? And, above all: **when did it all begin?**

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters on papyrus, we can be sure it all happened during Diocletian's reign

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters on papyrus, we can be sure it all happened during Diocletian's reign
- **SB XVIII 13851** (AD 293): the letter for Alogius

|¹ Aurelius [.] magg(istris) s [- - -] |² salutem.

|³ **Annonas** . . . as . . . **capitum trium*** Alogio |⁴ adiutori memoriae apud Caesariam |⁵ quousque bonam ualetudinem perceperit |⁶ et proficiscenti per . . em in sacrum |⁷ comitatum d(omini) n(ostri) Maximiani |⁸ nobilissimi C[a]esaris usque |⁹ ex die |¹⁰ [.]um Iduum Dece[m]brium | in diem q[u]o ad comitatum |¹¹ uenerit.

‘Aurelius ... to the *magistri* ... greetings.

... **rations of three units** to the *adiutor memoriae* Alogius in Caesarea, until he recovers his good health, and as he travels ... to the holy retinue of our lord Maximian, the most noble Caesar, from the ... day before the Ides of December till the day in which he will have joined the retinue’.

**fortasse annonas duas uel binas da capitum trium etc.*

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters on papyrus, we can be sure it all happened during Diocletian's reign
- **SB XVIII 13851 (AD 293)**: the letter for Alogius
- **ChLA XIX 687 (AD 317-24)**: Vitalis recommends Theophanes to Achillius

|¹ Domino suo Achillio |² Vitalis.

|³ Cum in omnibus bonis benignitas tua sit praedita, tum |⁴ etiam scholasticos et maxime qui a me cultore tuo hono-|⁵-rificentiae tuae traduntur quod honeste respicere uelit |⁶ non dubito, domine praedicabilis. Quapropter Theofanen |⁷ oriundum ex ciuitate Hermopolitanorum prouinciae |⁸ Thebaidos, qui ex suggestione domini mei fratris nostri |⁹ Filippi usque ad officium domini mei Dyscoli uexationem |¹⁰ itineris quodammodo sine ratione sustinere uidetur, |¹¹ inimitabili religioni tuae trado, ut eundem praeter-|¹²-euntem more honestatis tuae benigne et humane |¹³ respicere digneris. Iuro enim salutem communem |¹⁴ et infantum nostrorum, quod enim eodem minime |¹⁵ petente beniuolentiae <tuae> eundem insinuendum putaui.

Domine |¹⁶ dulcissime et uere |¹⁷ amantissime, beatum te |¹⁸ meique amantem semper |¹⁹ gaudear.

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters on papyrus, we can be sure it all happened during Diocletian's reign
- **SB XVIII 13851** (AD 293): the letter for Alogius
- **ChLA XIX 687** (AD 317-24): Vitalis recommends Theophanes to Achillius
- **ChLA XLV 1320** (AD 399): travel permit for four soldiers

|¹ Flavius Gaiolus trib(unus) quintanor(um) |² prepositis horiorum et susceptoribus et debotis singuloru[m] lo[c]or(um) sal(utem).

|³ **Quattuor imfr[a] scriptis protectoribus** ad adorandam diuinam purpuram dominorum |⁴ nostrorum principum die felicissimum pascharum direxi ad sacratissimum comitatum |⁵ quibus iuxta annuo consuetud[i]ne **annonas quaternas kapitum quatuor** sine ulla mora |⁶ **preuere curate cum statib[us] solitis.** |⁷ Et [su]nt protectores:

|⁸ Bennafer

|⁹ Conon

|¹⁰ Babes

|¹¹ Besas

‘Flavius Gaiolus, commander of the soldiers of the fifth (legion), to the managers of the granaries and to the devoted collectors of the single forts, greetings.

