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Latin and Latin-Greek Papyri from Late Antique Egypt*
(*ChLA* XLIV 1262, 1285, 1286, *ChLA* XLIV 1304 *verso*, 1307,
XLV 1336, 1350 *recto*; P.Vindob. L 64)

Plates 9–13

Eight documentary papyri are published, covering at least four different aspects of the Latin language in Late Antique Egypt: the text entirely in Latin (*ChLA* XLIV 1304 *verso*, 1307); the Greek text with a Latin dating formula (*ChLA* XLIV 1262, 1286, XLV 1336) or a subscription (*ChLA* XLIV 1285, XLV 1350 *recto*) at the bottom; and, in an appendix to this paper, the so-called *di-emu* papyrus (P.Vindob. L 64), i.e. a Greek text with a notarial subscription in Greek language and Latin characters¹. These documents were usually produced in, and emanated from, provincial bureaux² (differently, P.Vindob. 64 is the products of tabellionic offices: see below). The full texts are forthcoming in the *CLTP*, where they are examined from a purely textual and linguistic point of view, and provided with translations³; the Greek texts with Latin subscriptions or formulae will feature in the same corpus as micro-entries⁴. This paper instead provides a traditional

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¹ The types of Latin and bilingual Latin-Greek documents from Late Antique Egypt will be extensively investigated in a monograph stemming from my recent project, LAREGRE. Powerpoint presentations of the LAREGRE seminars, providing some details, will be available at <https://unibo.academia.edu/GiulioIovine/Talks-and-Conference-Presentations> (last accessed 18/12/2024) (LAREGRE seminar 1 to 4). Further notes can be found in G. Iovine, *Data epistula: Later Additions of Roman Dating Formulae in Latin and Greek Papyri and Ostraka from the First to the Sixth Centuries AD*, *Manuscripta* 63/2 (2019) 157–230; id., *P.Aegyptus Cent. II 50. Epistula (commendaticia?) latina*, *Aegyptus* 101 (2021) 201–17: 202–205; id., *Copres and Domnio. Remarks on P.Mich. VII 460 and 461*, *SEP* 19 (2022) 55–78: 57–58.

² For Late Antique bureaux and their characteristics, see the pivotal P. Classen, *Spät-römische Grundlagen mittelalterlicher Kanzleien*, *Vorträge und Forschungen* 28 (1983) 67–84, and B. Palme, *Die officia der Statthalter in der Spätantike: Forschungsstand und Perspektiven*, *AntTard* 7 (1999) 85–133.

³ = M. C. Scappaticcio (ed.), *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus*, Cambridge 2025.

⁴ Micro-entries are shortened versions of the full entries in the corpus, specifically designed for Greek texts where Latin represents only a small portion of the overall text — as in this case.

papyrological edition⁵, with the original layout of the texts preserved, and more extended commentary included. The following table summarizes all the evidence gathered here:

ChLA	P.Vindob.	Date	Content
XLIV 1262	L 29	IV–V	End of a Greek official letter, with Latin dating formula
XLIV 1285	L 53	IV–V	Latin subscription to a document
XLIV 1286	L 54+55	420	End of a Greek official letter, with Latin dating formula
XLIV 1304 <i>v</i>	L 78 <i>v</i>	342?	Latin official document
XLIV 1307	L 83	IV–V	Latin official document
XLV 1336	L 131	307 or 320	End of a Greek official letter, with Latin dating formula
XLV 1350 <i>r</i>	L 148 <i>r</i>	IV–V	End of a document with Latin subscription
—	L 64	V–VI	End of a document with <i>di emu</i> -subscription

1. End of a Greek official letter, with Latin dating formula

P.Vindob. L 29⁶
Egypt

9.6 × 15.7 cm

IV–V AD
Plate 9 Fig. 1

On the *recto*, written along the fibres, one sees the beginning (barely preserved) of a line in large script, either Greek or Latin, perhaps the last line of an official letter; then, in the lower margin (8.2 cm), the left portion of a consular date in New Roman Cursive where the name of the consuls are no longer present. The formula is written in smaller letters (0.5 to 0.9 cm, the initial *p* being 2.5 cm in height; the interlinear space being 0.5 cm). On the *verso*, written along the fibres, the name of the addressee of the letter can be seen, either a *praepositus pagi* or more likely a *praepositus* ~ *πραιπόσιτος* of a Roman military unit⁷, in Greek majuscule script and language. This text has already been discussed in Iovine, *Later Additions* (note 1) 179–180 as one of those few Greek or Latin texts, mostly of epistolary nature and format, that bear a Latin dating formula (with a few exceptions) split into two: *dat(a)* or *dat(um)*, day, month and place in the left margin, and the consular year in the bottom margin. In this case, one can see only traces of the bottom portion of the formula. As the scribe uses the post-consular formula,

⁵ The guidelines presented in Paris at the 30th International Congress of Papyrology (July 2022) will be employed for the editions (aip.ulb.be/PDF/Guidelines_for_editing_papyri.pdf [last accessed 18/12/2024]).

⁶ TM 70050.

⁷ See e.g. the *praepositi horreorum* (*prepositi horiorum* in the text) addressed by Flavius Gaiolus in *ChLA* XLV 1320 (AD 399, TM 70106).

it is possible that he was still uninformed about the new consular couple⁸. The consuls must both be emperors (*domini nostri*). The traces after *nm* might point to couples such as Constantine and Constantius II, Constantine and Constantine II, Constantius II and Constantius Gallus, or Constantius II and Julian, ranging between AD 316 and 360; also Arcadius and Honorius (early V AD) might be a possibility.

recto

- 1 . . . [. . .] . . . [
- 2 post co(n)s(ulatum)
- 3 d(ominorum) n(ostrorum) . [
- 2 *coss* || 3 *dd nm*

1 The lower portion of two uprights, curled at the bottom in a cane-like fashion, facing up and right, is visible: the first two letters might be *c*, *e*, *t*, in ligature with the third, which is most likely an elongated *i*. Two long oblique strokes, pointing upwards and trespassing the writing line from below, can be seen at the left edge of the manuscript: perhaps a couple of *x* or *r*.

2 *Coss* is written instead of *cons* in the papyrus, but *coss* only stands for *co(n)s(ulibus)*, not *consulatum*. Perhaps it is a mistake, unless the scribe meant to write *post cons(ules) d(ominos) n(ostros) N.N. et N.N.*, a formula not yet documented in papyri. To avoid confusion, I have put in the text, not in the apparatus, the correct word.

3 The bottom of *a*, *c* or *e*.

verso

- 1 πραιποσίτω

1 The *praepositus*' name and the unit he presided to, which were probably located above and below πραιποσίτω, are not extant.

2. Subscription to a document

P.Vindob. L 53⁹
Egypt (Philagris?)

