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Material Aspects of Letter Writing in the Graeco-Roman World

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500 BC – AD 300

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Contents

Preface

Letter writing was widespread in the Graeco-Roman world, as indicated by the large number of surviving letters and their extensive coverage of all social categories. Besides literary letters, which have survived by being copied in medieval anthologies, there is a large corpus of ancient letters that have survived on their original materials. The bulk of this corpus consists of letters on papyrus and ostraca, mainly in Greek, found in Egypt. There is also scattered evidence from other places, such as the Latin letters on wooden tablets from Vindolanda (England), which suggests that Egypt is atypical in terms of preservation, not in production.[1]

Letter writing in the ancient world has been the subject of studies based mainly on literary letters, real or fictional.[2] Letters on papyrus have attracted the interest of scholarship since the earliest publications of papyri, but the focus has mainly been on their language and content, the variations in formula and structure, and specific themes.[3] An aspect of letter writing, however, that has remained underexplored is the material, format and other visual details in ancient letters, which the present work attempts to address.

In the past, any such analysis was impeded by the difficulty of accessing photographs and the paucity of information provided by editors about the material and visual elements of ancient documents. However, thanks to the increasing availability of digital images and more sophisticated editions, we are now in a position to study such aspects across a wide corpus of ancient letters. Almost all the letters that are mentioned in this book have a published image in print and/or online: For printed images I provide a reference to the source that I have consulted. For online images I give the link to the papyrus edition in *papyri.info*, where there is a further link to the published image of the institution that holds each papyrus; this method has seemed preferable, because the *papyri.info* URLs are transparent and stable, and the links to images found there are generally kept up-to-date through the *Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens* (*HGV*).

In this book I have tried to sketch an overview of the changes in the trends of letter writing from the classical Greek world to the Roman Empire, through an examination of the development of the ways in which letters were used, their function and types, materials, format, and palaeography. Aspects discussed are the materials that were used for letter writing in antiquity, their survival patterns, the chronological development of their format from archaic to Roman times, the layout of letters, methods of authentication and the distinction between letters written by secretaries and letters written by their authors. The language of letters has not been covered extensively in

1 Bagnall 2011.

2 See bibliography in Poster/Mitchell 2007, 245–283. For later additions see Ceccarelli 2013.

3 See bibliography in Luiselli 2008, 720–734.

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this book, however some aspects pertaining to linguistic style are discussed, to show what was regarded as "elegant" in relationship to the socio-cultural background of the writers and the function of each letter. Through this, it is hoped that the language of the letters will offer insight into the societies that created them.

The timeframe of the present work is ca. 500 BC–ca. AD 300, which is defined by the earliest Greek letters that survive on their original materials and the onset of the Late Antiquity. The latter is conventionally placed between AD 284, with the ascension and reforms of Diocletian, and AD 313, when Constantine the Great and Licinius issued the edict of Milan, which helped the spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire, or AD 330, when Constantine founded Constantinople, the new capital of the Roman Empire. Focus has been placed on the Roman period, due to the rich papyrological evidence that has survived from Egypt and the introduction of new features in letters, such as the use of personal signatures as a means of authentication. Many of the features that were introduced in Roman times continued and got further developed in Late Antiquity; however, the evolution of letter writing in Late Antiquity has not been included in this project, because Late Antiquity has its own peculiarities related to religious, cultural and social changes that merit separate study.

The first chapter provides a general overview of the establishment and development of letter writing in the Graeco-Roman world, from archaic to Roman imperial times, in parallel with the development of the definition of the term "epistole" and its derivatives. It further examines the differences and similarities between literary and non-literary letters and some linguistic features that are characteristic in letters. The second chapter provides a closer view of the chronological, geographical, and typological distribution of the materials that were used for letters (lead, papyrus, ostraca, wood, leather-parchment). Chapter three examines the development of the format and layout of letters, discussing new features that were introduced in each period. Chapter four deals with the authentication of ancient letters, focusing especially on the handwriting of the farewell greetings and proposing a method to distinguish between changes of hands and changes in the style of handwriting in this position. At the end of the book, there are three appendices: In Appendix I there is a list of the known archives of letters, based on combined data from Trismegistos and *HGV*. Appendix II provides a list of the dimensions of a large number of completely preserved letters. In Appendix III there is a selection of letters with "handshifts".

Literary texts are cited according to the text and translation of the Loeb Classical Library editions. Translations of ancient letters, if not otherwise indicated, are my own. Greek names have been transliterated into English according to the usual conventions, but common anglicised Latin words and grecicised Latin names are spelled in Latin in translations (e.g. Aurelius, Claudius, Flavius). The dimensions of letters are expressed in centimetres, w(idth) × h(eight).

The research for and writing of this book was completed in June 2015, when the manuscript was accepted for publication. Since then minor editorial changes have been made, but it has not been possible to take publications into account that have appeared since then.

1 The Development of the Ancient Letter

A general definition of the ancient letter would be a message written on a transferable medium to be carried by a third person to the addressee for the purpose of communication between sender(s) and addressee(s), who are separated by distance.[4] Essential elements of a letter are the sender, the addressee, the message, the medium, and the carrier. However, if one looks at the surviving corpus of letters from Graeco-Roman times, one realises that this general definition covers only partly the scope of letter writing. Besides ordinary letters that functioned as messages for the communication between two parties, letters were also used in official life for administrative purposes or as an outer format for many other types of texts, such as contracts or literary treatises.[5]

The list of types of letters that existed according to their content and function can become long, depending on the degree of detail with which one wishes to analyse the categories. Since Hellenistic and Roman times there have been several treatises on epistolary theory that have tried to distinguish types of letters. Each theorist, according to his perspective and cultural backround, has presented a different number and classification of the types of letters.[6] For example Cicero distinguished between two types of letters, public and private, and different styles of letters, of which he mentioned two, the serious and the intimate or humorous.[7] Ps.-Demetrius categorised letters according to their style into twenty-one types,[8] while a treatise attributed to the rhetor Libanius or Proclus mentions forty-one types according to their style.[9] Ps.-Demetrius and ps.-Libanius coincide in some types but differ in others.[10] Julius Victor, on the other hand, categorised the letters simply as official or personal.[11]

In modern times, Sykutris made a typological categorisation of ancient letters according to their content, distinguishing them as private, as literary (recognising that the borders between literary and private letters can be blurred), as forms of public speech, as moral teachings or literature, as *pseudepigrapha* letters, as official

4 Trapp 2003, 1; see also Gibson/Morrison 2007, 1–16.

5 For the variety of uses of official letters in the ancient world see e.g. Yiftach-Firanko 2013

6 For the categorisations of letters by ancient epistolary theorists see Malherbe 1988, 12–13.

7 Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 37 (types of letters); *Ad Familiares* 2.4.1 (styles of letters).

8 E.g. friendly, commendatory, blaming, reproachful, consoling etc. ps.-Demetrius, *Τύποι ἐπιστολικοί* (*Epistolary Types*). See below p. 28 and Malherbe 1988, 30–31.

9 E.g. paraenetic, blaming, requesting, commending, ironic etc. ps.-Libanius or Proclus, *Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι χαρακτῆρες* (*Epistolary Styles*). See below p. 28 and Malherbe 1988, 66–67.

10 E.g. μεμπτική/-ός (blaming), ἐπαινετική/-ός (praising) and συγχαρητική/-ός (congratulatory) are included in both ps.-Demetrius and ps.-Libanius, but ἐπιτιμητικός (censorious) is mentioned only by ps.-Demetrius, and αἰνιγματική (enigmatic) is mentioned only by ps.-Libanius.

11 Julius Victor, *Ars rhetorica* 27: Epistolarum species duplex est; sunt enim aut negotiales aut familiares ("There are two kinds of letters: they are either official or personal", transl. Malherbe 1988, 63).

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letters.[12] In the papyrological database of *HGV*, which contains records for almost all published letters surviving on their original materials, mainly from Egypt but also from other places in the Graeco-Roman world, letters have been divided into three types: official, business and private (some, especially fragmentary ones, are uncategorised), although as explained below, it may be preferable to divide them into two types, official and private.[13]

It is clear from the above that the definition of ancient letters is complicated, not only due to the great differentiation between the types of letters, the blurred borders between and the mixing of some categories, but also because of the broad applicability of the epistolary form for other types of texts. The boundaries that distinguish letters from other types of texts are not always clear, a difficulty that was already recognised by ancient epistolary theorists.[14] Furthermore, neither the use nor the format of ancient letters was stable, but it developed over time, according to the socio-political context and the communicational needs of each period, parallel to development in the meaning of the Greek term "ἐπιστολή" (epistle, letter) and the gradual establishment of letter writing in the Graeco-Roman world. It has therefore seemed preferable to define ancient letters by giving a brief description of the evolution of the function and applicability of letters, as well as of the sense of the term ἐπιστολή from the earliest surviving evidence in archaic times to the end of the Roman period, by which time the definition of the term "letter" had clearly stabilised.

1.1 The Use of Letters in Official Life

Letter writing was used in the ancient Near East long before the earliest attestations of Greek letters.[15] In the Greek world the earliest references to letters begin in archaic literature with the letter mentioned in the story of Bellerophontes, which contained a malign message instructing the addressee to kill the letter carrier (Homer, *Iliad* VI 118). In classical times, and especially in the last half of the fifth century, references to letters in literature multiply in a way that shows that people were familiar with letter writing in their private life. For example, letters were presented in drama to

12 Sykutris 1931.

13 The *Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens* (*HGV*) database is available at http://aquila.zaw.uni-heidelberg.de/start (last accessed: 1.11.2014). For the typological categorization of letters see also the discussion below p. 65ff.

14 For example Demetrius, while commenting on the proper length of a letter, states that "the length of a letter, no less than its range of style, should be restricted. Those that are too long, not to mention too inflated in style, are not in any true sense letters at all but treatises with the heading, 'Dear Sir'. This is true of many of Platos', and of that of Thucydides." (*De elocutione* 228, transl. Innes 1999[2]).

15 For letter writing in Pharaonic Egypt see Bakir 1970; Meltzer 1990. For the ancient Near Eastern kingdoms see Bryce 2003; Cancik/Kirschbaum 1996; Eidem/Læssøe 2001.

advance the plot, such as the letter of Iphigenia in Euripides' *Iphigenia Taurica*, which propels the plot to the recognition between Iphigenia and Orestes. It has been stated that in many cases the letters that appear in archaic and classical literature were used to convey secretive, suspicious, deceptive messages, as in the letter of Phaedra in Euripides *Hippolytus*, which leads to the death of Hippolytus, and in the letter of Agamemnon in *Iphigenia in Aulis*, which leads to the death of Iphigenia, suggesting that letter writing may have had negative connotations in classical times.[16] A relevant statement of Aeschylus in the *Supplices* that oral speech guarantees the truth of the words seems to reflect this view.[17] Along the same lines is a joke in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousae*, ταῦτ'ἐγὼ φανερῶς λέγω· τὰ δ'ἄλλα μετὰ τῆς γραμματέως συγγράψομαι ("That is what I announce publicly; as to certain other points I will record them in the secretary's minutes").[18]

It has been suggested that the negative connotations that letters appear to have in sixth and fifth century literature and the respective trust in the oral word may be related to the political conditions that applied in the societies where the literature was created.[19] In democratic Athens, where all public matters used to be discussed openly in the assembly, letters with private messages could have been regarded as suspicious. For this reason, in democratic cities like Athens, communication between the city and its delegates, ambassadors or generals, used to be carried out by heralds. Since anything related to public matters did not need to be kept secret from the citizens, messages did not have to be kept secret from the heralds. For official dealings with other states, ambassadors (πρέσβεις) were usually sent, who represented the city as its delegates. Official messages between cities used to be delivered orally by messengers (ἄγγελοι) or heralds (κήρυκες).[20] For longer distances or at war campaigns fast-runners were preferred as messengers; these were called day-runners (ἡμεροδρόμοι) or runner-heralds (δρομοκήρυκες).[21] The advantage of oral messages was that messages had better chances to survive, if heralds encountered hard conditions or even enemies.[22] This is the reason given by Euripides in *Iphigenia Taurica*

16 Harris 1989, 88; Rosenmeyer 2001, 61–97, esp. 71.

17 Aeschylus, *Supplices* 946–949 ταῦτ'οὐ πίναξίν ἐστιν ἐγγεγραμμένα οὐδ'ἐν πτυχαῖς βύβλων κατεσφραγισμένα, σαφῆ δ'ἀκούεις ἐξ ἐλευθεροστόμου γλώσσης, "these words are not written on tablets, nor sealed up in a folded sheet of papyrus: you hear them plainly from the lips and tongue of a free man." (Transl. Sommerstein 2008).

18 Aristophanes *Thesmophoriazousae* 431–432 (Transl. Henderson 2000).

19 Lewis 1996, 147; Ceccarelli 2005, 345–369; 2013, 331–332.

20 For the delivery of messages in archaic and classical Greece see Lewis 1996, 142–153.

21 Famous is the ἡμεροδρόμης Φιλιππίδης, who ran from Athens to Sparta in two days (Herodotus 6.105). See also Aeschines, *De falsa legatione* 130 for the δρομοκήρυκες of Phalaecus, the Phocian tyrant.

22 Heralds were sacred in antiquity and, even if enemies captured them, they would not be tortured to reveal the message (Lewis 1996, 148); whereas a letter could be lost or caught by an enemy on the

when Iphigenia disclosed the content of her letter in order to enhance the chances of its secure delivery.[23] Although messengers carried mostly oral messages, they also carried letters if required. The carrier of a letter usually knew the information written in the message and could give additional information and clarification if necessary.

Contrary to Athens, in monarchic and oligarchic regimes letters were common for official communications, because private dealings were part of the way of ruling, and messages needed to be carried for that reason in secrecy.[24] There are several examples of letters in the *Histories* of Herodotus that were delivered secretly; these mostly relate to Persian kings or Greek tyrants and elites.[25] Both Herodotus and Xenophon describe the efficiency of the Persian postal system, which enabled the speediest possible delivery of messages in antiquity and enabled the control and administration of the vast Persian Empire.[26] The postal system consisted of a network of roads, with post stations on the way, placed at a distance equal to one-day journey-by-horse from each other. The letter carriers (called ἄγγαροι) carried the messages in relay, each carrier being responsible to carry the message for a fixed distance and deliver it to the post station, from where the next letter carrier would carry it further. The relay post system required a trustworthy way to guarantee the authenticity of the messages, and it has been suggested that this was perhaps managed by equipping the royal messengers and envoys with a royal seal.[27] In oligarchic Sparta, letters were used in official communications for the transfer of messages between the ephors and generals who had been sent to war campaigns, and they were written with the cryptographic method of the *scytale*.[28]

The above views about the use of letters in official life, however, need not imply that letters were not common in the private life of Athens and other cities of the classical Greek world.[29] As the evidence of lead letters shows, letter writing must have been

way. For example, Thucydides (4.50) reports that the Athenians caught a carrier and confiscated a letter that he was carrying from Artaphernes to the Spartans.

23 Euripides, *Iphigenia Taurica* 727–787.

24 Lewis 1996, 147; Ceccarelli 2005, 345–369 and 2013, 331–332.

25 Herodotus focuses on the ways that were devised for the delivery of letters; for example the letter from Harpagus to Cyrus was transferred in a hare (Herodotus 1.123); the letter from Histiaeus to Aristagoras was tattooed on the head of a slave (Herodotus 5.35); the letter from Demaratos to the Spartans was hidden under the wax layer on a wooden tablet (Herodotus 7.239). See further Rosenmeyer 2001, 45–60; Ceccarelli 2013, 113–130; Sickinger 2013, 126–127.

26 Herodotus 8.98; Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8.6.17–18.

27 See Radner 2008, 481–515 and Kuhrt 2014, 125. The Persian system continued and advanced the postal systems of earlier Near Eastern kingdoms, for which see Radner 2014.

28 A stick of wood with a strip of leather wound around it, on which the sender wrote the message. The recipient had a stick of the same diameter as the sender, so when he received the strip, he wrapped it around his stick to read the message.

29 The view of Lewis 1996, 142 and Harris 1989, 88 that personal communication through letters was not common in Classical Greece may be explained by the fact that relatively few letters on lead had

common for communications related to private life in the whole archaic and classical Greek world. Although lead is not mentioned as a writing material in any of the classical literary sources, thanks to their durable material, letters on lead sheets have survived from various places of the ancient world, including Athens.[30] These letters are representative of the private correspondence that circulated in archaic and classical times, while those written on perishable materials (e.g. wood) have been much more poorly preserved. The content of the surviving letters on lead shows that they were used for private communications, such as sending information, instructions, requests or other messages to relatives, friends or business associates. They were exchanged among ordinary people, including traders, women, slaves.

The linguistic style of the surviving letters on lead sheets and in contemporary literature shows that the basic epistolary formulas in the opening address and perhaps in the farewell greeting probably got standardised around the early fourth century BC. This suggests that by that time letter writing had been common and probably began to enter the public life of Athens too, since from about this time the use of official letters begins to be attested in Athens. According to the sophist Lucianus, the demagogue Kleon sent a letter to the Athenians from Sphakteria[31] and in the lexicon of Moeris it is reported that Kleon was the first to use the epistolary opening χαίρειν, despite the sad news that he included in his letter.[32] Nikias' letter in Thucydides is the earliest surviving letter from an Athenian general to the assembly.[33] Thucydides explains Nikias' reasons for preferring a letter over an oral message delivered by heralds, emphasising that Nikias wanted his words to be transferred exactly to the assembly, and he did not trust that the heralds would describe the situation accurately.[34] Nikias' view of the letter as an accurate means for direct communication is an aspect of letter writing which will be emphatically expressed by epistolary theorists in later times.[35] The written message was useful as a carrier of the exact words of the sender, and the deliverer was supposed to provide some extra information. The letter from Nikias to the Athenians was read to the Athenians in the assembly and the letter carriers announced additionally what Nikias had told them. The case of Nikias' letter indicates that in the fifth century written messages were thought as useful for the delivery of the exact words of the sender, however oral messages had not yet been replaced by letters.

been published by the early 1990s. Since then, the evidence has greatly increased, revealing that letters were extensively used in private life.

30 For the letters from archaic and classical times see below p. 40ff. and 53ff.

31 Lucianus, *Pro lapsu inter salutandum* 3.

32 Aelius Moeris Atticista, Lexicon atticum, letter *chi* 37.

33 Thucydides 7.10–14.

34 Thucydides 7.8.2.

35 For example, according to Demetrius' *De elocutione* 223, 227, letters functioned like speech in a written medium, like half of a dialogue, expressing exactly the mind of the author.

In the course of the fourth century the use of letters was gradually established in the official life of cities. Xenophon reveals that by his time letters were commonly used for official communications between generals and their cities in both Sparta and Athens.[36] The gradual change in the way that letters were used may be viewed as part of the overall tendency to replace oral speech with the written word in the end of the fifth century. This, for example, can be clearly observed in Athenian courts, where witness statements used to be presented orally and decrees to be read aloud by clerks in the courts, but from about 380 BC testimonies were deposited in writing by the litigant to the court.[37] The change from the oral to the written word was slow, since the belief that oral speech was more trustworthy than written did not cease to exist. As Isocrates comments, oral advice is preferable to advice through letters, because everyone believes the oral word more than the written one.[38]

Later, in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, this attitude changed and letters were used as a way to authorise official communications between cities or between generals and their cities and/or other generals. A characteristic example that illustrates the change in the way that letters were regarded in the Greek world is the story of Amasis and Polykrates, as narrated both by Herodotus and the Hellenistic historian Diodorus Siculus. According to Herodotus (3.40–42), Amasis sent a letter to his friend Polykrates, and the latter replied with a letter. After receiving Polykrates' reply, Amasis decided to officially end his relationship with Polykrates and sent a herald to announce it. However, in the account of Diodorus (1.95), the means of communications are inverted: Amasis sent first heralds to Polykrates to advise him to change his way of life, and when Polykrates refused to follow his advice, he sent a letter to officially end their relationship. The difference in the means of communication is indicative of the different role that letters played in official communications in Hellenistic times.

In Greece, letter writing was consolidated in the official life during the rule of Philip II and his son Alexander. A trustworthy and efficient system of letter writers and carriers was essential for monarchic regimes, in order to send messages confidentially, to communicate information between the ruler and remote regions of the Empire, and to manage any other administrative requirements. Such systems had already been developed in the ancient Near Eastern kingdoms, and Philip and Alexander used them, too, for the administration of their kingdoms and for official communications with the cities. Philip is reported as the founder of the royal chancery in Greece and of the introduction of the post of γραμματεύς (secretary) the official letter writer. Demosthenes and Aeschines refer to various letters from Greek kings and tyrants, but

36 Xenophon, *Hellenica* 1.7.4 and 1.7.17, from Athenian generals to Athens; *Hellenica* 1.1.23 from a Spartan general to Sparta (caught on the way by the Athenians).
37 Todd 1993, 96 n. 20.
38 Isocrates, *Ad Dionysium* 2–3.

mostly to letters from Philip.[39] It seems that this way of communication through letters had also an impact on how letters were used by democratic states. Thus, in Athens decisions continued to be discussed in the assembly and published as decrees, but letters were also common for official communications and were received in a formal way by the city: as Aristotle described, heralds or ambassadors would go to the *prytaneis* to announce their messages and letters had to be delivered to the *prytaneis*, too.[40] A public hearing of the letters in the ἐκκλησία followed, which is reminiscent of the reading of the letter of Nikias mentioned above.[41] Communications of Athens with generals who were on campaign or with other cities continued to be made through heralds and ambassadors, respectively, but communications from Athenian envoys to Athens were accomplished through letters.[42]

In Hellenistic kingdoms, the letters of kings acquired an official character, and many of them were published on stone like decrees in earlier times. The publication of kings' letters on stone began under Alexander and increased under the rule of his successors.[43] These letters had legislative power, replacing the decrees that democratic cities used to issue in the past. The publication was occasionally instructed by the kings, but in most cases it was decided upon by the recipient cities as an indication of loyalty to the king.[44] The cities usually rushed to publish centrally and thus "petrify" especially those letters that carried favourable decisions for them, while they were reluctant to publish those letters that were not favourable to them.[45]

A large number of official letters from Hellenistic times have survived thanks to their publication on stone.[46] However, the volume of letters used in the administration can be viewed most clearly in Egypt. There, the attested official correspondence is not limited to the types of letters that we know of from inscriptions, but includes all kinds of letters that were used for official communications at all levels, such as orders, instructions, requests, exchange of information between officials etc. Soil conditions have not permitted the survival of letters in Alexandria, where the Ptolemaic court was located, but many letters have been found in the Fayum or along the Nile valley,

39 Letters from Thracian kings to Athens are referred to in Demosthenes, *In Aristocratem* 151. Letters from Philip are mentioned, e.g., in Demosthenes *Olynthiaca* 6; *De Halonneso* 1; *De Chersoneso* 17; *In epistulam Philippi*; *De corona* 39, 77, 166, 221; *De falsa legatione* 38, 40, 51, 161. See further examples in Sickinger 2013, 129–130, and Ceccarelli 2013, 266.

40 Aristotle, *Ἀθηναίων πολιτεία* 43.6.

41 Thucydides 7.10, cf. above p. 9.

42 E.g. Demosthenes, *De falsa legatione* 174. See also Ceccarelli 2013, 275.

43 Sickinger 2013, 132–138; Bencivenni 2014, 141–171; Corcoran 2014, 172–209.

44 This was part of a mutual relationship of euergetism and loyalty between kings and cities, which is also evident in the language of the letters. See Ma 1999, 179–242.

45 Welles 1934, xl–xli.

46 See Welles 1934; Bencivenni 2014, 165–171 with a list of letters from the Seleukid and Attalid kingdoms.

in archives of minor officials. In other regions of the Graeco-Roman world the volume of epistolography must have been equally large, but original letters written on perishable materials have not survived.

An effective system of official communications requires a trustworthy postal service. In Greece, the postal service of official letters was probably systematised under Alexander, who adopted the system of the Persian Empire, and his successors continued and advanced it. Direct evidence about the postal system of the Hellenistic kingdoms is relatively little, because letters and documents recording the deliveries of letters used to be written on perishable materials. For the Seleucid Empire it is known that a satrapal system existed, which was responsible for the copying and forwarding of letters at the local level.[47] Diodorus reports that Antigonos Monophthalmos controlled Asia Minor through fire-signalers (πυρσοί) and letter carriers (βιβλιαφόροι).[48] More details are known about the Ptolemaic kingdom of Egypt, where surviving papyrus documents provide information about the function of a relay postal service. P.Hib. I 110 (259–253 BC), a daybook of a Ptolemaic postal station in the north of the Herakleopolite nome, records items received and dispatched from a station.[49] The postal service staff were Greeks, perhaps cavalry men who were detached for this service. A clerk in the post station, called the ὡρογράφος, wrote in a daybook the hours when the post was received and dispatched. Each carrier was appointed for a specific distance to deliver the items to the next post station, which, as it appears from the records in the papyrus, was at about six hours distance on horse-back.[50] The service was intended exclusively for the king, but high officials may have benefited from it, too, such as Apollonios, the finance minister of Ptolemy II, who sent frequently letters to his agent Zenon, although there is no evidence either way.

The Romans adopted and advanced further the Hellenistic postal systems. Although during the Roman republic, there was no public postal service and the delivery of both private and official letters letters was done by slaves or freedmen called *tabellarii*, after the conquest of Egypt, Augustus established a public postal service, the so-called *cursus publicus*.[51] This was based on the already existing relay system of couriers, which Augustus later reformed with a relay of post stations, where the courier could find accommodation and provisions, but also could change his horse or wagon. In comparison to the earlier relay systems, the Roman system offered enhanced security for the delivery of the letters, because it was the same letter carrier who took the letter from the sender and delivered it to the addressee.[52] The services of

47 Bencivenni 2014, 160.
48 Diodorus Siculus, 19.57.5.
49 Llewelyn 1994 revised earlier interpretations of P.Hib. I 110, especially Preisigke 1907.
50 For the postal system in Ptolemaic Egypt see Remijsen 2007, 131–135.
51 For the postal service in Hellenistic and Roman times see Llewelyn 1994; Kolb 2000, and especially for Egypt Kolb 1997; Kovarik 2010.
52 Suetonius, *Augustus* 49.

the *cursus publicus* were maintained by locals as a liturgy, and official couriers were supplied with *diplomata* (authorising letters by the emperor or the governor of a province) which entitled them to use the staging posts and provisions for free. The *cursus publicus* could also be used by other individuals, but with compensation; however, there is evidence that the system was sometimes abused, especially by official and military personnel. More specifically, an edict by the prefect L. Aemilius Rectus, dated to AD 42, warned those who abused the *cursus publicus*, referring especially to military (στρατευομένων), police (μαχαιροφόρων) and other public service personnel (τῶν ὑπηρετῶν τῶ[ν ἐπὶ τ]ᾶς δημοσ[ίαις] χρήαις (l. χρείαις)).[53]

The praefect's edict may partly explain the disproportionally large number of private letters from Roman soldiers and high state officials within the corpus of extant letters from Roman Egypt. Although Romans did not overwhelm the local population, Roman soldiers or other military and administrative officials may be overrepresented, thanks to their access to the official postal service for their private letters. Soldiers' letters could also be carried by fellow soldiers who happened to travel in the right direction[54] or sent to a central office to be forwarded to the family of the soldier in the Egyptian chora; for example, there is a letter from Apion, a recruit in the Roman army, to his father in Philadelpheia in Egypt, which, as it appears from the two addresses on the back, was first sent to a secretary of the army in Alexandria, who then forwarded it to the father of Apion in Philadelpheia.[55]

The sophisticated system of official letters that was developed in Hellenistic and Roman times can also be demonstrated by the variety in the typology of letters that were used according to specific situations. Although the standard epistolary format was employed for any type of official communication, a detailed formalisation and categorisation of letters was gradually established, to distinguish between the different types that were appropriate for particular purposes. Thus, in Hellenistic times, royal ordinances and decisions to subject cities were written in epistolary format, identified as προστάγματα or διαγράμματα;[56] circular letters to officials were iden-

53 P.Lond. III 1171 v (c).

54 For example P.Mich. VIII 465 (AD 108) is a letter from a soldier to his mother, in which he asked her to send to him some linens through a friend of his located at Alexandria. Similarly, in P.Mich. VIII 490 (2nd c. AD) a soldier asked his mother to write back, mentioning that, if she could not find anyone to carry the letter, she should send it to Sokrates (probably a fellow soldier) who could send it over to him.

55 BGU II 423 (2nd c. AD). On the back of the letter there are two addresses. The first one reads ε[ἰς] Φ[ιλ]αδελφίαν Ἐπιμάχῳ ἀπὸ Ἀπίωνος υἱοῦ ("To Philadelphia, to Epimachos from Apion his son"), and below a second address, by a different hand, reads ἀπόδος εἰς χώρτην πρῖμαν Ἀπαμηνῶν Ἰο[υλι]α[ν]οῦ (l. Ἰουλιανῷ) Ἀν̣[̣.̣.̣] λιβλαρίῳ (l. λιβελαρίῳ according to the ed.pr. or ἀντιλιβλαρίῳ as suggested in the re-edition of the letter in Sel.Pap. I 112) ἀπὸ Ἀπίωνος ὥστε Ἐπιμάχῳ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ ("Deliver at the camp of the first cohort of the Apameni to Julianus, vice-secretary, this letter from Apion to be forwarded to his father Epimachus"). Transl. Hunt/Edgar, Sel.Pap. I 112.

56 E.g. UPZ I 112.7 (204 BC). The distinction between the διάγραμμα and the letter is not always clear

tified as ἐντολαί (commands);[57] petitions to the kings were called ἐντεύξεις;[58] and reports or petitions to officials were called ὑπομνήματα (memoranda).[59] Epistolary format was also adopted for private documents or contracts; for example the so-called χειρόγραφον (autograph contract) is a contract introduced like a letter, which in Hellenistic times replaced earlier types of contracts.[60] Receipts too were often styled like letters.[61]

In Roman times, the categorisation of epistolary documents appears to have become even more precise, with the employment of special secretaries for the composition of each type of letter or document; for example the secretaries who were responsible for Latin and Greek letters were the so-called *ab epistulis* and *ab epistulis Graecis* respectively; the so-called *a libellis* dealt with petitions, the so-called a memoria were probably responsible for keeping records, etc.[62] The main types of official letters that were issued by emperors were three: γράμματα or ἐπιστολαί (letters), προστάγματα (*edicta*), which were ordinances to the people of the whole Empire or of a city or province and opened with the phrase "the emperor says" (λέγει or *dicit*), and ἐντολαί (*mandata*) which were instructions to officials, especially governors. Petitions to emperors were named βιβλίδια (*libelli*), and the answers to the petitions were called ἀντιγραφαί (*rescripta*) or ὑπογραφαί (*subscriptiones*), because they used to be written either at the bottom of the sheet of the petition or in a separate sheet.[63]

All the above categories of documents have the basic external characteristics of letters, but each type has further special characteristics, being structurally specialised according to its function and purpose. The formalisation of the characteristics of each type of "epistolary" document was a gradual process. The terminology that was used to describe each particular type of "epistolary" document was gradually defined, too, in parallel to the structural formalisation of each type of document. The terminology used for the different types of epistolary documents in papyrological evidence shows that in the Roman period a document in epistolary format was distinct from a letter. For example, in a private letter of the early second century (P.Brem. 51)

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and not all scholars are in agreement about it. Bickerman suggested that the διάγραμμα is not a letter but an ordinance embedded in a letter, while a royal letter was sent to a city in response to a request of the city, and it was written in the first person in epistolary form; see Yiftach-Firanko 2013, 21. Sickinger 2013, 134 n. 38 on the other hand supports the view that the διάγραμμα and letter were not sharply distinguished. Πρόσταγμα is usually used by subordinates to describe king's orders.

57 E.g. UPZ I 106 (99 BC).

58 E.g. UPZ I 41 (161/160 BC).

59 E.g. P.Köln V 223 (145 BC).

60 For the χειρόγραφον in Hellenistic and Roman times see Yiftach-Firanko 2008a and 2008b; Vandorpe 2013.

61 E.g. P.Cair.Zen. III 59345 (245 BC) is a receipt in the form of a letter.

62 See further Corcoran 2014, 187–190.

63 See further Jördens 1997, 326–331, with further bibliography provided therein.

the author states: (3–5) συνήλιξα ἐ[ν] τῇ ἐπιστολῇ χ<ε>ιρόγραφα ("I have attached contracts to the letter") and (11–13) ἐπιστολὴν ἔπεμψα Διοσκόρου τοῦ Οὐαμβᾶθι, ἐν ὡ (l. ᾗ) συνήλιξα αὐτοῦ διαγραφήν ("I sent the letter of Dioskoros son of Ouambathes, in which I attached his contract").[64] Similarly, a petition was defined as a βιβλίδιον and was distinguished from an ἐπιστολή, despite the fact that a petition is very close in format and function to a letter.[65]

In parallel to the terminological specification of the different categories of documents in epistolary format, the sense of the term ἐπιστολή got narrower too. The broader the epistolary format was applied for other types of texts the narrower the sense of the term ἐπιστολή itself became, until it described specifically "a written message from one person (or set of people) to another, requiring to be set down in a tangible medium, which itself is to be physically conveyed from sender(s) to recipient(s)."[66] This development and stabilisation was gradual, but it seems that by the end of the third century AD the term ἐπιστολή specified a letter. However, the correct use of the terminology was not consistent, since it depended on how precisely any given writer employed the terms. Roman officials were very accurate with the terminology of documents, but ordinary people in the provinces, such as the Egyptian chora, were not always equally precise. People often used ἐπιστολή for any document that was sent like a letter. For example the papyrus BGU IV 1199 (4 BC) contains a copy of an edict from the praefect C. Turannius, which is referred to as copy of a letter (ἀντίγραφον ἐπ̣ι̣[στο]λῆς).[67] Similarly, the "prefectorial letters" mentioned in P.Worp. 51 (3 ἐπιστολῶν ἡγεμονικῶν) and P.Sarap. 84 a ii (6–7 ἐπιστολὴν ἡγεμονικήν) could refer to letters or other documents sent by the prefect of Egypt.[68]

In modern scholarship, there is occasionally disagreement about the definition of documents in epistolary format, with some scholars naming every document that has the external characteristics of a letter a "letter" and others prefering to define each epistolary document according to its particular typological category.[69] However, if basic epistolary formulaic elements, such as the opening address, are regarded as

64 Other examples are PSI IX 1042.10 (3rd c. AD) and P.Oxy. XXXIV 2728.29 (AD 312–318), where there are references to orders (ἐντολικά).

65 For the formulaic and structural elements of petitions see White 1972a.

66 Definition of the letter by Trapp 2003, 1.

67 See Jördens 2009, 339 with n. 38.

68 Although it cannot be excluded that the ἐπιστολὴ ἡγεμονική could refer to a letter or petition addressing the praefect, as explained by Cuvigny (P.Worp. 51.3n.), it seems more likely that it was a letter or document sent from the prefect.

69 For example P.Bad. IV 73 (2nd c. AD) begins as a letter but in fact it is an order to pay: Gonis 1998, 190 with n. 17; Papathomas 2010b, 208. Other examples are the letters/orders of the Heroninus archive, which are written in epistolary format; many of them close with the epistolary farewell greeting ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι ("I pray for your health") while others close with the documentary signature σεσημείωμαι ("I have signed") (cf. the examples in P.Flor. II), but despite this external differentiation, they are similar in content.

the basis for the definition of a document as a letter, then every document or text in epistolary format would qualify to be a letter. On the other hand, if one defines as a letter only what was called ἐπιστολή in ancient times, the boundaries become gradually narrower, since over time the terminology became more detailed and specific, in parallel to the expansion of the applicability of the epistolary format for administrative and other types of texts. Although the latter definition is preferable from a scholarly point of view, it requires specialist knowledge of the development and use of the terms over time.