I sent the four undermentioned protectors to the most sacred army to adore the divine purple of our emperors in the happiest day of Easter; **take care of supplying to them**, without hesitation, **four rations and four forages in the usual stations.** The protectors are:

Bennafer

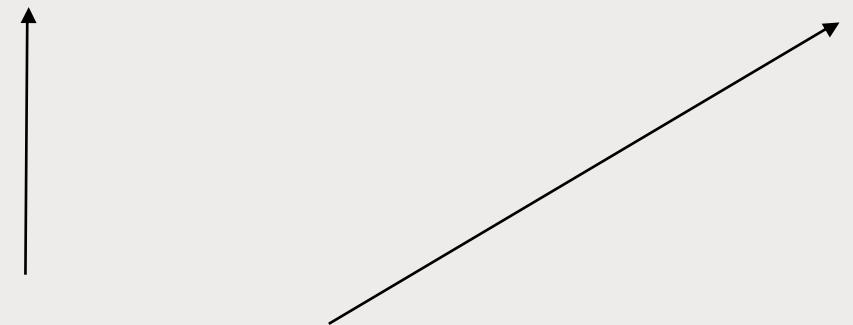
Conon

Babes

Besas’.

|¹ Aurelius [.] magg(istris) s .[- - -] |²
salutem.

|³ **Annonas** . . . as .. **capitum trium** Alogio |⁴
adiutori memoriae apud Caesariam |⁵ quousque
bonam ualetudinem perceperit |⁶ et proficiscenti
per . em **in sacrum** |⁷ **comitatum** d(omini)
n(ostr)i Maximiani |⁸ nobilissimi C[a]esaris
usque |⁹ ex die [. . . .]um Iduum Dece[m]brium
|¹⁰ in diem q[u]o ad comitatum |¹¹ uenerit.



293 - 399

|¹ Flauius Gaiolus trib(unus) quintanor(um) |²
prepositis horiorum et susceptoribus .. debotis
singuloru[m] lo[c]or(um) sal(utem).

|³ Quattuor imfr[a] scriptis protectoribus **ad**
adorandam diuinam purpuram dominorum |⁴
nostrorum principum die felicissimum
pascharum direxi **ad sacratissimum comitatum** |⁵
quibus **iuxta annuo consuetud[i]ne annonas**
quaternas kapitum quatuor sine ulla mora |⁶
preuere curate cum statib[us] solitis. |⁷ Et [su]nt
protectores:

- |⁸ Bennafer
- |⁹ Conon
- |¹⁰ Babes
- |¹¹ Besas

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters on papyrus, we can be sure it all happened **during Diocletian's reign**

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters **on papyrus**, we can be sure it all happened **during Diocletian's reign**
- For Latin letters **in general...?**

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters **on papyrus**, we can be sure it all happened **during Diocletian's reign**
- For Latin letters **in general...?**
- **Literature enters chancery, not the other way round (?)**

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters **on papyrus**, we can be sure it all happened **during Diocletian's reign**
- For Latin letters **in general...?**
- Literature enters chancery, not the other way round (?)
- Literature evolves more or less spontaneously, chancery style is **ordained from above**

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters **on papyrus**, we can be sure it all happened **during Diocletian's reign**
- For Latin letters **in general...?**
- Literature enters chancery, not the other way round (?)
- Literature evolves more or less spontaneously, chancery style is **ordained from above**
- All Latin authors taken into consideration for parallels operate **from mid-IV AD onwards, and were schooled in the early IV, when the scenario was already established**

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters **on papyrus**, we can be sure it all happened **during Diocletian's reign**
- The **schools**: Alexandria, Berytus, Antiochia, Constantinopolis (in the East); Caesarea, Rome, Augustodunum etc. (in the West)
- For Latin letters **in general...?**
- Literature enters chancery, not the other way round (?)
- Literature evolves more or less spontaneously, chancery style is **ordained from above**
- All Latin authors taken into consideration for parallels operate **from mid-IV AD onwards, and were schooled in the early IV, when the scenario was already established**