3 × 6 cm

IV–V AD
Plate 9 Fig. 2

Rectangular fragment, light brown-coloured; written on the *recto* along the fibres. The *verso* is blank. It contains the initial part of two Latin lines, seemingly isolated in the writing frame: the blank space above the text is about 3 cm, and the lower (1.3 cm)

⁸ On the custom of post-consular dating in papyri, see R. S. Bagnall, K. A. Worp, *Chronological Systems of Byzantine Egypt*, Leiden, Boston 2004, 88–98.

⁹ TM 70072.

and left (1 cm) margin are visible. The preserved text probably belonged to a subscription (in Latin) to a longer document, the language of which cannot be determined; it must have been at the bottom margin of the original writing frame. The script is a New Roman Cursive, slightly sloping to the right, and competently executed: parallels can be found in *SB XX* 14675¹⁰, *ChLA XLV* 1328¹¹ and 1329¹² (AD 399). Apparently, the scribe was unsatisfied with the height of the *s*, as if it were a *littera notabilior* of some sort, and arranged to lengthen its upper stroke by making a second ornamental curl above the previous one.

Without the original document, the meaning of the subscription remains obscure. The verb (*ad*)*signare* is usually employed in I–III AD Latin or bilingual papyri to notify the presence of a witness, as was traditional in Roman documentary culture: that is, it functions as a signature to a deed, be it a purchase, marriage or divorce act¹³. On one occasion, it seems to strengthen a decurion's summons to his inferiors¹⁴; at any rate, the only ones found so far using this specific verb are soldiers. This sample is the only one extant from Late Antiquity. In this specific case, the simple *signauī* was probably not sufficient, as the scribe was obliged to add at least a location — the village of Philagris, *meris* of Themistos, Arsinoite¹⁵ — and something else, now lost in the lacuna¹⁶.

- 1 signauī m . [
 2 ap(ud) Filagriū[em?
 2 ap/

¹⁰ = P.Vindob. L 119, TM 23788.

¹¹ = P.Vindob. L 120, TM 18755.

¹² = P.Vindob. L 121, TM 18756.

¹³ See *FIRA III* 147 (AD 142, TM 70160), the testament of Antonius Silvanus; *P.Col.* VIII 221 (AD 143, TM 17631), a receipt for a soldier's deposit; *PSI IX* 1026 (AD 150, TM 17460), a petition from some veterans to the governor of Judaea; *ChLA III* 200 (AD 166, TM 11654), a text documenting the purchase of a slave *ChLA IV* 249 (II AD, TM 27148), a marriage contract; *P.Dura* 26 (AD 227, TM 17223), a deed of sale; *P.Dura* 30 (AD 232, TM 17227), another marriage contract; and *P.Dura* 32 (AD 254, TM 17229), a deed of divorce. In testaments, witnesses could also sign the opening protocol with *adsignauī*: see e.g. a recently published papyrus, *P.CtYBR* inv. 4669, dated AD 191, in: L. C. Colella, *Copia fragmentaria di un protocollo di apertura di testamento in lingua latina*, *Tyche* 33 (2018) 55–60. Subscribers can use the Latin subscription — N.N. + *signauī* — and the Greek one — N.N. + μαρτυρῶ / ἐσφράγιχα. Sometimes they all use Latin (*FIRA III* 147, *ChLA III* 200) and sometimes they mix the Latin and Greek signatures (*P.Col.* VIII 221, *PSI IX* 1026, *ChLA IV* 249 and the *P.Dura*).

¹⁴ In *P.Oxy.* LXXIV 5007 (III–IV AD, TM 128313). After the main text, fully in Greek, the sender put a *seg* which is probably a mistake meant to indicate *sig(nauī)*.

¹⁵ TM Geo 1766.

¹⁶ Reviewer 2 warns me that *ap(ud)* cannot but precede *Filagriū[m]*, prefect of Egypt in AD 334–340. It is true that *apud* mostly precedes names in extant Latin documentary papyri, but it can also precede locations, as in *ChLA XIX* 684, a document where two ἐπιμεληταί, while addressing a strategus of the Arsinoite about the delivery of *annonae*, quote a Latin document: see ll. 17–18 *cum sagmaria in pasqua apud ciuitate[m] | [.]rum annonas VI · quin · quaginta s[e]ptem* (AD 303, TM 13415). While traces close to the lacuna still make me prefer *d[* instead of *u[*, they are, after all, traces — and I cannot be completely sure. I mention here, therefore, the reviewer's alternative reading.

1 Perhaps *signauimū[s]*.

2 Notice Φιλαργίς (and cognates, if the name is in fact Φιλάργιος) rendered in Latin as *Filagris* instead of *Philagris* (l. 2), as customary for Late Antique documents: notice *Theofanen, Filippi, Delfinius* in *ChLA* XIX 687¹⁷ and *P.Ryl.* IV 623¹⁸ (AD 317–324) from the so-called archive of Theophanes.

3. Official document or letter

P.Vindob. L 54+55¹⁹
Egypt

12.2 × 11.1 cm

AD 420
Plate 10 Fig. 3

Portions of the last two lines (only specks of ink from the first one are preserved), written along the fibres, from an official document drafted in quite a large and elegant Greek script (1 to 1.7 cm in height); then, in the lower margin (8.5 cm), a Latin consular date (6 cm from the Greek line). The New Roman Cursive employed is informal, small in size (0.5 to 1.5 cm in height, but for initial *d*, which amounts to 3.5 cm) and quickly written. Although little is preserved from the Greek line, the script reminds one of coeval semi-cursive writings that were clearly legible and not crowded with ligatures: see e.g. *P.Oxy.* LXVIII 4680²⁰, *P.Oxy.* LXVIII 4681²¹ (AD 419), and *P.Oxy.* XVI 1973²² (AD 420). As for the Latin script, it bears comparison with that in the Latin lines of the fragmentary record of proceedings *ChLA* XLV 1325²³ (AD 436?), particularly in terms of the *d* and the ligatures *th* and *si* with the upper stroke of the *s* directly touching the *i*. The *verso* is blank. The text is of the same type as 1 — a Greek document with an inorganic Latin dating formula — and has been addressed in Iovine, *Later Additions* (note 1) 180–181. It also will appear as a micro-entry in the *CLTP*. It is impossible to grasp the context and content of the original text. The participle ἀρπασθέντες might refer to stolen objects, thus suggesting a communication from a higher authority concerning theft or pillage.

→ 1]του ἀρπασθέντες [

2 d(omino) n(ostro) Theodosio VIII<I> et Constantio III [co(n)s(ulibus)]

2 dnς

¹⁷ = *P.Strasb.* inv. Lat. 1, TM 70001.

¹⁸ TM 17314.

¹⁹ TM 70073.

²⁰ TM 78677.

²¹ TM 78678.

²² TM 22070.

²³ = *P.Vindob.* L 109, TM 70107.