1.2 Greek Terminology of Letters

1.2.1 Ἐπιστολή, ἐπιστολογράφος, ἐπιστολαφόρος

The word ἐπιστολή is the standard Greek term for a letter, however it did not have this narrow sense in archaic and classical times. As already stated, this sense developed gradually, in parallel to the establishment of letter writing in the Greek world.[70] In archaic and early classical Greek literature (6th–early 5th c. BC) the term ἐπιστολή was used to refer to orders or instructions or to a message transferred orally or in written form.[71] The specification that a message was in written form was indicated either by an additional reference to the writing, usually by the plural γράμματα or any other derivative of γράφω, or by reference to the physical medium on which a letter was written, with βύβλος for papyrus, πίναξ or δέλτος for a wooden tablet, and μολύβδιον for a lead sheet.[72] Each of the terms, according to its inherent meaning,

70 For the terminology of letters in classical times see also Ceccarelli 2013, 13–19; Rosenmeyer 2001, 62–64.

71 For example, in Herodotus 4.10 [τῆς ἐπιστολῆς μεμνημένην αὐτὴν ποιῆσαι τὰ ἐντεταλμένα ("remembering the instructions, she did as she was told")] and 6.50 [ἔλεγε δὲ ταῦτα ἐξ ἐπιστολῆς τῆς Δημαρήτου ("he said these things by command of Demaretos")], the ἐπιστολή refers to oral instructions. Similarly, in Aeschylus' *Fragm.* 293, ἄκουε τὰς ἐμὰς ἐπιστολάς ("listen to my instructions"), *Persae* 783, κοὐ μνημονεύει τὰς ἐμὰς ἐπιστολάς ("does not remember my instructions") and *Supplices* 1012, μόνον φύλαξαι τάσδ' ἐπιστολὰς πατρός ("only keep these paternal counsels") the word ἐπιστολή refers to oral instructions. In Sophocles' *Ajax* 781, πέμπει μέ σοι φέροντα τάσδ' ἐπιστολάς ("he sends me to bring you these orders"—continuing with recitation of oral instructions), in *Oedipus Coloneus* 1601–1602, τάσδ' ἐπιστολὰς πατρὶ ταχεῖ 'πόρευσαν ("they fulfilled quickly the wishes of their father"), and in *Trachiniae* 493, ὡς λόγων τ' ἐπιστολὰς φέρῃς ("carry orally the instructions") the ἐπιστολή refers to oral instructions as well.

72 For example, in Aeschylus' *Supplices* 946–947 the king puts emphasis on the fact that his message will be given orally and thus openly, not written in folded tablets or sealed in a papyrus roll, οὐ πίναξίν ἐστιν ἐγγεγραμμένα οὐδ' ἐν πτυχαῖς βύβλων κατεσφραγισμένα. In Sophocles, *Fragm.* (Radt) 784, the letter of a herald is described as γράμμα κηρύκειον ("letter of a herald"). In Euripides' *Iphigenia Taurica* 760 τἀνόντα κἀγγεγραμμέν' ἐν δέλτου πτυχαῖς ("all that is contained in the folds of the

focuses on a different aspect of the letter: the ἐπιστολή to the message, the materials (βύβλος, πίναξ, δέλτος) to the medium, the γράμματα to the writing, the πτυχαί to the folds and, by extension, to the privacy of a folded letter.[73] Diminutive forms of the above terms were also used metonymically to refer to a letter or to another piece of writing written on them. For example in SEG XXVI 845, which is a lead letter, the author refers to the letter as μολίβδιον.[74] In Ionian areas, where skin (διφθέρα) was the common writing material, διφθέρια used to refer metonymically to documents.[75] In Aristophanes' Frogs the βιβλίον refers to a literary work written on a papyrus roll.[76]

From about the last decades of the fifth century BC, the term ἐπιστολή started to be used on its own, without being accompanied by a reference to the writing or to the material, in order to specify that the letter was in written form; however, at the same time, it did not cease to be used to refer to oral messages as well. Two characteristic examples, both dating to the last decades of the fifth century, are Nikias' letter in Thucydides and Euripides' *Andromache* and *Iphigenia Aulidensis*. In Nikias' letter to the Athenians, the word ἐπιστολή alone is used to refer to a written letter without any additional reference to the material or to the writing, but a few lines later the same word is used to refer to verbal messages.[77] Similarly, in Euripides' *Andromache*, the word ἐπιστολή refers to oral instructions,[78] but in *Iphigenia Aulidensis*, the last of Euripides' tragedies, the old servant of Agamemnon used the word ἐπιστολή to refer to Agamemnon's letter, which Menelaus had taken from his hands.[79]

By the early fourth century, ἐπιστολή was used almost exclusively for a written letter. In Isocrates, the noun ἐπιστολή and the verb ἐπιστέλλω mean almost everywhere "letter" and "send a letter," respectively.[80] In Xenophon, ἐπιστολή always

tablet", transl. Kovacs 1999) and in *Iphigenia Aulidensis* 98 κἀν δέλτου πτυχαῖς γράψας ἔπεμψα πρὸς δάμαρτα τὴν ἐμὴν ("in a folded tablet I wrote a message and sent it to my wife", transl. Kovacs 2002), the letter is written in folded tablets.

73 Ceccarelli 2013, 17–18.

74 Ἀχιλλοδώρō (l. Ἀχιλλοδώρου) τὸ μολίβδιον (l. μολύβδιον) παρὰ τόμ (l. τὸν) παῖδα κἀναξαγόρην ("Achilodoros' piece of lead, to his son and Anaxagoras."). Transl. Trapp 2003, 51.

75 See further below p. 72.

76 Aristophanes, *Ranae* 1113–1114 βιβλίον τ' ἔχων ἕκαστος μανθάνει τὰ δεξιά ("nowadays everyone has his little book and learns the right things").

77 Thucydides 7.11. See Hornblower 2008, 560.

78 Euripides, *Andromache* 964 ἦλθον δὲ σὰς μὲν οὐ σέβων ἐπιστολάς ("I have come not out of respect of your commands", transl. Kovacs 1995).

79 Euripides, *Iphigenia Aulidensis* 314–315 ὦ δέσποτ', ἀδικούμεσθα· σὰς δ' ἐπιστολὰς ἐξαρπάσας ὅδ' ἐκ χερῶν ἐμῶν βίαι ("oh master, we are being wronged; he snatched your letter from my hands by force", transl. Kovacs 2002).

80 The two words are attested twenty-six times in the Isocratean corpus, and in twenty-three of them ἐπιστολή means "letter" and ἐπιστέλλω means "to send a letter"—only in three cases, all in the forensic speech *Trapeziticus*, do ἐπιστολή and ἐπιστέλλω mean "command" or "enjoin." Poster/Mitchell 2007, 8.

denotes a letter.[81] The establishment of the word ἐπιστολή as the standard term for a written letter can be further confirmed by the formation of derivatives related to letter writing from the fourth century BC onwards, such as ἐπιστολιμαῖος (*in* or *of* letters),[82] ἐπιστολικός (suited to a letter, in the style of letters),[83] ἐπιστολεύς (admiral second in command), ἐπιστολαφόρος (letter carrier), ἐπιστολογράφος (letter writer). However, careful attention to the derivatives of ἐπιστολή suggests that in the fourth century BC the term did not refer to the letter as a whole, but focused mostly on the written message. This appears most clearly from an examination of the development and use of the derivative ἐπιστολ(ι)αφόρος (letter carrier). The word ἐπιστολιαφόρος is used by Xenophon to refer to Hypermenes, who was ἐπιστολεύς, a title in the Spartan navy referring to the vice admiral, the second in command below the ναύαρχος.[84] Elsewhere Xenophon mentions that Hippocrates, ἐπιστολεύς of the Spartan navy, was carrying a letter to Sparta, when he was caught on the way by the Athenians, which may suggest that one of the main duties of an ἐπιστολεύς was the transfer of messages.[85] However, after this single instance in Xenophon, the word ἐπιστολ(ι)αφόρος/ἐπιστολοφόρος does not appear in any other literary text of the Hellenistic period or in any of the documentary papyri or inscriptions of the same period,[86] which suggests that the ἐπιστολιαφόρος, though introduced by Xenophon, did not get established in Hellenistic times.

The standard term for the letter carrier until the end of the Hellenistic period is βυβλιαφόρος (or βιβλιαφόρος), which literally means "papyrus-roll carrier." This is confirmed by numerous instances of βυβλιαφόρος in papyri of Ptolemaic Egypt,[87] and literary sources of the same period.[88] The term βυβλιαφόρος (or βιβλιαφόρος) continued to be used until early Roman times, when it was replaced by the ἐπιστολοφόρος/ἐπιστολαφόρος. The earliest certainly dated instance of ἐπιστολαφόρος in papyri

81 ἐπιστολή in the singular for one letter and in the plural for more letters, is attested twenty one times in Xenophon's works, and in all these cases it refers to written letters. Ceccarelli 2013, 18 with n. 68.

82 LSJ[9] *s.v.*; e.g., Demosthenes, *Philippica* 1.19 ἐπιστολιμαίους ταύτας δυνάμεις ("those forces sent by letter") refers to military forces promised by letter and decreed, but never sent.

83 LSJ[9] *s.v.*; e.g. ps.-Demetrius, *Τύποι ἐπιστολικοί* (*Epistolary Types*).

84 Xenophon, *Hellenica* 2.1.7; 4.8.11; 5.1.5–6; 6.2.25; Plutarch, *Lysandrus* 7.2; Pollux I 96.

85 Xenophon, *Hellenica* 1.1.23. Pritchett 1974, 45–46 with n. 64.

86 A search for ἐπιστολιαφ-/ἐπιστολαφ-/ἐπιστολοφ- in the *papyri.info* and *The Packard Humanities Institute* online database did not return any results from the Hellenistic period (search conducted in July 2014).

87 Search in *papyri.info* returned seven instances of βυβλιαφ-, all of them dating to Hellenistic times; e.g. P.Hal. 7.6 (232 BC); BGU VI 1232.2, 8 (111/110 BC); P.Oxy. IV 710.2 (111 BC). Search for the spelling βιβλιαφ- did no return any instances (search conducted in August 2014).

88 E.g. in Diodorus Siculus 2.26.8; 11.21.4; 11.28.5; 11.45.2; 13.54.3; 14.101.2; 19.11.1; 19.13.5; 19.13.7; 19.14.4; 19.57.5; 19.85.5; 19.100.3; 20.18.1; in the *Septuaginta* translation of *Esther* 3.13; 8.10; in Polybius 4.22.2; *Fragm.* 138.

appears in AD 136 (P.Berl. Leihg. II 46.14) and after that it is well attested until late Roman times.[89] Unlike the word ἐπιστολοφόρος/ἐπιστολαφόρος (letter carrier), which was not common before Roman times, the word ἐπιστολογράφος (letter writer) was established very early. Characteristic is a papyrus of the third century BC, where both words are used in parallel, βυβλιαφόρος to refer to a letter carrier and ἐπιστολογράφος to refer to a letter writer.[90] The delay in the establishment of ἐπιστολοφόρος indicates that although the term ἐπιστολή was used to refer to a letter since early Hellenistic times, it focused on the message and not on the physical object of the letter, while in Roman times it referred to the letter as a whole, including both its content and its material aspects.

In the Roman period the words βύβλος and βιβλίον (papyrus roll) ceased to be used for reference to the papyrus material, and metonymically to anything written in a papyrus roll, being replaced by the χάρτης and χαρτίον (papyrus sheet). Thus, a sheet that was intended to be used for letter writing would be specified as χάρτης ἐπιστολικός in Roman times.[91] The term βιβλίον got limited to its metonymic use for a book, containing literature or documents, in which sense it continues to be used in Greek today. The diminutive, βιβλίδιον, which in Hellenistic times had the same sense as βιβλίον, in Roman times referred specifically to a petition, translating the Latin term *libellus*.[92]

1.2.2 Ἐπιστόλιον

In Hellenistic texts the ἐπιστόλιον is used as a diminutive form of the word ἐπιστολή, without any apparent semantic difference. In texts of the Roman period, however, ἐπιστόλιον sometimes reveals a difference in sense from ἐπιστολή, focusing mostly on material aspects of the letter and denoting a compact physical object. This slight difference between ἐπιστόλιον and ἐπιστολή becomes more evident when both words are used in the same text.

From the Hellenistic period there are four papyri where both ἐπιστολή and ἐπιστόλιον are used in the same text, and as it appears from the context the two

89 There are currently sixteen instances in the papyri of the word ἐπιστολαφ- and two instances of the form ἐπιστολοφ-, all of them dating to Roman times; e.g P.Ryl. II 78.24–25 (157 BC); P.Petaus 84.3 (AD 185); SB XII 10941.9–10 (AD 217/218); P.Flor. II 154.13 (AD 267); P.Oxy. XII 1587.6 (AD 276–300); P.Mich. III 217.21 (AD 297).

90 P.Ryl. IV 555 (257 BC). For other instances of ἐπιστολογράφος in papyri of the 3rd c. BC see e.g. P.Col. IV 63.26 (257 BC); P.Hamb. II 176.1 (241 BC); P.Ryl. IV 555.15 (257 BC).

91 E.g. SB VI 9017 no 15 (1st/2nd c. AD) 5–6 χ[άρ]την ἐπιστολ[ικόν].

92 E.g. in IG XI 4, 1299.25 (Delos, ca. 200 BC) *βιβλίδιον* means the same as *βιβλίον*, but in P.Oxy. VII 1070.32 (3rd c. AD) it refers to the petition. For the sense of *βιβλίδιον* in Roman times see also Wilcken (1920, 10 n. 3).

words are virtually synonymous. Either word is accompanied by verbs that refer to the content of the message, such as γράφω, or to the physical object, such as κομίζω, ἀποδίδωμι, without any discernible preference of one word over the other for a particular context.[93]

In the Roman period there are many cases where both ἐπιστολή and ἐπιστόλιον appear.[94] In some, ἐπιστόλιον is used as a diminutive form of ἐπιστολή without any significant difference in sense, but in most cases the ἐπιστόλιον appears to focus primarily on the material object of the letter as a compact and transferable artifact. The difference between ἐπιστόλιον and ἐπιστολή becomes clear from the verbs that are usually employed with either word. In letters where both ἐπιστολή and ἐπιστόλιον appear, ἐπιστολή tends to be governed by verbs that refer to the content, such as γράφω, while ἐπιστόλιον often goes with verbs meaning to "transfer" or "deliver", focusing on the medium, such as (ἀνα)δίδωμι, (δια)πέμπω, κομίζω/κομίζομαι. Although there are some instances of ἐπιστόλιον with γράφω or with ἀναγιγνώσκω, these are relatively few. More specifically, in cases where both ἐπιστολή and ἐπιστόλιον are attested in the same text, the verb κομίζω is employed five times with ἐπιστόλιον (or ἐπιστολίδιον) and twice with ἐπιστολή;[95] (δια)πέμπω appears six times with ἐπιστόλιον and twice with ἐπιστολή;[96] (ἀνα)δίδωμι is used three times with

93 P.Cair.Zen. I 59044.1–2 ἀποδοῦναι αὐτῶι τὸ ἐπιστόλιον ("deliver the letter to him"), 12–13 ἐν τῆι παρ᾽ Ἱκε[σίο]υ ἐπιστολῆι ("in the letter from Hikesios") (257 BC); PSI IV 425.19 τὰ ἐπιστόλια μεταγράψαι ("transcribe the letters"), 23–24 ἐν ἐνίοις (i.e. ἐπιστολίοις) γὰρ γέγραπται διὰ τῆς παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος ἐπιστολῆς[("for in some letters it is written 'through the letter from X'") (mid 3rd c. BC); SB X 10272.10–11 παρὰ Θρασέου ἐπιστολήν μοι ἐνέγκης ("bring me a letter from Thraseus"), 12–13 γράψαι μοι τὸ ἐπιστόλιον ("write the letter to me") (second half of 3rd c. BC); P.Tebt. I 12.9 ἐὰν λάβ[ῃ]ς τὴν ἐπιστολήν ("if you receive the letter"), 15 ἐκομισάμην τὸ παρὰ σοῦ γρ(αφὲν) ἐπισ(τόλιον) ("I have received the letter that you have written") (118 BC).

94 BGU III 811 (AD 98–102); P.Giss. I 73 (AD 113–120); P.Giss. Univ. III 20 (AD 113–117); P.Oxy. XIV 1757 (post AD 138); P.Oxy. XII 1481 (early 2nd c. AD); P.Strasb. VII 606 (early 2nd c. AD); P.Hamb. I 88 (mid 2nd c. AD); SB XVIII 13867 (mid 2nd c. AD); P.Mil. Vogl. II 61 (2nd c. AD); P.Mich. XV 751 (late 2nd c. AD); P.Mich. XV 752 (late 2nd c. AD); SB XVI 12579 (late 2nd c. AD); P.Mich. VIII 508 (2nd/3rd c. AD); P.Oxy. XLI 2983 (2nd/3rd c. AD); P.Meyer 20 (first half of 3rd c. AD); BGU III 814 (3rd c. AD); P.Merton I 28 (late 3rd c. AD); P.Prag. I 108 (AD 258–266); SB XII 11153 (3rd/4th c. AD).

95 BGU III 811.6 δυς (l. δῷς) τ[ῷ] κομίζοντί σοι τὸ ἐπιστόλιον ("give to the man who is bringing you this letter") (AD 98–102); P.Mil.Vogl. II 61.19 κόμισαι ... καὶ Δ[η]μητρίου ἐπιστολ[ί]διον ("bring also a letter from Demetrios") (2nd c. AD); P.Mich. XV 751.7 οὐκ ἐκομείσαντό (l. ἐκομίσαντό) μ[υ] (l. μ[οι]) ἐπιστόλιον ("they did not bring a letter for me") (late 2nd c. AD); P.Mich. XV 752.29–30 ἐ[κ]ο̣μ̣ειφ̣ά̣μην (l. ἐκομισάμην) σου ἐπιστόλιον ("I have I have received a letter from you") (late 2nd c. AD); BGU III 814.34 καλῶς [ποιήσεις κ]ομισάμενος (l. κομισαμένη?) μου τὸ ἐπιστόλιν ("you will do well to bring me the letter") (3rd c. AD); P.Giss. I 73.3–4 ἐ̣[κομισά]μην (or ἐ̣[δεξά]μην) σου τὴν ἐπιστολήν̣ ("I received your letter") (AD 113–120); P.Oxy. XII 1481.9 τὴν] ἐπιστολήν [σου] ἐ̣[κο]μιφ̣ά̣[μ]ην ("I received your letter") this case is uncertain and it has not been counted (2nd c. AD); P.Meyer 20.43–44 μίαν σου ἐ̣[π]ι̣[σ]τολὴν ἐκομισάμην μόνην ("I received only one letter from you") (3rd c. AD).

96 P.Giss. I 73.5 ὄφελον ἐπισ[τ]ό̣λιον π̣ε̣πομφώς ("I ought to have sent a letter") (AD 113–120); P.Giss.

ἐπιστόλιον and none with ἐπιστολή;[97] λαμβάνω accompanies ἐπιστόλιον twice and ἐπιστολή never;[98] (ἀντι)γράφω governs ἐπιστολή six times but is never found with ἐπιστόλιον;[99] ἐπιστολή is used in such phrases as δι᾽ ἐπιστολῆς and περὶ ἐπιστολῆς, but not ἐπιστόλιον.[100]

The term ἐπιστόλιον is sometimes used to refer to a letter on an ostracon, but these cases are limited.[101] The word was mostly used for references to letters on papyrus, while ὄστρακον or its diminutive ὀστράκιον are more often attested for letters on ostraca.[102] This difference appears clearly in O.Claud. I 174 (early 2nd c. AD), where there is a reference to a past letter on an ostracon: ἔγραψα ὑμ{ε}ῖν δι᾽ ἑτέρου ὀστρακίου ("I have written to you in another letter"); and a few lines below the sender asks the addressee to send over any letters that have been sent to him from Egypt: πέμψατε ὅσα ποτὲ ἠνέχθη μοι ἐπιστόλι̣α̣ ἀπὸ Αἰγύπτου ("send any letters that have been sent to me from

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Univ. III 20.7 [ἔπ]ε̣μψά σοι πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐπιστόλιον ("I have sent you a letter to him") (AD 113–117); P.Oxy. XII 1481.2–3 οὐκ ἀπέσταλκά σοι ἐπιστόλιον ("I have not sent you a letter") (early 2nd c. AD); SB XVI 12579.8 τὸ ἐπιστόλειν (l. ἐπιστόλιον) ἐπεύψαμεν (l. ἐπέμψαμεν) ("we had sent the letter to him") (late 2nd c. AD); P.Mich. VIII 508.8 πέμψον ἐπ[ι]στόλιον ("send to me a letter") (2nd/3rd c. AD); P.Mich. VIII 508.8 πέμψον ἐπ[ι]στόλιον ("send to me a letter") (2nd/3rd c. AD); BGU III 814.29 ἔπεμψέ μοι ἐπιστολήν ("he sent a letter to me") (3rd c. AD); P.Merton I 28.5–6 θαυμάζ[ω] πῶς οὐκ ἔπεμψάς μοι ἐπιστολήν ("I wonder how it is that you did not send me a letter") (late 3rd c. AD).

97 P.Oxy. XIV 1757.21 διὰ τοῦ ἀναδιδόντος σοι τὸ ἐπιστόλιον ("through the man who is delivering this letter to you") (post AD 138); P.Merton I 28.9–11 δύνῃ δῶναι (l. δοῦναι) Διδυμᾷτι ἢ τῷ συνερχομένῳ αὐτῷ ἐπιστ̣ρ̣[ό]λιον ("you might give a letter to Didymas or to his companion") (late 3rd c. AD); SB XII 11153.5–6 δότε τὸ ἐπιστόλιν (l. ἐπιστόλιον) Τρυφωνίδι ("give the letter to Tryphon") (3rd/4th c. AD).

98 P.Strasb. VII 606.24 λ̣[αβ]ε̣ῖν ἐπιστόλιον ("receive a letter") (early 2nd c. AD); P.Hamb. I 88.3 ἐχάρην λαβών σου τὸ ἐπιστόλιον ("I was glad to receive your letter") (mid 2nd c. AD).

99 P.Oxy. XIV 1757.19 γράψον μοι ἐπιστολὴν ("write to me a letter") (post AD 138); SB XVIII 13867.3–4 τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ ταύτῃ ("what is written in this letter") (mid 2nd c. AD); P.Mil. Vogl. II 61.15–19 ἐπιστολὴν [γ]ραφεῖσαν ("a written letter") (2nd c. AD); P.Mich. XV 751.25–26 ἔ]γραψας π[ερὶ] τούτων τὴν δευτέραν ἡμῖν ἐπισ[τολήν ("you wrote your second letter to us about these matters") (late 2nd c. AD); SB XVI 12579.12–13 ἀντιγραφ[ὴ]ν θέλομεν τῆς (l. τῇ) ἐπι[στο]λῇ ("we want an answer to the letter") (late 2nd c. AD); SB XII 11153.2 ὡς ἔγραψές μοι ὀπίσου τῆς ἐπιστολῆς Τρυφωνίδος ("as you wrote back to me after the letter of Tryphon") (3rd/4th c. AD).

100 BGU III 811.3–4 δι᾽ ἐπιστολῆ[ς] σε ἀσπάσεσθαι ("to greet you with a letter") (AD 98–102); P.Giss. Univ. III 20.29–30 τὴν περὶ Σ̣α̣ρ̣α̣πίωνος ἐπιστολήν ("the letter about Sarapion") (AD 113–117); P.Mich. XV 752.8 δι᾽ ἐπειστολῆς (l. ἐπιστολῆς) ἀσπάσα[σ]θε (l. ἀσπάσασθαι) ὑμᾶς ("to greet you with a letter") (late 2nd c. AD); P.Prag. I 108.6 δι᾽ ἐπιστ[ο]λῆς ("by letter") (AD 258–266).

101 Although there are cases where ἐπιστόλιον (or ἐπιστολίδιον) is used to describe a letter on an ostracon these are few: O.Claud. I 149 (AD 100–120) and O.Claud. II 299 (mid 2nd c. AD). In O.Claud. IV 867 (AD 98–117) and SB VI 9549 (1) (second half of 3rd c. AD) it is not clear whether the references are about letters on ostraca or on papyrus.

102 O.Claud. I 145.3–4 τρίτον σοι τοῦτο, ἄδελφε, ὄστρακον γράφω ("this is the third ostracon, brother, that I am writing to you") (AD 100–120); O.Claud. I 174.2 ἔγραψα ὑμεῖν (l. ὑμῖν) δι᾽ ἑτέρου ὀστρακίου ("I have written to you in another ostracon") (AD 100–120); O.Claud. IV 870.3–4 ἐκομισάμην σοῦ ὄστρακον ἐν ᾧ μοι δηλοῖς… ("I have received your ostracon, in which you point out to me…") (AD 138–161).

Egypt"—i.e. the Nile valley). The author is probably referring to letters on papyrus, since that was generally the material used for letters in the Nile valley area where papyrus was abundantly available.[103] In another ostracon, O.Claud. II 250 (mid 2nd c. AD), the author asks the addressee to send him two letters, which he describes as "tied", presumably referring to letters on papyrus, which are mentioned as ἐπιστόλια: κόμισον παρὰ Ἡραΐσκο̣[υ] ἐπιστόλια δύο ⟦. .⟧ δε̣δ̣[εμέ]να ("bring from Heraiskos two tied letters").

Combining the evidence for ἐπιστόλιον with that for βυβλιαφόρος, it can be concluded that although in early Hellenistic times the term ἐπιστολή became the standard term for the letter, it was not until the Roman imperial period that the ἐπιστολή was used for all the aspects of a letter, including both its content and the physical object, thus replacing earlier metonymic references to the material and to the physical aspects of a letter, such as βιβλίον. When speakers wanted to distinguish between the message and the physical object of a letter, the latter was specified with the diminutive ἐπιστόλιον, which designated generally a papyrus letter, while ὄστρακον or ὀστράκιον was used for a letter on a potsherd. Awareness of such semantic differences grants more nuanced understanding of epistolary practices, especially since it appears that the establishment of the term ἐπιστολή for the letter as a whole, including both the message and its material aspects, took place in early imperial times, when the ἐπιστολή genre was first established and developed as a literary genre with distinct generic characteristics.

1.2.3 Γράμμα–γράμματα

In this section, focus will be placed on the development of the sense and use of the word γράμμα as a synonym for ἐπιστολή. The basic meaning of γράμμα is "letter of the alphabet" or "written character", but the plural form was used metonymically to refer to the learning of Greek letters and literature.[104] Moreover, in the classical period the plural, γράμματα, refers to a written text of any kind, such as a letter, document, contract or literary text.[105] The diminutive γραμματείδιον is also attested with reference to a piece of writing, possibly a letter or a message.[106]

During the Hellenistic and Roman imperial periods, γράμματα (in the plural) continued to be used for an epistolary letter (or letters) or other kinds of written

103 See below p. 74.

104 See e.g. the illiteracy formula ἔγραψα ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ γράμματα μὴ εἰδότος ("I wrote on his behalf because he does not know letters"), used in documents to refer to illiterate people or to people who did not have good knowledge of Greek or Greek literature. See also Youtie 1975.

105 Examples of the use of γράμματα in classical times are listed in LSJ[9] *s.v.* γράμμα III. and Ceccarelli 2013, 14–15.

106 In Antiphon 5.53–56.

document. There are numerous examples of the term γράμματα being assigned to a letter, and from some of them it appears that γράμματα was used as a synonym for ἐπιστολή.[107] Examples of the use of γράμματα for other written documents, such as receipts of transactions, are also abundant, especially in papyri of imperial times.[108] Until the end of the imperial period, the singular form γράμμα occasionally refers to a letter,[109] but mostly to written contracts in formulaic phrases, such as τὸ γράμμα κύριον καὶ βέβαιον ("the contract is valid and secure").[110] The diminutive γραμμάτιον had the same meaning as γράμμα and was occasionally used for letters.[111] The derivative γραμματεῖον was used only for contracts, not for letters, and respectively γραμματειοφύλαξ (like ἀρχειοφύλαξ) was the notary.[112] From about the fourth century AD onwards, the singular γράμμα gradually becomes the standard term for the letter, first being used synonymously with ἐπιστολή, and finally replacing it.[113] The word γραμματοφόρος/γραμματηφόρος (letter carrier) is attested in Polybius, Plutarch

107 Some characteristic examples are PSI XIV 1440.5–7 τῷ δὲ ἀναδ[ιδόντι σοι τοῦτο] τὸ ἐπιστόλιον ἀντίγραφον γρα[-ca.?-] ἵνα καὶ γώ (l. ἐγώ) σου τὰ γράμματα π[ροσδεχόμενος εὐτυχήσω (?)] ("to the man who is delivering you this letter [- - -] a response, so that I, [receiving] your letter, [be delighted?]") (2nd/3rd c. AD) and P.Haun. II 21.10–14 ταχύτερόν μοι διάπεμψαι ἐπιστολὴν ἵνα κἀγὼ ἀμερίμνως διάγω, πάσῃ γὰρ ὥρᾳ ἕτοιμ[ός] ε̣ἰμι προσδοκώμενός σου γραμμαματα (l. γράμματα) ("quickly send me a letter, so that I become relieved, for every time I am ready expecting your letter(s)") (3rd/4th c. AD). Other examples where γράμματα refers to a letter: e.g. P.Cair. Zen. I 59016.3 (259 BC); PSI VI 570.2 (252 BC); BGU IV 1204.3 (28 BC); P.Yale I 83.4 (ca. AD 200); BGU II 615.9 (2nd c. AD); BGU VII 1676.12 (2nd c. AD); P.Gen. III 144.3 (2nd c. AD); PSI XII 1261.10–12 (AD 212–217) 10–12; BGU I 332.6 (2nd/3rd c. AD); PSI XII 1261.12 (AD 212–217).

108 E.g. P.Sarap. 97.5–7 (AD 90–133); P.Strasb. IV 187.5–6 (AD 113–120); P.Lond. III 899.11 (p. 208) (2nd c. AD); P.Flor. II 240.14 (AD 252); P.Prag. I 113.12 (AD 253); P.Flor. II 234.9 (AD 264); SB V 8087.9 (AD 271); P.Oxy. L 3570.9 (ca. AD 285); P.Haun. II 21.10 (3rd/4th c. AD).

109 There are a few cases such as BGU IV 1209 (23 BC); BGU VII 1669 (1st c. BC/1st c. AD) and BGU XVI 2665 (28/27 BC).

110 Cases where γράμμα refers to a document are e.g. O.Claud. III 622.7–10 (AD 139–160); P.Warr. 14 (2nd c. AD); P.Coll. Youtie II 72 (AD 281); P.Oxy. XIV 1666.17–18 (3rd c. AD); BGU XII 2140.15–16 (AD 432); BGU XII 2152.4 (AD 481).

111 Cf. P.Strasb. IV 260.1–4 τ̣ὸ γραμμάτιον ὃ διεπέμψαστέ (l. διεπέμψατέ) μοι δι᾽ Ἀλεξάνδρ[ο]υ τ̣οῦ καψαρίου ὑπόβροχον ἠνέχθη ὥστε μηδὲ εἰδέναι με μηδὲν ("the letter(?) that you sent me through Alexandros the satchel-maker was brought wet, so that I cannot see anything") and 5–7 ἐὰν ἔχῃς γραμμάτιον τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ . . . σερ̣ς ἢ ἄλλου τινὸς διαπέμψαι μοι αὐτά ("and if you have a letter from my brother (...) or anyone else send them over to me") (AD 161).

112 The spelling of γραμμάτιον and γραμματεῖον were often confused in Hellenistic and Roman times due to iotacism. The rhetor and grammarian Aelius Herodianus (2nd c. AD) in his work Περὶ ὀρθογραφίας 3.2 458 clarified the correct spelling of each word, explaining that, since γραμματεῖον is a derivative of γράμμα, it should be spelled with -ει-, while γραμμάτιον, as a diminutive of γράμμα, should be spelled with -ι-.

113 E.g. P.Kellis I 71.28–32 (mid 4th c. AD); P.Ross.Georg. III 13.10 (6th c. AD); CPR XIV 54.4 (7th/8th c. AD); CPR XXX 21.10–11 (AD 640–700); CPR XXV 21.8 (second half of 6th c. AD); P.Apoll. 11.7 (AD 660 or 675); P.Apoll. 34.3 (second half of 7th c. AD); P.Apoll. 36.4 (second half of 7th c. AD).

and other authors of the imperial period, but does not appear in papyri before the late third century AD, when it gradually replaced the word ἐπιστολοφόρος.[114] In the fourth century the γραμματηφόρος, like the earlier ἐπιστολοφόρος, referred to the professional liturgical post of the messenger, but gradually lost this meaning. From the beginning of the fifth century γραμματηφόρος refers in papyri to the bearer of the letter, not as a professional messenger but as the person who carried the message and whom the letter might concern (as, e.g., with letters of recommendation).[115] The word ταχυδρόμος started being used from about the sixth century AD to refer to the professional messenger, translating the Latin term *cursor*.[116]

1.3 Literary and Non-Literary Letters

Literary letters, as a category, did not exist in ancient times, since no distinction was made between literary and non-literary letters. The category "literary letters" is a modern classification introduced by modern philologists for those letters that were collected and copied in antiquity as pieces of literature and transmitted to us through medieval anthologies. Letters that have survived on their original materials, such as papyrus or ostraca, are defined as "non-literary" (or "documentary"). Below, surviving literary letters will be briefly described, with focus on their relationship to non-literary letters.

Around the beginning of the fourth century BC, the increasing use of letters in private and public life and the parallel standardisation of the basic epistolary formulas encouraged the adoption of the epistolary form as a vehicle for literary treatises. It is not certain when exactly the epistolary format started being used for literary treatises, and the genre has had a complicated history. Because of the existence of *pseudepigrapha* (i.e. pseudonymous) letters in Roman and Byzantine times (see below) attributed to famous personalities of classical Greece, the authenticity of many of the letters that have been handed down through medieval anthologies has been debated. In fact, after the publication of Bentley's dissertation in 1697–1699, all letters included in medieval corpora of classical Greek authors were condemned as forgeries. More recently, however, scholars have tended to agree that many of the letters attributed to authors of the fourth century BC may be genuine.[117] More specifically, the nine

114 Γραμματηφόρος is first attested in Polybius (e.g. 4.9.9) and after that appears in other authors of the Roman period, such as Plutarch (e.g. *Vita Demetrii* 22.2), Dio Cassius (63.11.4), Fl. Philostratus (e.g. *Vita Philosophorum* 2 Olearius p. 562) and others (see Ceccarelli 2013, 168). Search in *papyri.info* (in August 2014) returned 72 instances of γραμματηφ-, the earliest appearing in P.Panop. Beat. 1.61, which dates to AD 298.