That awkward moment

- For Latin letters on papyrus, we can be sure it all happened **during Diocletian's reign**
- The schools: Alexandria, Berytus, Antiochia, Constantinopolis (in the East); Caesarea, Rome, Augustodunum etc. (in the West)
- The roots of the evolution in Latin epistolography **are in the III AD**; chancery adopted a model already established in literature, or at any rate sealed it
- For Latin letters **in general...?**
- Literature enters chancery, not the other way round (?)
- Literature evolves more or less spontaneously, chancery style is **ordained from above**
- All Latin authors taken into consideration for parallels operate **from mid-IV AD onwards, and were schooled in the early IV**, when the scenario was already established

BUT

- What happens in Latin literature in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?

BUT

- What happens in Latin literature in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?
- Binge-reading bibliography

- E. Norden, *Antike Kunstprosa*: the final triumph of **Asianism** in Latin literature after the IV AD, mainly in Imperial legal production (constitutions, rescripts...)

BUT

- What happens in Latin literature in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?
- Binge-reading bibliography

- E. Norden, *Antike Kunstprosa*: the final triumph of **Asianism** in Latin literature after the IV AD, mainly in Imperial legal production (constitutions, rescripts...)
- C. Del Chicca: if you want to write a panegyric in Late Antiquity, you stick to rigid rules

BUT

- What happens in Latin literature in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?
- Binge-reading bibliography

- **E. Norden**, *Antike Kunstprosa*: the final triumph of **Asianism** in Latin literature after the IV AD, mainly in Imperial legal production (constitutions, rescripts...)
- **C. Del Chicca**: if you want to write a panegyric in Late Antiquity, you stick to rigid rules
- **R. G. Mayer**: Latin literature has no real model in style, because Cicero and Caesare are too good and too idiosyncratic to be successfully imitated

BUT

- What happens in Latin literature in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?
- Binge-reading bibliography

- R. G. **Mayer**: Latin literature has no real model in style, because Cicero and Caesar are too good and too idiosyncratic to be successfully imitated
- J. N. **Dillon**: ‘Roman imperial legislation indeed underwent a real stylistic transformation from the High Empire to Late Antiquity and [...] the reign of Diocletian was a milestone in this process. [...] In Late Antiquity, and in the reign of D. particularly, the rhetoric of Roman legislation became both argumentative and ornate’ (p. 338).

BUT

- What happens in Latin literature in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?
- Binge-reading bibliography

- J. N. Dillon: ‘Roman imperial legislation indeed underwent a real stylistic transformation from the High Empire to Late Antiquity and [...] **the reign of Diocletian was a milestone in this process.** [...] In Late Antiquity, and in the reign of D. particularly, **the rhetoric of Roman legislation became both argumentative and ornate**’ (p. 338).
- Dillon, again: in **rescripts**, Diocletianic chancery keeps it to a minimum – they explode with Constantine. But in **letters and edicts**, from 292-293 everything changes

|¹ Aurelius [.] magg(istris) s [- - -] |² salutem.

|³ **Annonas** . . . as . . . **capitum trium*** Alogio |⁴ adiutori memoriae apud Caesariam |⁵ quousque bonam ualitudinem perceperit |⁶ et proficiscenti per . . em in sacrum |⁷ comitatum d(omini) n(ostri) Maximiani |⁸ nobilissimi C[a]esaris usque |⁹ ex die |¹⁰ [.]um Iduum Dece[m]brium | in diem q[u]o ad comitatum |¹¹ uenerit.

‘Aurelius ... to the *magistri* ... greetings.

... **rations of three units** to the *adiutor memoriae* Alogius in Caesarea, until he recovers his good health, and as he travels ... to the holy retinue of our lord Maximian, the most noble Caesar, from the ... day before the Ides of December till the day in which he will have joined the retinue’.