1 The verb ἀρπάζω, here in the passive aorist participle, has a very precise and negative meaning ('carry off', 'steal', 'snatch away'²⁴). The verb is found elsewhere in papyri, always with this meaning: see e.g. *SB* VI 9558²⁵ ll. 8–9 ὃς πλείονα ὑποψίαν μοι ἐνέβα|λεν φήσας κεκελευῖσθαι ἀρπάσαι με (AD 325), or *P. Ammon* II 227²⁶ ll. 10–12 ἢ κατὰ παραλογί|σμον ἐπιχειρεῖν ἀρπάσαι τὰ [ἐ]ν Ἀλεξανδρεία ἀνδράποδα τοῦ | ἔμου ἀδελφοῦ Ἀρποκρατίων[ο]c (c. AD 348).

2 The scribe has probably written *VIII* by mistake. In AD 418 the 8th consulship of Theodosius II was with Emperor Honorius (then in his 12th consulship), not with Flavius Constantius; moreover, with two Emperors in the consulship, the text should have read *dd nn, dominis nostris*. The correct figure is *VIII*: it was not until AD 420 that Theodosius II became consul for the 9th time together with Flavius Constantius (then consul for the 3rd time), the latter of whom was to become Western Emperor for a very short period in the following year. The simplest explanation for this is that the last *I* has dropped from the figure. Notice the small, *s*-like abbreviation sign over the *n* of *n(ostro)*, widespread in Late Antique papyri from the late fourth century AD onwards²⁷.

4. Latin official document

P.Vindob. L 78 verso²⁸
Egypt

12.5 × 5.5 cm

AD 342?
Plate 10 Fig. 4

A rectangular fragment of papyrus: portions of five lines are extant. On the *recto*, one can see the faint remnants of a Greek document, unconnected with the text on the *verso*. The five Latin lines belong to the left portion of a column; the left margin (2 cm) is in fact visible, and probably also the lower one (ca. 1 cm in its higher part). The interlinear space is about 0.5 cm; the average height of the letters is approximately 0.5 cm as well, except for those whose vertical strokes trespass the writing space and which are generally longer (1 cm). The width, on the other hand, is about 0.2/0.3 cm. The text is written across the fibres in an elegant and uniform new Roman cursive, decidedly sloping to the right, which can be dated to AD 342 (see below). A striking parallel is the script in *P. Abinn.* 2²⁹ (AD 344), especially for the *a*, *g*, *m*, *n*, *s* and *u* written above the line, which are almost identical in the two documents. The letters at the beginning of the line, whether or not they are initial letters, are artificially enlarged: see *l* at l. 2 and *e* at l. 3. Interpuncts are present. The scribe abbreviates plural nouns by redoubling the last letter before the cut.

²⁴ LSJ⁹ (245–246) *s.v.* ἀρπάζω.

²⁵ TM 19100.

²⁶ TM 23633.

²⁷ Details in G. Iovine, *A Survey on Abbreviating (and Punctuation) Signs in Latin Documentary Papyri, Ostraka and Tablets from Roman Africa and the East (BC I–VII AD)*, Cambridge, forthcoming.

²⁸ TM 70091.

²⁹ TM 10021.

The papyrus provides very little content. On account of the last sentence (l. 5), the text might be construed as a copy of an official document from the Imperial chancery — a copy drafted in the province, the original perhaps being in *litterae caelestes*. The sentence, in fact, suggests that a *uir illustris* named Vetranio checked (*recognoui*) the exactness of the copy in the presence of some abovementioned people (*praesentibus suprascriptis*) in relation to an original document consisting, perhaps, of some (Imperial?) letters (*litteris*³⁰; *libellis* is less likely). The situation appears to be similar to that presented in *AE* 1962, 142³¹, which reports three Imperial rescripts and represents the bureaucratic process that Iulianus, chief of the Zegrenses in *Mauretania Tingitana*, underwent to be granted Roman citizenship under Marcus Aurelius. The third and final document carved in this stone yields the last stage of the process, when Iulianus' name was inscribed into the *commentarius ciuitate Romana donatorum*, the witnesses being some powerful members of the *consilium principis*. The document we now read in the inscription is most likely a certified copy, written by the imperial freedman Asclepiodotus³², who left on it the validating formula *Asclepiodotus libertus recognoui*. It is therefore possible to construe 4 as the copy of an Imperial pronouncement of some kind, perhaps drafted first in tachygraphy or deriving from letters, i.e., a rescript; it was then prepared for sending and validated by a public official in the presence of the Emperor and other witnesses. The provincial office in Egypt would have received a document in *litterae caelestes* and prepared, presumably, a copy in *litterae communes* to be passed along to the neighbouring bureaux. The dating formula in ll. 2–3 *Constantio Aug(usto) III | et Co[n]stante Aug(usto) II cons(ulibus)* might signify the year when the document was drafted.

This *uir illustris* who certified the copy might well be the Vetranio who went on to play some role during the disorders following Constans' assassination and the *coup* staged by Magnentius. This shady character's historical importance is still a matter of

³⁰ The plural is suggested by the double *l*; *ex litteris* 'from the letter' is much more frequent in Latin than *ex libellis* 'from the *libelli*' (only three times: *Cic. fam.* 11, 11, 1; *Fronto* p. 188, 1; *Dig.* 32, 99). Plus, the source of a copy can be more likely interpreted as a single *libellus*, rather than more. In *CIL* III 12336 (AD 238, Thrace), a copy of a record of proceedings, one sees more than one *libellus*, but a single *liber* — and probably, a single *libellus* is in fact the source of the copy: ll. 1–5 *Bona Fortuna. | Fulvio Pio et Po(n)tio Proculo cons(ulibus) XVII Kal(endas) Ian(uarias) descriptum et | recognitum factum ex libro libellorum rescriptorum a do|mino n(ostro) Imp(eratore) Caes(are) M. Antonio Gordiano Pio Felice Aug(usto) et propo|sitorum Romae in portico thermarum Tr(a)ianarum in ue(r)ba (!) i(n)fra s(c)ripta s(unt)*.

³¹ An edition, with a rich commentary, in M. Euzennat, J. Marion, *Inscriptions antiques du Maroc*, 2. *Inscriptions latines*, Paris 1982, 76–91 (n° 94) [= *IAM*].

³² See *IAM*, p. 91 'Il ne fait aucun doute que tous ces personnages aient appartenu au *consilium principis*. On peut seulement se demander s'ils représentent la totalité de ses membres au mois de juillet 177 ou une section spécialisée, peut-être réunie pour débattre des problèmes africains ... La décision prise ... fut inscrite dans le *commentarius ciuitate Romana donatorum* et une copie certifiée fut préparée sur-le-champ par l'affranchi impérial Asclepiodotus, connu quelques années plus tard comme *a rationibus et a memoria*'. More on this document and on Imperial *commentarii* in F. Millar, *The emperor in the Roman world: 31 BC–AD 337*, London 1977, 259–272.

debate among scholars³³, and this papyrus is not likely to shed much light on the matter. He first appears in AD 350, eight years after this document was drafted — if the dating is assumed correctly — as a *magister peditum*, or *militum*, in the Illyrian prefecture and thus serving Emperor Constans³⁴. What he was before 350 is open to speculation; if he is the person appearing in this papyrus, he might have been a courtier in Constantius II's or Constans' entourage, already styled *uir illustris* — a title which, if he was a *magister militum*, he had a full right to use, at least later. Serving first in the East then in the West was not impossible in fourth century AD: Vetrano's colleague in the Illyrian prefecture, Vulcacius Rufinus, was serving under Constans when Magnentius revolted in 350, but had been *comes per Orientem Aegypti et Mesopotamiae, per easdem uice sacra iudicans* in 342, under Constantius II³⁵.