115 Morelli 2007, 351–353.

116 P.Oxy. LVIII 3934.9n.; Kolb 2000, 278–280.

117 Trapp 2003, 12–13.

letters that are attributed to Isocrates, which were thought spurious in the past, are regarded as authentic by scholars today.[118] The authenticity of thirteen letters attributed to Plato has been debated,[119] however the recent publication of a third century BC papyrus with part of *Epistula* VIII may support the authenticity of at least some of Plato's letters.[120] Four of the six letters that are attributed to Demosthenes have been deemed genuine.[121] Aristotle wrote letters, which were collected by his student Artemon, but none of them has survived.[122] It is known that Epicurus wrote many of his philosophical doctrines in epistolary form, three of which survive in full and fragments of others are considered to be probably authentic.[123]

Early literary letters were probably collected and edited by students or readers after the death of their authors. The main common characteristic of these letters is that they bear only the external characteristics of letters; in fact, they are rhetorical or philosophical treatises, and can only be placed at the borderline of the epistolary genre. The letters of Plato and the letter of Thucydides are rather συγγράμματα (treatises), in accordance with Demetrius's understanding of the proper style of a letter.[124] In imperial Roman and late antique times, philosophical doctrines continue to be written in epistolary form, in the style of the Epicurean letter. Such are, for example, the didactic letters of Seneca,[125] the Stoic letters of Musonius Rufus (1st c. AD), and the philosophical letters of the neopythagorian Apollonius of Tyana (1st c. AD). To the same type may be classified the letters of Saint Paul, although the latter were sent not only for the purpose of teaching, but also for the spiritual support and practical organisation of newly-established churches. In Late Antiquity, letters that include philosophical doctrines are those of the emperor Julian the Apostate and the church fathers, especially the Cappadocians Saint Basil and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus;

118 The authenticity of the letters of Isocrates was debated in earlier scholarship, but it has recently been supported by Ceccarelli 2013, 286–292, Sullivan 2007, 7–20 and Too 1995, 195–199.

119 Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum* III 61. The authenticity of the Platonic epistles is doubted by Gulley 1972, but Morrow 1935 has supported it for the bulk of them and especially for epistles VII and VIII.

120 P.Lugd. Bat. XXXIII 1 (published in 2008), containing Plato, *Epistula* VIII 356 a 6–8.

121 Goldstein 1968 supported the authenticity of the first four, while the others remain doubtful.

122 Demetrius, *De Elocutione* 223. Four letters attributed to Aristotle are considered as products of later authors. For the letters attributed to Aristotle see Plezia 1961; for another letter attributed to Aristotle in an Arabic manuscript see Bielawski/Plezia 1970.

123 The three complete letters are preserved in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* X. Fragments of other letters of Epicurus have been preserved as quotations in later authors, in the papyri from the library at Herculaneum of the Epicurean Philodemus, and on the Oinoanda inscription (Lycia). See Klauck 2006, 149–155.

124 Demetrius, *De elocutione* 228.

125 The letters of Seneca are addressed to an imaginary friend, Lucilius, and contain philosophical advice in a lively epistolary format.

also, a large collection of letters (about 1600), including correspondence with Saint Basil, has survived from the teacher of rhetoric, Libanius (AD 314–393).

In imperial Roman and late antique times, the increasing interest in letter writing can also be observed in the composition of fictional letters, a popular kind of literature. The composition of such letters was part of the educational programme in schools of rhetoric, in the exercises of προσωποποιεία (personification) and ἠθοποιεία (imitation of character), which combined historical information and anecdotal short stories or sayings (χρεῖαι) with information about the circumstances, environment and life of classical Greek figures. The students tried to impersonate the ancient personality and write imaginary speeches or letters that could have been written/spoken by the ancient men themselves.[126] The purpose of these exercises was to develop eloquence in writing and speaking in different styles. Since the letter was regarded as a reflection of the personality of the writer,[127] the main characteristic of the fictitious letters is the painstaking attention to stylistic detail, matching as closely as possible the character, circumstances and language of the personality to whom the letter was attributed.

Depending on the ability of Roman or late antique anonymous writers to imitate the style of an ancient Greek author, distinguishing *pseudepigrapha* letters from genuine ones may be challenging. However, this is not the only difficulty. Although most of the *pseudepigrapha* letters were created in the Roman period, it cannot be excluded that some were created around the time of the ancient Greek authors to whom they are attributed. Especially in the case of letters attributed to famous philosophers, letters may have been created during or shortly after their lifetime and distributed under their names as to promote their philosophy.[128] Therefore, it is difficult and not always possible to recognise a fake letter from a real one on stylistic grounds.[129]

Novels with fictitious letters were also created, the most famous being the *Alexander Romance* (3rd c. AD), which consists of fictitious letters to and from Alexander the Great depicting his life and deeds. Besides the letters that impersonated mythical or famous historical personalities, fictitious letters were composed for ordinary people

126 For rhetorical prose composition textbooks (προγυμνάσματα) by Aelius Theon, Hermogenes, Aphthonius the sophist, and Nicolaus the sophist, see Kennedy 2003. See also below p. 47 with n. 206.

127 As mentioned in the *De elocutione* 227 "the letter, like the dialogue, should abound in glimpses of character. It may be said that everybody reveals his own soul in his letters. In every other form of composition it is possible to discern the writer's character, but none so clearly as in the epistolary." Transl. Malherbe 1988, 19, see also 12.

128 I thank A. Morrison and J. Bryan for discussion on *pseudepigrapha* and philosophical letters.

129 Hercher 1873, which did not distinguish between pseudonymous and genuine letters, remains the most inclusive publication of Greek literary letters. In modern times scholarly interest in fictional letters has been revived, and *pseudepigrapha* letters are studied both as biographic sources about their (fake) writers and as testimonies of the use of the letter in antiquity. For recent studies on *pseudepigrapha* letters see Costa 2001; Trapp 2003, 27–31; Rosenmeyer 2001, 193–233; Hodkinson/Rosenmeyer 2013, 1–36.

of classical antiquity, too; for example Aelian (2nd/3rd c. AD) produced a collection of fictitious letters attributed to Greek farmers, Alciphron (2nd c. AD) wrote fictitious letters of simple people of classical Athens, such as fishermen, farmers and *hetaerae*, and Philostratus (2nd c. AD) wrote love letters.

1.3.1 Private Letters

Until the end of the Hellenistic period, even though the epistolary form had been used for literary texts, private letters were not regarded as pieces of literature. This can be inferred from the absence of any literary collections of private letters until the first century BC. The earliest known private letters that have been collected and published as literature are the letters of Cicero. Unlike the literary letters of classical Greek authors, which are philosophical or rhetorical treatises in epistolary form, Cicero's letters are real private letters, sent for the purpose of communication. It is not clear if Cicero wrote his letters with view to publication; in one of his letters to Atticus, he revealed that he intended to collect, revise and publish his letters,[130] but eventually these were probably collected and published after his death by his secretary, Marcus Tullius Tiro.[131] After Cicero, more collections of private letters from the political and intellectual elite of Rome and other metropolitan cities of the Empire were published. Pliny the Younger published his private correspondence with the emperor Trajan, as well as letters with family, friends, and social acquaintances.[132] Another example is the collection of letters of the second-century Roman orator and grammarian Fronto, which includes private letters exchanged between him and influential personalities of his time, especially the emperors Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius.

Collections of letters, especially those of famous personalities, orators, and emperors, were popular reading in antiquity. They were copied and transmitted as literature by subsequent generations, not only because their writers were famous figures in their day, but also because the letters were of interest for their artful style.[133] Although the letters provided important information about their authors and the historical background of their times, ancient readers collected them mostly as model letters and sources of ideas for the writing of their own letters. This has been recently shown by R. Gibson's study of the arrangement of letters in their ancient collections: instead of being arranged in chronological order according to the historical sequence

130 Cicero, *Atticus* XVI 5.5.

131 For an overview of Cicero's letters see Klauck 2006, 156–165.

132 Pliny's correspondence was published in nine books during his lifetime and one more book was published after his death. For an introduction to the letters of Pliny see Gibson/Morello 2012.

133 E.g. Quintilianus X 1.107 referred to the literary worth of Cicero's letters with admiration; see also Hutchinson 1998, 4–5 n. 4.

of the events, they were arranged by thematic categories or by addressee, which suggests that the compilers and readers of the collections were interested in the style of private letters rather than in the historical sequence of events and the lives of the authors.[134]

Care for epistolary style and interest in practical advice on how to write a nice letter are also suggested by the content of the epistolary treatises, especially those produced in imperial and later times. Although the earliest surviving treatise, the *De elocutione*, attributed to Demetrius Phalereus (mid 2nd c. BC),[135] contains only theoretical descriptions of epistolary style without model letters, later treatises provide sample letters for each occasion. Cicero classified letters as public or private, but also remarks that there are different styles of letters, mentioning the serious and the intimate or humorous, however without proceeding to an analytical discussion of the styles.[136] The epistolary treatises that have been dated to the imperial and late antique periods provide, in addition to a theoretical description of the epistolary genre, sample letters that could be used as models for social occasions in which letters could be sent. More specifically, the treatise *Epistolary Types* (200 BC–AD 300)[137] categorises letters according to their style into 21 types, providing a sample letter for each type: friendly, commendatory, blaming, reproachful, consoling, censorious, admonishing, threatening, vituperative, praising, advisory, supplicatory, inquiring, responding, allegorical, accounting, accusing, apologetic, congratulatory, ironic, thankful.[138] The treatise *Epistolary Styles* (4th–6th c. AD)[139] includes forty-one types of letters with practical examples, distinguishing them according to their style as paraenetic, blaming, requesting, commending, ironic, thankful, friendly, praying, threatening, denying, commanding, repenting, reproaching, sympathetic, conciliatory, congratulatory, contemptuous, counter-accusing, replying, provoking, consoling, insulting, reporting, angry, diplomatic, praising, didactic, reproving, maligning, censorious, inquiring, encouraging, consulting, declaratory, mocking, submissive, enigmatic, suggestive, grieving, erotic, and mixed.[140] Similarly, the fragmentary papyri P.Bon. 5 (3rd/4th

134 Gibson 2012.

135 The authorship and dating of the *De elocutione* has been doubted. In the manuscript tradition it is attributed to Demetrius Phalereus and most scholars date it to the 2nd c. BC; see Trapp 2003, 43.

136 Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 37 (types of letters); *Ad Familiares* 2.4.1 (styles of letters).

137 For the dating see Trapp 2003, 45.

138 Ps.-Demetrius, *Τύποι Ἐπιστολικοί* (*Epistolary Types*): φιλικός, συστατικός, μεμπτικός, ὀνειδιστικός, παραμυθητικός, ἐπιτιμητικός, νουθετητικός, ἀπειλητικός, ψεκτικός, ἐπαινετικός, συμβουλευτικός, ἀξιωματικός, ἐρωτηματικός ἀποφαντικός, ἀλληγορικός, αἰτιολογικός, κατηγορικός, ἀπολογητικός, συγχαρητικός, εἰρωνικός, ἀπευχαριστικός. Transl. Malherbe 1988, 31.

139 The work Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι Χαρακτῆρες (*Epistolary Styles*) has been transmitted in two manuscript traditions which differ; the one attributes it to Libanius and the other to Proclus. It is dated between the 4th and the 6th c. AD.

140 Ps.-Libanius, *Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι Χαρακτῆρες* (*Epistolary Styles*): Εἰσὶ δὲ πᾶσαι αἱ προσηγορίαι αἷς ὁ ἐπιστολιμαῖος ὑποβάλλεται χαρακτήρ, αἵδε· α΄ παραινετική, β΄ μεμπτική, γ΄ παρακλητική, δ΄ συστατική,

c. AD) and BKT IX 94 (6th c. AD) preserve parts of letter-writing manuals with model letters.[141] Furthermore, it is interesting to note that such samples of letters as those included in the epistolary treatises offered not only advice for the proper style of a letter for each occasion, but indeed ideas for potential occasions in which one could send a letter to a friend or social acquaintance.

The linguistic style of the model letters is elegant, adorned with polite expressions and phrases appropriate for the occasion and the personality of the addressee. The popularity of the epistolary treatises shows that letter writing formed an important part of social communication, and the ability to express in a proper style according to the occasion and addressee was highly esteemed and appreciated. Most types of letters that were proposed in the epistolary treatises belonged to an epistolographic style that was not informative in content, but mostly a means for cultivating and maintaining personal relationships in a polite manner. Letter writing manuals suggested a proper style of written communication according to a socialising etiquette that was popular in aristocratic circles. The letter was used as a means to contact a friend, even if one had nothing new to announce to him.

This sort of epistolography is attested for the first time in republican Rome, and the letters of Cicero are characteristic in this regard. For example, in a letter to Atticus, Cicero explained that although he had already sent him a letter on the previous day and had nothing new to add, he wrote the letter because he did not want to let the carrier leave without a letter.[142] It is not clear if this type of epistolography was practiced already among elite networks related to the courts of Hellenistic kings, but the surviving evidence of private letters suggests that in Hellenistic times although private letters were sent, their purpose was primarily informative. They were not sent for courtesy, but with the purpose of passing on some information, news or requests. For example, BGU XIV 2417 (258/257 BC) is a private letter from Philotas to Epistratos, written in a polite linguistic style, apparently from a sender of Greek origin with an advanced socio-cultural background. Despite the letter's elegant language,[143] its

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ε΄ εἰρωνική, ς΄ εὐχαριστική, ζ΄ φιλική, η΄ εὐκτική, θ΄ ἀπειλητική, ι΄ ἀπαρνητική, ια΄ παραγγελματική, ιβ΄ μεταμελητική, ιγ΄ ὀνειδιστική, ιδ΄ συμπαθητική, ιε΄ θεραπευτική, ις΄ συγχαρητική, ιζ΄ παραλογιστική, ιη΄ ἀντεγκληματική, ιθ΄ ἀντεπισταλτική, κ΄ παροξυντική, κα΄ παραμυθητική, κβ΄ ὑβριστική, κγ΄ ἀπαγγελτική, κδ΄ σχετλιαστική, κε΄ πρεσβευτική, κς΄ ἐπαινετική, κζ΄ διδασκαλική, κη΄ ἐλεγκτική, κθ΄ διαβλητική, λ΄ ἐπιτιμητική, λα΄ ἐρωτηματική, λβ΄ παραθαρρυντική, λγ΄ ἀναθετική, λδ΄ ἀποφαντική, λε΄ σκωπτική, λς΄ μετριαστική, λζ΄ αἰνιγματική, λη΄ ὑπομνηστική, λθ΄ λυπητική, μ΄ ἐρωτική, μα΄ μικτή. Transl. Malherbe 1988, 67.

141 Text and translation of P.Bon. 5 in Malherbe 1988, 44–57; for BKT IX 94 see Luiselli 1997, 643–651.

142 Cicero, *Atticus* XV 1a.

143 BGU XIV 2417.2–3 καλῶς ποιεῖς, εἰ ἔρρωσαι· ἐρρώμεθα δὲ καὶ ἡμεῖς ("you will do well if you are in good health; we are also in good health") and 6–12 χαρίζοιο δ᾽ ἂν ἡμῖν ἐπιμελόμενος σαυτοῦ, ὅπως ἂν ὑγιαίνῃς· καὶ μνημόνευε δὲ ἡμῶν ὥσπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς σοῦ ἐν παντὶ καιρῶι, καὶ ταῦτα πολὺ χαριεῖ ἡμῖν ("You would please us if you take care of your health. Also remember us just as we also [remember] you always; this will please us greatly."). Transl. Llewelyn 1994a, 26.

purpose was primarily informative: it let Epistratos know that his son Pleistarchos had been received well by the king.[144] Like the son of Epistratos, those people who had access to the court of a Hellenistic king could benefit from his favours, but, as the letter suggests, personal contacts used to be made directly by accessing the king in person not in writing. The same is suggested by another letter, from Polykrates to his father Kleon, asking him to come to the festival of Arsinoeia and on that occasion to introduce Polykrates to the king.[145] A different, but still comparable example is a letter that makes arrangements for the delivery of gifts to a newborn baby; although the sender sent the letter to organise the delivery of the gifts to the baby, these would be given in person, not sent through a third person and accompanied by a letter.[146]

It seems that Romans brought a small revolution in private epistolography, transforming it from its informative function to a literary genre. The major known personality who initiated this genre of writing was Cicero; but Cicero is representative of his contemporary society and the people of his class, the Roman aristocracy. It was the socio-political and cultural environment of republican Rome that encouraged the flourishing of a courteous type of epistolography and the circulation of private letters for communication and socialising purposes.[147] In republican Rome it was not audience with a king, but political alliances among prominent individuals that secured one's social and political emergence. A factor that encouraged the flourishing of written communications must have been Rome's contact with Greek culture, which inspired intellectual and cultural interests, and reading and writing became highly esteemed among the social and political elites at Rome.[148] In this political and socio-cultural context, writing frequently nice letters to friends and social acquaintances became a prestigious act. It became a means to conduct diplomatic and social interactions with other elites and, as such, it became an indispensable part, along with face-to-face contact, of an aristocrat's daily routine. Elegant and polite epistolary exchanges, confirming friendship and goodwill, was a means to show one's upper-

144 BGU XIV 2417.3–6 ὑγιαίνει δὲ καὶ Πλείσταρχος, καὶ ἡδέως προσεδέξατο αὐτὸν ὁ βασιλεύς ("Pleistarchos is also well and was gladly received by the king."). Transl. Llewelyn 1994a, 26.

145 P.Petrie III 42 H (1).2–5 πολλάκις μὲν γέγραφά σοι παραγενέσθαι καὶ συστῆσαί με ὅπως τῆς ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος σχολῆς ἀπολυθῶ, καὶ νῦν δὲ εἰ δυνατόν ἐστιν καὶ μηθέν σε τῶν ἔργων κωλύει πειράθητι ἐλθεῖν εἰς τὰ Ἀρσινοεῖα. ἐὰν γὰρ σὺ παραγένηι πέπεισμαι ῥαιδίως με τῶι βασιλεῖ συσταθήσεσθαι. ("I have often written to you to come over and introduce me, so that I may be relieved from my present unemployment. And now, if it is possible and nothing of the works hinders you, try to come for the Arsinoeia; I am convinced that if you come, I will be easily introduced to the king.") (mid 3rd c. BC); transl. van Beek 2006, no 13.

146 P.Köln IX 364 (272 or 230 BC).

147 White 2010.

148 For the flourishing of reading and writing and the construction of an intellectual elite in the Roman Empire see Johnson 2010.

class breed, intellectual interests, and, at the same time, to cultivate relationships with political friends.

As Rome gradually expanded its Empire, the long absences of emperors on military campaigns necessitated that communications between emperors, generals, senators and other important personalities were made in writing; thus, letter writing gained further esteem. Although those who could have direct audience with a Roman emperor or could access elites in Rome must have benefited from personal meetings, letters could connect people over long distances. During his appointment as governor of the province of Bithynia, Pliny the younger sent frequently letters to the emperor Trajan, asking him about various matters, even small ones, and the Emperor replied to all these, encouraging this personal communication through writing.

The vastness of the Empire gradually led to the rise of local elites in the provinces. The kind of courteous epistolography that began and became popular among the aristocracy of Rome spread to the rest of the Empire and influenced the mentality of provincial elites, especially in cosmopolitan centres like Alexandria. Roman aristocratic manners were adopted especially by those coming from prominent families, who aspired to ascend the social ladder and perhaps take positions in the central administration. The epistolary conventions that had been developed by the Roman aristocracy influenced and brought a "fresh mentality" to the style of letters exchanged among elite circles in the provinces. This can be confirmed by a large number of courteous socialising letters that begin to be attested in early imperial times in Egypt among the thousands of papyrus letters that have been found there, and by chance finds at other places, such as Vindolanda in England. Although the identity of the senders of most of these letters is unknown, their linguistic style and content suggest that polite, courteous letters became a popular exchange, especially among people of means, who had both the time and education to appreciate cultured activities of this sort. In cases where the social background of the senders can be identified, they tend to be people with Roman or Greek names, thus probably Romans, Greeks or Hellenised Egyptians, with an upper-class social background and Greek education. The letter of Philosarapis, *hieropoios* (sacrificial magistrate) at Antaeopolis, to the gymnasiarch Apion provides such an example (P.Oxy XIV 1664, ca. AD 200; fig. 1). The purpose of the letter was neither to send information nor to ask for anything, but it was merely a polite gesture to an absent friend.

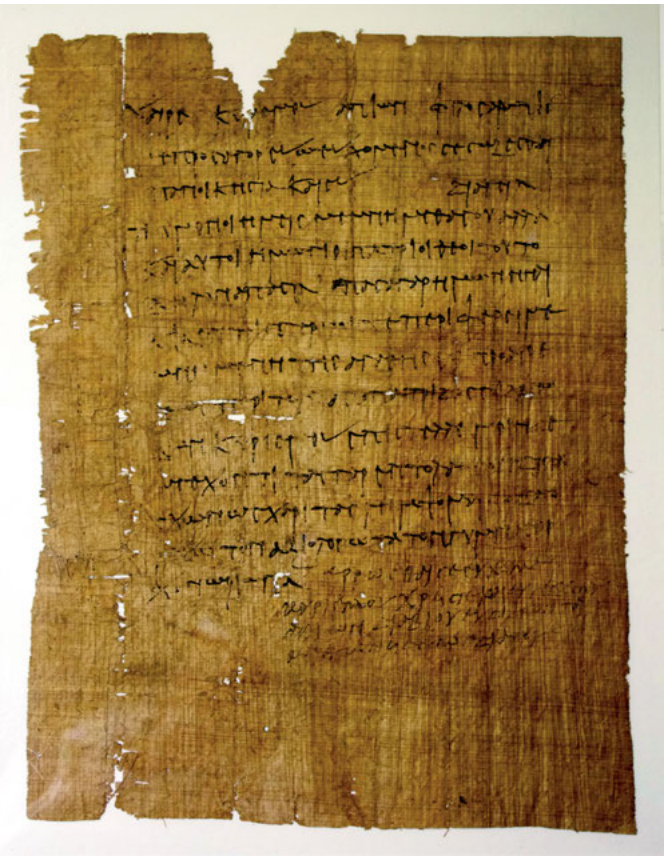


Fig. 1: P.Oxy. XIV 1664, letter from Philosarapis, sacrificial magistrate at Antaeopolis to the gymnasiarch Apion, ca. AD 200, w: 0.8 × h: 27.4 cm © The University of Melbourne, Art Collection. Classics and Archaeology Collection. Gift of the Egypt Exploration Society.

Front

Χαῖρε, κύριέ μου Ἀπίων, Φιλοσάραπίς
σε προσαγορεύω εὐχόμενός σε σώζεσθαι
πανοικησίᾳ καὶ εὖ διάγειν.
ὅτι οὐ μόνοι ἡμεῖς μεμνήμεθά σου ἀλλὰ
καὶ αὐτοὶ ἡμῶν οἱ πάτριοι θεοί, τοῦτο
δῆλον ἅπασιν, πᾶσα (corr. ex ⟦α⟧πασα) γὰρ ἡμῶν ἡ ἡλι-
κία ἐν τοῖς στέρνοις σε περιφέρει, με-
μνημένη τῆς ἀγαθῆς σου προαιρέ-
σεως. περὶ τῶν ἀπὸ πατρίδος σοι χρειω-
δῶν, κύριέ μου, ἐπίστελλέ μοι ἡδέ-
ως ἔχοντι, τὰς γὰρ ἐντολάς σου ἥδιστα
ἔχων ὡς χάριτας λήμψομαι. προσαγο-
ρεύω τὸν ἀξιολογώτατον γυμνασίαρ-

χον Ὡρίωνα. (hand 2) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι,
15 κύριέ μου χρηστὲ καὶ εὐγενέστατε
Ἀπίων, διὰ βίου εὖ διάγοντα
μεθ' ὧν ἡδέως διάγεις.

Back

Ἀπίωνι γυμνασιάρχωι στρατηγήσαντι Ἀνταιοπολείτου
[π(αρὰ)] Φιλοσαράπιδος ἐνάρχου[149]
20 [ἱερ]ο̣ποιοῦ Ἀνταιουπόλ(εως).

Translation

Greetings, my lord Apion; I, Philosarapis, salute you, praying for the welfare and prosperity of you and all your household. That not only we but also our ancestral gods themselves remember you is clear to all; for all our young men carry you in their hearts, remembering your goodwill. Send to me about anything that you need from home, my lord, and it will be a pleasure; for I shall be most pleased to accept your commands as favours. I salute the most estimable gymnasiarch Horion. I pray for your health, my kind and most noble lord Apion, and your lifelong prosperity with those with whom it pleases you to live.
Back (address): To Apion, gymnasiarch and ex-strategos of the Antaeopolite nome, from Philosarapis, sacrificial magistrate in office of Antaeopolis.[150]

Such a polite and friendly manner in letters was called φιλικός (friendly) or φιλοφρονητικός (friendly, courteous, kind), from the noun φιλοφρόνησις (kind treatment, courtesy).[151] This kind of letter contained expressions of care, good wishes, greetings and compliments, and they used to be sent as an attentive gesture to an absent friend, who was thus felt like being present and conversing through writing.[152] References to φιλία (love, friendship) and φίλος (friend) were very common φιλοφρονήσεις in letters. A characteristic example is SB XIV 11584 (late 2nd c. AD; fig. 2), a private letter in which the sender says "I received your letters, through which I got the feeling of seeing you. I therefore beseech you to do the same constantly, for in this way our friendship (φιλία) will be increased." The author added the request to the addressee to write back and ask for anything he might need, which the author would happily do without delay, expressing his readiness by applying the elegant and rarely used adverb ἀνυπερθέτως.

149 In the ed.pr. there is an uncertain handshift marked before l. 19, indicating a change of hand before the part of the external address that contains the author's own details. Comparison with similar cases (see e.g. P.Brem. 6 below, p. 356) suggests that there is probably no change of hand in this position, but I have not been able to consult an image of the back of P.Oxy. XIV 1664 to confirm it.
150 Transl. Grenfell/Hunt, P.Oxy. XIV 1664.
151 See LSJ[9] *s.v.* φιλοφρόνησις.
152 For "philophronetic" letters see Koskenniemi 1956 and Kreuzsaler 2010.

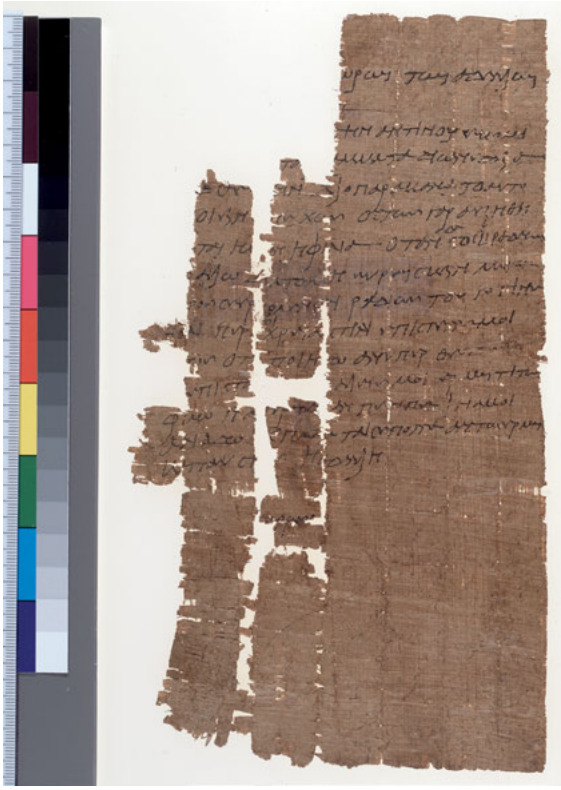


Fig. 2: SB XIV 11584, letter from N.N. to Isidoros, late 2nd c. AD, w: 13 × h: 23.5 cm © Papyrology Collection, Graduate Library, University of Michigan.

Front

[. . . . . Ἰσιδ]ώρωι τῶι ἀδελφῶι
[χαίρει]ν.
[εὐθὺς ἐλθὼν εἰς] τὴν Ἀντίνου (l. Ἀντινόου) ἐκομι-
[σάμην σου] τὰ γράμματα δι᾽ ὧν ἔδοξά
5 [σ]ε θεω[ρ]εῖν. διὸ παρακαλῶ τὸ αὐτὸ
ποιεῖν σ[υ]νεχῶς, οὕτως γὰρ αὐξηθή-
[σ]εται ἡμῶν ἡ φιλία. ὅταν δέ σοι βραδέως
[γ]ράφω, διὰ τὸ μὴ εὑρ⟦υ⟧ίσκειν μηδ̣ὲ̣ν̣ᾳ
πρὸς σὲ ἐρχόμενον ῥαδίως τοῦτο γίνε-
10 ται. περὶ οὗ σοι χρεία ἐστὶν ἐπίστελλέ μοι
[ε]ἰδὼς ὅτι ποιήσω ἀνυπερθέτως.
[εἰ] ἐπιστο[λὴν γ]ράφεις μοι, Ἑρμῆτι τῶι
φίλῳ παρὰ Ἀρτεμᾶν πέμπε ἵνα μοι
ἀναδῷ. [ἀ]σπάζεταί σε πολλὰ αὐτὸς Ἑρμῆ[ς]
15 καὶ Ταυσῖ[ρι]ς ἡ ἀδελφή.
ἔρρωσο.

Back

[ἀπόδος τῷ] φίλῳ χ ʼΙσιδώρῳ ἐμ (l. ἐν) Φιλ̣α̣δ̣ε̣λ̣φ(είᾳ) π̣αρὰ . . . .[153]

Translation:

> N.N. to Isidoros, his brother, greetings. As soon as I reached Antinoopolis, I received your letter, through which I got the feeling of seeing you. I therefore beseech you to do the same constantly, for in this way our friendship will be increased. Whenever I am slow to write to you, this happens easily because I find no one going your way. If you have need of anything, send me word since you know that I will do it without delay. If you write me a letter, send it to my friend Hermes at the house of Artemas so that he may deliver it to me. Hermes himself and his sister Tausiris greet you heartily. Farewell.
> Back (address): Deliver to my dear Isidoros in Philadelpheia from . . .[154]

The persuasiveness of a letter depended not so much on rhetorical language and persuasive argumentation, but on the emphatic confirmation of friendly relationships with the addressee. It was expected that the addressee would appreciate the sender's polite and friendly feelings and would return these feelings of friendship and favouritism. For example, in the archive of Isidoros of Psophthis, there are several letters from Isidoros' protector, Proklos, to various addressees concerning a lawsuit that he had against the strategos Tryphon (early 1st c. AD). Proklos, in order to enhance his persuasiveness emphasised the mutual friendship that he had with the addressees and promised to return the favour that he asked on behalf of Isidoros.[155] The emphatic reference to friendship as a rhetoric strategy in order to secure a favour from an addressee is novel in letters. In Hellenistic times, although personal relationships were helpful for access to favours, there was no direct reference to them in letters.[156]

Philophronetic letters were often accompanied by gifts. For instance, P.Oxy. LV 3806 (AD 15; fig. 3) was accompanied by a woollen cloth as a gift to a woman named Philous. The author's motive for writing the letter was that someone from his vicinity was travelling upstream to where the addressee was.[157] In this letter the author asked

153 In the ed.pr. there is a handshift before l. 17, indicating a change of hand before the external address. Comparison with similar cases suggests that there is probably no change of hand in this position, but I have not been able to consult an image of the back of the papyrus. See the relevant discussion below, pp. 122ff.
154 Transl. Youtie 1976, 52.
155 See e.g. the postscript of the letter P.Lond.inv. 2553 + P.Col. VIII 211 in Sarri 2014a, 37–44.
156 See, for example, below pp. 98ff., the letters of Pyron, the secretary of Zenon (mid 3rd c. BC).
157 Since there was no postal service, apart from that for official correspondence, the chance of finding someone travelling in the direction of a friend's residence could be an impetus for sending a letter. The contrary, i.e. to find someone to carry a letter but not send one, would be regarded as impolite even if one had nothing new to say. See also above the letter of Cicero to Atticus XV 1a with n. 142.

if Philous likes the cloth, and encouraged Isidoros to write back and request anything that he might need, which the author promised to oblige with great pleasure. The letter was found at Oxyrhynchos, so the sender may have been located anywhere to the north, perhaps in Alexandria.

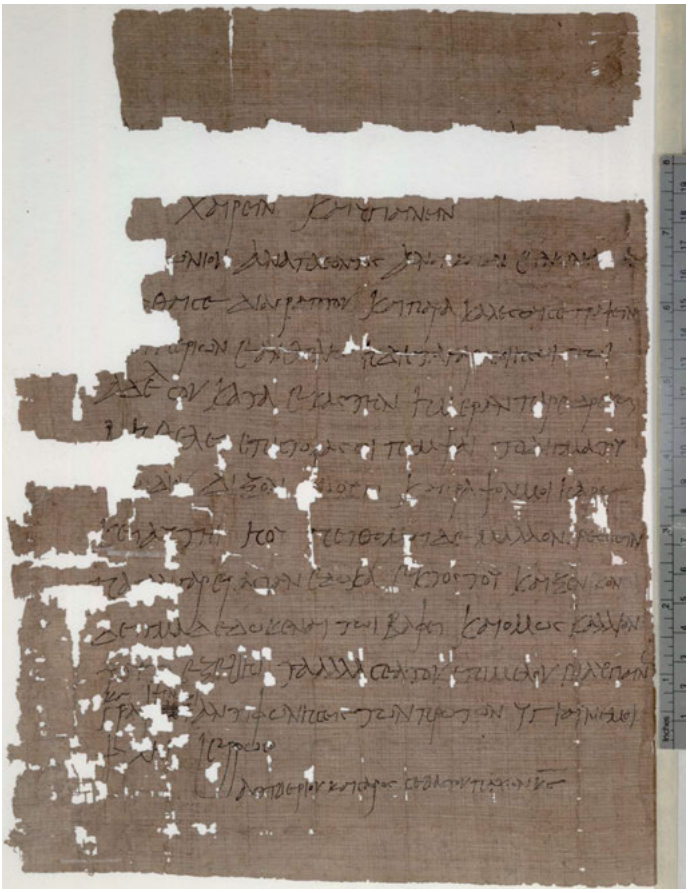


Fig. 3: P.Oxy LV 3806, letter from N.N. to N.N., AD 15, w: 22.5 × h: 29 cm © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

Front (recto along the fibres)

[.]. . . [. . . . .]. [. . .]. [- ca.12 -]. [. . . . .]
χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν.
[. .]. ωνίου ἀναπλέοντος ἀναγκαῖον ἔγνων ἀ[σπ]ά-
[σα]σθαί σε διὰ γραπτοῦ καὶ παρακαλέσ{σ}αι σε γράφειν
5 μ̣ο̣ι περὶ ὧν ἐὰν θέλῃς. ἥδιστα γὰρ ποιήσω{ι}. τῶι
ἀδελ(φῷ) σου κατὰ ἑκάστην ἡμέραν παρεδρεύω{ι},

μὴ θέλε̣ι ἐπιστολάς σοι πέμψαι. τὸ δ<ε>ῖγμα του
[ἐ]ριδίου δ<ε>ῖξον Φιλοῦτι καὶ γράψον μοι ἡ (l. εἰ) ἀρέσ-
κει αὐτῆι ἢ οὔ. πείθομαι δὲ μᾶλλον ἀρέσ{σ}ειν.
10 πᾶσαν γὰρ ἐργασίαν ἔδωκα ἐκτὸς τοῦ καὶ ξενικὸν
δεῖγμα δεδωκέναι τῶι βαφεῖ, καὶ ὅμως κάλλιον
τοῦτο ἐξεβη{ι}. τὰ ἄλλα σεα<υ>τοῦ ἐπιμελοῦ ἵνα ὑγιαίν\ῃς/.
\καὶ/ γρά\ψον/ ⟦μοι⟧ \μ̣οι/ ἀντιφωνήσεις τῶν πρώτων. ὑγίαινέ μοι
ψυχῆι. ἔρρωσο.
15 (ἔτους) α Τιβερίου Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ. Παχὼν κς.

Back (verso)

[-10-15-]. . vac.? [. . .] vac.? γραμμ(ατ) Κορράγου.