**fortasse annonas duas uel binas da capitum trium etc.*

BUT

- What happens in Latin literature in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?
- Binge-reading bibliography

- J. N. Dillon: ‘Roman imperial legislation indeed underwent a real stylistic transformation from the High Empire to Late Antiquity and [...] **the reign of Diocletian was a milestone in this process.** [...] In Late Antiquity, and in the reign of D. particularly, **the rhetoric of Roman legislation became both argumentative and ornate**’ (p. 338).
- Dillon, again: in **rescripts**, Diocletianic chancery keeps it to a minimum – they explode with Constantine. But in **letters and edicts**, from 292-293 everything changes
- Not so essential to divide rescripts from letters or edicts: they are all **communications** – and they are all, ultimately, **transformed**

Why, Dillon?

- The Emperor in Late Antiquity is a **demi-god**, and **he speaks accordingly** in a very ornate style, like a god would
- Everything concerning him is **holy** and must be reflected in his prose, which becomes **self-important**
- This process was developed and brewed **during the III AD.**



Jean-Paul Laurens, *Le Bas-Empire : Honorius* (1880; detail)

AND YET

- What happens in **Latin literature** in the III AD, that can **corroborate this reconstruction?**
- Did Imperial chancery do it all **by itself, out of thin air...?**

AND YET

- What happens in Latin literature in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?
- Did Imperial chancery do it all by itself, out of thin air...?

- E. Norden, *Antike Kunstprosa*: the final triumph of Asianism in Latin literature after the IV AD, mainly in Imperial legal production (constitutions, rescripts...)
- C. Del Chicca: if you want to write a panegyric in Late Antiquity, you stick to rigid rules
- R. G. Mayer: Latin literature has no real model in style, because Cicero and Caesare are too good and too idiosyncratic to be successfully imitated
- Companions on Latin literature agree that the II AD (**Fronto**, **Apuleius**) is already well within parameters of redundancy and contrivance

AND YET

- What happens in Latin literature in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?
- Did Imperial chancery do it all by itself, out of thin air...?

- E. Norden, *Antike Kunstprosa*: the final triumph of Asianism in Latin literature after the IV AD, mainly in Imperial legal production (constitutions, rescripts...)
- R. G. Mayer: Latin literature has no real model in style, because Cicero and Caesare are too good and too idiosyncratic to be successfully imitated
- Companions on Latin literature agree that the II AD (**Fronto, Apuleius**) is already well within parameters of redundancy and contrivance
- J. Fontaine: Latin literature is inherently baroque (but for a short interval under Caesar and Augustus)

AND YET

- What happens in Latin literature in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?
- Did Imperial chancery do it all by itself, out of thin air...?

- E. Norden, *Antike Kunstprosa*: the final triumph of Asianism in Latin literature after the IV AD, mainly in Imperial legal production (constitutions, rescripts...)
- R. G. Mayer: Latin literature has no real model in style, because Cicero and Caesare are too good and too idiosyncratic to be successfully imitated
- Companions on Latin literature agree that the II AD (Fronto, Apuleius) is already well within parameters of redundancy and contrivance
- J. Fontaine: Latin literature is inherently baroque (but for a short interval under Caesar and Augustus)
- F. Gasti: Latin authors in the III AD react to crisis and lack of funding by sticking closely to ancient authors and imitating the past