What little remains of the content of the document might perhaps refer to some constitution or rescript concerning the military. The potential readings are uncertain as it is, and nothing further can be argued on the basis of this evidence.

For the sake of clarity, in this instance I provide a diplomatic transcription as well:

— — — — —
 ↓ 1 [. .] . . [.] . [. .] p[
 2 liṭaṇṭum die unius id eṣṭ . [
 3 etco[.] stante augi conspr[. [
 4 aneṭ primarioe[.] eṭeaiunn . [
 5 [.] ll'ueṭranioppss' ex ll' recognouide[
 — — — — —
 ↓ 1 [. .] . . [.] . [. .] p[— — — — — mi-]
 2 liṭaṇṭum die<i> unius id eṣṭ . [— — — — — Constantio Aug(usto) III]
 3 et Co[n]stante Aug(usto) II cons(ulibus) pr[. [
 4 ane ṭ primario uē[t(eranorum)] eṭ eā² iun(ior-) . [— — — — — uir]
 5 [i]ll(ustris) Veṭranio p(raesentibus) s(upra)s(criptis) ex l(itteris) recognoui de[

1 Hooked bottoms of oblique strokes: *ç*, *e* or *ʃ*.

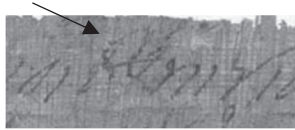
³³ A political reassessment of Vetrano, whom contemporary sources describe as old and irresolute, is in B. Bleckmann, *Constantina, Vetrano und Gallus Caesar*, Chiron 24 (1994) 29–68, followed by J. F. Drinkwater, *The revolt and ethnic origin of the usurper Magnentius (350–353), and the rebellion of Vetrano (350)*, Chiron 30 (2000) 131–159.

³⁴ A full account, with sources, in *PLRE I s.v. Vetrano* 1. Problems concerning his exact rank (ancient sources offer both *magister peditum* and *militum*) are discussed by W. Ensslin, *Zum Heermeisteramt des spätrömischen Reiches I. Die Titulatur der magistri militum bis auf Theodosius I.*, Klio 23 (1930) 306–325, particularly 321; and *II. Die magistri militum des 4. Jahrhunderts*, Klio 24 (1931) 102–147, particularly p. 104. More on the topic in an updated study by M. Landelle, rich in knowledge and bibliographical references: *La titulature des magistri militum au IV^e siècle*, AntTard 22 (2014) 195–221.

³⁵ Cf. Cod. Theod. 12,1,33 *Idem A(ugusti) Rufino comiti Orientis*. See *PLRE I s.v. Rufinus* 25.

1–2 *Mi*]litantum is the likeliest possibility: the participle is found in Late Latin prose, such as Cod. Theod. 7,12,2 or 13,5,36. Other options, such as *debilitare*, *litare*, *nobilitare*, *periclitare*, *uolitare*, are all more or less literary. One is tempted to read *die(i) unius* afterwards: perhaps the text concerned a specific class of individuals who ‘fought for a single day’? The following *id est* might introduce an explanation for this concept. The formula *unius diei*, ‘of one day only’, ‘during one day only’, and metaphorically, ‘of very short duration’, is widespread in Latin prose (e.g. Caes. *civ.* 3,71,1; Cic. *Pis.* 7; Liv. 21,27,3; Val. Max. 1,6,12; Gaius *Inst.* 3,184, etc.). The inverted form *diei unius* is rarer (e.g. Liv. 21,47,1; 44,1,4; Aug. *epist.* 166,6, etc.) and found mainly in late prose.

2 Between *die* and *unius*, a long and curved pen stroke has been drawn as if joining the middle stroke of the *e* with the left portion of the *u*. Its purpose and meaning are unclear.



2–3 The year 342 is unremarkable in the life and times of Constantius II, as in that year he was the reigning Emperor in the East, and of Constans, who at that time was successfully fighting against the Franks on the Rhine. See P. Maraval, *Les fils du Constantin*, Paris 2013, particularly pp. 46–50 and 64–79.

4 Readings are particularly difficult here and the content of this line is therefore uncertain. The ink has vanished in the central section, after *primario*, leaving blurred traces which only become clearer in the *aiunn* sequence. The sequence *ane* suggests the ending of a name in the ablative, like *Iord]ane*, probably governed by the adjective *primario*³⁶. *Iunn*, on the other hand, resembles a possible abbreviation for the plural *iuniores*, a word that in Late Antiquity came to define soldiers positioned somewhere in the middle between *adulescentes* (15 to 30 years old) and *iuvenes* (30 to 45³⁷), and later, simply ‘recruits’³⁸. One is reminded, in fact, of the *epistula probatoria* preserved in *P.Ryl.* IV 609³⁹, ll. 3–5 [*cum*] *opdulero sacra iussione domini nostri Anastasii piisimi ac triumfatoris semper Augusti | [e qua n]umeris supplementi causa i[u]niores robustis corporibus adsociarentur, Heracleon fili(um) Constantinii | ...`uexillatione*

³⁶ An alternative reading of *ane*, *-anē*, suggests instead a present participle (*adst*]anē? *inst*]anē?) probably governed by the adjective *primario*, which in late prose can also stand by itself as a name (‘a pre-eminent one’). See e.g. Cod. Theod. 12, 1, 39 *in perpetuum obseruandum esse sancimus, ut citra iniuriam corporis, quod in seruis etiam probrosam atque postremum est, cuncti primarii et curiales praecepta a iudicibus exequantur ... Frequenti ergo monitione atque hortatu tam primario curiarum quam hos, qui magistratus gerunt atque gesserunt, sinceritas tua incitare debebit, ut promptius praecepta suscipiant omni corporalis contumeliae timore sublato.*

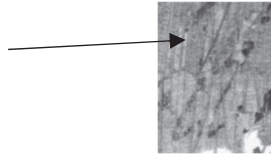
³⁷ M. Rocco, *Iuniores e seniores nell’ esercito del tardo impero: un problema di nomenclatura*, *Rivista storica dell’ antichità* 39 (2009) 191–211.

³⁸ Rocco argues that already at the end of IV century AD the word *iuniores* came to mean simply ‘recruits’, the difference from *seniores* slowly waning (Rocco, *Iuniores* [note 37] 191, fn. 11; 209–211).

³⁹ AD 505, TM 17309.

prudētiaē tuaē pro tempore credita edictio mea mīlītārē praē[cip]it: Heracleon, a recruit to be enlisted in Verte's unit, is defined as a *iunior robusto corpore*. Hence, perhaps *uē[t(eranorum)]*⁴⁰ must be supplied after *primario* 'the most pre-eminent among veterans'.