Translation:

"(A to B) greeting and good health! Since . . . is going upstream I judged it necessary to salute you by letter and invite you to write to me about whatever you may want. I shall do it with great pleasure. I attend on our brother every day in case he wants to send letters to you. Show the sample of wool to Philous, and write me if it pleases her or not. I believe that it will rather please her, for I gave (it) every attention, besides having given the dyer an imported sample as well, and even so this one turned out nicer. For the rest, look after yourself so as to keep well, and write me answers to (my) first (letters). Keep well in spirit! Farewell!
Year 1 of Tiberius Caesar Augustus, Pachon 26."
Back (address): ... secretary of Korragos.[158]

Reciprocity was an important part of Graeco-Roman social convention and the receipt of gifts and favours carried an obligation to respond in kind. A proper response to gifts from a friend was to reply with a polite letter of thanks, thereby confirming the mutual friendship and fulfilling the obligation to reciprocate. As an expression of extreme politeness, one might express an inability to respond with a gift of equal value, being able to return only one's friendship, but this need not always be taken literally.[159]

Other types of letters were sent for very special purposes, such as letters of condolence, which had a more-or-less standard content and style and were sent mostly among people of an upper social and educational background.[160] Another special type of letter that flourished in Roman times was the invitation. While invitations to social or religious events are attested in the Hellenistic period, these were not sent as

158 Transl. Rea/Parsons, P.Oxy. LV 3806.
159 E.g. P.Merton I 12 (AD 59); P.Oxy. XLII 3057 (1st/2nd c. AD). For the importance of gift reciprocity in the Graeco-Roman world, with further examples from papyrus letters, see Peterman 1997, 51–89.
160 For the formulas and style of the letters of condolence see Chapa 1998; for the social background of the senders of such letters see Tost 2010.

separate letters on their own. For example, P.Paris 43 (=UPZ I 66, dated to 153 BC),[161] which is a private letter from Sarapion to Apollonios and Ptolemaios, was sent in order to inform the addressees about Sarapion's upcoming wedding and to ask them to bring some oil. Only at the end of the letter did Sarapion add a short invitation to Apollonios: παραγε{νομε}νοῦ δὲ εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν, Ἀπολλώνιος ("Be here for that day, Apollonios.").[162] In Roman times, however, invitations acquired a formal style, resembling that of modern formal invitations to social events, which could be repeated in more copies. A characteristic example is P.Oxy. LXXV 5057 (2nd/3rd c. AD), which contains two identical copies of the same invitation to a wedding dinner: ἐρωτᾷ σε Ἡραῖς δειπνῆσαι εἰς γάμους τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτῆς ἐν τῷ μεγάλῳ Θοηρείῳ αὔριον ἥτις ἐστὶν κς ἀπὸ ὥρας θ. ("Herais asks you to dine on the occasion of the wedding of her son, in the Great Thoereum, tomorrow, which is the 26th, from the 9th hour on.").[163] The sheet would be cut in the middle so that the invitations could be sent to two different persons.

To addressees who were close friends a personalised invitation may have seemed a more courteous choice, but the content of the invitation remained of a formal and typical style. Such an example is T.Vindol. II 291 (late 1st/2nd c. AD, fig. 4), a Latin letter on wooden leaf, found at the Roman military camp of Vindolanda in England. It was sent from Claudia Severa, wife of Aelius Brocchus, to Sulpicia Lepidina, wife of the prefect of the Ninth Cohort of Batavians, Flavius Cerialis, inviting her to her birthday party, with greetings added from herself and her husband to Flavius Cerialis.

Fig. 4: T.Vindol. II 291, letter from Claudia to Severa, late 1st/2nd c. AD, w: 23.4 × h: 5.0 cm © The British Museum, London

161 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/upz;1;66.
162 Transl. Rowlandson 1998, no 83.
163 Transl. Kritzer, P.Oxy. LXXV 5057. Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;75;5057.

Col. i

Cl(audia) · Seuerá Lepidinae [suae]
[sa]l[u]tem
iii Idus Septembr[e]s soror ad diem
sollemnem natalem meum rogó
5 libenter faciás ut uenias
ad nos iucundiorem mihi

Col. ii

[diem] interuentú tuo facturá si
[̣] ̣[ca. 3]s
Cerial[em t]uum salutá Aelius meus ̣[
10 et filiolus salutant
(hand 2) sperabo te soror
vale soror anima
mea ita valeam
karissima et have

Back

(hand 1) Sulpiciae Lepidinae
Cerialis
a Severa

Translation

Claudia Severa to her Lepidina greetings. On 11 September, sister, for the day of the celebration of my birthday, I give you a warm invitation to make sure that you come to us, to make the day more enjoyable for me by your arrival, if you are present (?). Give my greetings to your Cerialis. My Aelius and my little son send him (?) their greetings. (hand 2) I shall expect you, sister. Farewell, sister, my dearest soul, as I hope to prosper, and hail.
Back address: (hand 1) To Sulpicia Lepidina, wife of Cerialis, from Severa.[164]

Although there are many courteous letters, such as those described above, that survive from Roman Egypt and other regions of the Empire, most extant letters are informative in content, sent for the purpose of passing on news, instructions or requests about business or personal matters. Yet, even in informative letters one observes that beginning in the Roman imperial period there is an increased tendency to add long greetings and wishes to the addressee and/or to third persons, to express eloquently one's sentiments, feelings and compliments, as well as a tendency for longer descriptions of the sender's own feelings and health. As a result of this, there is a general

164 Transl. Bowman/Thomas, T.Vindol. II 291.

increase in the length of letters.[165] Although epistolary theorists advised letter writers to keep their letters concise,[166] letters of the Roman imperial and later periods, especially private ones, are often longer than the author had planned before cutting off the papyrus sheet, with the result that even the margins were filled with writing.[167] The length of a letter plus its "richness" of expression showed one's care for the addressee and a desire to keep the conversation long.[168]

1.4 The Linguistic Style of Letters

1.4.1 Archaic and Classical Times

The developing use of letters in archaic and classical times can be observed in the evolution of epistolary expressions in this period. In most of the surviving fifth-century letters the prescript is formulated in either of two ways, both attested in letters included in Herodotus, too.[169] The first type, which seems to be the earlier, is similar to an oral address, with the name of the addressee in the vocative, often followed by the sender in the nominative and the verb ἐπιστέλλει. For example, a letter from a certain Aristokrates to Kledikos (Hermonassa, Black Sea, 5th c. BC) begins as Ὦριστόκρατες ἐπιστέλλε (l. ἐπιστέλλει) τοι Κλέδικος ("Aristokrates, Kledikos sends you these instructions").[170] The second type of prescript has the addressee in the dative, the sender in the nominative and the verb ἐπιστέλλω/ἐπιστέλλε(ι) is sometimes added. Thus, a letter on lead found in the Black Sea area (Olbia, ca. 500 BC) begins with Λήνακτι Ἀπατόριος ("to Leanax, Apatorios"),[171] and a letter on an ostracon found in Athens (425–400 BC) begins with Σοσίνεο<ς> ἐπέστελε Γλαύκοι ("Sosineos sent to Glaukos").[172] There are also a few cases that differ slightly from the two styles above, suggesting that the epistolary prescript had not been stabilised until the end of the

165 For the expression of feelings and sentiments in letters see Kovel'man 1985 and Clarysse 2010.
166 Demetrius, *De elocutione* 228.
167 For writing in the margin see below p. 133.
168 Similar characteristics can be oserved in Latin literary letters; see Cugusi 1983, 68.
169 The opening address with the vocative is attested in, e.g., Herodotus I 124 τὰ δὲ γράμματα ἔλεγε τάδε· Ὦ παῖ Καμβύσεω… ("The writing was saying the following: Son of Kambyses…") and VIII 22 τὰ δὲ γράμματα τάδε ἔλεγε· Ἄνδρες Ἴωνες… (The writing was saying the following: "Men of Ionia…"). The opening with the dative can be found in, e.g., III 40 γράψας ἐς βυβλίον τάδε ἐπέστειλε ἐς Σάμον· Ἄμασις Πολυκράτεϊ ὧδε λέγει. ("He wrote in a papyrus roll and sent the following to Samos: Amasis is saying the following to Polykrates.").
170 Belousov/Saprykin 2013, 153–160.
171 SEG LIV 694.
172 Lang 1976, 9 no B9.

fifth century.[173] By the early fourth century, the opening in the vocative is no longer attested. The prescript with the name of the addressee in the dative had prevailed.[174]

Another peculiarity in letters of archaic and early classical times is the inconsistency of the "persona" of verbs, which is either in the third or in the first person singular.[175] Although the use of the third person singular could be taken as an indication that a third person penned the letter by dictation, it seems more likely that it was an early convention to style letters as if they were oral messages transferred by a third person. The latter can be confirmed by SEG L 276, a letter on lead found in Athens and dated to the early fourth century, which opens with the verb in the third person singular and changes to the first person singular in the body of the letter.[176] The absence of any change of hand in the letter suggests that the change in person was most probably the result of increased emotional intensity rather than dictation.

The letters of the fifth and early fourth centuries BC reveal the stages that led to the formation of the formulaic epistolary opening ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν. Most characteristic is the ἐπιστέλλει in the opening address, which apparently gave the name to the genre ἐπιστολή. The verb means "I send a message" or "I command"[177] and is related to the purpose and content of letters, which in those times were instructive or informative, i.e., they were not sent simply to communicate greetings, but they conveyed requests or instructions to the addressee to accomplish some kind of (pressing) work. A style of prescript that takes us closer to the formulaic epistolary openings of later times is seen in SIG³ 1259 (Athens, 400–350 BC), Μνησίεργος ἐπέστειλε τοῖς οἴκοι χαίρεν (l. χαίρειν) καὶ ὑγιαίνεν (l. ὑγιαίνειν) ("Mnesiergos bids greetings and good health to the people at home").[178] The greeting χαίρειν is a development of the oral greeting χαῖρε, which was the conventional oral greeting in classical times. The

173 E.g., SEG XLVIII 1029 (Zhivakhov Hill, Black Sea, 450–400 BC) opens with the name Πρωταγόρης only. Since it is in the nominative, it is likely that it is the name of the sender.

174 The openings of the Isocratic epistolary treatises have survived in two different versions in the two main manuscript families, which are equally strong in the tradition. In the first family the letters begin with the sender in the nominative and the addressee in the dative, but in the other the letters begin with the addressee in the dative and omit the sender. Comparison with the surviving contemporary letters suggests that the first version might be the one that Isocrates wrote. For the epistolary treatises of Isocrates see Sullivan 2007, 9.

175 E.g. SEG XXVI 845 (Berezan, ca. 500 BC) is in the third person throughout, Ἦ Πρωταγόρη, ὁ πατήρ τοι ἐπιστέλλε̄ (l. ἐπιστέλλει) ἀδικε̄ται (l. ἀδικεῖται) ὑπὸ Ματάσυος.... ("Protagoras, your father sends you these instructions. He is being wronged by Matasys..."); SEG LIV 694 (Olbia, Black Sea, ca. 500 BC) is in the first person singular throughout, Λήνακτι Ἀπατόριος : τὰ χρήματα σισύληματι ὑπ' Ἠρακ|λείδεω τō (l. τοῦ) Ε[ὀ]θήριος : κατὰ δύναμιν τὴν σὴν : μὴ ἀπολέ|σω τὰ χρήματα... ("To Leanax Apatorios. I have had my goods confiscated by Herakleides, son of Eutherios... by your influence I will not lose the goods").

176 See p. 88 with fig. 8.

177 LSJ⁹ *s.v.*

178 Transl. Trapp 2003, 51.

infinitival form of χαίρειν shows that a governing verb was initially implied.[179] In the Roman writer Lucianus, the χαίρειν depends on κελεύειν,[180] but since in SIG³ 1259 χαίρειν depends on ἐπέστειλε, it seems likely that a transitional stage in the formation of the opening address ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν was ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι ἐπιστέλλει χαίρειν.[181]

The use of a closing formula was not common in ancient letters. Most of the surviving letters from this period end abruptly without any closing greeting, but there are some exceptions: SEG LIII 1153.15, a letter on a lead sheet found at Emporion in Southern France and dated to 530–500 BC, ends with χαῖρε, and SEG L 704, a fragmentary letter on a lead sheet, found at Pantikapaion in the Black Sea and dated to the first half of the fourth century BC, seems to end with the farewell ἔρρω[σο].[182] Letters embedded in early fifth century literature support the idea that the use of farewell greetings was not standard in the fifth century.[183] In the early fourth century, the Isocratic discourses in epistolary form end without any closing formulas, apart from the letter *To Timotheus*, which has ἔρρωσο in the closing lines.[184]

1.4.2 Hellenistic Times

The socio-political developments in the Greek world during the fourth century BC, and more specifically the transition of the political power play from democratic Athens to despotic Macedonia, are reflected in the style of linguistic conventions in letters. This is observable especially in the opening addresses, in which, until the end of the classical period, the order of the names of sender and addressee was not related to the status of, and relationship between, the correspondents.[185] However,

179 An alternative explanation might be that χαίρειν is an infinitive of command, but this explanation is less likely, because such a use of the infinitive is common in poetry but not in prose (see Smyth 1920, § 2013).

180 Lucianus, *Pro lapsu inter salutandum* 1 δέον τὴν συνήθη ταύτην φωνὴν ἀφεῖναι καὶ χαίρειν κελεύειν, ἐγώ δὲ ὁ χρυσοῦς ἐπιλαθόμενος ὑγιαίνειν σε ἠξίουν ("I ought to have used the usual expression "joy to you," but like a golden ass I blundered and said "Health to you"; Transl. Kilburn, Loeb 1959).

181 Other proposed (restored) opening addresses seem to be uncertain or unlikely: In SEG XLVIII 988 (Berezan, 540–535 BC) the restored opening is Παρὰ [τοῦ δεῖνος or τὸν δεῖνα - -]A I I[. .] τ̣[ί?], which is unlikely, because such an opening address is not attested in letters before the third century AD. In SEG XXXVII 838 (= SEG LIII 1153) (Emporion, 530–500 BC) the restored opening address [- - - -] ο̣[σ- - - - χαίρε̄]ν̣ [- - - -?] is uncertain (cf. Wilson 1997–1998, 46–47).

182 An uncertainly restored [ἔρρ]ω̣[σο] may be attested also in SEG XLIII 488.7 (350–325 BC).

183 E.g. Herodotus I 124 letter to Kambyses; III 40 letter to Amasis.

184 Sullivan 2007, 10.

185 For example, in SEG L 276 (Athens, Agora, 400–350 BC), which is a letter from a slave/son to his mistress/mother, the sender placed his own name first (see p. 88 with fig. 8). For SEG LIII 256

in papyrus letters from Ptolemaic Egypt, the names of the sender and addressee are ordered in the opening address according to the hierarchic relationship between the correspondents. An extreme version of this custom is to find the sender's name not only after the addressee's, but even after the greeting χαίρειν. Thus, it is not by chance that letters that open with τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα have an elegant linguistic style, sent from people who had an evidently advanced literacy background to addressees with equal or higher social status.[186]

In the Hellenistic period, the name of the addressee in the opening address used to be bare. Titles next to the name of the addressee were normally skipped.[187] This should not be confused with official letters from lower-ranking officials to their superiors, in which the "office" of the sender was sometimes added in the opening address, functioning as an identification marker, to help the addressee recognise who the sender was, not an expression of respect; in letters from senior officials to lower-ranking ones no functions were mentioned.[188] Kinship terms, if added in the opening address, used to be meant literally, indicating blood relationships, such as τῷ ἀδελφῷ, τῷ πατρί, τῇ μητρί.[189] Few are the cases in which kinship terms were used metaphorically, such as P.Phrur. Diosk. 15 (158 or 155 BC) which opens with an elaborated address, Σῶσος Διοσ[κουρ]ίδῃ τῷ ἀδελφῷ τῷ φίλῳ πατρὶ τῇ ἐλπίδι τῇ ἐμῇ χαίρε<ι>ν ("Sosos to Dioskourides, my brother, my dear father, my hope, greetings"). Characteristic in this letter is that Sosos appears to be in a very difficult situation and asks for a favour from Dioskourides, which may explain his use of kinship terms as an exaggerated expression of politeness and respect.

The body of the letter usually opened with a polite expression about the health of the addressee, and the confirmation that the sender was also well. These expressions are attested not only in letters found in Egypt, but also in letters from other places, as

(Attica, before 370/369 BC) [Π]ασίωνι Κλ̣ίαρχο<ς> ἐπιστέλλ|ω, Sosin (2008, 107) expressed uncertainty about his reading of the names of sender and recipient in the opening address on the grounds that the address τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν tends "to call attention to the superior status of the recipient, relative to that of the sender, and so cuts against the grain of the command, ἐπιστέλλω"; however, this convention had not yet been applied in Athens in the mid fourth century BC, so Sosin's reading is indeed possible.

186 E.g. the letters from Pyron to Zenon (see below pp. 98ff.), and PSI VI 51 (mid 3rd c. BC) Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Μάσσιχος.

187 However, in petitions to kings/queens, the relevant titles were never omitted. See the relevant discussion in Dickey 2004b, 500.

188 See Verhoogt 1998, 71, who observes that in the archive of Menches only in official letters from lower-ranking officers to their seniors did the senders add their function after their names.

189 With the exception of husband-wife relationships, who often called each other brother-sister. For the addressing system of Greek and the changes that took effect in the post-classical period see Dickey 1996 and a summary in Dickey 2010a, 327–337.

shown by a 3rd century lead tablet discovered at the harbour of Massalia. The letter is one of very few from Hellenistic times found outside of Egypt. It was sent to Leukon, probably a ship captain, from Megistes, probably the ship-owner or representative of the ship-owner Oulis, asking him to move the ship by the month Apatourion (October/November).

Front[190]

Μεγιστῆς Λεύκωνι χαίρειν· ε̣ἰ ὑγιαίνεις, καλῶς ποεῖς·
ὑγιαίνομεν δὲ ̣κ[α]ὶ ἡμεῖς. Οὖλις μοι ἐνέτυχεν ὑπὲρ τῆς
ἀνκύρης (l. ἀγκύρης) ἀξιῶν ζητεῖν ἐκ παντὸς τρόπου ὅπως ἄν λυθείη·
ὁ χρόνος ἔσ<τ>ω ὁ Ἀπατουριών· καὶ αὐτὸς ἔφη προσ̣τ̣[̣.]
5 προσ̣τ̣[.]̣ι̣σε[ca.1–2]σλ
̣α̣τ̣ιλειγειν̣γρ[ca.3]αταλγ[.]τ[.]τ[ca.1–2]Ι[- -]· εὐτύχει

Back

Λεύκωνι

Translation

Megistes to Leukon, greetings. If you are in good health, you do well; we are in good health as well. Oulis has contacted me, asking, concerning the anchor, to try in any way to leave. The time let it be Apatourion. And he himself said [...] Farewell.
Back address: "To Leukon."

Regarding the farewell greetings, by the middle of the third century BC the greeting ἔρρωσο is conventional. There were also more elegant alternatives, such as εὐτύχει or other similar verbs (e.g. ὑγίαινε).[191] In petitions the conventional closing farewell was εὐτύχει. Unlike ἔρρωσο, which was usually followed by the date, εὐτύχει and ὑγίαινε were not followed by the date.

1.4.3 Roman Times

From about the late first century BC and through the Roman period, the linguistic style of letters gradually developed and became more sophisticated than in earlier times, but not overly refined. As epistolary theorists suggested, the language of letters, though more formal than everyday speech, should be charming, avoiding excessive

190 SEG LIV 983, ed.pr. Decourt 2004 no 4; transl. Ceccarelli 2013, App. I no 29.
191 E.g. UPZ I 62 (160 BC) = P.Paris 49 ends with υγίαινε.

refinements.[192] A sublime style with archaisms and bold rhetorical language would sound too pompous and artificial.[193] Although classicism was at a peak and knowledge of classical Greek literature was a sign of prestige,[194] the use of archaistic and literary linguistic elements is rare in letters. Allusions to knowledge of classical literature tend to be subtly expressed, in a way that would be recognised and appreciated mainly by people with an equally advanced cultural background and literary interest.

Cicero, for example, avoided excessive rhetorical devices and literary language in letters, preferring to make allusions to Greek literature than to appear pompous and impolite to the addressee.[195] He tended to include Greek literary phrases in letters to those addressees who had a high educational background and could appreciate such elements. In this way, literary elements enhanced the elegance of his letters and at the same time flattered the addressees. The language of papyrus letters is, of course, not as advanced and sophisticated as that of the letters of Cicero—not every man had such an advanced level of literacy; however, there are letters with an elegant linguistic style that reveal good knowledge of the Attic Greek language.[196] In these letters, the use of archaistic elements remained moderate, and, although in some cases it is evident that the writers had literary knowledge, they deliberately avoided heavy use of literary language.[197] A subtle way of demonstrating one's learning in a letter could be, for example, to use the optative case instead of the commonplace indicative or

192 For the proper epistolary style according to ancient epistolary theorists see Malherbe 1988, 13–14, and Luiselli 1999, 83–104.

193 For the atticistic movement, which was initiated in Rome and spread to the Greek East, where it flourished, see Wisse 1995, with the bibliography included there.

194 For the archaistic tendencies of the second sophistic see the classic article of Bowie 1970.

195 Hall 2009.

196 For papyrus letters that have an evidently advanced linguistic style with literary elements or allusions to literature see Döllstadt 1934.

197 Luiselli 1999, 142–143. Although letters of the late antique period are beyond the scope of this work, it may be parenthetically added here that the epistolary conventions that began in Roman times continued more intensively in late antique times. Politeness and respect formulas became longer and much more intense, resulting in a style that in some cases has been described as "servile" (Zilliacus 1953). However, the excessive politeness in late antique letters should be explained in the context of Christian spirituality and ideology, that one should have humility and serve the others (*Matthew* 20.26–28; *Marcus* 10.44–45; see Papathomas 2007 and Papathomas 2010a). Another linguistic phenomenon in some late antique letters is a heavier use of poetic elements, which aimed at adding elegance. This phenomenon can be related to the poetry of the time, which imitated the style of epic poetry. For elegant late antique letters that contain poetic elements see the archive of Dioskoros, in Fournet 1999 and 2008, with Agosti 2008, 33–54, and Schwendner 2008, 55–66.

imperative moods.[198] Or one might employ the rhetorical figure of *parechesis* by duplicating similar-sounding words.[199]

Another characteristic phenomenon of the epistolary language of the Roman period is the increased conventionalisation. This does not imply that the use of formulaic phrases in letters was a novelty, since conventional epistolary formulas, especially in the opening address and the farewell greeting, are among the standard characteristic elements that differentiate letters from other types of texts. Nor does this imply that polite expressions were not used in letters of earlier times. However, under the Romans the conventionalisation of epistolary language became more extensive, with the introduction of a new repertoire of phrases that expressed friendship, intimacy and care more intensely than in earlier times. While in the Hellenistic period, epistolary formulas were used in opening addresses, in initial questions about the addressee's health (the so-called *formula valetudinis*), and sometimes in polite requests and closing farewells, in Roman times, there is even greater use of flattering adjectives and expressions of friendship and intimacy, establishing a new repertoire of formulaic epistolary expressions.

Unlike in Hellenistic letters, in which the name of the addressee was usually bare and if any kinship terms were added, they were in most cases used literally, in Roman letters, writing only the name of the addressee in the opening address would appear impolite. The opening address was expected to include flattering adjectives or kinship terms, such as ἀδελφός ("brother") or πατήρ ("father), which did not necessarily designate blood ties, but rather a close friendly relationship: "brother" was preferred for correspondents of equal status, while "father" was used to express respect to addressees of higher status or older age. A respectful term in the opening address was κύριος ("lord"), and its more formal variant was δέσποτα ("master", "lord").[200] In official or formal letters, the title of the addressee was normally added, too, and the adjectives that accompanied his name were carefully selected, according to social status and the relationship between the correspondents. A very common adjective in the opening address was φίλτατος ("dearest"), which implied friendly relationship but in a formal way. More remote was τιμιώτατος ("most honourable, most esteemed"), and there were also other alternatives, such as ἀγαθώτατος ("most noble, excellent").

Each letter-writter used the epistolary expressions that were familiar to him and seemed to be appropriate for the addressee. Thus, the linguistic style of each letter reveals the ability and level of literacy of its writer, his circumstances and socio-

198 The optative case had been mostly abandoned by the Roman period but was revived in some letters of the 2nd and 3rd cent. AD. See for example the opening address χαίροις, as an alternative to the imperative χαῖρε, discussed below p. 50 with n. 217.

199 E.g. P.Heid. III 234.3 πάντῃ πάν[τ]ως and 4–5 πραχθέντων καὶ πρασσομένων (see edition and image below p. 119 fig. 22); PSI XII 1246.6 φί[λτατ]ε, φιλητά σοι φίλα.

200 For the literary and extended use of kinship terms in papyrus letters see Dickey 2004a.

cultural background. The use of standardised expressions gradually led to increased conventionalisation in the linguistic style of letters. The use of conventional polite phrases has been discussed in recent studies about the epistolography of Cicero, where it has been shown that Cicero used them especially in his formal correspondence, while letters to his trusted friends and close family did not stick stictly to typical politeness rituals of formal relationships.[201] In papyrus letters, too, an etiquette can be observed in conventional formulas especially in letters addressing social acquaintances, while in letters to family members, to very close friends or to business partners of lower social status, formalities were often skipped. For example, in the archive of the strategos Apollonios, the letters that he received from officials, social acquaintances or business partners have a relatively formal linguistic style and proper use of the adjectives φίλτατος and τιμιώτατος, while the letters from his mother, wife and other members of the household show more intimate, personal language.[202]

Epistolary formulas have been the subject of many studies.[203] Their development and use has often been attributed to schooling or to thinking in clichés.[204] However, the great spread and uniformity of the formulas found in papyrus letters can hardly be explained by schooling, and the explanation "thinking in clichés" needs to be substantiated. Surviving school exercises from Roman Egypt reveal that epistolary formulas were not taught at ordinary grammar schools.[205] Letter writing was practiced only at high educational levels in schools of rhetoric as part of the exercises προσωποποιεία ("personification") and ἠθοποιεία ("imitation of character"),[206] but at this level stu-

201 For the politeness strategies in the epistolography of republican Rome, reflected in the letters of Cicero, see Hall 2009.

202 For the letters sent to Apollonios from his family see P.Giss. Apoll. pp. 61–190 and for letters sent to him from official and business partners or other acquaintances see P.Giss. Apoll. pp. 192–305.

203 For formulaic epistolary expressions of the Ptolemaic period see Buzón 1984; for an anthology of Ptolemaic papyrus letters see Witkowski 1911. For the Roman period see e.g. Exler 1923; Steen 1938; Koskenniemi 1956; White 1972b, 1–41; White 1981; Ziemann 1910; for anthologies of letters that include comprehensive introductory discussions see e.g. Bagnall/Cribiore 2006 for women's letters; Ghedini 1923, Naldini 1998[2] and Tibiletti 1979 for Christian letters; Olsson 1925; Trapp 2003 for both literary and non-literary letters; White 1986.

204 Parsons 1980, 7–8; Trapp 2003, 39–40.

205 For the content of the exercises at different educational levels see Cribiore 1996, 31.

206 For these exercises the students combined historical information, anecdotal short stories or sayings (χρεῖαι), with information about the circumstances, environment and life of classical Greek figures and tried to impersonate the ancient personality by writing imaginary speeches or letters that could have been spoken/written by the ancient men themselves. As mentioned in the treatise *De elocutione* 227 (Malherbe 1988, 19), letters should reflect the personality of the writer, and fictitious letters were composed with painstaking attention to stylistic detail, matching as closely as possible the character, circumstances and language of the personality to whom the letter was attributed. Rhetorical prose composition textbooks (προγυμνάσματα) with rhetorical exercises were written by Aelius Theon, Hermogenes, Aphthonius the sophist, and Nicolaus the sophist (Kennedy 2003). See also above p. 26 with n. 126.

dents were already familiar with conventional epistolary phraseology. There was another type of "school exercise" that incorporated epistolary formulas, so-called "copying exercises", but their number is relatively small and they are usually written in skilled hands, attributed to apprentice scribes,[207] even though surviving papyrus letters were not written exclusively by scribes.[208] It seems more likely, therefore, that people learned conventional epistolary formulas by reading other letters, received by themselves or by other members of the household. Those with a more advanced educational background might also have consulted collections of model letters in circulation at the time.[209] By using standard epistolary expressions, letter writers were able to express themselves in a "proper" style that would be recognised and appreciated by the addressee. This was important, especially because the ability to use language that was appropriate for each addressee and occasion was an indication of one's educational background and familiarity with elegant social manners.

As shown by Dickey, a common characteristic of the epistolary formulas that were introduced in the Roman period is that they were influenced by Latin.[210] This is suggested by comparison of new formulas attested in Greek papyrus letters from Roman Egypt with contemporary or earlier Latin letters written in Rome, such as the letters of Cicero, or in other Latin-speaking regions of the Roman Empire, such as Vindolanda (England). Greek adopted a number of conventional terms from Latin; for example, the metaphorical use of kinship terms, such as ἀδελφός ("brother") or πατήρ ("father"), to express intimacy, or of flattering adjectives, such as κύριος ("lord"), in opening addresses seems to have come from Latin.[211] Similaly, the word ἴδιος, which was used in the opening of some letters as an expression of polite intimacy, is a translation of Latin *suus* (cf. "my dear").[212] A common characteristic of these epistolary adjectives is that they are usually in the superlative, such as τιμιώτατος, ἀγαθώτατος, φίλτατος etc., translating into Greek the Latin tendency to place the adjectives that referred to the addressee in the superlative. The same applies to adverbs expressing sentiments, feelings and wishes, which tend to be in the superlative, such as the intensifying πλεῖστα ("most") frequently attested with the greeting χαίρειν in the opening address in the Roman period. In the farewell greeting, the imperative ἔρρωσο continued to be used, but from about the first century AD on, another formula, ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι,

207 Exercises of this kind have been collected in MPER N.S. XV and XVIII.

208 The question "who wrote ancient letters" is discussed below in the chapter pp. 125ff. Authentication.

209 See e.g. the collections mentioned above, p. 28.

210 For the transfer of epistolary formulas from Latin to Greek see Adams 2003, 76–84; Dickey 2001; 2003; 2004 a and b; Dickey 2010b, 208–220.

211 For the addressing system in Greek non-literary letters and the influence of Latin see Dickey 2004b. For the address κύριε and its relationship to the Latin *domine* see Dickey 2001.

212 For discussion of this, see Cuvigny 2002.

was introduced and gradually prevailed. It was influenced by the Latin epistolary closing phrase *bene valere te opto*.[213]

Other polite, Latin-inspired formulas are attested in the body of the letter. Characteristic are prayers to the gods, and more specifically, the προσκύνημα formula. This was an expression of a religious act of adoration to deities, such as the local deities (τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς) or deities of the home (τοῖς πατρώοις θεοῖς), to whom the sender prayed on behalf of the addressee. At religious sites, such religious acts could be commemorated with an inscription made on the foot of the statute of a god, or at the entrance of a temple or other religious site, in order to record an act of adoration, often with a name. Προσκυνήματα are attested only in Egypt, because this was an Egyptian religious practice, which was adopted by the Greek and Hellenised inhabitants who coined the term προσκύνημα, attested from the mid-second century BC to the Roman period. From the names attested in inscriptions on gods' statues it appears that many προσκυνήματα were written by Roman soldiers. Many letters mentioning προσκυνήματα have been found in the Roman military camps in the Eastern Desert, revealing the popularity of the practice among the Romans.[214]

In the second and third centuries AD a new style of prescript came into fashion, as an alternative to the standard ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι or τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν. The new prescript was formed by the imperative χαῖρε (or the optative χαίροις) and the name of the addressee in the vocative. The name of the sender followed in a prepositional clause (παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος) or, more often, in a new sentence (ὁ δεῖνα σε προσαγορεύω/ἀσπάζομαι). This new formula was influenced by the Latin epistolary opening (*salve* + vocative), which is attested in contemporary Latin letters from senders of very high status, such as the emperor Marcus Aurelius.[215] The formation of this opening address with the name of the addressee in the vocative, as in an oral address, is reminiscent of the type of opening address attested in letters of the early classical period.[216] The revival of the vocative in the Roman imperial period may have been inspired by the general cultural tendency to imitate the style of Classical Greece. It is certainly not by chance that this opening address is attested in letters that are elegant and formal in content, from senders who evidently had an advanced education, as in the above

213 The earliest known certainly dated Greek letter with such a farewell is P.Princ. III 162 (AD 89) which ends with ἐρρῶσθαί [εὔχο]μαι. As Parsons has shown, the new form of the closing farewell was introduced to Greek by Latin influence, on the model of the formula *bene valere te opto* which is already used in Latin letters in the first century BC (Parsons, *P.Rain.Cent.* 164.15n).

214 For προσκυνήματα formulas see Geraci 1971, 3–211 and Tallet 2013, 5587–5588, with further bibliography. For προσκυνήματα in the Roman military camps of the Eastern Desert see Bülow-Jacobsen 1997, 65–68 and Cuvigny 2013, 409–416.

215 E.g. Fronto, 1.6. from M. Aurelius to Fronto: *Salve mi magister optime* ("Hail my best of masters"; Transl. Haines, Loeb 1928). For the opening χαῖρε/χαίροις + Vocative see also Koskenniemi 1956, 164–167 and Cugusi 1983, 52.

216 See above pp. 40ff.

cited philophronetic letter P.Oxy. XIV 1664 (with fig. 1).[217] The epistolary opening with χαῖρε/χαίροις never became as widespread as the standard ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι or τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν, and discontinued after the fourth century.

An unusual phenomenon associated with the formulaic expressions that were introduced from Latin to Greek in the Roman period is that these expressions were not translated from one language to the other only once and subsequently developed independently in each language. Rather, linguistic developments in Latin continued to be imported into Greek.[218] This reveals constant contact and exchange between the two languages. Another peculiarity is that some of the syntactical structures that were introduced into Greek must have initially sounded unusual to native Greek speakers, such as the request constructions with the verb παρακαλῶ ("I beg") or ἐρωτῶ ("I ask"), from the respective Latin contructions with *oro* and *rogo*.[219] This phenomenon cannot be explained simply as an imitation of the language of the Latin-speaking conquerors by Greeks. If these loan words and phrases had been imported by Greek speakers, they would not have been syntactical, but rather lexical and adapted to the syntactical structures of Greek. However, until the late third century AD, loans from Latin were exclusively loan translations, i.e. expressions adopted from Latin and translated into Greek literally word for word, creating new constructions which would sound unsual to Greek native speakers. Direct lexical loans or phonetical loans from Latin do not appear in Greek before the fourth century AD, when a large number of direct lexical imports from Latin entered Greek vocabulary (and continue to be imported from Romance languages in modern times).[220] This linguistic phenomenon observed in the Roman period is unusual and it may suggest that the influence from Latin was not due to direct imitation and adoption of the Latin language by Greeks, but indirect: It seems probable that these loan translations were not made by Greek speakers, but by Latin speakers as they tried to speak and write in Greek, and, thus, unconsciously introduced syntactical constructions from their mother tongue into their Greek texts. Subsequently, Greek speakers adopted these new grammatical constructions imported by Latin speakers and used them themselves.