AND YET

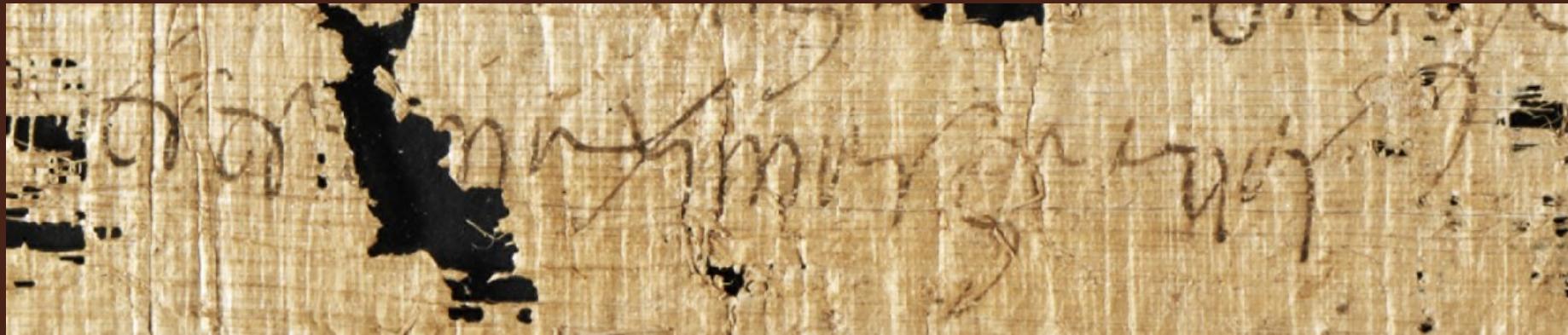
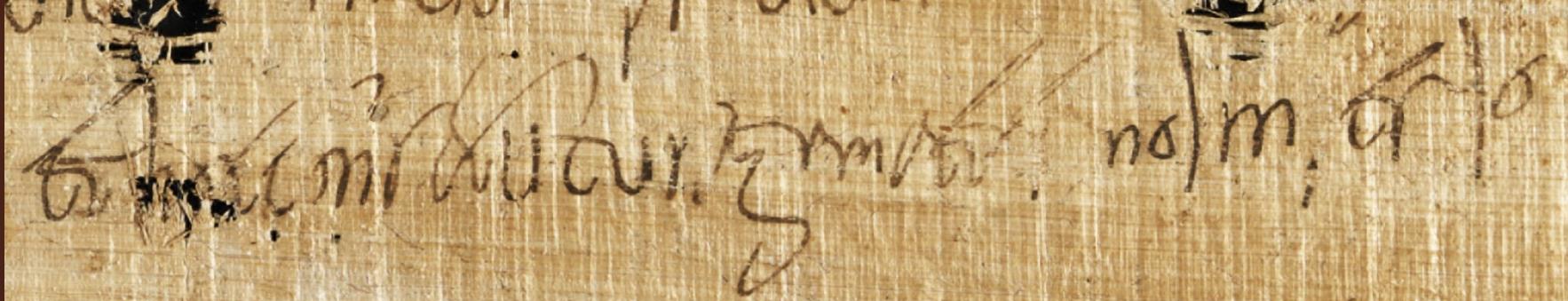
- What happens in **Latin literature** in the III AD, that can corroborate this reconstruction?
- Did Imperial chancery do it all by itself, **out of thin air...?**
- Do we have **names and works** of people **educated in the III and operating in late III – early IV?** Lactantius, Ciprianus?

- **E. Norden, *Antike Kunstprosa*:** the final triumph of **Asianism** in Latin literature after the IV AD, mainly in Imperial legal production (constitutions, rescripts...)
- **R. G. Mayer:** Latin literature **has no real model in style**, because Cicero and Caesare are too good and too idiosyncratic to be successfully imitated
- **Companions** on Latin literature agree that the II AD (**Fronto, Apuleius**) is already well within parameters of redundancy and contrivance
- **J. Fontaine:** Latin literature is inherently **baroque** (but for a short interval under Caesar and Augustus)
- **F. Gasti:** Latin authors in the III AD react to crisis and lack of funding by **sticking closely to ancient authors** and imitating the past

Still here with my initial question. Did the Imperial chancery engineer, or at least inspire, Late Latin epistolography, or did it just imbibe and develop germs of change that were already in being in the contemporary Latin literature?

If the latter: can we detect works and authors which can corroborate?

|¹⁴ ... ET HOC CONSECVTVS **AGAM** AETERNO IMPERIO
|¹⁵ VESTRO **MAXIMAS GRATIAS**



Thanks for attending this paper!