5 *Recognoscere*, particularly the first-person perfect *recognoui*, is paramount in the Roman bureaucratic tradition inasmuch as this subscription was used to signify that a copy was true to its original. Mourgues identified the *recognitio* as the second-to-last step in the making of a document in the high Roman chancery: a top-ranking officer, most likely the *a libellis*, certified with a *recognoui* that the final copy of the Imperial rescript matched the words of the emperor as they had been previously taken down in tachygraphy, drafted and preliminarily shown to him⁴¹. In the provinces, the word was regularly used for the same purpose, although in more limited circumstances — an individual signals with *recognoui* that he has checked the copy and found it to be regular⁴². Before the verb, whose subject is Vetranio, I believe the sequence to be read as *pp(raesentibus) s(upra)s(criptis)* 'in the presence of the aforementioned people'. Regarding the abbreviation *pp* = *praesentibus*, see the much later *P.Ital.* II 30⁴³, ll. 37–38 *testibus pp(raesentibus) suscri[b]tur[is]* (AD 539). The overall sense of the line would be 'I, the *uir illustris* Vetranio, certified that this copy matches the original document (*recognoui ex litteris*) in the presence of the aforementioned people'. Above the double *l*'s of *l(itteris)*, one sees traces of ink, perhaps connected to the letter above (instead of *et*, one should read *ep*, which gives no meaningful sequence), or the result of scribal mistake.



At the end of the line, the text perhaps read *de[scripsique]* or rather *de[scripta]* as an object to *recognoui*: 'I certified the copy'.

⁴⁰ See e.g. *Liv.* 3, 57, 9 *cum ad ea bella dilectum edixissent, fauore plebis non iuniores modo sed emeritis etiam stipendiis pars magna uoluntariorum ad nomina danda praesto fuere, eoque non copia modo sed genere etiam militum, ueteranis admixtis, firmior exercitus fuit.*

⁴¹ J.-L. Mourgues, *Les formules «rescripsi» «recognovi» et les étapes de la rédaction des souscriptions impériales sous le Haut-Empire romain*, MEFRA 107 (1995) 255–300.

⁴² See at fn. 1 for the Powerpoint presentations of the LAREGRE seminars, nominally seminar 4 'I will subscribe gentle adieux and greetings. Latin Tags for Late Antique Documents'.

⁴³ = *ChLA* XX 706, TM 114813.

5. Latin official document

P.Vindob. L 83⁴⁴
Egypt

12 × 19 cm

late IV–V AD
Plate 11 Fig. 5

A brown, extremely scratched papyrus written in dark ink, now badly damaged. The lower margin might be visible (3 cm). The texts consist of the remnants of 14 entirely Latin lines, one of which (l. 5) is blank. The interlinear space between lines is 0.6 cm on average; the notional baseline constantly fluctuates and the scribe seems unable to maintain a straight writing line. The papyrus is written along the fibres on the *verso* of the document; the other side is blank. A close palaeographic parallel is a triplet of Latin military papyri from AD 399 Egypt⁴⁵, especially for *a d m n*; for a very similar *d* and *f*, see *P.Ryl.* IV 615 (IV–V AD)⁴⁶; and *ChLA* XLIII 1248⁴⁷ (AD 401) for *a c d o*. There is no way to determine whether one hand or more was involved in writing this papyrus; it is clear at first sight, however, that from l. 10 onwards the letters become larger and less careful in execution, whereas before that line, i.e. 7–8, they are neatly drawn and put together in an orderly manner.

The document appears to be fully in Latin, rather than presenting a Latin frame and Greek text; so far, a *Prozeßverhandlung*, or record of proceedings, can be ruled out. The Latin documents from Late Antique Egypt included petitions — from soldiers or private citizens to the higher authorities of the province or the emperor(s); orders or reprimand letters — in short, communications internal to the military or civil bureaus; and copies of Imperial constitutions and rescripts, as well as communications from the Pretorian prefects⁴⁸. What little survives of this document does not point to any specific interpretation, and the deplorable condition of most of the surviving text makes this a tentative edition. The speaking person seems to be a plural entity (l. 7 *et inputauimus*), unless the reading at l. 9 (*reçusaou*) holds; they seem to mention a higher rank, perhaps the emperor (l. 10 *d(ominorum)*) and specific events in specific places (ll. 8–9 *urc(eorum) myrīad(es) ... ad meṭr(opolim) Kaḷ(endis) S(eptembribus)*). The last two lines (13–14) possibly represent a final paragraph or a post-scriptum, as they are separated from the previous lines by a blank space. Since there are several abbreviations, marked and unmarked, which is seldom the case in the fully Latin texts of this period — at least in the main portion of the text⁴⁹ — this might be a copy arranged for a specific purpose.

⁴⁴ TM 70094.

⁴⁵ *ChLA* XLV 1328 (= P.Vindob. L 119 + 120 + 121), TM 23788 + 18755 + 18756.

⁴⁶ TM 32758.

⁴⁷ TM 12866.

⁴⁸ As previously specified, for a discussion of Latin documents, i.e. *fully Latin texts*, from Late Antique Egypt and the types they comprise, see the Powerpoint presentation mentioned at fn. 1 (https://www.academia.edu/70291181/The_Common_Ancestor_Latin_Letters_in_Late_Antique_Papyri_and_Late_Prose_LAREGRE_seminar_1_ [last accessed 18/12/2024]).

⁴⁹ In texts like the abovementioned *ChLA* XIX 687 (AD 317–324), *P.Abinn.* 2 (AD 344), *ChLA* XLV 1320 (AD 399), *P.Ryl.* IV 609 (AD 505), abbreviations are usually confined to the introduction of the letter, or *praescriptum*.

ραλαβόντα μου κοι-
 νωνείαν ἐς ἡμέρας
 ζῆ δεκαπένται αὐτῆ
 ἀπόλεσα Βειταλεια-
 νός. Κύζη μου, κόζου.

The use of *myriades* in this particular case might be linked to the protagonists of the inscription, being (also) native Greek speakers and living their entire lives in the Eastern Grecophone portion of the Empire; when setting up the tombstone, they probably stumbled on a Greek word while drafting the Latin text. If the reconstruction holds, a large quantity of *urcei* ‘jars’ (a measure so far unattested in Egyptian documents) each containing something, is being spent by a plural entity (*effunditis*) for something.

9 A place and fixed date are provided, and followed by numbers. The use of *metropolis* suggests that the document specifically refers to the Egyptian countryside. The Greek word μητρόπολις is sometimes rendered as *metropolis* in early-stage Latin documents⁵¹.

10 Very little survives here, except for the reference to a speech from, perhaps, two or more emperors. The *l* of *adl* projects to the right, and the following two *d*’s are written slightly above the prolonged stroke. The word preceding *adl* is not clearly legible; I have tentatively resorted to the singular future *recusabo*, written *recusauo* — again, supposing a mistake of *u* for *b*. Below the final *o*, two oblique strokes are drawn, one above the other; they might signify that the word ending in *-o* is in fact abbreviated. They seem to be followed by a short blank space; perhaps the oblique strokes mark a pause in the sentence⁵².