The reason for this complicated development would be that, unlike in the Western provinces of the Roman Empire, where the Roman conquest established Latin as the dominant language, in the Eastern provinces Greek remained dominant and the use of Latin remained limited, used mostly in military contexts and high administrative levels, such as the office of the Prefect of Egypt in Alexandria. Although Romans had the military and administrative power, Greek was the language of ordinary

217 A list of papyrus letters with the opening χαῖρε/χαίροις is presented by Hagedorn in P.Hamb. IV 256.1n.

218 Dickey 2004b, 516.

219 For novelties in the construction of παρακαλῶ and ἐρωτῶ under influence of Latin, see Dickey 2010b, 208–220.

220 Dickey 2003.

daily administration. This was due to the long establishment of Greek as the *lingua franca* in the region since Ptolemaic times. Learning Greek was indispensable for the management and administration of these areas, but, besides this, it seems that Latin immigrants used Greek not only in public administration but in their private life, too. This is suggested, for example, by scratched inscriptions on gods' statues (προσκυνήματα), many of which were written in Greek, by Roman soldiers who were native Latin speakers, as evidenced by grammatical errors in the inscriptions.[221] Similarly, for their private communications with native Latin speakers, they often used Greek. This can be observed in archives of private letters of Roman soldiers, such as the archive of Tiberianus, a Roman veteran in the village Karanis, including letters from his "son", Terentianus.[222] Both Tiberianus and Terentianus were bilingual in Greek and Latin and could understand both languages, so some of the letters from Terentianus to Tibelianus are in Greek and some in Latin. Comparable examples can be found among other private letters from Roman soldiers, such as O.Claud. 366 and 367, two letters on ostraca excavated at a Roman military camp in the Eastern Desert of Egypt: They were both written by the same sender to the same addressee, the first in Greek and the second in Latin.[223]

Thus, it seems that the Romans who immigrated to the Eastern provinces, despite using Latin in high military and state administration, used Greek in their everyday life and often in their private correspondence. The obvious reason for this preference is that Greek was regarded as culturally prestigious by high-class Romans, including emperors and orators, who wrote literature and elegant private letters in Greek.[224] The attitude of Roman immigrant soldiers in the Eastern provinces of the Empire was not different from the attitude of the aristocracy at Rome. Since the Roman immigrants in the Eastern provinces were regarded as politically and socially superior to Greeks, their linguistic and epistolary style was soon imitated by the latter, especially by those who aspired to ascend socially and enter Roman elite circles. Thus, formulaic constructions, which were imported unconsciously into Greek by Latin native speakers who tried to speak and write in Greek, got established in Greek by being imitated by Greek native speakers.

Roman influence is evident not only in the formulaic expressions of letters, but also in their content and ideology. To this cultural influence is owed the courteous epistolographic style that flourished in Roman Egypt, producing the new epistolographic style of polite philophronetic letters, invitations to social events,

221 Adams 2003, 579–589.
222 Strassi 2008.
223 For further examples and discussion of the use of Latin in Egypt and its interference with Greek see Adams 2003, 527–641.
224 See e.g. the Greek letters between Marcus Aurelius and Fronto. For upper-class Romans who learned Greek see Adams 2003, 9–14 and 308–347.

letters of condolence and thanksgiving letters. This peculiar type of fertilisation, which, in fact, represented an import of mentality without direct linguistic influence, is owed to the unique relationship that Greek and Latin culture had in the Roman Empire. Similarly, Roman influence has also motivated a revival of classicising and atticistic cultural and linguistic trends in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire, being inspired by the mentality of Rome, usually described broadly as the cultural movement of the Second Sophistic. Romans' admiration of classical Greek literature and culture inspired Greeks' re-appreciation and admiration of their own past and culture.[225] The influence of Roman mentality in Greek letters is also evident in the layout and authentication patterns of letters, which will be analysed in the following chapters.[226]

225 As Swain 1996, 28 commented "Rome was not a source of inspiration; but she may well have been a source of reaction."

226 See below pp. 87ff. Format and Layout and pp. 125ff. Authentication.

2 Evidence

2.1 Chronological and Geographical Distribution

This chapter presents the evidence of letters that have survived in the Graeco-Roman world on their original material substrates. It includes letters on lead and ostraca from archaic and classical times, published in Ceccarelli 2013, App. I, as well as letters on papyrus, ostraca, wood and parchment from Hellenistic and Roman times that have been included in the *HGV* with the indication "Brief" (letter) for their content.[227] As mentioned above, the distinction between letters and other documents is not always clear.[228] There are some documents in epistolary format that are described as "letters" in the editions, but may not have been. In the case of fragmentary texts, the distinction between letters and other types of texts becomes even harder. However, the number of debatable cases is relatively small compared to the quantity of surviving letters, so their inclusion in the calculations does not affect the general view of the distribution of letters.

2.1.1 Archaic and Classical Times

Table 1 presents the geographical and chronological distribution of surviving letters from archaic and classical times, which includes published letters on lead sheets, ostraca and one on clay, and some that have been described but are awaiting full publication.[229]

227 The database is accessible online at http://aquila.zaw.uni-heidelberg.de/start.

228 See discussion above p. 15.

229 Ceccarelli 2013, App. I lists 48 letters on lead sheets and ostraca (including 5 that are described as uncertain): Letters on lead: Black Sea: no 1 (550–500 BC), no 2 (ca. 540–535 BC), no 3 (525–500 BC), no 4 (530–510 BC), no 5 (ca. 500 BC), no 7 (450–400 BC), no 9 (5th/4th c. BC), no 10 (400–350 BC), no 12 (4th c. BC), no 14 (5th/4th BC), no 16 (magic text?, unpublished), no 18 (5th/4th c. BC), no 19 (unpublished), and one official letter of Hellenistic or Roman times (3rd c. BC–2nd c. AD). Gulf of Massalia: no 23 (ca. 500 BC), no 24 (5th c.), no 26 (5th c. BC), no 27 (3rd c. BC, uncertain), no 28 (450–430 BC), no 29 (3rd c. BC), no 30 (4th c. BC), and the uncertain no 3 (450–440 BC), no 4 (unpublished), no 5 (unpublished). Sicily: no 32 (470–450 BC). Chalkidike: no 33 (350–325 BC), no 34 (unpublished). Attica: no 39 (5th/4th c. BC), no 40 (425–325), no 41 (4th c.), no 42 (370/369 BC). Letters on ostraca: Black Sea: no 6 (ca. 500 BC), no 8 (5th c.), no 11 (350–325 BC), no 13 (350–325 BC), no 15 (3rd c. BC), no 17 (350 BC), no 20 (4th/3rd c.), no 21 (375–325 BC), no 22 (unpublished), and two uncertain, no 1 (ca. 300 BC) and no 2 (5th/4th c.). Gulf of Massalia: no 31 (3rd/2nd c. BC). Attica: no 35 (6th c. BC), no 36 (5th c. BC), no 37 (5th c. B), no 38 (5th c. BC). One on clay tablet no 25 (ca. 500 BC) from the Gulf of Massalia. Table 1includes only the letters that have been assigned a date. Letters dated between two centuries have been counted with the earlier of the two possible centuries (e.g., a letter dated 5th/4th c. BC or ca. 400 BC is counted with 5th c. BC). A

10.1515/9783110426953-003,

Table 1: Letters from archaic, classical and a few of early Hellenistic times.

Lead

	Black Sea	Gulf of Massalia	Sicily	Chalkidike	Attica
6th c. BC	5	1	-	-	-
5th c. BC	4	4	1	-	2
4th c. BC	2	1	-	1	2
3rd c. BC	1	2	-	-	-

Ostraca

	Black Sea	Gulf of Massalia	Sicily	Chalkidike	Attica
6th c. BC	1	1	-	-	1
5th c. BC	2	-	-	-	3
4th c. BC	6	-	-	-	-
3rd c. BC	1	1	-	-	-

Most of the surviving letters are written on lead sheets and have survived thanks to the durability of this material. The vast majority of lead letters have been published relatively recently, in the last decades of the twentieth century; perhaps in earlier excavations such letters escaped the notice of archaeologists because of their grey colour and small size.[230] Most are fragmentary and it is difficult to grasp their content, but they seem to contain messages related to business transactions, requests, instructions on how to manage a difficult situation, records of—or requests for—a commercial transaction, and notices of the dispatch of goods. They have been discovered mainly in Attica and in areas where Greeks had colonies and trading relationships, more specifically, at the north shore of the Black Sea, where Ionians, especially Milesians, had immigrated, the coast of the gulf of Massalia, where Ionians, especially Phocaeans, had immigrated, and Sicily and Chalkidike, where Euboeans had immigrated.[231] Many of the letters were carried there (and from there) by ships, transferring messages between business partners, as suggested by relevant references in forensic speeches that show that letter writing was a common means of communication between business partners and maritime traders in archaic and classical times.[232] Some of the letters on lead sheets contain messages related with maritime traders, such as SEG XXVI 845 (Berezan, Black Sea, ca. 500 BC), which

new updated catalogue of the corpus of Greek letters on lead and ostraca from archaic and classical times is forthcoming by Dana; see Belousov 2015 and Dana 2015.

230 I thank J. Lougovaya for this observation.

231 Dana 2015, 1§5.

232 Harris 2013, 112–124. Dana 2015, 2§1–5.

contains a message from a father to his son with an urgent request to help him in some troubles that he has with a man who has deprived him of his cargo. Another letter, SEG LIV 694 (ca. 500 BC), found in the nearby city of Olbia, contains a plea: "Leanax implores Apatorios to help protect his goods from being seized."

In Athens the use of lead was facilitated by its availability and low price, thanks to the silver-mines at Laurion.[233] People whom we encounter in lead letters from Athens are ordinary men, slaves and women.[234] An example is furnished by SEG L 276,[235] a letter from Lesis to his mother and Xenokles (Athens, early 4th c.). Lesis was an apprentice at a foundry, and he sent the letter to his mother (or, if he was a slave, to his housemistress) asking her not to overlook how he was being treated by his employer, but to come there and find something else for him: "For I have been handed over to a man thoroughly wicked; I am perishing of being whipped; I am tied up; I am treated like dirt." Lead is not mentioned in literary texts as a writing surface for letters, perhaps because wooden tablets were regarded as more elegant and suitable for this purpose.[236] It is possible that wooden tablets and lead sheets were used in parallel, the first by people who had the means to afford wooden tablets the latter by ordinary people of lower social strata, and traders, who may not have had at their disposal wooden tablets as easily as lead sheets.

Besides the letters on lead there are also letters on ostraca, found in the same areas as the letters on lead, but in lower numbers (in Athens, in the Black Sea coast and in the Gulf of Massalia). Ostraca were used in antiquity for various short ephemeral texts, but they were not regarded as suitable for letter writing, because they could not be folded and sealed to protect the message inside.[237] Most of the surviving letters on ostraca are short messages, and from their content it appears that they were usually sent to addressees who were at close distance.[238] For example, in a small fifth century BC ostracon found in the Athenian Agora with the message Σοσίνεο(ς) ἐπέστε(ι)λε Γλαύκοι ἐς ἄστυ ἔνδεσμον ("Sosineos sent to Glaukos in the city a bundle"), the ἐς ἄστυ indicates that Sosineos was in the country and sent a bundle to Glaukos who was in the city (Athens). The ostracon could have been handed to Sosineos by the bundle-carrier or, most probably, it would have been included in the bundle.[239]

The surviving letters on lead sheets and ostraca cannot be regarded as representative of the overall volume of letters that circulated in the Greek world in archaic and classical times. Lead, despite its durability compared to other materials, eventually becomes brittle and disintegrates. If one considers that in parallel to lead sheets,

233 See below p. 72 Lead.
234 Eidinow/Taylor 2010, 36–38.
235 See below p. 88 with fig. 8.
236 See below p. 79 Wood.
237 See below p. 77 Ostraca.
238 Dana 2015, 3§4.
239 Ceccarelli 2013, App. I no 38. Ed.pr. Lang 1976, 9, no B9.

other foldable but perishable materials were also used for letters, such as wooden tablets or (in Minor Asia) skins[240], it is likely that more letters existed in archaic and classical times, but the order of magnitude is difficult to determine.

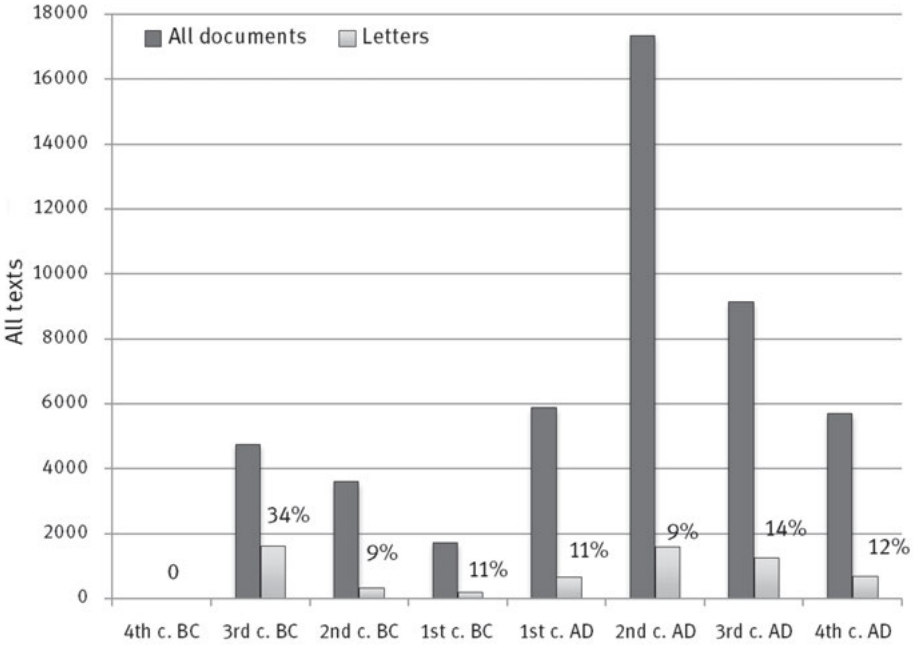
2.1.2 Hellenistic and Roman Times

With the exception of a few letters on lead sheets and ostraca found outside Egypt,[241] almost all surviving letters from Hellenistic and Roman times are written on papyrus and have been found in Egypt. In the *HGV* there are currently almost 60,000 documents of all kinds, dating between the early fourth century BC and the eighth century AD; about 8,000 of them are indicated as letters. While these numbers can be considered fairly representative, they are not definitive because *HGV* gets continuously updated to include new publications.[242]

Between the early fourth century BC and the late third century AD, which is the period under consideration in this study, the number of letters is almost 4,000. Table 2 depicts the comparative chronological distribution of these letters against the backdrop of all other documents. As shown, letters range between 10% and 12% of the total of the surviving documentation. The chronological distribution of letters relative to other types of documents remains relatively steady over the entire period surveyed, with the exception of the third century BC, where the number of letters is disproportionately high due to the archive of Zenon, the secretary and later estate manager of Apollonios, the finance minister of Ptolemy II, whose papers constitute the largest archival collection of papyri ever found.[243] In the third century AD, the archive of Heroninus has a similar effect, but this effect has a smaller impact, because the number of surviving documents in the third century AD is far greater.[244] The relative distribution of letters and documents per century has not changed since 1998, when Habermann presented a study of the distribution of papyri per century, despite the fact that since then the number of published papyri has increased significantly.[245]

240 See below p. 84 Leather – Parchment.
241 See above Table 1 and the discussion below p. 70 Outside Egypt.
242 A search for "Brief" in the query field "Inhalt" in *HGV* has been conducted in July 2014 and returned 59582 texts in total and 8232 letters.
243 See Appendix I, Archive of Zenon.
244 I thank W. Clarysse for this observation on the archive of Heroninus.
245 Habermann 1998.

Table 2: Chronological distribution of documents and letters in Hellenistic and Roman times (letters also expressed as a percentage of all documents).[246]



Of the total number of letters that are currently included in the *HGV* database, 87.4% are written on papyrus, 12.5% on ostraca and a negligible number on other materials, that is 6 letters on wood and 4 on parchment or leather. The percentage of ostraca may rise in the near future, because several thousand recently discovered pieces still await publication and could not be included in these calculations. In particular, the material from the Eastern Desert, once published, will necessitate some adjustments to the overall picture of the distribution of material. The Latin letters found at Vindolanda (England) have been very recently added to *HGV* and have not been included in the calculations.

246 For the calculation of the number of letters per century, the following parameters have been applied: Double entries have been eliminated by counting only the earliest entry for texts that have been assigned more than one possible date. Texts that have been dated to two successive centuries have been counted with the earlier possible century, e.g. 1st/2nd c. AD or e.g. AD 98–110 have been counted with the 1st c. Texts that have been dated by editors to three possible alternative centuries have been counted in the middle, e.g. 1st–3rd c. AD has been counted in the 2nd c. AD. Texts that have been dated more broadly than three centuries, e.g. 1st–4th c. AD, have not been included in the calculations.

2.1.3 Egypt

Within Egypt, the distribution of documents by materials on which they are written varies both chronologically and geographically, as does the distribution of letters on ostraca and papyrus. Table 3 illustrates the number of finds by material for the Ptolemaic and Roman periods. It distinguishes between documents in general and letters in particular and classes the evidence by geographical areas where large numbers of papyri and ostraca were found.

Table 3: Number of letters and other texts on papyrus and ostraca.

PTOLEMAIC TIMES (4th–1st c. BC)

Area	All texts		Letters		letters/all texts (%)
	Papyri	Ostraca	Papyri	Ostraca	
Memphis	318	–	91	–	29%
Arsinoite nome (Fayum)	3969	238	1158	2	28%
Herakleopolite nome	870	–	208	–	24%
Oxyrhynchite nome	381	1	87	–	23%
Nile valley (Antinoopolis, Hermopolite nome, Lykopolis, Antaeopolis, Panopolis)	162	7	19	–	11%
Theban area (Apollonopolis, Dendera, Diospolis, Elephantine, Koptos, Pathyris, Ptolemais, Syene, Tentyris)	281	721	29	2	3%
Eastern Desert (Abu Sha'ar, Berenike, Didymoi, Leukos Limen, Maximianon, Mons Claudianus, Raima, Tiberiane, Wadi Fawakhir, Wadi Hammamat, Xeron Pelagos)	3	7	1	1	20%
Western Desert (Oasis Magna, Oasis Parva)	–	–	–	–	–

ROMAN TIMES (1st–4th c. AD)

Provenance	All texts		Letters		letters/all texts (%)
	Papyri	Ostraca	Papyri	Ostraca	
Memphis	152	–	18	–	12%
Arsinoite nome (Fayum)	9889	1713	957	9	8%
Herakleopolite nome	645	–	51	–	8%
Oxyrhynchite nome	4232	158	757	1	17%
Nile valley (Antinoopolis, Hermopolite nome, Lykopolis, Antaeopolis, Panopolis)	2555	128	312	–	12%
Provenance	**All texts**		**Letters**		**letters/all texts (%)**
	Papyri	**Ostraca**	**Papyri**	**Ostraca**	
Eastern Desert (Abu Sha'ar, Berenike, Didymoi, Leukos Limen, Maximianon, Mons Claudianus, Raima, Tiberiane, Wadi Fawakhir, Wadi Hammamat, Xeron Pelagos)	51	1757	14	522	30%
Western Desert (Oasis Magna, Oasis Parva)	174	1473	45	63	7%

The data laid out in the table demonstrate that the correlation between the distribution of documents and that of letters, when they are restricted to their main material substrates, papyrus and ostraca, is not constant but also depends on the period and region, a fact that warrants further discussion. Before discussing the preservation patterns, it is useful to refer to some consistencies related to the provenance of letters.

2.1.3.1 Provenance

In table 3 the column "Area" refers the provenance of each document or letter, according to the information included in *HGV*. In most cases the provenance is the place where each document or letter has been excavated, but this cannot be taken for granted, because it does not appy for all documents and letters. If a document was excavated during an official excavation, the place where it was excavated is known. However, if a document was discovered by clandestine diggers and sold on the market, the information about the findspot is not always certainly known; it is

either completely missing and thus said to be of "unknown" provenance or has been restored by editors on the basis of some information in its text.

With regard to letters, the question of provenance is more complicated than for other documents, because most letters have been found not at the place where they were written, but where they were sent to—in other words not in the sender's vicinity but in the addressee's. In the majority of cases, the "provenance" that is given for a letter denotes the place where the letter was received (and subsequently found), yet in some cases "provenance" can refer to where the letter was written. A characteristic example is the archive of Apollonios strategos of the Apollonopolite nome of Heptakomia (early 2nd c. AD). During his appointment there, part of his family remained in Hermopolis, from where Apollonios received letters. When Apollonios' appointment ended, he returned to his family estate at Hermopolis, where his archive was probably found. The letters that Apollonios received from his mother Eudaimonis were written at Hermopolis, received by Apollonios in the Apollonopolite nome, and excavated at Hermopolis with the rest of the archive. In *HGV*, the "provenance" of the letters of Eudaimonis is Apollonopolite nome (i.e. the place where Apollonios received them), except for three letters that are said to be from "Hermopolis", meaning the place where the letters were excavated. This inconsistency has been rectified for women's letters in the homonymous book by Bagnall/Cribiore,[247] who have indicated where each letter was written and/or found. This practice needs to be followed by future editors, who, ideally, should indicate consistently as "provenance" the place where a letter was excavated and (if known) the place where it was written.

In the above tables, closer analysis may reveal that there are some letters for which "provenance" indicates the place where they were written and not where they have been found. However, the number of these letters is very small in comparison to the vast majority of letters for which "provenance" indicates the place where they have been excavated. Accordingly, the general impression one gets from the above tables about the places where documents and letters have been excavated has not been distorted, and will be discussed below under preservation patterns.

2.1.4 Preservation Patterns

2.1.4.1 Papyri

For the Hellenistic period most surviving letters, as well as other documents, on papyrus come from the Arsinoite and Herakleopolite nomes; fewer are from the nearby regions of Memphis and the Oxyrhynchite nome, the Nile valley and the Theban area. Several reasons may explain this distribution. Alexandria and the Delta were the places where most Greeks lived, but very little evidence has survived from these areas

247 Bagnall/Cribiore 2006.

due to the humidity of the soil. Surviving letters from Alexandria are mainly those that were sent or carried to drier areas of Egypt and have been found there. These letters are especially important, because they reveal the way of life in this cultural and socio-economic centre of the Graeco-Roman world, which appears to have been not different from life in other big cities of the Roman Empire, and set the example for the life of Greeks in other, smaller cities of the Egyptian chora. After Alexandria and the Delta, the Arsinoite and the Herakleopolite nomes were regions where many early Greek immigrants settled. The land irrigation project that was organised by the early Ptolemies and the allocation of plots of land (κλῆροι) to Greek soldiers encouraged the settlement of Greek immigrants in these nomes.[248] At the same time, Greeks were also settling throughout the Nile valley and the Theban area.

An important factor in any examination of the distribution of papyrological evidence from Egypt are the circumstances of survival of papyrus in each region, as Bagnall has recently pointed out.[249] In dry areas papyrus survives in the upper levels of the soil and down to a certain depth, below which the natural humidity of the ground becomes a destructive factor. In some places, the older the papyri, the smaller their chances of survival. Thus, Grenfell's description of excavations at the mounds of Oxyrhynchos offers an explanation for why the papyri from the Ptolemaic period, which probably sat at a level that had become damp by the time Grenfell and Hunt reached the site, hardly survived there: "papyri are found continuously down to a depth of five or even eight metres. As a rule the well preserved documents are discovered within 3 metres of the surface; in the lower strata the papyri tend to be more fragmentary, though our trenches in a few mounds have reached 9 metres at the highest parts before coming to the damp level."[250]

Because of the depths at which they were deposited, it seems therefore that documents from the Ptolemaic period could not survive unprotected in the ground, so most papyri from this early period have been preserved either in ancient deposits or in mummy cartonnage.[251] The latter was a special technique of wrapping corpses and constructing mummy casings with recycled papyrus instead of traditional linen, applied between the middle of the third century BC and early first century AD.[252] Mummies wrapped in cartonnage have been found mostly in the Arsinoite and Herakleopolite nomes, the nearby northern area of the Oxyrhynchite nome, and in a cemetery at Lykopolis.[253] Papyrus was less commonly employed for cartonnage than linen, but a large number of papyri was required for wrapping a body, and,

248 For the irrigation and drainage works in the Arsinoite nome, see Thompson 1999, 107–122.
249 Bagnall 2011, 29–32.
250 Quoted by Turner 2007, 21.
251 Bagnall 2011, 32. For a discussion of mummy cartonnage see Salmenkivi, P.Berl. X pp. 9–54.
252 "This reuse of discarded papyri appears to have started towards the end of the reign of Ptolemy II" (van Beek 2009, 148).
253 For Ptolemaic papyri found at Lykopolis see Clarysse 1979, 101–106.

consequently, even a small number of excavated mummies could yield a relatively large number of papyri thanks to this kind of reuse. Another, similar way in which papyri have survived is through use as stuffing material in the head or other cavities of animal mummies, in particular the crocodile mummies excavated at Tebtynis.[254] Papyri extracted from mummies can often be grouped together into archives,[255] because the papyri used in a given mummy usually came from the same source, such as a household, an administrative office or the locality where they were discarded before being collected for reuse. Most of the archives from mummy cartonnage divide over more than one mummy found in the same cemetery, and any given mummy may contain more than one archive.[256]

Of the forty-four Ptolemaic archives with letters that have been identified so far, thirty-seven come from mummy cartonnage excavated in the Arsinoite or the Herakleopolite nomes or nearby areas. Although the exact sources of papyri reused in cartonnage are not clear, it seems that administrative offices contributed a large quantity of them. This is not surprising given the large number of papyri used in administrative settings. We can imagine that state offices were good places to collect or purchase discarded papyri. As a consequence of this, many cartonnage papyri are official in content.[257] However, there are also private letters among them. Some of them are private letters of officials, such as the correspondence found in the archive of the engineers Kleon and Theodoros, which may suggest that officials disposed of papers of administrative content together with their personal ones. There are also other private letters among the papyri extracted from cartonnage, which cannot be classified into archives, such as P.Köln IX 364 (272 or 230 BC). Although it cannot be excluded that the relationship of such letters to other papers has not been recognised—the identification of private letters within archives is usually difficult, since in private correspondence people do not always provide information regarding their identity and relationships to each other—another possibility might be that the papyri that were reused in cartonnage did not originate exclusively from administrative sources.

Table 4: Letters belonging to archives (%).

3rd c. BC	2nd c. BC	1st c. BC	1st c. AD	2nd c. AD	3rd c. AD	4th c. AD
85%	42%	44%	14%	17%	34%	24%

254 Grenfell/Hunt, P.Tebt. I, p. vi–vii; Verghoogt 1998, 12–15.
255 For an explanation of the term archive and a list of the archives of letters that have been identified to date see Appendix I.
256 Verhoogt 1998, 20–21.
257 Bagnall 2011, 38–39; Clarysse 2008, 71.

Besides archives that have been extracted from mummy cartonnage, some Ptolemaic archives have survived in their original safe deposit spots. This is how the largest known papyrological archive, that of Zenon (3rd c. BC), probably survived, and it contains more than one thousand letters. The archive was found at the village of Philadelpheia in the Arsinoite nome by clandestine diggers, and the circumstances of its unearthing remain unknown, but probably it was preserved by being deposited, for example, in a tomb or other repository. At any rate, it shows no signs of being exposed to the elements. Another third-century BC archive found in an ancient deposit is the archive of Milon, officer (πράκτωρ) of Egyptian temples responsible for financial affairs. The archive, which includes official letters and other documents, was found in a jar in a cellar at Elephantine. Another archive found in a deposit is the archive of Dryton. It dates to the second and early first century BC and contains private papers of Dryton's family covering more than three generations. The archive was found at Pathyris (Gebelein), partly in controlled excavations and partly by clandestine diggers.[258]

In comparison to the Ptolemaic period, the number of excavated papyri is higher in the Roman period and the geographical distribution of their provenance locations is more diverse. The richest source of Roman-period papyri has been the Arsinoite nome, where the most productive excavations were conducted by Grenfell and Hunt at Tebtynis and by the University of Michigan at Karanis. In addition to excavations at the outskirts of villages, findings from illegal diggings have also been sold through antiquities dealers to various institutions and private buyers in Europe and the United States. Oxyrhynchos is the second largest source of Roman papyri, thanks to the ancient rubbish dumps discovered there by Grenfell and Hunt. Other sites of the Nile valley, such as Antinoopolis and Hermopolis, have also produced large numbers of papyri of the Roman period.

For the most part, Roman-period papyri have been found at habitation sites and rubbish dumps, as opposed to cartonnage, which was a characteristic source of preservation for earlier papyri. The fact that cartonnage has been excavated only in a limited number of localities has affected the ratio of Ptolemaic and Roman papyri surviving in certain areas. This may explain the lower number of Roman texts, as compared to Ptolemaic, from the Herakleopolite nome since most of the Herakleopolite papyri have survived in cartonnage.

Letters dated to the Roman period constitute the main part of the surviving body of material, but relatively few of them belong to archives. For the first century, only 14% of total letters has been identified as forming or belonging to an archive; for the second century the ratio is 17%. For the third century the percentage is higher, 34%, thanks to the large archive of Heroninos, the estate manager of the Appianus estate in

258 Vandorpe/Waebens 2009, 103.

the village of Theadelpheia in the Arsinoite nome.[259] The low percentages of letters in archives from the Roman period, especially the first and second centuries AD, can be explained by the types of places where the papyri were found, as well as by the types of letters, which in the Roman period are mostly private in content. These two factors will be analysed below.

Many of the Roman period papyri were found in the rubbish dumps of Oxyrhynchos. It is not clear whether they had been carried there by the Roman inhabitants of the sites or by later generations, but it seems that the transfer was random and not organised. Probably papyri found at the same level in a dump were discarded together or at a point close in time, but it cannot always be determined which papyri were found together in a layer. The box- and layer-numbers that can be deduced from the inventory numbers indicated in the editions of *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* provide helpful information about the possible groupings of papyri that were excavated on the same day and packed together; however, these details cannot restore the exact locations of the papyri in the dumps nor of the groups of papyri discarded together in dumps.

The other main source of Roman papyri is habitation sites, and it is from these archaeological contexts that archives dated to the Roman period come from. Characteristic cases are the archives found in the ruins of houses at Karanis by the Michigan excavations. Other excavations of habitation sites in the Arsinoite nome have brought to light archives containing letters, such as the archive of Epagathos found in the ruins of a house in the village Euhemeria.[260] Most archives of the Roman period did not come from controlled excavations and ended up dispersed in collections around the world. A good example is the archive of Apollonios, the strategos of the Apollonopolite nome of the Heptakomia, which is discussed above.[261] The archive was sold to various collections, and the links between the texts in such archives can only be recognised from the content, prosopography, and, sometimes, information provided about the finding circumstances by dealers.

2.1.4.2 Ostraca

Different from papyri are the preservation patterns of ostraca. In the Graeco-Roman period letters on ostraca are far less common than on papyrus. Bagnall suggested that a possible reason for this may be that the majority of the papyri were excavated at the end of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century, either clandestinely or by archaeological excavations that were not conducted as carefully as modern ones. Past excavators searched mainly or exclusively for papyri, while

259 Rathbone 1991.
260 Ast/Azzarello 2013.
261 See above p. 60.

ostraca, which possibly existed in these areas, may have escaped their attention, as suggested by recent discoveries of ostraca in the debris of earlier excavations.[262] However, even if ostraca have escaped the attention of early excavators, it is very unlikely that among them there would have been many letters, because ostraca were not preferred for letter writing in areas where papyrus was easily accessible.

It seems that the use of pottery sherds for writing was influenced by the availability of papyrus as well as by the type of document that was being recorded. Table 3 demonstrates that while hundreds of ostraca were found along the Nile valley, very few of them contain letters. In regions such as the Fayum and the Nile valley, where papyrus was easily accessible, ostraca were often used as a cheap alternative, but they were preferred mostly for short ephemeral texts, such as receipts of everyday transactions and taxes, school exercises and short notes or messages. For long and more enduring or permanent texts, papyrus was preferred. Desert areas, on the other hand, have yielded numerous ostraca. Since papyrus was not readily available there, but had to be transported in from the Nile valley, ostraca served as a substitute material for all ordinary writing purposes, including letters. There are examples of letters on ostraca found in desert areas, in which it is mentioned explicitly that the reason for the use of an ostracon was that no papyrus was available.[263] Ostraca were abundantly available there from the containers that were used for the transport of food and other commodities. The largest quantities of letters on ostraca have been found in the Eastern Desert at Roman military camps near quarries and water stations and at trading posts on the Red Sea, such as Berenike.[264]

2.1.5 Types of Letters

The typology of letters is an important parameter in this study and since it complicates the recognition of possible links between letters and archives, it needs to be analysed closely here.

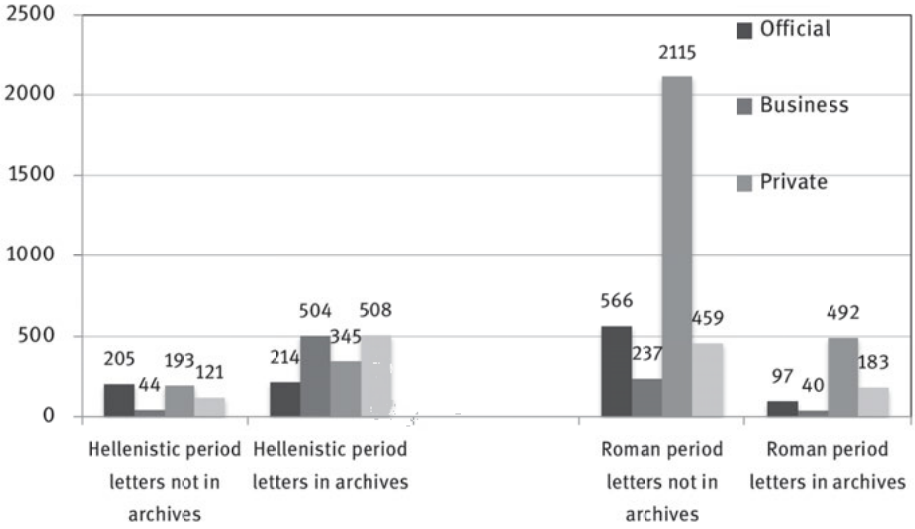
Table 5 depicts the distribution of letters by types according to their classification in *HGV*[265]: official letters (Brief amtlich), business letters (Brief geschäftlich), private letters (Brief privat), and letters that have not been classified into one of the three categories (Brief). The letters of the Hellenistic period (3rd–1st c. BC) are shown

262 Bagnall 2011, 120–122.
263 See below p. 79.
264 For publications of ostraca from the Eastern Desert see Cuvigny 2003; O.Claud I–IV, O.Krok., O.Did., O.Berenike I–III.
265 Data taken from *HGV* in July 2014. Double entries have been eliminated.

separately from Roman (1st–4th c. AD), and have been further distinguished as letters that belong to archives and letters that have not been identified within an archive.

The categorisation of letters is not an easy task and there can be ambiguities, because it sometimes depends on the perspective of an editor. *HGV*, which follows the categorisations of the editors, cannot be perfectly consistent. Generally, the category "official letters" includes those letters that were used for administrative purposes at various levels of the administration, ranging from kings to minor officials. "Private letters" are those that were sent between friends and family, or other social acquaintances for personal reasons, ranging from instuctions to greetings, news, requests and any other private matter. The "uncategorised" letters include fragmentary letters, the type of which remains uncertain, or complete letters that have not been described in *HGV* yet.[266]

Table 5: Typological distribution of letters.



In *HGV* there is also a category called "business", which includes letters about private business matters. However the classification of private letters referring to business matters as "private" or as "business" is not clearly defined, because the distinction between business and private is often unclear. This ambiguity has resulted in somewhat distorted data in *HGV*, owing to the characterisation of the letters in the editions.

266 E.g. the typology of the letters of the archive of Harimouthes is not described in *HGV*, but they are official in type; see White 1986, 23. Similarly the type of letters of the archive of Leodamas is not specified in *HGV*, but they are of official type, as described in the introductions of their ed.pr.

More specifically, the apparently high percentage of business letters in Hellenistic archives is due to the Zenon archive, to which 441, or 87.5%, of the business letters included in archives belong. However, this does not necessarily imply that in the Zenon archive there is such a large concentration of letters about business matters, while in other archives letters dealt less with business affairs. The characterisation of the typology of letters largely depends on the preference of an editor. The editors of the Zenon archive preferred characterising letters about private business matters as "business", while editors of other archives have characterised letters related to private business matters as "private". For example, in the archive of L. Bellienus Gemellus, his letters to his estate manager Epagathos are primarily about business matters related to the estate of Gemellus, but they have been characterised as private by the editors. Thus, the data have become skewed by editorial preferences.

Since the distinction between private and business letters is blurred, it seems preferable to ignore it, and to divide ancient letters only into official and private, including letters about private business matters in the category private. This distinction is in accord with the categorisation of letters by the ancient epistolary theorist, Julius Victor, who states that "there are two kinds of letters: they are either official or personal."[267] Cicero, also, distinguishes between public and private letters.[268] Ps.-Demetrius' *Epistolary Types* and ps.-Libanius' *Epistolary Styles* divide letters into a large number of epistolary types, however all these types can be described as subcategories of the "private" letter according to the function of each letter and the occasion, such as that of thanksgiving, condolence, etc. There is no epistolary type in the ancient treatises for business letters.[269]

Regarding the distinction between private and official letters, this should be based on their content and not their language, formulaic elements, or other external characteristics. Although the language of official letters, especially of those that were sent to or from high officials, is often formal, including titles and formal appellations in the opening addresses such as τιμιώτατος or φίλτατος, the linguistic style is relative, depending on the relationship between the correspondents and the formality of the situation for which each letter was sent. There are official letters, especially those between officials at an equal administrative level, about ordinary administrative tasks, which were friendly, naming the addressee as "brother".[270] Especially in the Roman period, the use of friendly formulaic expressions, greetings and personal

267 Julius Victor (4th c. AD), *Ars rhetorica* 27 (*de epistolis*); transl. Malherbe 1988, 63.

268 Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 16, 37.

269 "Literary" letters are not included in the present discussion of the typology of letters, because this discussion refers to letters that have been preserved since antiquity directly, on their original materials. For the literary letters and the terminological distinction between literary and non-literary letters see above p. 27.

270 E.g. BGU VIII 1788 (88 BC) is an official letter from Heliodoros, perhaps the royal scribe, to the strategos Paniskos, who is called "brother" in the opening address.

wishes in letters is common, making the letters sound more personal than Ptolemaic letters, which are more restrained in the expression of greetings and friendly sentiments.[271]

There are of course some cases in which the personal and the official relationships may appear to interfere. For example, in letters of people who had an official position but, at the same time, ran also their own private business, it is sometimes difficult to be certain whether a letter was related to private business or official matters. Most of the letters in the Zenon archive, for instance, are related to Zenon's own business interests and the management of Apollonios' private estate. Yet, because Apollonios had an official position as finance minister of Ptolemy II, there are also petitions and letters related to official matters. Another ambiguous case may be letters of recommendation; the senders of such letters were often people with some important official position, such as epistrategos or strategos, however the practice of recommending someone was based on the personal knowledge of this person and the personal relationship with the addresse. In other words, even though the sender used the authority of his official position, he recommended someone to the addressee not officially, but personally. Thus, letters of recommendation should rather be included in the category of private letters.

Another detail in table 5 that needs to be discussed is the relatively high number of official letters in the Ptolemaic period compared to Roman, especially for letters that have not been identified within archives. A possible reason for this may be the practice of reusing papyri from administrative offices for mummy cartonnage in the Ptolemaic period. Respectively, the number of surviving private letters appears to be low in Ptolemaic times compared to Roman. It has been suggested that besides mummy cartonnage, ancient deposits too are not representative of the true volume of private letters, since "neither governments nor individuals normally had much reason to keep them."[272] Although it seems probable that mummy cartonnage is not representative of the whole volume of private correspondence in Ptolemaic times, this is probably not the case with archives found in deposits. In individuals' archives found in deposits one can find all kinds of correspondence.

An overall view of the typology of letters in archives suggests that private correspondence was considered important by individuals and often kept together with official papers. The archive of Kleon and his assistant and successor Theodoros, chief engineers of Ptolemy II's irrigation and drainage works project in the Fayum, contains mostly correspondence about official matters and issues related to the irrigation project. However, among them there are also letters sent to Kleon from his wife and sons who lived in Alexandria.[273] This suggests that Kleon kept his

271 Kruse 2010.
272 Bagnall 2011, 38–39.
273 The archive of Kleon and Theodoros contains 63 published letters. Van Beek mentions that there

personal and work correspondence together, before his archive was reused in mummy cartonnage. The archive of the phrourarchos Dioskourides, found in mummy cartonnage at Herakleopolis and dating to the reign of Ptolemy VIII (182–116 BC), contains documents and petitions, as well as private and official letters. From the above examples it appears that officials did not discard all their private letters separately, since some were found together with their official ones. Therefore, the low percentage of private letters in Ptolemaic times, as compared to Roman, cannot be explained only by the chance of preservation and needs to be discussed further.

As mentioned above,[274] in the Roman period private correspondence became fashionable, not only for ordinary communicational needs, but also as a means of networking. Personal communication by letter with friends, relatives, acquaintances and business partners played an important role in building social relationships. The extensive use of letters for personal communications is reflected in the higher percentage of private letters in archives of individuals when compared to the Ptolemaic period. For example in the archive of Apollonios, the strategos of the Apollonopolite nome of the Heptakomia (early 2nd c. AD), there are 75 private letters, most of which were sent to Apollonios from his family and friends, 35 official, 5 letters that are described as business (which may be added to private) and 15 uncategorised.[275] The rate of private letters to official is the inverse of that found in archives of officials in the Ptolemaic period and this is indicative of the rise of private correspondence in the Roman period.

A third detail in table 5 that needs to be mentioned is the very large number of Roman private letters that do not belong to archives compared to those that do. Although the finding circumstances may be related to this large number, since some letters may have ended up randomly in rubbish dumps, a more likely reason may be the content of the letters of the Roman period. Since a large number of letters are private, it is difficult to recognise ties between the people mentioned in them. Unlike public documents or private ones such as contracts, registrations, and declarations, where people provide their full identities, in letters, and especially in private ones, senders provided little identifying information about themselves, because the addressee knew who the sender was. It is therefore likely that more private letters belong to archives than have been identified, due to the lack of evidence to confirm

are more letters from this archive that still await publication (see Trismegistos ArchID 122. Version 2, 2012, p. 2).

274 See above pp. 24ff.

275 Of the uncategorised letters of the archive of the strategos Apollonios, five are letters of recommendation and so they should preferably be categorised as private letters (P.Brem. 5–9); eight are fragmentary and their type remains uncertain (P.Brem. 71–73, 78, P.Alex. Giss. 52, 55–56, P.Giss. I 90); two are about private businesses of Apollonios and so they may be included with private (P.Giss. Apoll. 20 and P.Ryl. II 233); two are probably official (P.Giss. 46, 61); and P.Brem. 1 is a report about the Jewish war which, if a letter, remains of uncertain type.

possible associations. P.Corn. 49, for example, is a private letter that may belong to the archive of Thermouthas' family, but, as Azzarello explains, there is not enough evidence to support this identification.[276]

2.1.6 Outside Egypt

There is a small number of letters found outside Egypt that provides a valuable source for comparison with the letters found in Egypt and shows that letter writing was widespread throughout the Graeco-Roman world.

The few surviving letters from the Hellenistic period are written on lead sheets and ostraca found in Athens and places where Greeks had colonies, especially the north coast of the Black Sea and the gulf of Massalia.[277] The most characteristic is a third century BC letter, found at the harbour of Massalia, sent from Megistes, a shipowner (or his representative), to the captain of the ship, Leukon. As mentioned above, this case shows that letter writing was uniform in style throughout the Graeco-Roman world.[278] Another significant example is an official letter (Pantikapaion, Black Sea, 1st c. BC–1st c. AD), of which only a fragment from the top left part survives.[279] From areas of the Near East, no actual letters have survived, although there is evidence of Greek documents written on skins.[280] As additional witnesses from outside Egypt one can include letters that were sent to Egypt from elsewhere. The most characteristic case is Zenon, who was a native of Kaunos in Karia. After immigrating to Egypt, he received letters from his family and friends back in Asia Minor. P.Cair. Zen. I 59056 (257 BC) is a letter sent from Apollodotos, a financial official in Karia, referring to some business that Apollodotos had with Zenon's father; it was found among Zenon's papers in Egypt.[281] Also, Zenon himself travelled to Palestine for business purposes on behalf of the dioiketes Apollonios, and when he came back to Egypt he carried with him letters that he had received in Palestine. P.Cair. Zen. I 59016 (259 BC) was sent to Zenon while he was in Karia by Demetrios, a secretary in Cyprus, who was probably located in the city of Tyre.[282]

From the Roman period, letters in Greek and Latin have been found at garrisons of the Roman army in the Near East, especially at Dura-Europos and the Middle Euphrates in Syria, at Bu Njem (called Golas in Latin) in Libya and at Vindolanda in England. P.Euphr. 16 and 17 are two papyrus letters found at Middle Euphrates: the

276 Azzarello 2008, 35 n. 45.
277 See above table 1.
278 See above p. 44, SEG LIV 983.
279 SEG LVIII 775.
280 See below p. 84 Leather – Parchment.
281 For Apollodotos see P.Cair. Zen. I 59036.1n.
282 For more letters sent to Zenon while he was at Palestine see P.Zen. Pestm. p. 172.

first was sent from Ourodes to his son Nisraios about various business affairs, and the second was sent from Roumas to Roumas about the repayment of a loan. Although the names of the correspondents are unusual by onomastic standards of Graeco-Roman Egypt, the language and the expressions used in the letters resemble very much the style of contemporary Greek letters found in Egypt. About seventy Greek and Latin letters on papyrus found at Dura-Europos in Syria are associated with the Palmyrene cohort stationed there.[283] Greek and Latin letters have also been discovered in Masada in Palestine. The Latin texts are related to the Roman army forces that were stationed there in the second half of the 1st c. AD in order to control the Jewish revolt. Some of the Greek letters may have been written by locals, as, for example, P.Masada 741, a fragmentary letter on papyrus from Abaskantos to Ioudas.

One of the most important sources of evidence are the letters found at the Roman military camp at Vindolanda, located about one mile south of Hadrian's Wall in northern England. More than two thousand wooden tablets have been uncovered there, almost all of them dating to the period between AD 90 and AD 120, which corresponds to the time of the establishment of the Roman frontier in England, just before the construction of Hadrian's wall.[284] The Vindolanda tablets contain texts related to the life of the Roman army on the frontier, such as military records, accounts, reports and lists. Among these texts there are 333 letters, both personal and official, many of them related to commanding officers of the Roman cohorts located there, the largest and most important being the archive of the prefect of the Ninth Cohort of Batavians, Flavius Cerialis.[285]

A collection of around 158 ostraca, written in Latin and dated to AD 254–259, have been found at a Roman military camp at Bu Njem in Libya.[286] Among them, there are 44 letters containing mostly short messages related to the every-day life of the army, such as the dispatch of goods. With the exception of minor linguistic variations owed to the interference of Latin with the mother language of the locals (many of the soldiers were recent recruits from the local population),[287] the letters resemble the Latin letters found at Roman military camps in other parts of the Empire.

Finally, there is also a fair number of letters sent to Egypt from outside the provenance. Characteristic examples are the letters of Graeco-Egyptian recruits in the Roman army who sent letters to their families in Egypt, such as P.Mich. VIII 490 and 491 (2nd c. AD), sent from Apollinarios, a recruit in the Roman navy, to his mother

283 P.Dura 55–81.

284 Bowman 1994, 6.

285 The letters and documents found at Vindolanda have been published in T.Vindol. I–III (239 letters in T.Vindol. I–II and 94 letters in T.Vindol. III). For the letters see also Bowman 1994. The editions and images of the letters and documents published in T.Vindol. I–II are also available online at http://vindolanda.csad.ox.ac.uk.

286 For the ostraca found at Bu Njem see O.BuNjem .

287 For the language of the Bu Njem letters see Adams 1994, 87–112.

Taesion in the Arsinoite village of Karanis: P.Mich. VIII 490 was written in Portus, and P.Mich. VIII 491 in Rome.

2.2 Materials of Letters

The ancient letters that were used for everyday communication purposes were written on perishable materials, light and often foldable and thus suitable for easy transfer. The choice of a certain material depended on its availability in a region, societal writing habits, as well as the personal preference of a writer.

2.2.1 Lead

The earliest known Greek letters that have survived on their original material substrates are written on lead (μόλυβδος), and date to the late archaic and classical periods (6th–4th c. BC). Their preservation is due to the relative durability of the metal in humid conditions in which other organic materials, such as wood, papyrus, or leather, had little chance of survival. Lead is a by-product of the extraction of silver and it was abundant in areas where silver was mined, such as Laurion in Attica, where it was relatively cheap.[288] Lead is durable, soft and malleable; it can be shaped into thin sheets (ἐλασμοί), which are suitable as writing surfaces. The sheets can be easily inscribed with a sharp object, such as a stylus (metal pen).[289]

Most texts surviving on lead contain curses. The earliest documents of this kind come from Athens, Sicily and Olbia,[290] while by the Roman period they are attested all over the Graeco-Roman world, with more than 1,500 lead sheets with curses or magic spells currently known.[291] The reasons for the preference of lead for these texts are not entirely clear. In addition to its relatively easy accessibility, several characteristics of lead are thought to have rendered it appropriate for messages to the underworld:

288 For the use of lead and other metals as writing surfaces see Kiyanrad/Lougovaya/Sarri/Trampedach 2015, 293–306; cf. also Cancik/Schneider 1997, s.v. Blei. For the availability of lead in Attica, cf. Aristotle, *Oeconomica* 2.1353a.

289 A magical papyrus, found at Thebes or the Arsinoite nome and dated to the 3rd/4th c. AD, contains instructions to the performer to write certain spells on a piece of lead with a bronze stylus: P.Lond. I p. 83–115 no 121 λαβὼν μόλιβον … ἐπίγραφε χαλκῷ γραφείῳ (= PGM VII 396–397); de Haro Sanchez 2008, 101–102. Gager (1992, 4), referring to writing on lead sheets, mentions "contrary to what one might expect, the process of inscribing metal tablets posed no great difficulty." The same kind of stylus was also used for inscribing waxed wooden tablets (see below p. 80 n. 339).

290 Cancik/Schneider 1997, s.v. defixio.

291 For magic spells and curses from Roman Egypt written on papyrus or lead sheets see Suppl.Mag. I–2. For a list of magic texts on lead sheets found in Egypt or other regions see Jordan 1985, 188–191.

its dull grey colour, heavy weight, and clamminess.[292] An inscribed lead sheet can survive for a long time in the ground, which may have made it a suitable material for texts buried in cemeteries, wells or other places that were regarded as appropriate for the delivery of messages to the underworld. Besides curses, lead sheets were used for questions to the gods, and a large number of such texts have been found at the oracle of Dodona.[293] Some scholars have observed a relationship between letters on lead and curse tablets in that "both these genres seem to have been used in situations of crisis, when their writers were facing significant risks", since situations described in letters on lead show that many writers "require the recipient to act" and "many of these letters convey a sense of urgency" with words like τάχος or τάχιστα.[294] However, expressions of urgency are commonplace in letters of all times, material notwithstanding, and are especially common in letters containing instructions or requests concerning business matters.[295] Thus, it is difficult to see such a connection between letters and curse tablets, besides the fact they might have been regarded as letters to the underworld.

The fact that various types of texts on lead have survived from archaic and classical times indicates that lead was a common medium for writing in that period, including letter writing. In Athens lead sheets were used for other types of ordinary texts too, such as token-type objects that could be stamped or inscribed. Jurors assigned to courts received lead symbola stamped with letters of the alphabet, which insured their eventual payment.[296] Two cavalry archives, excavated at Kerameikos and the Agora, dating to the second half of the fourth century BC, consist of hundreds of lead strips containing records of the name of the owner of a horse, the horse's breed and colour, as well as its price. They may have been used for the record of ownership and evaluation of horses of Athenian cavalrymen.[297]

There are very few letters on lead from the Hellenistic and Roman periods, which may indicate that lead was no longer used for letter writing. A possible reason is that other materials such as wood and papyrus replaced lead sheets as the common writing medium. Although papyrus was well accessible before Alexander the Great's conquest of Egypt, that event may have spread even more the use of papyrus as a

292 Miller 1973, 7.

293 Carapanos 1878, 68–83; Lhôte 2006, xi; Parke 1967, 100–114 and 259–273.

294 Eidinow/Taylor 2010, 39–40.

295 For example, a search for ταχυ- in letters included in the *DDbDP* returns 58 instances, for ταχε- 239 instances, for ταχι- 127 instances. E.g. P.Cair. Zen. I 59019.7 σὺ οὖν, ὡς ἂν τάχιστα λάβῃς τὰ γράμματα, γ\ρ/α⟦.⟧ομ (l. γράψον) μοι περὶ τούτων (And you, very quickly when you receive the letters, write to me about these); O.Florida 5.3–6 λαβών μου τὸ ὄστρακον πέμψας πρὸς ἐμὲ ἐν τάχι (l. τάχει) (when you receive the ostracon from me, please send me quickly); P.Oxy. I 113.7–8 ταχύ μοι πέμψον (send to me at once) and 24 τάχειόν (l. τάχιον) μοι πέμψον (send to me with all speed).

296 Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia* 65.

297 Kroll 1977, 83–140; Posner 1974, 579–582.

writing material in the Graeco-Roman world. In literary sources of the Roman period there are a few references to letters written on lead, in cases when lead was selected because the letters had to be delivered secretly under special conditions. Thus, in his *Roman History*, Cassius Dio describes that, when Decimus Brutus was besieged by Antony, Octavian and Irtius wanted to communicate to him that they had come to support him against Antony. Separated from him by a river, at first they tried to send Decimus beacon messages from the tallest trees, but he could not understand them. So Octavian and Irtius scratched a message on a thin lead sheet, rolled it like a piece of papyrus, and gave it to a diver to carry under water by night. Decimus got the message and replied in the same manner, and in this way they continued to communicate.[298] Parthenius, in one of the *Narrationes Amatoriae*, mentions that when Diognetos and Polykrite wanted to send a secret letter to the besieged Naxians, they scratched it on a lead sheet and hid it in a loaf of bread.[299]

2.2.2 Papyrus

In antiquity the papyrus plant was native only to Egypt, growing in the marshes along the Nile River.[300] The earliest surviving Egyptian papyri date to the fourth and fifth dynasties of the Old Kingdom, but hieroglyphic representations of the papyrus roll and writing instruments attest its use for writing already in 3100 BC.[301] In Greece, papyrus rolls were probably imported through the Phoenician port Byblos (modern Gubal in Lebanon),[302] as suggested by the words βύβλος (or βίβλος) for the papyrus plant and the paper that was produced from it, and its derivative βυβλίον (or βιβλίον) for the papyrus roll. The word πάπυρος is first attested in Theophrastus[303] (4th c. BC) and it is thought to be of Egyptian origin, since in Egyptian it means "that of the king", which may suggest that papyrus was once viewed as a royal monopoly of the pharaohs.[304]

298 Dio Cassius, *Historia Romana* XLVI 36.4.
299 Parthenius, *Narrationes Amatoriae* IX.
300 For the use of papyrus as a writing material see Turner 1968; Römer 2007, 84–94; Ast/Jördens/Quack/Sarri 2015, 307–321.
301 Černý 1952, 11.
302 This must have taken place before the establishment of the Greek city Naukratis in the Delta in the 7th c. BC, since after that time Naukratis became the main trading point of exchange between Greeks and Egyptians.
303 Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* 4.8.2.
304 Černý 1952, 4: "Still in the very late Bohairic (Lower Egyptian) dialect of Coptic (Christian idiom of Egypt) ⲡⲁⲡⲟⲩⲣⲟ, though not actually attested, would mean 'that of the King', ⲡⲟⲩⲣⲟ being here the word more familiar to us in its Biblical form as Pharaoh."

References to texts written on papyrus are numerous in classical Greek literature, which indicates that papyrus was known and used there as a writing material, at least since archaic times.[305] In Herodotus I 123, a letter was written on a papyrus roll (βυβλίον) to be transferred secretly in the belly of a hare, and in III 40–41, Amasis, the king of Egypt, sent a letter to Polykrates in Samos written on a βυβλίον, and Polykrates replied to him with a letter also written on a βυβλίον. According to references in literature, in Athens papyrus was probably used for long texts, like literary works, from which derived the metonymic use of the word βύβλος or βίβλος for the book.[306]

The writing material was made of strips of the stem of the papyrus plant. The process of making it is described by Theophrastus in his *Historia plantarum* 4.8.3 and by Pliny in *Historia naturalis* 13.70.[307] For the construction of the sheets, fresh strips of papyrus were placed side by side in two layers running perpendicular to each other. Strips from the inner part of the stem were soft and moist and produced a better quality surface. After the strips were glued together, the resulting sheets (κολλήματα) were joined in order to form a roll. The surface of the sheets was perhaps smoothened by polishing with a hard object such as a pebble. Fibres on the inner side of the roll were placed horizontally, and this side was usually smoother than the other, which meant that it would be written on first (recto). The outer side (verso) had fibres running vertically; it was coarser and was left unwritten or was used only after the inner side had been filled up.[308] For protection, a first page called the "first sheet" (πρωτόκολλον) was often attached; the *protokollon* was created by gluing a third layer of papyrus, with its fibres running vertically, perpendicular to the other sheets of the roll.[309] The width of a sheet (κόλλημα) usually ranged around 25 cm, which must have been about the length of the strips of the papyrus.[310] In Greek papyrus rolls, the sheets are joined so that the left sheet ends on top of the beginning of the next sheet, while in Egyptian papyri it is the opposite: in either case the joins follow the direction of writing so as not to obstruct the pen.

305 Perhaps introduced around the mid 7th c. BC (Legras 2002, 51); the earliest surviving depictions of papyri date after 500 BC.

306 Aristophanes' *Ranae* 1113–1114 βιβλίον τ' ἔχων ἕκαστος μανθάνει τὰ δεξιά (nowadays everyone has his little book and learns the right things) suggests that literary works on papyrus rolls were circulating in Athens when the play was performed in 405 BC.

307 There are many modern descriptions of the process of the production of papyrus; see e.g. Černý 1952, Turner 1968, 1–6; Bülow-Jacobsen 2009, 4–8.

308 The terms recto and verso are sometimes inadequately used to describe not the front and back of the papyrus, but the direction of the text according to the fibres, i.e. recto when the text runs along the fibres and verso when it runs against the fibres. The terms have also been adopted in codicology, to describe the front and back of a page of a codex. For the terms recto and verso see Turner 1978.

309 Turner 1968, 5.

310 Examples in Turner 1968, 5 with n. 21; Johnson 2004, 88–91.

Unlike writing on wooden tablets, which could be easily erased so that the tablet could be reused, writing on papyrus was meant to be permanent. The ink consisted of carbon[311] and it could be washed off with water, as suggested for example by P.Berl. Zill. 10 (1st/2nd c. AD), in which it is mentioned that a letter was received washed-out: ἀπόστιλές (l. ἀπέστειλές) μοι {ἐπὶ} ἐπιστολὴς (l. ἐπιστολὴν) καὶ οὐ ἐχεῦρον (l. ἐξηῦρον) οὐδὲ ἓν [γ]ράμ<μ>α, ἀλλὰ βεβρε<γ>μένην τὴν ἐπιστολής (l. ἐπιστολήν), ("You sent me an epistole, and I found not a single letter, but (found) the epistole wet"). Although there are palimpsests of papyri, their number is relatively small, suggesting that erasing and re-writing was not a common practice.[312] The Greeks introduced the use of a pen made out of reed (κάλαμος), which was an adaptation of the Greek metal pens that were used for scratching text on waxed wooden tablets, lead sheets and glazed ostraca. The traditional Egyptian way of writing was to use a reed brush, which one created by chewing the end of a reed stick.[313] Some Greek letters from Egypt dating to early Hellenistic times are written with an Egyptian brush, which is usually an indication of the Egyptian background of the writer.[314] For example, a Greek letter dating to 255 BC from the archive of the engineers Kleon and Theodoros, is written with an Egyptian brush and the sheet has been turned in such a way that the joins have the right sheet over the left, which are indications that the writer was of Egyptian origin.[315]

A papyrus roll could be of considerable size, its length ever expandable by gluing new sheets at the end. In Pharaonic Egypt a standard roll consisted of twenty sheets, which resulted in no more than 6 metres in length,[316] while in a third century BC papyrus there is reference to papyrus rolls consisting of fifty sheets.[317] In the Roman period, the usual range for the length of a literary book was between 3 and 15 metres.[318] The height of a roll was of a more fixed size. In Pharaonic times the usual height was around 29–32 cm, but sometimes even longer.[319] In the early Hellenistic period, until about the second half of the second century BC, as appears from the dimensions of completely preserved sheets of letters, a roll was commonly around 30–34 cm in height,[320] although there are some rare cases that suggest that besides the "standard" rolls, there were also taller ones.[321] From about the middle of the second

311 For the ink see Frösén 2009, 82.
312 For Greek palimpsest papyri see Schmidt 2007, 979–990.
313 Černý 1952, 12.
314 Clarysse 1993.
315 P.Petrie II 13 (2) (=P.Petrie III 42 C (10)); see van Beek 2006, 81.
316 Černý 1952, 9.
317 P.Cair. Zen. I 59054.46 χάρτας πεντηκοντακόλλους (257 BC).
318 Johnson 2004, 149.
319 Černý 1952.
320 For the width of completely preserved letters see Appendix II.
321 E.g. P.Sorb. I 9 (268 BC) measures 37.2 cm in width, and P.Sorb. I 11 (262 BC) measures 39 cm.

century BC to the end of the Roman period, the height of a standard roll becomes shorter, rarely exceeding 30 cm. Many completely preserved letters from this period correspond to the height of a roll.[322] From letters that contain more than one column and their height has been preserved intact, it appears that in Roman times the height of ordinary rolls was maximum 25 cm.[323] This suggests that letters used to be written on sheets that come from rolls of lower quality, belonging to Johnson's lower range of rolls of the Roman period.[324] This is not surprising; unlike literary texts, which in the Roman period used to be written on good quality papyrus rolls,[325] letters, like any other ephemeral texts, were written on sheets from lower quality papyrus rolls. Examples such as P.Mil. Vogl. I 24 (AD 117) which measures 29.5 cm in height are not common, and it may not be chance that the letter is elegant in content, suggesting that the writer was of an upper social background. He may have had at his disposal an expensive papyrus roll that he could use for a nice letter to the addressee.

2.2.3 Ostraca

The term ostracon (ὄστρακον) refers to a piece of broken clay pottery that has been reused for writing, and the same term has also been used for flakes of stone.[326] In the Graeco-Roman world, thanks to the widespread use of ceramics for the carriage and storage of goods, potsherds of broken vessels were the cheapest, ready-to-use and abundantly available writing material. Ostraca are generally small in size and can only fit short texts (very large ostraca, like O.Krok. I 1, are extremely rare).[327]

Since these letters are written *transversa charta*, they must have been cut from rolls with a height at least equal to the width of the letters. For the *transversa carta* format see below p. 91 *Transversa charta* Format.

322 See examples in Appendix II.

323 P.Oxy. II 269 (AD 57) with 1+ col. measures 20.5 cm in height (H); SB XXII 15708 (AD 100) with 2 cols. measures 22.6 cm H; P.Giss. Bibl. III 20 (AD 113–117) with 2+ cols. measures 22.5 cm H; P.Brem. 53 (AD 114) with 2 cols. measures 25 cm H; P.Mil. Vogl. I 24 (AD 117) with 1+ col. measures 29.5 cm H; P.Mich. VIII 468 (early 2nd c. AD) with 2 cols. measures 21.8 cm H; P.Brem. 61 (AD 113–120) with 2 cols. measures 23 cm H.

324 Johnson 2004, 143 noted: "The height of bookrolls before the first century spanned a wide range, with examples as high as 29 cm, but short bookrolls of less than 25–26 cm seem to have been most common. In the Roman era, however, such short bookrolls became unusual, and in this period roll heights hardly fell below 25 cm or above 33 cm."

325 Photos in Johnson 2004.

326 For the use of clay as a writing material see Balke/Panagiotopoulos/Sarri/Tsouparopoulou 2015, 277–292.

327 Bülow-Jacobsen 2009, 17.

From classical times a large number of ostraca have been found in the Athenian Agora, most of which were used for ostracisms.[328] Athenian pottery was glazed, and the writing on these ostraca was done by scratching through the glaze with a sharp object. The glaze made it difficult to alter the scratched text, and their small size and free availability rendered them an ideal writing surface for balloting. Other types of texts on ostraca from Athens are few, among them short messages similar messages on ostraca have been found in other areas of the Greek world.[329]

Most texts on ostraca have been found in Egypt. *HGV* currently lists around 20.000 published Greek ostraca, which is about one third of the total of the texts.[330] This includes both ostraca that come from broken flakes of limestone and those that come from broken pieces of pottery. In Egypt, flakes of limestone were used continuously from the Old Kingdom until Coptic times as a cheap alternative to papyrus for private writing, whereas papyrus was preferred for official writing.[331] The text was written on the ostracon in ink with the traditional Egyptian brush, but since Graeco-Roman times the reed pen was used. Limestone ostraca are not common for Greek letters; a small number of limestone flakes, found in desert areas contain Greek, mostly ephemeral texts, such as receipts, school exercises, Christian prayers.[332] However, a relatively large number of limestone ostraca found in desert areas contain Coptic letters.[333]

The custom of writing on pottery sherds increased in Hellenistic and especially Roman times. Most of these ostraca contain texts in Greek, but there are also ostraca written in Aramaic, Demotic, Latin and Coptic. Egyptian pottery was not glazed and the text was written in ink with a calamos or (for demotic texts) with a brush. Greek and Latin ostraca were commonly written on one side, and the back was left blank.[334] The pottery of the ostraca that have been found in Egypt was produced mostly in Egypt, as can be determined by the composition of the clay from Nile silt or desert

328 This was a voting procedure characteristic of Athenian democracy, through which people wrote on an ostracon the name of the man whom they considered as dangerous to the city and democracy. The man who received the most votes was expelled from the city for ten years.

329 See above p. 56.

330 Data drawn in July 2014.

331 An example of a limestone ostracon that dates to the early Egyptian dynasties (about 2600 BC) was found at the Meidum pyramid and contains accounts of pyramid builders; it is inscribed in hieratic script with a traditional Egyptian brush. Petrie/Mackay/Wainwright 1910, plate XIV no 1.

332 E.g. O. Epiph. 611 (6th/7th c. AD), found at the Monastery of Epiphanius in Thebes, contains the first line of Homer's *Iliad* repeated four times, probably as a school exercise. See Crum/Winlock 1926, plate XIV no 611.

333 E.g. the Coptic archive of Frange found in Western Thebes and dating to the 8th c. AD contains many of his outgoing letters; see O.Frange and www.trismegistos.org/archive/321.

334 In some cultures, writing could continue on the back. For example, ostraca containing Aramaic letters are usually written on the one side (mostly the concave side), but some continue on the back; see Lindenberger 2003, 5.

marl; much fewer are ostraca taken from imported wares coming from trade areas of the Mediterranean and the Near East.[335]

Most letters on ostraca have been found in desert areas where papyrus was not easily available.[336] The Eastern Desert has produced the largest quantities of Greek and Latin letters on pottery ostraca. They were written by Roman soldiers stationed there, and among them are some very elegant specimen with regards to the layout of the text. In the Nile valley, where papyrus was easily accessible, ostraca were sometimes used for short ephemeral texts, such as toll-receipts, but rarely for letters. When it came to letters, ostraca were in fact regarded as poor substitutes for papyri, as is evident from apologetic statements such as that found in Max. inv. no 761 συνγνώσ̣ει, ἄδελφε, ὅτι εἰς ὄστρακόν σοι ἔγραψα̣· οὐχ εὑρίσκω γὰρ χαρτάριν ("excuse me, brother, for having written to you on an ostracon, for I cannot find papyrus"); in another ostracon from the Eastern Desert the writer asked the addressee to send him 8 obols worth of papyrus for letter-writing.[337] A major disadvantage of ostraca is that they cannot be folded to keep the text private. Unlike letters on papyrus, which were folded and inscribed with the address of the recipient on the outside, letters on ostraca remained open. This made them less suitable for letters, contracts or any other texts that needed to be kept confidential.

2.2.4 Wood

In classical Greece a common medium for short ephemeral texts, such as letters, appears to have been wooden tablets (πίναξ, δέλτος).[338] These were thin boards of wood, which were chiseled out and filled with wax. A raised frame was left around the waxed surface to protect it from being rubbed when the tablets were stacked on top of one another. The tablets were usually packed in sets of two or more and holes were made on one of the long sides to fasten the boards together, forming a δίπτυχον (twofold), τρίπτυχον (threefold), or multifold (πολύπτυχον) booklet. The text could be

335 For the clay resources for the production of pottery in Roman Egypt see Gallimore 2010, 164–168 and Cockle 1981, 93. For pottery introduced from other places in the Mediterranean to Mons Claudianus see Tomber 1996, 39–49.

336 See also above p. 64 Ostraca.

337 Fournet 2003, 471.

338 For the use of wood as a writing surface see Berkes/Giele/Ott 2015, 383–395; Bülow-Jacobsen 2009, 11–14.

easily inscribed with a sharp stylus—surviving examples of styli are usually made of bronze, wood, reed, bone—and it could also be easily erased by smoothing the wax surface with the back of the stylus, which was usually flattened for this purpose.[339] Writing on a tablet with a sharp stylus is depicted on an Attic vase (fig. 5) that presents themes related to the education of children.

Fig. 5: Detail from the "Douris cup", ca. 485 BC © Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, F 2285; photo by J. Laurentius.

The main advantage of waxed wooden tablets is that they could be reused repeatedly and were durable yet light to carry. On the other hand, their contents could be easily erased, and this is apparently the reason for frequent references to the sealing of wax tablets for security. The earliest references to seals that secured wooden tablets are

339 The Latin word stylus comes from the Greek στύλος (column), but in Latin it is also spelled stilus. The stylus is best described in a riddle of Symphosius, *Aenigmata* 1 "Flat is my top, not flat my base at all. Both ways I'm turned, nor do my tasks appal. What one end does the other can recall." Transl. Hickman-Du Bois 1912.

attested in ancient Mesopotamian texts, mentioned in clay tablets dated before 2000 BC.[340]

In Greek literature, the earliest text on a tablet is the letter in the story of Bellerophontes mentioned in Homer's *Iliad* VI 169 γράψας ἐν πίνακι πτυκτῷ ("wrote on a foldable tablet"), but it is not clear if the tablet was of plain wood or waxed. In tragedies of Euripides all the letters that are presented on stage are described as written on waxed tablets. In *Iphigenia at Aulis* there is a detailed description of the writing-erasing-rewriting process of a letter on a waxed wooden tablet: 35–40 δέλτον τε γράφεις τήνδ' ἣν πρὸ χερῶν ἔτι βαστάζεις καὶ ταὐτὰ πάλιν γράμματα συγχεῖς καὶ σφραγίζεις λύεις τ' ὀπίσω ῥίπτεις τε πέδωι πεύκην ("you write this letter which is still in your hands and then erase the same words again; you seal the tablet and then break the seal, and you throw the pine frame upon the ground"). The use of the verb συγχέω suggests that the tablet was waxed and the letters were cancelled by being blurred for the surface to be rewritten. In Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris* 727, Iphigenia gave a closed letter to Pylades. The scene is depicted in a vase from Campania (fig. 6), in which Iphigenia's letter appears to be a set of wooden tablets, folded and tied with strings.[341]

Fig. 6: Detail from a red-figure neck amphora attributed to the Libation Painter, Campania, Italy, 350–325 BC © Nicholson Museum, University of Sydney.