11 The line seems to contain two personal names: a *Max(imus)*, abbreviated by an oblique stroke, and a name ending in *-auto*, followed by *fratē[r]*, which I have tentatively reconstructed as *Bauto*, the name of the renown *magister militum* of Gratian (cfr. *PLRE* I, pp. 159–160). The scribe seems to have initially drawn an *a* after *r*, then to have added a short stroke below the letter to change it into *b*; then he has formed a ligature *au* similar to those visible in *inputauimus* (l. 7) and *recusauo* (l. 10). Even if the reconstruction holds, there is no proof that this *Bauto* and the *magister militum* are the same individual. It is uncertain both what the ending of the line says and what it means. I am tempted to read *u(ir) l(audabilis)* after *Max(imus)*, but the letter before *l* is unlikely to be *u*.

12 Apparently, the plural past participle from *nanciscor*. A wide blank space opens up after this word, the last letters of which are ornamentally elongated suggesting the end of a paragraph or a line. The last three lines (13–15) might be a later addition.

⁵¹ In *PSI* XI 1183 (AD 47/48), *ChLA* XLI 1191 (I–II AD, TM 70012), *PSI* IX 1027 (AD 151, TM 13757), *M.Chr.* 327 (AD 170, TM 9922), *O.Wilck.* 1266 (II AD, TM 77650), *P.Diog.* 10 (AD 211, TM 10689).

⁵² For this rare, but attested usage of the long oblique stroke in Latin documents on papyrus, see the relevant paragraph in the abovementioned Iovine, *A Survey* (note 27).

4 [- - et Con]s[τ]antino nob(ilissimo) Caes(are) I co(n)s(ulibus)

3]χαι corr. from]χiv washed out || 4 nob | coss

1–2 Where the letter is uncertain, only dot-like traces are visible.

3 The scribe wrote *iota* instead of εἰ (perhaps iotacism), then washed it out and overwrote. In the greeting formula, there seems to be a blank space between ερ and ρωσο, mostly vanished in a hole. Perhaps the subscribing authority made a mistake in the lacuna and erased it, then resumed writing after the cancelled letter(s).

4 Regarding *nobilissimus* (usually rendered in Greek with ἱερώτατος or ἐπιφανέστατος) added to the names of the *Caesares* — heirs to the Imperial throne — see H. G. Pflaum, *Titulature et rang social sous le Haut-Empire*, in C. Nicolet (éd.), *Recherches sur les structures sociales dans l'Antiquité classique*, Paris 1970, 159–185 (160–164); and F. Mitthof, *Vom ἱερώτατος Καῖσαρ zum ἐπιφανέστατος Καῖσαρ. Die Ehrenprädikate in der Titulatur der Thronfolger des 3. Jh. n.Chr. nach den Papyri*, ZPE 99 (1993) 97–111. The practice is also documented to have occurred regularly in the IV century AD, and slightly later⁵⁶. The first consulship of the second consul is provided with the figure *I*, something that seldom happened in Roman dating formulae before the IV century AD⁵⁷. The date is uncertain because this Constantine might be either Flavius Valerius Constantinus, i.e. Constantine the Great, who was second consul for the first time in AD 307 (as ‘Caesar’, with Emperor Maximian), or his son, Flavius Claudius Constantinus, later Constantine II, who occupied the same position in AD 320 (with his father as emperor).

7. End of a document and subscription

P.Vindob. L 148 *recto*⁵⁸
Egypt

10 × 11 cm

IV–V AD
Plate 13 Fig. 7

A rectangular, almost square-shaped scrap. On the *verso*, Greek tachygraphic signs. On the *recto*, the sheet appears to be divided into two sections, *a* and *b*, each containing a portion of a different document, separated from each other by a *kollesis*, which suggests that the original documents were pasted together to obtain a clean *verso* on which the

⁵⁶ See e.g. *BGU* XIII 2334 ll. 13–14 καὶ (ἕτους) ιβ τῶν κυρίων ἡμῶν Κωνσταντίου | καὶ Μαξιμιανοῦ τῶν ἐπιφανεστάτων Καϊσάρων (AD 304, TM 22667), *P.Sakaon* 33 l. 1 *d(ominis) n(ostris) Constantino Aug(usto) VI et Constantino [no]b(ilissimo) Caes(are) I co(n)s(ulibus)* (AD 320, TM 13051), *P.Sakaon* 34 l. 1 *d(ominis) n(ostris) Lici[n]io Aug(usto) VI et Licinio nob(ilissimo) Caes(are) II co(n)s(ulibus)* (AD 321, TM 13052), *P.Kell.* I 23 l. 30 καὶ [Κ]ωνσταντίου τοῦ ἐπιφανεστάτου Καίσαρος τὸ β (AD 353, TM 20288), *P.Strasb.Gr.* VII 639 ll. 2–3 καὶ Οὐαλεν]τινιανοῦ τοῦ ἐπιφανεστά[του Καίσαρος (AD 425, TM 16494).

⁵⁷ E.g. when names in the consular couple were omitted after *damnatio memoriae*, leaving only the figures to identify them (*III et II cos, II et I cos*, etc.): this happens in Dura papyri and has been investigated by J. F. Gilliam in *Trebonianus Gallus and the Decii: III et I cos*, in *Studi in onore di Aristide Calderini e Andrea Paribeni*, Milano 1956, 305–311. It is a rare practice after the III AD as well: it appears e.g. in the aforementioned *P.Sakaon* 33 l. 1 (see note 56).

⁵⁸ TM 70125.

tachygraphic signs could be drafted. Section *a*, written across the fibres, contains the last — almost completely lost — line of a Greek official document, and the subscription (*legimus*) with two crosses and one *staurogramma*. Very little can be said about the Latin script; the subscription is written with large letters, some of which have a cursive origin (*l, e, m, u; m* in particular is reminiscent of the coeval semi-uncial *m*) whereas others are clearly taken from a more capital-like writing style (*g, s*). Section *b*, written along the fibres, contains scanty portions of 5 Greek lines starting right after the *kollesis*. No margin is visible, nor is the beginning of the Greek lines to be seen.

The content of both the original documents, *a* and *b*, is obscure. As for *a*, the presence of *legimus* and crosses and *staurogrammata* might suggest an official document in Greek from a provincial bureau in Egypt, subscribed by the issuing authority with a Latin formula. In Late Antique documents, the few Latin *legi* that do appear are employed as validating subscriptions and usually put there by the issuing office, rather than by a clerk from the receiving bureau⁵⁹.

Fr. *a*

↓ 1] ιερερον[

2 † † legimus †

1 The reconstructed word is highly conjectural.

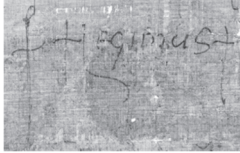
2 The word is preceded and followed by two crosses, quite similar to each other; before the first cross, a taller and larger *staurogramma* has been drafted. Signs such as these and their significance are discussed in N. Carlig, *Les symboles chrétiens dans les papyrus littéraires et documentaires grecs: forme, disposition et fonction (III^e – VII^e/VIII^e siècles)*, in: N. Carlig, G. Lescuyer, A. Motte, N. Sojic (eds.), *Signes dans les textes. Continuités et ruptures des pratiques sribales en Égypte pharaonique, gréco-romaine et byzantine. Actes du colloque international de Liège (2–4 juin 2016)*, Liège 2020, 271–281. This particular subscription is noteworthy in two respects: first, because it is as yet unparalleled, in that only *legi* has been found in Late Antique documents from Egypt (and not the plural *legimus*); second, because so far only one *legi* from this particular set of documents was known to be associated with crosses, namely that in *P.Oxy.* VIII 1106⁶⁰ (V–VI AD). This document is an official letter in which some high-ranking military man orders another to go and defend a village being harassed by marauders. Apparently, both the sender (who did not write the document) and the scribe put their *legi* there in the writing frame; only one of them is relevant here, as it is surrounded by crosses, whereas the other is a completely different script without any crosses and has apparently been drawn by the scribe himself — *legi scribus*, a mistaken rendering of *legi scriba* ‘I, the scribe, read (this)’.

⁵⁹ See the Powerpoint presentation mentioned at fn. 1 (n. 4) for a preliminary account of *legi* in Late Antique papyri from Egypt.

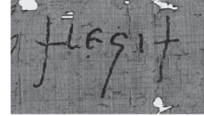
⁶⁰ TM 37834.

As regards the first occurrences, perhaps the issuing authority was perceived, or wanted to be perceived, as a plural entity — namely, two emperors or two Praetorian prefects, if the documents had been issued by the highest chanceries; without the original text, however, this remains a conjecture. The second particular acquires even more relevance if the two subscriptions, the *legimus* and *legi*, are compared:

ChLA XLV 1350 *recto* = P.Vindob. L 148



P.Oxy. VIII 1106



The two individuals draft *e* and *g* in a quite similar way; the crosses are also roughly in the same position and have a similar orientation. It is certain that the *legi* in P.Oxy. 1106 was not drafted by the scribe of the main document, as he subscribed himself (*legi scribus*) below the first *legi*. At the same time, the *legimus* was probably put there by the authority issuing the document rather than the person who drafted the main text. A tempting explanation for these similarities is that they suggest not the same scribe — indeed, much more evidence would be required to justify this assertion — but that the two documents were issued by the same office where this specific way of drawing *legi* or *legimus* was employed.

Fr. b⁶¹

→ 1] . ν . [

2] . α ω ς [

3] ἀ πο δει [

4] του και [

5] . ο δ ω ρ ο [

3 Perhaps ἀ πο δει [ζ .

5 Perhaps Θ] ξ ο δ ω ρ ο [.

⁶¹ I owe most of the readings here to Reviewer 1.

APPENDIX. P.Vindob. L 64

End of a tabellionic document with *di emu* subscription

P.Vindob. L 64⁶²
Egypt

9.3 × 7.6 cm

V–VI AD
Plate 13 Fig. 8

Portion of the last two Greek lines of a contract, written across the fibres; then a σταυρόγραμμα and the left portion of a *di emu*-subscription (3 cm from the Greek line), in large Latin letters (0.7 to 2.5 cm in height). Above it, in smaller letters, the left portion of the same formula, again in Latin characters (1.5 cm from the Greek line). The Latin script is a New Roman Cursive, as expected, with no distinctive features: it is elongated and slightly sloping to the right, tending towards round strokes. The initial *d* has been drawn in two strokes, the second of which is purely ornamental; the second *e* (*emu*) is different from the first one (closer to an old-Roman-cursive *e*) and bears a *macron* above it.

This text, soon to appear as a micro-entry in the *CLTP*, is a remnant from a longer contract that belonged to a widely known documentary type used in Late Antique Egypt, the tabellionic document with a notarial subscription δι' ἐμοῦ ~ *di emu*⁶³. The content of the original document is lost; so are the qualifications Menas attached to his name, if there were any such qualifications.

⁶² No TM number so far.

⁶³ This type is discussed in detail in V. Gardthausen, *Di emu der ägyptischen Notare*, SPP 17 (1917) 1–8; M. Diethart, K. A. Worp, *Notarsunterschriften im Byzantinischen Ägypten* (MPER N. S. XVI), Wien 1986; M. Amelotti, *Notai nel mondo greco-romano: Odoacre e Siracusa*, *Minima Epigraphica et Papyrologica* 5–6 (2003) 53–58; D. Feissel, *Écrire grec en alphabet latin: le cas des documents protobyzantins*, in: F. Biville, J. C. Decourt, G. Rougemont (éds.), *Bilinguisme gréco-latin et épigraphie. Actes du colloque organisé à l'Université Lumière-Lyon 2. Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée-Jean Pouilloux le 17, 18 et 19 mai 2004*, Lyon (2008), 213–230; S. Kovarik, *Die byzantinische Tabellionenurkunde in Ägypten*, in: C. Gastgeber (ed.), *Quellen zur byzantinischen Rechtspraxis, Aspekte der Textüberlieferung, Paläographie und Diplomatie, Akten des internationalen Symposiums, Wien, 5.–7. 11. 2007*, Vienna 2010, 27–38; G. Azzarello, *Tale padre, tale figlio? Riflessioni sulla prassi notarile bizantina a Ossirinco*, in: V. Formentin, S. Contarini, F. Rognoni, M. Romero Allué, R. Zucco (eds.), *Lingua, letteratura e umanità. Studi offerti dagli amici ad Antonio Daniele*, Padova 2016, 51–71; J.-L. Fournet, *La pratique du Latin dans l'Égypte de l'Antiquité tardive*, in: A. Garcea, M. Rosellini, L. Silvano (eds.), *Latin in Byzantium I. Late Antiquity and Beyond*, Turnhout 2019, 73–91; A. Apostolakou, *The Interrelationship between Scriptal and Linguistic Variation in Notary Signatures of Greek Contracts from Late Antique Egypt*, JJP 50 (2020) 1–47; S. Kovarik, *The Evolution of the Notarial Signature in Late Antique Egypt. A Diachronic Comparison of the Middle Egyptian Evidence (Province of Arcadia: Arsinoite, Heracleopolite, Oxyrhynchite)*, in: A. Ghignoli, M. Boccuzzi, A. Monte, N. Sietis (eds.), *Segni, sogni, materie e scrittura dall'Egitto tardoantico all'Europa carolingia*, Roma 2023, 71–118.

common transliteration appearing in Byzantine contracts⁷². None of the Μηνῶc documented to date uses *e* with a macron above it to transliterate his own name. The rendering *Menas* for Μηνῶc, without a *macron*, is found in *SB XXVIII 17014*⁷³ (AD 528), *P.Gen. IV 192*⁷⁴ (AD 532), *SB VIII 9876*⁷⁵ (AD 534; apparently the same Menas of *SB 17014*⁷⁶), and *P.Gascou 41*⁷⁷ (AD 587 or 602 or 617).