Wood decomposes in the ground, which explains the shortage of material evidence from early times. The earliest known wooden tablet from Greece has been discovered

340 For wooden tablets in the Ancient Near East and Syria see André-Salvini 1992; Symington 1991. For the use of seals to secure Greek letters see below p. 140.
341 For further information about the pot see Turner/Cambitoglou 2014.

in the tomb of a musician, excavated at Daphne in Athens, and dates to 430–420 BC.[342] In the tomb, among other belongings of the musician, there were five tablets and a bronze stylus. Three of the tablets are of matching size (10 × 5 × 0.3 cm) and have holes on one of the long sides, which served the purpose of fastening them together into a πολύπτυχον. The other two tablets have no holes and must have been singles (the one measures 13.5 × 5.8 × 0.4 cm and the other 11.5 × 6.6 cm). The tablets that formed the central part of the πολύπτυχον are chiseled out and filled with wax on both their sides. Patches of wax with readable texts are preserved on some of them. The tablets must have contained a considerable amount of text since it was written in a tiny script along the long side.[343] On one side of the tablet the text runs with the holes at the top and on the other side the holes are at the bottom of the text. This shows that the text was first inscribed on the front side of the tablet with the hinges at the top, then the sheet was turned over and the text continued on the back of the sheet with the hinged side at the bottom, and continued like this to the next hinged sheet (fig. 7).

Fig. 7: Wooden tablets found in the tomb of the musician in Daphne, Athens, 430–420 BC
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In Graeco-Roman times, tablets were a common writing medium, as evidenced by the large number of Greek and Latin tablets included in a catalogue compiled by K. Worp.[344] Most of them have been found in Egypt, where they were preserved thanks to

342 Pöhlmann/West 2012, 1–16; West 2013, 73–92 with photos of the tablet.
343 West 2013, 76.
344 Worp 2012 includes Greek, Coptic, Demotic, and Latin tablets. Older catalogues are those of Brashear/Hoogendijk 1990 and Cauderlier 1990, which are included in Worp's catalogue.

the dry climate conditions. However, wood was not as abundantly available in Egypt as elsewhere, and the use of wood was always limited in comparison to papyrus and ostraca. Surviving tablets contain either ephemeral texts that were meant to be erased soon, such as school exercises (grammatical or mathematical exercises or lists of gnomes)[345] and accounts, or permanent records, such as birth certificates, testaments, contracts, mummy labels. Letters on wooden tablets are rare and come from places where authors probably had easier access to wood than to papyrus. They have been found in the Dakhleh Oasis, the source of a number of interesting wooden condices containing documentary and literary texts.[346] Brief letters on wood that accompanied mummies and resemble extended mummy labels have also been found.[347]

The best-known letters on wood are the Latin letters from Vindolanda, which date to AD 90–120. Wooden leaf-tablets must have been a common writing material in Europe, but almost nothing has come down to us. Their survival at Vindolanda was made possible thanks to their preservation in anaerobic conditions. Two types of tablets were found there: the first is the common reusable wax tablets described above, which were probably transferred there, as they are made from wood that was not produced locally at Vindolanda;[348] to the second type belong the majority of the tablets, made from alder or birch, which grew locally. These are thin leaf-tablets (ca. 1–3 mm), about the size of a modern postcard (w: 16–20 × h: 6–9 cm), that have a smooth surface and texts written in ink.[349] Reusable waxed tablets were preferred for formal texts, such as certificates or contracts, while the latter were used mostly for ordinary ephemeral texts, like letters.

Wooden tablets were orientated horizontally or vertically, depending on the type of text to be written. For short texts, such as letters, a tablet was placed horizontally and the text ran parallel to the long side of the leaf along the grain of the wood. The text was written in two columns and the leaf was scored in the middle and folded to enclose the text inside. Many of the letters have notches on the right and left sides to secure the string that was tied around the folded letter or batch of letters. The address was added on the outer side of the folded tablet, usually on the back of the second column. Tablets are small in size, and cannot fit long texts. For longer documents, such as lists or accounts, the scored leaf was placed vertically and the text was written in a single column across the grain. When the text reached the bottom of the tablet, a new one was added below, tied with the first through holes made on the top

345 For school tablets see Cribiore 1996, 65–69.

346 E.g. O.Douch III 259, 290 (4th/5th c. AD). For the wooden codices found in Dakhleh see Sharpe 1992, with photos on pp. 138–148.

347 E.g. SB I 3939 (undated), SB XIV 11939 (1st–4th c. AD) and SB VI 9126 (3rd c. AD) are short letters accompanying mummies.

348 See examples in T.Vindol. I, pp. 34–35.

349 Bowman 1994, 8–9.

and bottom of each tablet. The whole list could be folded in a concertina format and opened vertically like a rotulus.

The use of Vindolanda tablets in north-western Europe can be compared with the use of papyrus in Egypt, because tablets were equally easily available where forests grew abundantly.[350] Their difference from ostraca is that the latter could not be folded, while Vindolanda tablets were foldable.[351]

2.2.5 Leather – Parchment

Parchment was produced from skins of animals, such as goat, sheep or calf, through a special preparation process.[352] The main difference between parchment and leather is that "parchment is prepared from pelt, i.e., wet, unhaired and limed skin, simply by drying at ordinary temperatures under tension, most commonly on a wooden frame known as a stretching frame", while with leather "wet pelt is not dried under tension and hence the fibre bundles do not undergo any radical change in relative position."[353] The finest quality parchment was produced from calfskin, known in medieval times as vellum (from the Latin word for a calf, *vitulus*), because this type of skin combined great strength with thinness.[354] In order to be used for writing, parchment needed to be degreased, smoothened and lined.[355]

Parchment is a durable material as long as it remains exposed to normal above-ground conditions, but it decomposes relatively quickly in the ground, which is probably the reason why so little of it has survived. Leather on the other hand is tanned, which makes it resistant to water and more durable.[356] For old texts written on skins the distinction between leather and parchment is not easy, due to the destruction of tanning over time, and for secure determination a scientific examination under UV light is required.[357] In scholarly works the terms parchment and leather are often used imprecisely, and in the present work the terms leather and parchment are generically used to describe strips of leather prepared to receive writing, without claiming precision about the process of preparation of the writing surface in each case.

350 Bowman, T.Vindol. I, p. 44.
351 Cf. Bagnall 2011, 130.
352 For the use of leather as a writing material see Jördens/Kiyanrad/Quack 2015 323–335, and for pergament – parchment see Becker/Licht/Schneidmüller 2015, 337–347.
353 Reed 1972, 119 and 121.
354 Reed 1972, 126.
355 See a detailed description of the process in Reed 1972, 132–152.
356 For the tanning methods see Reed 1972, 46–85.
357 Reed 1972, 252–254 and 261–264.

The use of skins (διφθέρα) as a writing material is documented in Near Eastern cultures since early times.[358] The "parchment" or "leather" that was used in early times in the Near East was of low quality, and cannot be compared with medieval parchments. Whether the term "parchment" is even appropriate to describe them is debatable. In the Greek world, the use of skins as a writing material can be evidenced since Minoan times from traces on clay seals,[359] but it is not clear if writing on skins was as common in Greece as it was in Near Eastern cultures. In the early fifth century BC, Herodotus reported that the Ionian Greeks had replaced the use of skins with papyrus, but due to their earlier use, they continued to call the papyrus rolls (βύβλους) skins (διφθέρας), while other Near Eastern people continued to use skins.[360] Herodotus' statement is supported by SEG LIV 694, a letter on lead, found at Olbia (Black Sea) and dated to ca. 500 BC, in which the word διφθέρια (skins) is used to refer metonymically to written documents; it remains uncertain if skins were used for letter writing.

Chance finds show that throughout Hellenistic and Roman times parchment was continuously used in the Near East.[361] From the Hellenistic period, Greek texts on skins have been found in Near Eastern regions, but there are no letters among them.[362] From the Roman period, parchment was used alongside papyrus for literature or legal

358 Although no documents have survived, the use of parchment is depicted in an Assyrian relief of 640–620 BC, in which scribes are shown taking notes on tablets and parchment (British Museum inv. no 124955).

359 For Mycenaean seals there is no clear evidence that they were used for the sealing of papyrus or parchment documents, but for some Minoan seals it appears from the shape of and traces on their back that they were used for sealing parchment or leather objects, possibly documents. Weingarten 1983, 8–13; Weingarten 1994, 179. For seals and sealings in Minoan and Mycenaean times see also Weingarten 2012, 317–328; Younger 2012, 339. I thank D. Panagiotopoulos for helpful information about the survival of seals from Mycenaean and Minoan times.

360 Herodotus, *Historiae* V 58 καὶ τὰς βύβλους διφθέρας καλέουσι ἀπό τοῦ παλαιοῦ οἱ Ἴωνες ὅτι κοτὲ ἐν σπάνι βύβλων ἐχρέωντο διφθέρῃσι αἰγέῃσί τε καὶ οἰέῃσι ἔτι δὲ καὶ τὸ κατ' ἐμὲ πολλοὶ τῶν βαρβάρων ἐς τοιαύτας διφθέρας γράφουσι ("since old times the Ionians call the papyrus rolls (βύβλους) skins (διφθέρας), because when there was not enough papyrus they used parchment made from goats' and sheep' skins, and even to my day there are many barbaroi who continue writing on such skins").

361 The Dead Sea scrolls (3rd–1st c. BC), which contain biblical, apocryphal, and other Hebrew texts related to the local community, are among the earliest surviving texts on skins; Tov 1993; Parry/Tov 2004–2005. For the use of skins in the Near East in Hellenistic and Roman times see also Bagnall 2011, 46.

362 The earliest Greek texts on skins have been found in Bactria (Afghanistan) and date to the late 3rd and 2nd c. BC; Clarysse/Thompson 2007, 276 and 278–279; Canali de Rossi 2004, 272–273 no 459 = SB XXII 15765. Greek documents of the 2nd c. BC have been found at Dura–Europos, e.g. P.Dura 15 and 34 contain contracts, and two Greek documents of the 1st c. BC have been found with a Parthian text in a jar in a cave at ancient Kopanis in Persian Kurdistan; Minns 1915, 22–65, with pl. I–III; Canali de Rossi 2004, 265–269, no 454–455.

documents at the Roman military camp at Dura-Europos.[363] However, the Greek and Latin letters that have been found there are written on papyrus,[364] and the only letters on parchment are written in local languages.[365] This suggests that Romans would not use skins for letters, if papyrus was available, and this is supported by a reference in Strabo to a letter presented to the emperor Augustus by Indian ambassadors that was in Greek but written on parchment.[366] The fact that Strabo paid attention to the material of the letter suggests that it was regarded as exotic in Rome. Parchment was expensive, and it is unlikely that it would be used for ephemeral texts, if other materials, such as wood or papyrus were available.

In Egypt, skins were rarely used as writing materials before the spread of Christianity.[367] With the spread of Christianity from about the end of the third century AD, the use of parchment increased, but being expensive, it never became a preferred material for letters. It was used mostly for legal, literary or religious texts, with which greater permanence was associated than with letters. Four parchment letters survive from late antique Egypt. Two were sent by a Christian bishop, Papa Sotas, who may have had ready access to the material through his involvement in the production of Christian codices, for which parchment was the standard material.[368] Of the other two letters written on parchment, SB III 7269[369] (4th/5th c. AD) definitely comes from a Christian milieu, being a letter of recommendation from a certain Tyrannos to a Christian community, in support of the letter carrier, Eudaimon; P.Iand II 12[370] (3rd/4th c. AD), on the other hand, does not have any clear attachment to Christianity. It is a short, fragmentary letter, from Aphys to Soeris, the content of which cannot be fully grasped; it seems to be a reply to a previous letter from Soeris to Aphys, asking her about some pots.

363 Welles/Fink/Gilliam, P.Dura, p. 4.

364 In Luijendijk 2008, 147 n. 82 it is stated that one of the letters (P.Dura 46) was written on parchment; however, it is clear from the edition of the letter that it was written on papyrus.

365 Two letters on parchment have been found at Dura–Europos, one written in Parthian (P.Dura 153) and the other in Middle Persian (P.Dura 154).

366 Strabo XV 1.73.

367 The only pre-Christian Greek texts on parchment from Egypt are P.Oxy. VI 957 and 958, used as σίλλυβοι (book indicators for papyrus rolls), and ChLA 41 1191, a short Latin document recording the delivery of cereal, all dating to the 1st and 2nd c. AD.

368 PSI III 208 and IX 1041 (mid–second half of the 3rd c. AD); Luijendijk 2008, 144–151.

369 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/sb;3;7269.

370 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.iand;2;12.

3 Format and Layout

Although the terms format and layout are related and often used interchangeably, in the present study they refer to two different aspects of an inscribed text. The term format is used to refer to the shape, size and orientation of the sheet on which the letter stands, while the term layout is used to refer to the shape of the text on the sheet. As it will be argued below, the materials that were used in each period and region influenced the development of the format of letters. Their physical dimensions and the degree of flexibility that each material offered the writer determined stylistic conventions and trends in the format of letters over time. The layout and palaeography, on the other hand, depended mostly on socio-cultural trends, the educational background of the writers, the relationship between the correspondents and the function of each letter.

3.1 The Development of the Format of Letters

3.1.1 Archaic and Classical Times

As mentioned above, in classical Greece the most common medium for short ephemeral texts, according to the evidence of literature, was probably the wooden tablet (πίναξ, δέλτος), although no letters on wood have survived from the period. The wooden tablets that have been found, such as those uncovered in the tomb of the musician in Athens,[371] suggest that "wooden sheets" were rectangular in shape, placed horizontally, with the writing running along the long side. The only surviving letters from classical times are those written on lead sheets (around 40 letters). They represent the dealings of a lower stratum of society, such as that of traders, probably because lead was cheaply available in areas where silver was produced, such as at Athens.[372] The sheets of most of the surviving lead letters from archaic and classical times are rectangular and placed with the long side horizontally, resembling the shape of the wooden tablets. Most of the surviving letters on lead have long sides ranging between 7 and 20 cm and short sides between 3 and 8 cm.[373] Complete letters were rolled from side to side, and the address was written on the outer side of the roll, parallel to short side of the sheets.

371 See above p. 82.

372 See above p. 72.

373 Examples of completely preserved letters with their sizes (width × height) are SEG XXVI 845 measuring 15.3 × 6.5 cm (Berezan, Black Sea, ca. 500 BC); SEG LIV 694 measuring 15.8 × 8.5 cm (Olbia, Black Sea, ca. 500 BC); Belousov/Saprykin 2013, 153–160 measuring 20.4 × 3.2 cm (Hermonassa, second half of 5th c. BC); SIG³ 1259 measuring 7 × 4 cm (Chaidari, Attica, 400–350 BC).

10.1515/9783110426953-004,

SEG L 276 (fig. 8) is a representative example of a letter on lead, displaying the above-described characteristics. It was found in the Athenian Agora and is dated to the early fourth century BC. The letter is addressed from a certain Lesis to his mother(?) and a certain Xenokles. It contains a desperate message to them, requesting that they come and find something better for him, as he is being abused by his employer at the foundry. The appellation "mother" does not imply necessarily blood relationships, since Lesis could have been a slave who wrote to his housemistress(?) for help. On the back of the letter, about 2 cm from the left edge, there are some illegible traces, which probably belong to the external address.

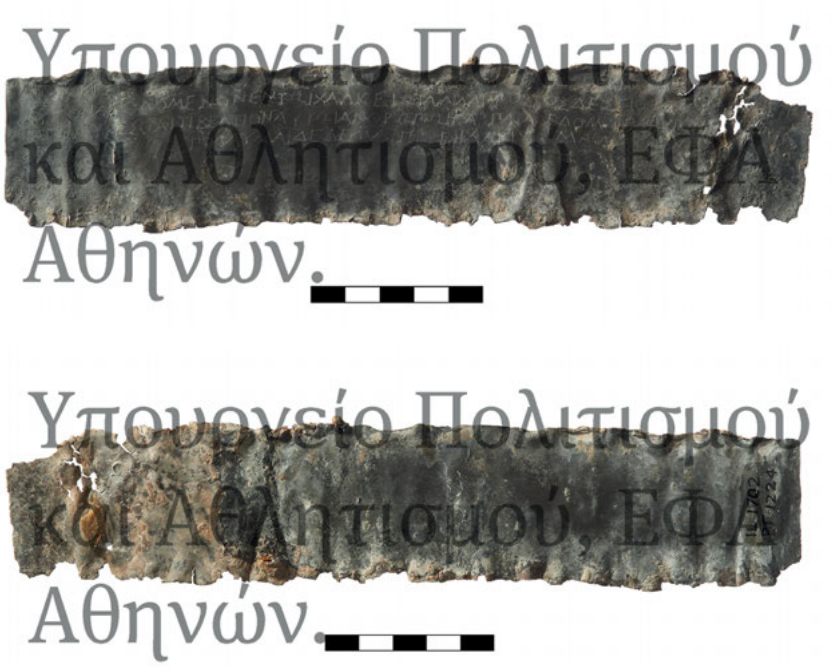

Fig. 8: SEG L 276, letter from Lesis to Xenokles, early 4th c. BC, w: 23.4 × h: 5.0 cm, front and back
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Front

Λῆσις {ις} ἐπιστέλλει Ξενοκλεῖ καὶ τῆι μητρὶ μηδαμῶς περιιδὲν (l. περιιδεῖν)
αὐτὸν ἀπολόμενον (l. ἀπολούμενον) ἐν τῶι χαλκείωι, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸς (l. τοὺς) δεσπότας αὐτῶ (l. αὐτοῦ) ἐλθὲν (l. ἐλθεῖν)
καὶ ἐνευρέσθαι τι βέλτιον αὐτῶι. Ἀνθρώπωι γὰρ παραδέδομαι πάνυ πονηρῶι
μαστιγόμενος ἀπόλλυμαι, δέδεμαι, προπηλακίζομαι μᾶλλον μᾶ[λ]λον.

Back

Traces (perhaps of the external address, e.g. Ξενοκλεῖ)

Translation

Lesis is sending (a letter) to Xenokles and to his mother by no means to overlook that he is perishing in the foundry but to come to his masters and find something better for him. For I have been handed over to a man thoroughly wicked; I am perishing from being whipped; I am tied up; I am treated like dirt—more and more![374]

The text stretches along the whole length of the sheets, and the lines are tightly arranged, not covering the entire sheet, but leaving blank space below. This is typical of the period, where writing is continuous without any indentation or special layout for the prescript or closing of the letter. The words at the ends of lines are either complete or divided, usually in accordance with correct syllabication.[375] Individual letters on lead sheets show classical forms, such as the epigraphic-style Σ, which continued to be used in the mid-to-late fourth century BC.[376] In some letters there is a dicolon (:) punctuation mark separating phrases.[377] Its use is similar to the commonly attested dicola and tricola in inscriptions of archaic and classical times, until about the end of the fifth century; in the fourth century BC use of the dicolon was gradually abandoned.[378] This punctuation sign is attested in some literary texts written on papyri of the Hellenistic period, but it is rare in papyrus letters and other documentary texts.

Two letters dated to the classical period warrant brief discussion because of their exceptional format. One is the letter of Kledikos to Aristokrates, found at Hermonassa (Black Sea) and dated to the fifth century BC.[379] It is written on a rectangular lead sheet measuring w: 3.1 × h: 20.4 cm. The writer divided the sheet into two almost equal parts and then proceeded to inscribe his letter in two columns, filling the left column first before continuing to the right one. This type of format is otherwise unparalleled in this period, but it reveals that writing in columns was already known in classical

374 Transl. Jordan 2000, 95.
375 E.g. SEG XXVI 845, SEG XLVIII 1024. Few are the cases where the lines reach the end of a sheet without space for correct word-divisions, such as SEG LIV 694.3–4 Μένω-ν, 6–7 σ-εο̣ (Olbia, Black Sea, ca. 500 BC).
376 The change is best illustrated by two papyri, both dating to mid/late 4th c. BC and found in Egypt: the papyrus of Timotheus, *Persae* (Berlin P. 9875) has the epigraphic Σ, while the Artemisia papyrus (UPZ I 1) has the lunate C.
377 Attested e.g. in SEG XLVIII 988 (Berezan, Black Sea, 540–535 BC), SEG XLVIII 1024 (Phanagoria, Black Sea, 530–510 BC), SEG XLVIII 1011 (Olbia, Black Sea, 525–500 BC), SEG LIV 694 (Olbia, Black Sea, ca. 500 BC); SIG³ 1259 (Chaidari, Attica 400–350 BC).
378 For punctuation and lectional signs in Attic inscriptions see Threatte 1980, 73–84.
379 Ed.pr. with photo in Belousov/Saprykin 2013, 153–160.

times, anticipating a style that is attested in the Hellenistic and mostly in the Roman period.

A second exceptional case is SEG LIII 256, a private letter from Pasion to Kliarchos, found in Athens and assigned a date before 370/369 BC.[380] The letter is fragmented, partly preserved on a lead sheet that now measures w: 8.0 × h: 8.5 cm. The first eleven lines are complete, but it is uncertain how much is missing below. It is therefore clear that the letter was written either on a square or a rectangular-shaped sheet placed vertically, with the writing stretching along the short side of the sheet. To fold it, one rolled it not side to side, but from top to bottom. Besides its unusual format, SEG LIII 256 may also be of historical interest, because it appears to address the famous ex-slave Athenian banker Pasion, the father of Apollodoros, who is known from the Demosthenic corpus.[381] With this letter Pasion sent instructions to Kliarchos, to punish and prosecute (τιμωρήσασθαι καὶ μετελθεν (l. μετελθεῖν)) Nikostratos, the brother of Deinon, and Arethosios, on the grounds that they plotted against Kliarchos. Long running forensics disputes between groups of people who went to court with accusations against each other were common in classical Athens.[382] The three brothers that Kliarchos asks Pasion to prosecute are mentioned in Apollodoros' speech Contra Nicostratum.[383] If Pasion, the writer of this letter, was indeed involved in legal disputes, he must have been well educated and familiar with the relevant terminology. This seems to be supported by the vocabulary in this letter, which includes the uncommon verb μετέρχομαι (μετελθεῖν), a word found in forensics texts in the special legal sense of "prosecute". The unsual, upright, format of the letter seems to support this possibility, too, because, as argued below, in the early Hellenistic period this format is attested in letters written by individuals who had an advanced level of Greek.[384] The format of Pasion's letter may have been influenced by the layout of long prose texts, such as rhetorical speeches, which could have been written in columns on papyrus. If this supposition is correct, then the pagina format that is attested in papyrus letters of Hellenistic times may mark a continuation of a more formal style that had already been applied in classical times.

380 Edition and photo of the letter in Jordan 2003, 23–39.
381 Jordan 2003, 22–30.
382 Cf. e.g. the long-running dispute between Demosthenes and Aeschines.
383 Preserved in the Demosthenic corpus as *Dem.* 53.4.
384 See below p. 97.

3.1.2 Hellenistic Times

Our main evidence for the format of letters in the Hellenistic period are the papyrus letters found in Ptolemaic Egypt. In the third century BC, there are three kinds of format attested: the *transversa charta*, the Demotic style, and the *pagina* format.

3.1.2.1 *Transversa charta* Format

The *transversa charta* format refers to letters written on a broad, usually rectangular (depending on the length of the letter) sheet of papyrus, placed with the long side horizontal. This format takes its name from the way in which the sheet was cut from the papyrus roll: across the length of the roll against the direction of fibres. The sheet was placed horizontally and the writing ran on the recto side against the direction of the fibres.[385] Writing against the fibres of the papyrus was not as convenient as writing along the fibres, but cutting the sheet in this way combined the shape of a broad horizontally-oriented sheet, to which Greeks were accustomed. The *transversa charta* format is comparable to the format of Demotic and Aramaic letters on papyrus of the sixth and fifth centuries BC,[386] although by the third century BC the *transversa charta* format had already been abandoned for Demotic and Aramaic letters, so the format of Greek letters was not influenced by them, but rather it was introduced by the Greeks.

This format was used by Greek immigrants in Egypt for both their private and official correspondence. The earliest[387] surviving Greek letter on papyrus is P.Köln IX 364 (fig. 9) (270/232 BC), which is private in content, referring to the delivery of gifts to a new-born baby. The format and layout of the text closely resembles that of the letters on lead sheets: it has the shape of a rectangular block, squeezed at the top of the sheet (the upper margin is about the height of one line), with large vacant space at the bottom. Both left and right margins are evenly maintained. Another characteristic of P.Köln IX 364, which is attested in other early Hellenistic Greek letters on papyrus, too, is the small size of the letters and the thinness of the point of the reed-

385 Turner 1978, 26–53.

386 The sheets of those letters are rectangular, with the long sides measuring around 32 cm and the writing running against the fibres. Like Greek letters, the earlier Demotic and Aramaic letters, too, used to be folded in such a way that the text was hidden inside, and only the exterior address, written on the back of the sheet, was visible on the outer part of the closed letter (Porten 1980, 39–75). However there is a difference in the way the text was accommodated on the back: in Demotic and Aramaic letters the sheet was turned upside-down, while in Greek letters it was turned over the side. Thus the addresses on the back of Greek *transversa charta* letters are always written in the same direction as the text on the front, while in Demotic and Aramaic letters any text written on the back is upside-down in relation to the front side. See also Depauw 2006, 294; Lindenberger 2003, chapters II and IV.

387 If the earlier of its two alternative possible datings is accepted.

pen, resembling the style of inscribing with a metal pen on lead sheets or on waxed wooden tablets.[388]

Fig. 9: P.Köln IX 364, letter from N.N. to Ktesippos, 270 or 232 BC, w: 26.1 × h: 7.4 cm © Papyrus Collection, Institut für Altertumskunde, Universität zu Köln.

Front

. . . . . Κτησίπ̣π̣[ωι] Πτολεμαίωι τοῖς ἐπὶ σκηνῇ πᾶσι χαίρειν. καλῶς ποεῖς (l. ποιεῖς) εἰ
ἔρρωσα̣ι. ἔρρωμαι δ̣ὲ καὶ αὐτός. παραγενηθεὶς πρὸς Ἀνδροτέλην κατέλαβον
πάντας ὑγιαίνοντας καὶ Βερενίκην τὴν θυγατέρα τετοκυῖαν θῆλυ καὶ
π̣ά̣ντα̣ κ̣α̣τ̣ὰ̣ λ̣όγον αὐτῇ γέγονε[ν]. λ̣έγω οὖν, καθάπερ ἠξιώκατε τὴν ταχί-
5 στην μ̣ε̣ ἀγγεῖλαι, ὅπως ἂν τὰ εὐανγέλια (l. εὐαγγέλια) σύ τε καὶ Πτολεμαῖος, ἃ \ἐ/πενγίλασ-
θε̣ (l. ἐπηγγείλασθε) ἐν Ἰερ[ᾶι] Ν̣ήσωι δώσειν, παρασκευάσατε, ὅπως ἂν ἐλθὼν κομίσωμαι.
ἐπιμελο̣ῦ̣ [δὲ κα]ὶ Ἀνδροτέλου τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦτο ποι̣ῶ̣ν̣ χαριεῖ μοι.
(vac.) (ἔτους) ις Ἀρτεμισί̣ο̣υ̣ ς

Back

Κ̣τ̣ησίππωι

Translation

N.N. to Ktesippos, to Ptolemaios, to all those in the household greetings. You do well if you are in good health. I am in good health too. When I arrived at Androteles' (home), I found everyone in good health and Berenike, his daughter, having given birth to a girl and everything has gone as she wished. So I am telling you, just as you asked that I notify you as quickly as possible, so that you and Ptolemaios prepare the gifts that you promised to give in Hiera Nesos, so that I might receive them when I come. Also take care of the father Androteles and by doing this you will gratify me.
Address: To Ktesippos.

388 See e.g. above fig. 8.

P.Köln IX 364, though being classified as *transversa charta*, has the writing parallel to the fibres on what seems to be the recto side. This was probably due to it being written on a left-over piece of papyrus, since it is unlikely that one would cut a piece from a blank papyrus roll in such a way. In some other cases, too, it seems that the sheet was cut off the roll before the letter was written. For example, in P.Col. IV 66[389] (256/255 BC) the last lines are squeezed in to fit a squarish piece that measures 16.8 cm in width and 15.7 cm in height; similarly, UPZ I 69[390] (152 BC) is squeezed on a sheet that measures 33 cm in width and 8 cm in height. Cutting the sheet before or after writing the text on it depended on the availability of blank papyrus rolls, but it is also an indication of the professionalism of a letter writer.

Letters of formal official correspondence, like the letters of the dioiketes (finance minister) of Ptolemy II Apollonios, have ample and well-balanced margins, large interlinear spaces, giving the impression that they were written before cutting the sheets off the roll (e.g. P.Cair. Zen. II 59155, fig. 10). In state offices there was certainly availability of large, blank papyrus rolls, and the secretaries must have been used to the process of writing administrative letters in a professional manner. Turner mentions a relief in Thessaloniki, where a writer is depicted using the roll of the papyrus as a base, unrolling it as he went on writing.[391] This writing method may have also been applied by trained scribes or secretaries, even if not by ordinary people.

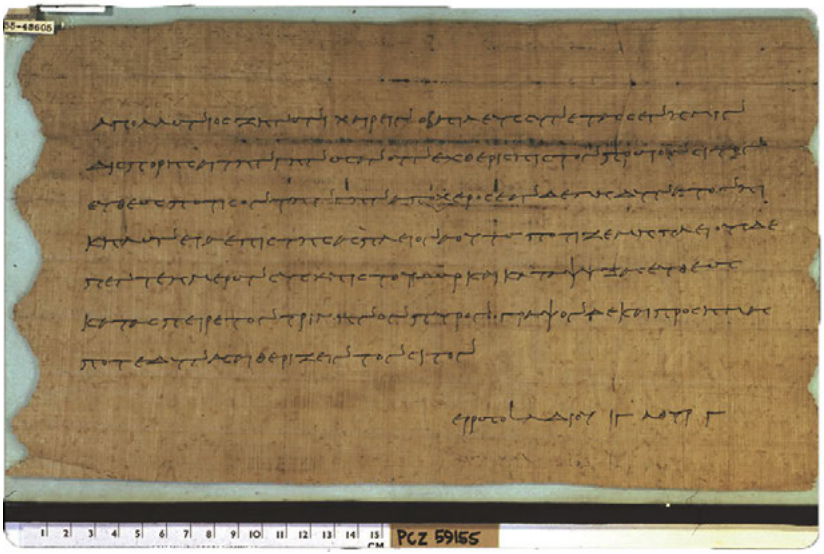

Fig. 10a: P.Cair. Zen. II 59155, letter from Zenon to Apollonios, 256 BC, front, w: 34 × h: 19 cm
© Papyrology Collection, Graduate Library, University of Michigan.

389 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.col;4;66.
390 Photo: P.Paris planche XXXIII no 45.
391 Turner 1978, 46.

Fig. 10b: P.Cair. Zen. II 59155, letter from Zenon to Apollonios, 256 BC, back, w: 34 × h: 19 cm
© Papyrology Collection, Graduate Library, University of Michigan.

Front

Ἀπολλώνιος Ζήνωνι χαίρειν. ὁ βασιλεὺς συνέτασσεν ἡμῖν
διισπορῆσαι τὴν γῆν. ὡς ἂν οὖν ἐχθερίσηις (l. ἐκθερίσῃς) τὸν πρώιον σῖτον,
εὐθέως πότισον τὴν γῆν ἀπὸ χερός (l. χειρός), ἐὰν δὲ μὴ δυνατὸν ἦι,
κηλώνεια ἐπιστήσας πλείονα οὕτω πότιζε, μὴ πλείους δὲ
5 πέντε ἡμερῶν σύσχηις τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ καταψύξας εὐθέως
κατάσπειρε τὸν τρίμηνον πυρόν. γράψον δὲ καὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς
πότε δύνασαι θερίζειν τὸν σῖτον.
ἔρρωσο. (ἔτους) λ, Δίου ιγ, Ἀθὺρ γ.

Back

Ζήνωνι

Translation

The King has ordered us to sow the land twice. As soon as you gather the crops, irrigate the soil immediately by hand, or if that is impossible, allow as many tollenos (shadoofs) as possible to be operated and irrigate the land, but don't keep the water on the fields longer than five days. After irrigation sow the three-months wheat. Write me when you have succeeded in gathering the first crops.
Farewell Year 30, Dios 13, Hathyr 3.
Address: To Zenon.[392]

392 Transl. Rostovtzeff 1922, 49.

In the course of the second century BC, the *transversa charta* format gradually discontinued, being replaced by the *pagina* format, described further below.

3.1.2.2 Demotic Style Format

At the time when Greek rule was first established in Egypt, locals were accustomed to writing letters on oblong very narrow sheets of papyrus that were cut along the height of the roll. Because of its Egyptian origin, this format, which was applied also to Greek letters, is termed "Demotic", after the type of script employed by Egyptians at the time.

Most of the surviving Greek letters in Demotic style measure about 32–34 cm in height, equal to the height of the roll from which the sheets were cut, but there are also shorter ones, measuring half or one third of the height of the roll. The width of the sheets ranges between 7 and 10 cm, although there are both wider and narrower examples. In most letters of this type there are hardly any side margins—especially on the right side, where the lines reach the end of the sheet—and sometimes writing continues on the back side, giving the impression that the sheets were cut off the roll before the letters were composed.

The Demotic format was used for informal private letters related to ordinary private, often business, matters. A number of Greek letters written in this style can be attributed to senders who were Egyptian in origin, as suggested by the names of the senders, the use of a reed-brush instead of a reed-stylus or the continuation of writing on the back side upside down in relation to the front. Besides senders of Egyptian origin, the Demotic style was also used by Greeks: for example P.Cair.Zen. I 59025 (fig. 11) was sent from Archelaos to Kriton. The purpose of the letter was the purchase of spars and a boat, which the sender needed urgently, asking Kriton to buy them without delay, and the request to Kriton to take care of Archelaos' family during his absence, especially of his wife, who was about to give birth.