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⁷² Cfr. Kovarik, *The Evolution* (note 63) 81–85, part. p. 81 ‘long *e* is represented by the Latin letter *h* which graphically looks the same as Greek η, but it is also used for Latin *h* in digraphs *ch* and *th* for χ and θ’.

⁷³ TM 383639.

⁷⁴ TM 129813.

⁷⁵ TM 22923.

⁷⁶ See N. Gonis, *Six Documentary Fragments from Oxford Collections*, *JJP* 33 (2003) 67–76: 74.

⁷⁷ TM 702544.

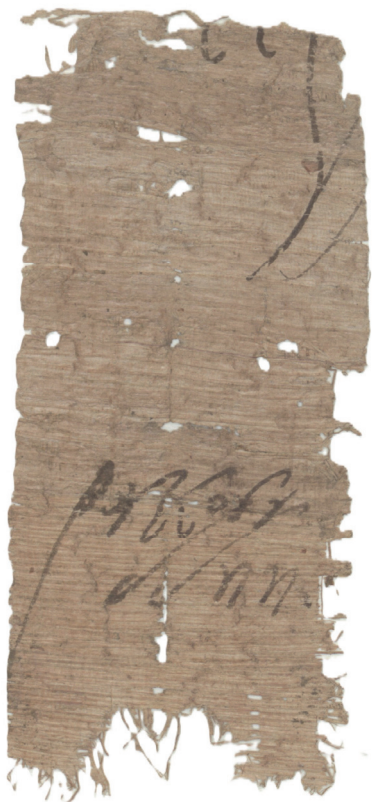


Fig. 1: P.Vindob. L 29 (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Papyrussammlung)



Fig. 2: P.Vindob. L 53 (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Papyrussammlung)

zu G. Iovine, Latin and Latin-Greek Papyri, S. 68 und 69

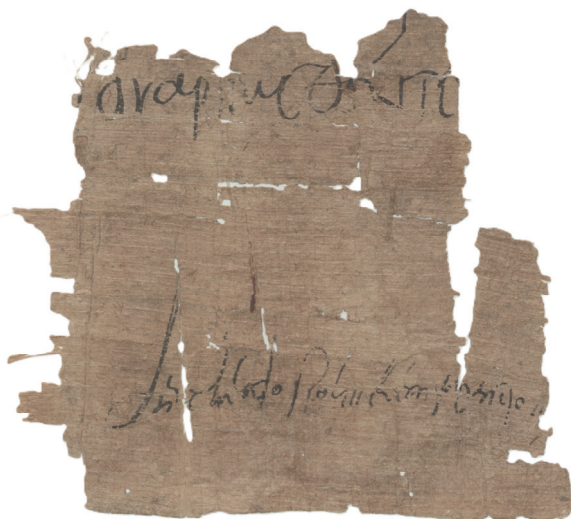


Fig. 3: P.Vindob. L 54 + 55 (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Papyrussammlung)

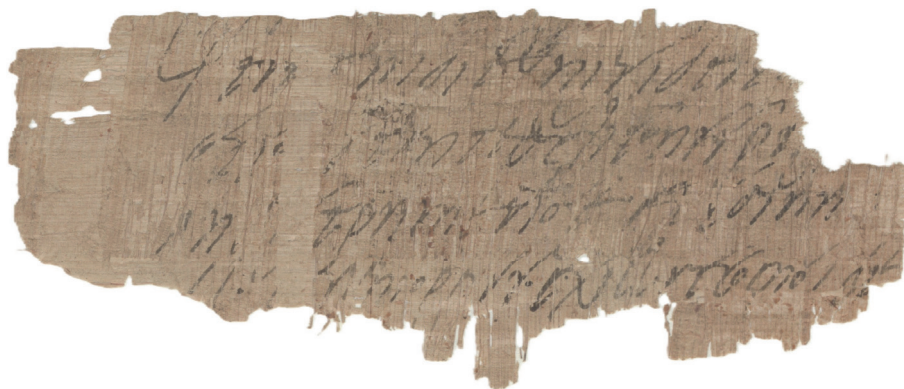


Fig. 4: P.Vindob. L 78 verso (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Papyrussammlung)

zu G. Iovine, *Latin and Latin-Greek Papyri*, S. 71 und 72



Fig. 5: P.Vindob. L 83 (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Papyrussammlung)

zu G. Iovine, Latin and Latin-Greek Papyri, S. 77



Fig. 6: P.Vindob. L 131 (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Papyrussammlung)

zu G. Iovine, *Latin and Latin-Greek Papyri*, S. 80

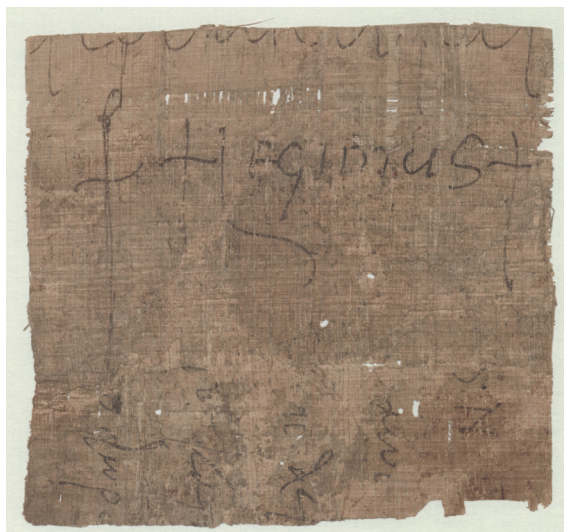


Fig. 7: P.Vindob. L 148 recto
(Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Papyrussammlung)

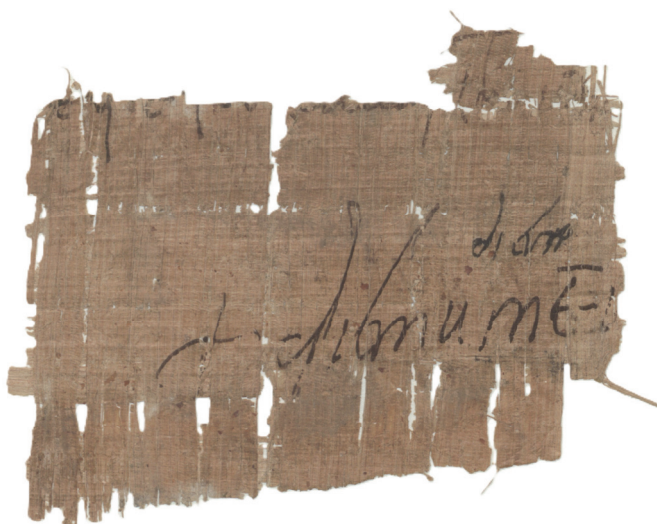


Fig. 8: P.Vindob. L 64 (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Papyrussammlung)

zu G. Iovine, Latin and Latin-Greek Papyri, S. 81 und 84