Fig. 11a: P.Cair. Zen. I 59025, letter from Archelaos to Kriton, 258/256 BC, front, w: 10 × h: 31.5 cm
© Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

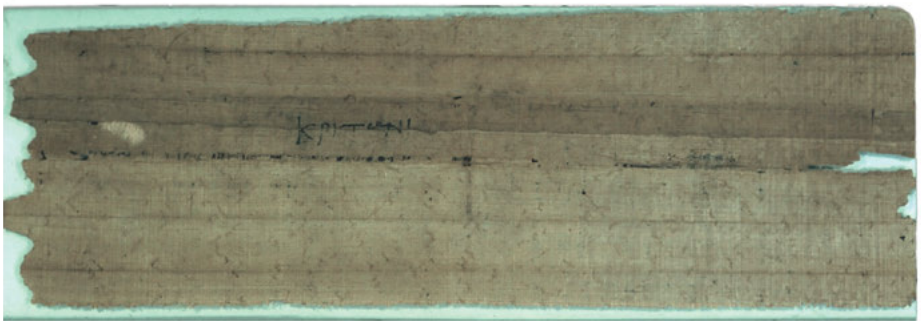

Fig. 11b: P.Cair. Zen. I 59025, letter from Archelaos to Kriton, 258/256 BC, back, w: 10 × h: 31.5 cm © Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

Front

Ἀρχέλαος Κρίτωνι
χαίρειν. χρε<ί>αν
ἔχομεν κεραιῶν
δύο πηχῶν μ
\ἀνὰ π(ήχεις) κ/ καὶ σκάφης τρισ-
κάλμου. πρὸς Διὸς
οὖν καὶ θεῶν μὴ ὀ-
κνήσῃς διελθὼν εἰς
ἐμπόριον καὶ ἀγορά-
σας, οὐθὲν γὰρ ἄλλο
ἡμᾶς ἐπικωλύει,
ἵνα μὴ ὑστερήσωμεν
τῆς ἐργασίας. τὰς δὲ
τιμὰς τούτων λαβὲ
παρὰ Ἀπολλοφάνους.
τὸ γύναιον ἐπίτοκον
ὃν καταλέλοιπα ὁρῶν
ἀναγκαίαν οὖσαν τὴν
ἀποδημίαν. καλῶς
οὖν πο<ι>ήσεις ἀποστέλ-
λων πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἐπι-
μελῶς, ἐάν τινος χρε<ί>-
αν ἔχωσιν, καὶ ποιῶν
αὐτοῖς. ἐὰν δὲ καὶ ἐν
δυνατῶι ἦι, ἀγόρασον
παρὰ Χαρμίδου ἐλαίου
χόας ἓξ καὶ δὸς αὐτοῖς·
φασὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν πωλεῖν.
[ἔ]ρρωσο.

Back

30 Κρίτωνι.

Translation

Archelaos to Kriton greetings. We need two spars, 40 cubits, that is, 20 cubits each, and a boat with three sculls. By Zeus and gods, do not hesitate to go to the trading port and purchase them, for nothing else delays us, in order that we may not be too late for the work. Receive the price for these from Apollophanes. I left my dear wife near childbirth, seeing the necessity to travel abroad. So, please take care to send them anything they need and to do for them (i.e. whatever they need). Also, if it is possible, buy six choas of oil from Charmides and give it to them; for they say that he sells it. Farewell.
Address: To Kriton.

The Demotic style format was gradually abandoned in the course of the second century BC, while the *pagina* format prevailed.

3.1.2.3 *Pagina* Format

Like the Demotic style format, the *pagina* format also involves a tall and narrow sheet on which the writing runs parallel to the fibres. However, the two types should not be confused: the Demotic format is much narrower than the *pagina*. Individual sheets in the *pagina* format are around 10–12 cm in width,[393] approximating the widths of the columns of contemporary literary texts.[394] In the course of the second and first centuries BC the height of the sheets of letters gradually shortened, in parallel to the reduction in the height of papyrus rolls.[395]

The *pagina* format may be anticipated in an exceptional lead letter written in columns,[396] but the earliest surviving letters in this format are papyrus letters dating to the third century BC. While these earliest letters are private in content, over the course of the first century BC the format was adopted for official correspondence, too.[397] At the same time, the number of letters in this format increased, so that by the end of the Hellenistic period it was standard for all kinds of letters and documents. The *pagina* style must have been considered elegant, because most of the third

393 SB I 5216 has a 10 cm column width; UPZ I 62 has a 9 cm column width; P.Phrour. Diosk. 17 has a 10 cm column width and P.Phrour. Diosk. 15 has a 12 cm column width.
394 Blanchard (1993, 35) found that the column width of prose texts of the Ptolemaic period is about 7 cm, and of poetry ranging between 8.5 and 19.5 cm.
395 See Appendix II.
396 Letter of Kledikos to Aristokrates; see above p. 88 with n. 380.
397 E.g. P.Tebt. I 32 (119 BC), a letter to Menches village scribe of Kerkeosiris, and P.Tebt. I 35 (111 BC), a letter to financial officials of the division of Polemon.

and second century BC letters that employ it were sent by relatively well educated individuals.

Characteristic third-century BC examples are the letters of Pyron, the chief secretary (γραμματεύς) of Zenon. PSI VI 571 (252/251 BC) (fig. 13) and PSI IV 418 (mid 3rd c. BC) (fig. 14) consist of a single column each, while P.Mich. I 46 (251 BC) (fig. 12) comprises two columns; the second column was added after the addition of a sheet, with the join running across the intercolumnium. The linguistic style of all Pyron's letters is elegant, thereby matching their appearance. The word order of the opening address, which has the addressee's name precede χαίρειν, followed by the sender's name, is an indication of politeness. The writer's linguistic competence is evident in the formation of uncommon compound words with prepositions that add precision and intensity. For example, in P.Mich. I 46 some of the compound words are δι-αισχυνόμενος ("be ashamed"), προσ-πορευομένους ("approaching"), συγ-κατα-πλέωμεν ("sail with you"), ἀπο-μετρήσω ("measure out, deliver"), and δι-ευσχημονήσομεν ("live decently"); in PSI VI 571 we find the ἀντι-\δια/-γραφήν ("delete of debt in place of payment"), δι-ευ-σχημονεῖν ("live decently"), παρα-τρέφω ("feed in addition"), περι-λείπεται ("remains"), προ-δούς ("set forth"). Similar compound words are used in PSI IV 418, e.g. προσ-εφώνησας ("proclaimed)", ἀπο-σύν-ταξον ("order"), ἀπο-παιδαριοῦν ("be treated dishonourably/literally: be treated like a slave"), ἀ-συν-θετῶν ("be faithless"), ἐξ-α-θυμῶμεν ("be disheartened"). Another elegant stylistic element is his use of diminutives, such as the words σιταρίου ("little corn"), γηίδιον ("small plot of land") in PSI VI 571, and παλαιστρίδιον ("small palaestra"), ἐλαϊδίου ("little oil"), τριβώνιον ("little cloak") in PSI IV 418. To these we should also add his consistent use of the polite closing farewell εὐτύχει.

The unusual rhetorical ability of Pyron is also observable in the way he expresses his requests for provisions of food, elegant clothing, an office to work in, and a plot of land. He formulates himself in such a way that he does not loose dignity by asking; instead, he makes Zenon appear to be responsible for providing him with what he asked for. This is evident for example in phrases such as PSI IV 418.2–5 καλῶς ποιήσεις, καθὰ καὶ προσεφώνησας ἀξιωθεὶς καὶ ὡμολόγησας πᾶν τὸ δυνατὸν ποιήσειν, φροντίσας ὅπως... ("Please, in accordance with the promise you made at our request when you agreed to do everything possible, take care so that ..."); 23–5 καὶ τὸ ὅλον δὲ παῦσαι ἀσυνθετῶ\ν/ περὶ ὧν ἂν ὁμολογήσηις ἡμῖν, [ἵ]να μὴ [ἐ]ξαθυμῶμεν ("And in general, stop being faithless in whatever you promise us, so that we are not disheartened"); and PSI VI 571. 9–11 καὶ εἰς τὸ λοιπὸν δέ, ἵνα μὴ ἐνοχλῶμέν σε περὶ σιταρίου, καλῶς ποιήσεις φροντίσας ὅπως ἀπό γε τούτου τοῦ ἔτους ληφθῆ<ι> ἡμῖν γηίδιον... ("And for the future, in order that we do not disturb you for a little corn, please see to it that from this year onwards we receive a plot of land ..."). The same format and linguistic style can be observed in P.Cair. Zen. IV 59647 (dated before 248/247 BC), where the content, with requests for the salaries of clerks, and style, with words such as οἰκημάτιον (18, "little house") and διευσχημονεῖν (48, "live decently"),

strongly suggest that it is another letter from Pyron to Zenon. The hand of P.Cair. Zen. 59647[398] looks very similar to Pyron's letters, especially to PSI VI 571.

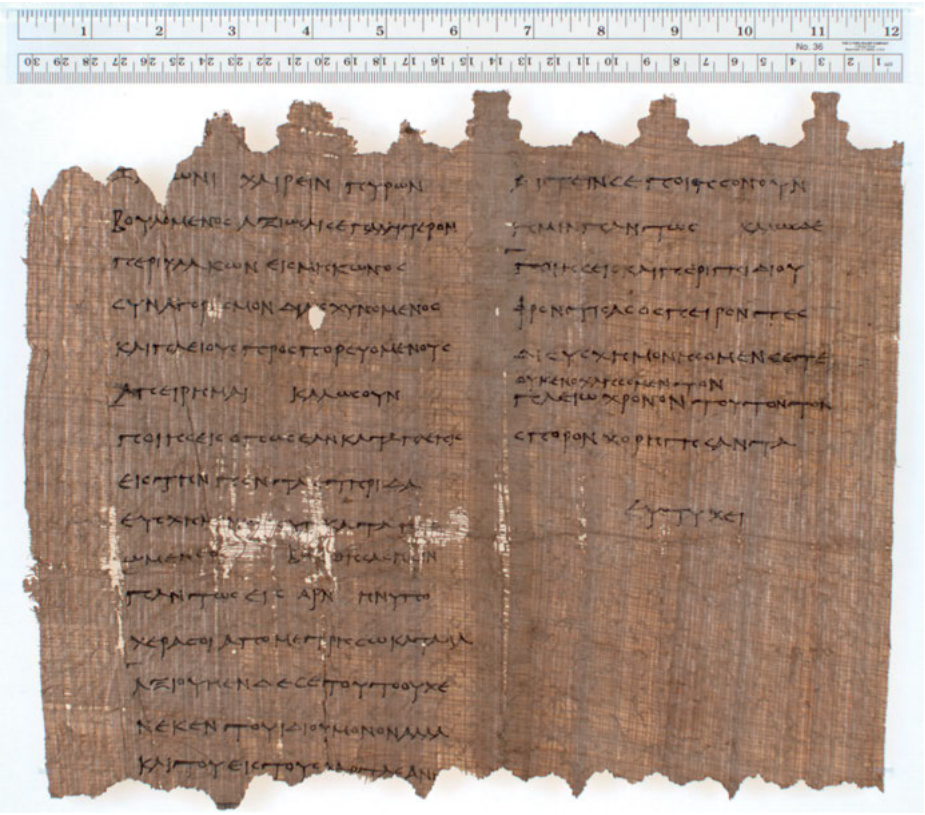

Fig. 12: P.Mich. I 46, letter from Pyron to Zenon, 251 BC, w: 24.5 × h: 30 cm © Papyrology Collection, Graduate Library, University of Michigan

Front
Col. i

Ζή[ν]ωνι χαίρειν Πύρων.
βουλόμενος ἀξιῶσαί σε παλαίτερον
περὶ χαλκῶν εἰς μήκωνος
συναγορασμόν, διαισχυνόμενος
καὶ πλείους προσπορευομένους
ἀπείρηματι. καλῶς οὖν
——

398 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.cair.zen;4;59647.

ποιήσεις, ὅπως, ἐὰν καταπλέηις
εἰς τὴν πενταετηρίδα,
εὐσχημόνως συγκαταπλ̣έ-
ωμέν σοι, βοηθήσας ἡμῖν
πάντως εἰς ἀρ(τάβας) ρν, ἣν ὑπὸ
χε<ῖ>ρα σοι ἀπομετρήσω κατὰ ἀρ(τάβας) λ.
——
ἀξιοῦμεν δέ σε τοῦτο οὐχ ἕ-
νεκεν τοῦ ἰδίου μόνον, ἀλλὰ
καὶ τοῦ εἰς τοὺς χάρτας ἀνη-
[λώμα]τ[ος -ca.?-]
-- -- -- -- -- -- -- -- -- --

Col. ii

αἰτεῖν σε. ποίησον οὖν
ἡμῖν πάντως. καλῶς δὲ
——
ποιήσεις καὶ περὶ γηιδίου
φροντίσας, ὃ σπείροντες
διευσχημονήσομεν σέ τε
\οὐκ ἐνοχλήσομεν τὸν/
πλείω χρόνον τοῦτον τὸν
σπόρον χορηγήσαντα.
εὐτύχει

Translation

To Zenon greeting from Pyron. Though I desired some time ago to ask you for money for buying poppy seed, I have refrained until now, being ashamed to see so many others applying to you. So in order that, if you sail down to the *Pentaeteris*, I may accompany you in proper style, will you kindly help me at any rate to buy 150 artabas, which I will presently deliver to you in quantities of 30 artabas? I ask this not only for the sake of my private expenses, but also to meet expenditure on the papyrus rolls... Do this for me at any rate. And please consider my request about a plot of land which I can sow and thus live decently without troubling you for the future, once you have provided this year's seed. May you prosper.[399]

399 Transl. Edgar, P.Mich. I 46.

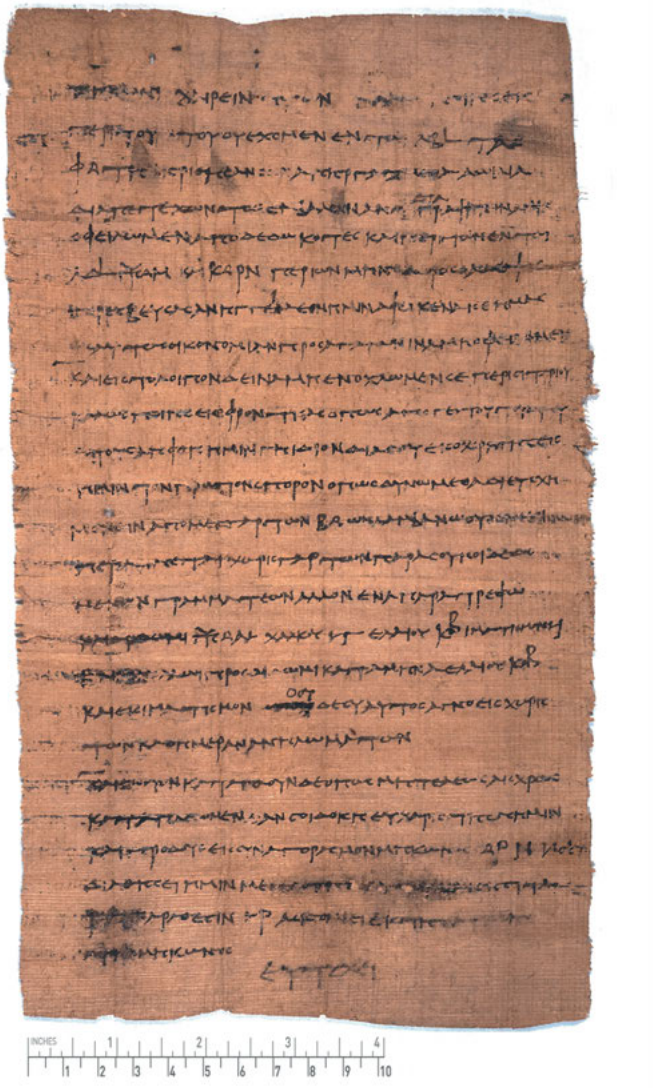

Fig. 13: PSI VI 571, letter from Pyron to Zenon, 252/251 BC, w: 16.8 × h: 28.9 cm © Biblioteca Medicea, Laurenziana, Firenze.

Front (recto, along the fibres)

Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Πύρων. καλῶς ποιήσεις
περὶ τοῦ σί̣τ̣ου οὗ ἔχομεν ἐν τῶι λβ (ἔτει) τὰς
φ (ἀρτάβας) τῆς κριθῆς ἀνθ᾽ ὧν ἀπηργάζμεθα ἀωιλια (l. ἀωϊλίων)
διὰ Πετεχῶντος ἐμβαλὼν ἀντι\δια/γραφήν, ἵνα μὴ
5 ὀφείλωμεν ἀποδεδωκότες, καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐν τῶι
λδ (ἔτει) πυ(ροῦ) (ἀρτάβας) μ καὶ κρ(ιθῆς) (ἀρτάβας) ρν, περὶ ὧν Μηνόδωρος ὁ ἀδελφὸς

πρεσβεύσας ἀνήγγε<ι>⟦λ⟧λε⟦ι⟧ν ἡμῖν ἀφεικέναι σε ἡμᾶς,
ὡσαύτως οἰκονομίαν προσαγαγών, ἵνα μὴ ὀφείλωμεν.
——
καὶ εἰς τὸ λοιπὸν δέ, ἵνα μὴ ἐνοχλῶμέν σε περὶ σιταρίου,
καλῶς ποιήσεις φροντίσας ὅπως ἀπό γε τούτου τοῦ
ἔτους ληφθη<ι> ἡμῖν γηίδιον διὰ σοῦ εἰς ὃ χορηγήσεις
ἡμῖν τὸν πρῶτον σπόρον, ὅπως δυνώμεθα διευσχη-
μονεῖν· ἀπὸ μὲγ (l. μὲν) γὰρ τῶν β (ἀρταβῶν) ὧν λαμβάνω, οὐθέν μοι
περιλείπεται. χωρὶς γὰρ τῶν παρά σού μοι δεδο-
μένων γραμματέων ἄλλον ἕνα παρατρέφω
καὶ δίδωμι πυ(ροῦ) (ἀρτάβην) α ∠ χαλκοῦ (δραχμὰς) γ ἐλαίου κο(τύλας) β ἱματισμὸν
(δραχμὰς) ι·
καὶ Ἑρμολάωι προσδίδωμι κατὰ μῆνα ἐλαίου κο(τύλας) β
καὶ εἰς ἱματισμὸν \ὃ οὐ/δὲ σὺ αὐτὸς ἀγνοεῖς, χωρὶς
τῶν καθ᾽ ἡμέραν ἀνηλωμάτων.
——
καὶ εἰς τὸν κατάπλουν δέ, ὅπως μὴ τελέως αἰσχρῶς
καταπλέωμεν, ἐάν σοι δοκῆ<ι>, εὐχαριστήσας ἡμῖν
καὶ προδοὺς εἰς συναγορασμὸν μήκωνος (ἀρτάβας) ρν ἧς σὺ
διαθήσει ἡμῖν μετὰ τῆς ᾽ὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰς σιτα-
ρί̣ο̣υ παράθεσιν (δραχμὰς) ρ ἃς κομιεῖ ἐκ τῆς τ̣ι̣μ̣ῆς
τῆς μήκωνος.
εὐτύχει.

Translation

To Zenon greeting from Pyron. You will do well, regarding the wheat that we have for the 12th year, to pay through Petechon the 500 artabas of barley in money instead of kind, in compensation for the aolia that we have worked, so that we are not in debt since we have paid. And regarding the 40 artabas of wheat of the 34th year and the 150 artabas of barley, which our brother Menodoros has anounced to us that you have given up to us, make an arrangement in a similar manner, so that we are not in debt.
And for the future, in order that we do not disturb you for a little corn, you will do well to see to it that from this year onwards we receive a plot of land, to which you will provide the first seeding, in order that we are able to live decently. For, from the 2 artabas that I receive, nothing remains. For, besides the secretaries that have been given to me by you, I also feed another one, and I give 1 ½ corn artabas, 3 drachmas in money, 3 cotylae of olive oil, and clothing worth 10 drachmas. And I additionally give to Hermolaos 2 cotylae of oil every month, and for clothing, which you yourself know, besides the daily provisions.

And for the travel to the north, in order that we do not travel in complete dishonour, if you agree, pleasing us and giving up 150 artabas of poppy seed for us, which you will set forth (for sale) together with your (poppy seeds), and you will provide us with 100 drachmas in wheat which you will get from the sale of the poppy seed. May you prosper.

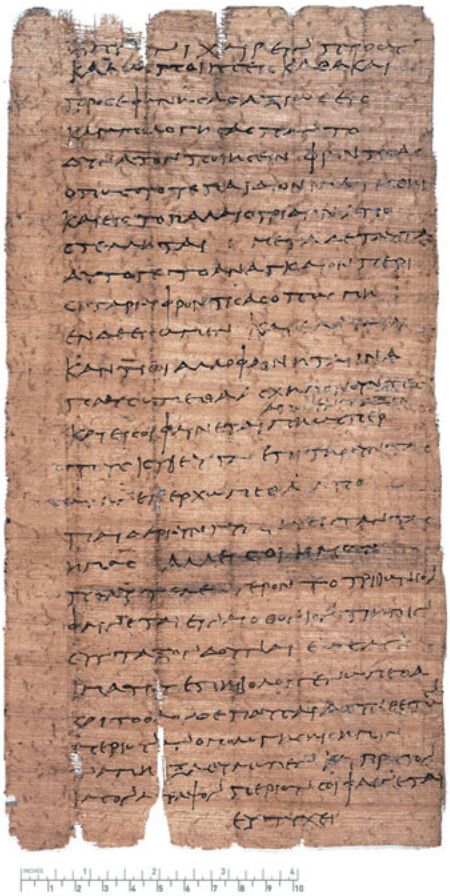

Fig. 14: PSI IV 418, letter from Pyron to Zenon, mid 3rd c. BC, w: 16 × h: 30.6 cm © Biblioteca Medicea, Laurenziana, Firenze.

Front (recto, along the fibres)

Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Πύρων.
καλῶς ποιήσεις, καθὰ καὶ
προσεφώνησας ἀξιωθεὶς
καὶ ὡμολόγησας πᾶν τὸ
5 δυνατὸν ποιήσειν, φροντίσας
ὅπως τό τε παιδίον ἱματισθῆι
καὶ εἰς τὸ παλαιστρίδιον ἀπο-
στέλληται : μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα
αὐτό γε τὸ ἀναγκαῖον περὶ
10 σιταρίου φροντίσας, ὅπως μὴ
ἐνδεεῖς ὦμεν καὶ ἐλαιδίου
κἄν τί σοι ἄλλο φαίνηται, ἵνα
παυσώμεθα ἀσχημονοῦντες·

καὶ εἴ σοι φαίνεται, \ἀποσύνταξον/ μὴ ὥσπερ
15 τοὺς κυβευτὰς ἐπιτηροῦντας
ὡς ἂν εἰσερχώμεθα ἀπο-
πα̣ιδ̣α̣ρ̣ι̣ο̣ῦ̣ν̣ γυμνοὺς ἱστάντας
ἡμᾶς. ἀλλ᾽ εἴ σοι ἡμῶν
πολυτελέστερον τὸ τριβώνιον
20 φαίνεται εἶναι, ὀθόνιόν τι ἡμῖν
σύνταξον δοῦναι, ἕως ἂν
ἱματίου ἐπήβολοι γενώμεθα.
καὶ τὸ ὅλον δὲ παῦσαι ἀσυνθετῶ\ν/
περὶ ὧν ἂν ὁμολογήσηις ἡμῖν,
25 [ἵ]να μὴ [ἐ]ξαθυμῶμεν. καὶ πρὸς τὸν
Ἰάσονα γράψον περὶ ὧν σοι φαίνεται.
εὐτύχει.

Translation

To Zenon greeting from Pyron. You will do well, as you promised when you were asked and agreed to do everything possible, to take care so that the child be dressed and be sent to the little palaestra. And after this, to take care of whatever food necessities, so that we are not in need of anything, even oil, and anything else that you find proper, so that we stop disgracing ourselves. And if you agree, order supplies—so that the gamblers, as they will be watching when we enter, will not dishonour us, as if being naked. But if you think our cheap clothing should more expensive, order linen cloth to be given us, until we acquire clothing. And in general, stop breaking your promises to us, so that we are not disheartened. And about Iason, write to us whatever seems fitting. May you prosper.

Characteristic second century examples can be found in the archive of the κάτοχοι ("secluded")[400] in the Sarapeion temple in Memphis, where there were both Greeks and Egyptians, since both Demotic and Greek papyri have been found there. Among these survive Greek literary papyri, suggesting that in the Egyptian temple there was a library of Greek literature, used at least by the Greeks who were "secluded" there.[401] UPZ I 59 and UPZ I 60 (168 BC) are two letters addressed to Hephaistion, both written in *pagina* format. Hephaistion had fled to the Sarapeion as a refugee and secluded himself voluntarily there in religious detention. UPZ I 59 was sent by his wife, Isias, and UPZ I 60 was sent from his brother, Dionysios, both asking Hephaistion to leave the Sarapeion and come back to his home and family. Both letters were written on the same day and in the same hand, perhaps Dionysios'.[402] Two more letters in the same

400 Κάτοχοι refers to individuals who voluntarily secluded themselves at religious sites. For a definition of the κάτοχοι see Legras 2011, 14–23.

401 For the archive of the "secluded in the Sarapeion" see Legras 2011; Thompson 2012, 197–246. For the Greek literary papyri of this archive see Clarysse 1983, 57–62.

402 This has also been suggested by Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 111–112. Careful attention to the handwriting suggests that there is no change of hand in UPZ I 59. This means that even if Dionysios wrote Isias' letter, Isias did not undersign it. For the absence of change of hand in UPZ I 59 see also p. 349.

format are UPZ I 62 (160 BC) and UPZ I 71 (152 BC), both sent to Ptolemaios, who was also "secluded" in the Sarapeion. Other examples of letters in *pagina* format can be found in the archive of Dioskourides, phrourarchos at Herakleopolis in the middle of the second century BC (see P.Phrour Diosk. 15, sent to Dioskourides from his father, and P.Phrour Diosk. 17, to Dioskourides from a certain Sosos), as well as in both P.Köln IX 365 (2nd c. BC), a letter of recommendation to Herakleides in support of a certain Telephanes, and SB I 5216 (2nd c. BC), a letter of the doctor Athenagoras to the priests of a temple.

From the Greek names of the senders and especially from the linguistic style of the third and second century BC letters in this format, it appears that the *pagina* format was favored by educated, linguistically competent Greeks. Moreover, these letters often contain lectional signs, such as *paragraphi* or punctuation marks accompanied by *paragraphi*, which were were common in literary texts. For example, P.Mich. I 46 and PSI VI 571 have *paragraphi* at the end of sections, while PSI IV 418.8 has a double-dot punctuation mark ":" indicating the end of a period. The double dot ":" in PSI IV 418 is one of the latest examples of this kind of punctuation, which was common in letters of archaic and classical times, but was gradually abandoned from the fourth century BC onwards. In the Hellenistic period it is sometimes used in literary texts, marking ends of sections, changes of speakers etc., but it was not common in letters or other documentary texts.[403] Other letters with *pararaphi* are UPZ I 62 (before 160 BC) and P.Phrur. Diosk. 15 (158 or 155 BC). The latter has also an unusually elaborate opening address for this period, indicative not only of the cordial relationship between the sender and addressee, but also of the sender's advanced level of literacy, Σῶσος Διοσ[κουρ]ίδη τῷ ἀδελφῷ τῷ φίλῳ πατρὶ τῇ ἐλπίδι τῇ ἐμῇ χαίρε<ι>ν ("Sosos to Dioskourides, my brother, my dear father, my hope, greetings").

3.1.2.4 From the *transversa charta* to the *pagina* Format

As is typical of cultural trends, the new did not immediately replace the old. This holds true too for the format of letters. The broad *transversa charta* continues to be attested—in decreasing numbers—until about the late first century BC. The Demotic-style format was gradually abandoned by the first century BC, too.

The reasons for the prevalence of the *pagina* format are not entirely clear, but they may be related to a change in the writing material in early Hellenistic times as a result of Alexander's expedition and the establishment of Alexandria as the major cultural centre of the Hellenistic world. More specifically, in classical Greece, the cultural centre was Athens and mainland Greece, where, as it appears from surviving evidence and literary sources, the standard writing surfaces for letters were waxed wooden

403 For the use of the double-dot (dicolon) in letters of archaic and classical times see above p. 88 with n. 378. For its use in classical texts of the Hellenistic period see Turner 1987, 8–9.

tablets and lead sheets.[404] Although papyrus was known as a writing material, its supply in Greece depended on imports from Egypt, and, as a result, its availability there was limited. From references in classical Greek literature, it seems that papyrus, though used for long permanent texts, such as books and literature, was not preferred for ephemeral, informal and ordinary short texts, such as letters.[405] The dimensions of surviving wooden tablets and lead sheets show that the available writing surface on these substrates is relatively small. This affected the shape of the text and the size of letterforms, which were written as small and tight as possible in order to fit the maximum amount of text on the surface. The large dimensions of papyrus rolls, on the other hand, removed some of the constraints on writers, enabling them to expand their texts. This is evident from comparison of very early surviving Greek letters on papyrus with papyrus letters dated to the later decades of the third century: in earlier letters, the lines hug the top part of the sheet leaving a large empty space below, resembling the format of letters on lead sheets, while later examples no longer squeeze the lines in at the top.

Once papyrus became the standard writing material for letter writing, the way in which Greeks had been using papyrus rolls in the past—to write books and long literary texts in columns—was gradually adopted for their letters and documents, too. The advantages of this method of writing are clear: opening a roll horizontally and writing along the fibres facilitated the expansion of the text to the right by allowing the addition of more columns or new sheets. Archiving texts was easy and tidy, too, since the left margin, which was standard and even, enabled pasting the sheets in *tomoi synkollesimoi*, by placing the end of the left sheet on top of the beginning of the right, covering thereby the empty left margin of each sheet.[406] This gradually affected the way dockets were recorded on official letters, too. More specifically, on *transversa charta* letters, such as those of the Zenon's archive (3rd c. BC), dockets were inserted by Zenon or his secretaries on the back of the sheet on the left-hand side, recording the date of receipt, the name of the sender and/or the content of the letter, and sometimes also the place where the letter had been received. From the second century BC on, dockets on letters written in the *pagina* format were inserted in the top front margin, above the opening address, introduced with verbs such as ἔλαβον ("I have received"), ἐκομισάμην ("I have been brought") or ἀνέγνων ("I have read") and recording only the date of receipt.[407] This position facilitated the reading of the dockets together with the content of the letters, as they were bound in *tomoi synkollesimoi*.

The dominance of Alexandria among the Hellenistic cities must have resulted in an increase in the export of papyrus rolls to the Greek world, and also to Rome,

404 See p. 72 Lead and p. 79 Wood.
405 See p. 74 Papyrus.
406 For the *tomoi synkollesimoi* see Clarysse 2003.
407 See examples of official letters of the 2nd and 1st c. BC in Armoni, P.Heid. IX p. 8.

which imitated and adopted Greek cultural conventions. As described by Suetonius, the Roman senators used to write letters in the *transversa charta* format, and Julius Caesar was the first who sent a letter to the Senate written in the *pagina* format: *epistulae quoque eius ad senatum extant, quas primum videtur ad paginas et formam memorialis libelli convertisse, cum antea consules et duces non nisi transversa charta scriptas mitterent* ("some letters of his to the senate are also preserved, and he seems to have been the first to reduce such documents to pages and the form of a note-book, whereas previously consuls and generals sent their reports written right across the sheet."[408] Since this change in the format of letters had already been applied for more than a century in Egypt, some influence from there can hardly be doubted. Suetonius' description confirms that the *pagina* format of letters was inspired by literature, because *pagina* in Latin (σελίς in Greek) was the term used to describe the "column" of literary texts. It also explains why in early Hellenistic times the *pagina* format was applied first for private letters by writers with advanced education, who were apparently accustomed to reading and/or writing literary texts in a format that they adopted for letters, too.

After the *pagina* format had been established for letter writing, letter writers started experimenting with the layout of letters, placing the prescript symmetrically in the middle of the first (one or two) line(s) of the letter, as will be described in greater detail below.

3.1.3 Roman Times

In the Roman period, despite variations in the dimensions of sheets, all letters belong to the *pagina* format. If sheets were cut directly from the papyrus rolls, the height of a sheet was equal to the height of the roll, which in Roman times was up to 28 cm, rarely exceeding 30 cm. The width of the sheets varied, but the width : height ratio ranged between 0.5–0.8.[409] Most of the letters consist of a single column, written on sheets that appear to have been cut from the papyrus roll before anything was written on them. Fewer are the number of letters that were written before the sheet was cut off, and in many of these cases they consist of more than one column.[410]

Letters, especially private ones, were sometimes written on left-over pieces of papyrus, resulting in variations in the shape of the text, while not deviating from the *pagina* format. If the writer had at his disposal a rectangular piece of papyrus the fibres of which ran along the long side, the sheet could be placed upright, even if

408 Suetonius, *Julius* 56 (transl. Rolfe 1913).
409 See Appendix II.
410 E.g. SB XXII 15708 (ca. AD 100, a student of rhetoric to his father Theon, w: 27 × h: 22.6 cm); P.Brem. 53 (AD 114, N.N. to Dioskoras, w: 29 × h: 25 cm).

this necessitated writing against the fibres or on the verso. Thus, P.Pintaudi 52[411] (AD 29, w: 10.8 × h: 27.2 cm) from an unknown sender to Aphr...(?), is written on the verso side of a poor quality sheet or perhaps a *protokollon*,[412] which was placed in upright position and the text was written against the fibres. This letter is informal and shows signs that it was written in a hurry.[413] An opposite, more formal, way to use a left-over piece of papyrus is exemplified by P.Brem. 14 (ca. AD 113–120, w: 29 × h: 11 cm). The sender of the letter, Hermaios, was geometer of the water-canals of the Apollonopolite nome and addressed this letter to the strategos Apollonios, referring to works in the canals, to irrigation and measurement of taxed land.[414] Several letters from Hermaios to Apollonios survive, all of which have a careful appearance and an elegant style, suggesting that Hermaios had a relatively high level of literacy and cared for the general appearance of the letters that he sent to the strategos.[415] While the other letters of Hermaios are written in upright sheets,[416] P.Brem. 14 has an unusual format, presumably because it was written on (part of) a left-over piece of papyrus. The sheet is rectangular with the fibres running parallel to its long side. Hermaios placed the sheet horizontally and wrote the text in two columns along the fibres. This way of writing must have been regarded as more proper or elegant than writing against the fibres.

411 Photo in P.Pintaudi pl. XLIX.

412 The fibres on the back are, in places, too short to cover the vertical fibres, suggesting that the piece may have come from the edge of a roll. For the *protokollon* sheet see p. 75 with note 309.

413 The urgency of the circumstances are described in the letter, but also the ink was still wet when the letter was folded, resulting in traces of blots of ink in the lower margin.

414 P.Brem. 12–14, P.Giss. Apoll. 32 can be assigned to Hermaios. P.Strasb. IV 178 should also be assigned to this Hermaios, as suggested by similarities in content and style: it has the same kind of opening address (1–3); it contains the appellation κύριε (4); it concerns similar issues (e.g. κωμογραμματεῖς in 8–9). This Hermaios should not be confused with another Hermaios mentioned in other letters of the archive of the strategos Apollonios; see the relevant discussion by Kortus in the introduction to P.Giss. Apoll. 17 and especially p. 177 with note 5.

415 E.g. participles (e.g. P.Brem. 14.6 ἐκζητοῦντα), secondary clauses (e.g. P.Brem. 14.7 ἐπεὶ...; 11 ᾧι φησιν...; 14 ἵνα...; 15 ἐπεὶ...), and compound words that add precision of expression (e.g. P.Brem. 14.15 καταμάθω). The reference to Apollonios' good fortune in P.Brem. 14.4 (τῆς τύχης σου συνπνεούσης) further supports the idea that the author was of an advanced cultural level.

416 P.Brem. 12 (w: 8 × h: 25 cm) and P.Brem. 13 (w: 10.5 × h: 24 cm) are written on oblong rectangular pieces of papyrus which were cut directly from the papyrus roll, as suggested by the heights of their sheets, which match the common heights of rolls in the Roman period. Only P.Giss. Apoll. 32 (w: 15 × h: 11.5 cm) contains a short letter, written on a small piece of papyrus, perhaps being (part of) a left-over piece of papyrus.

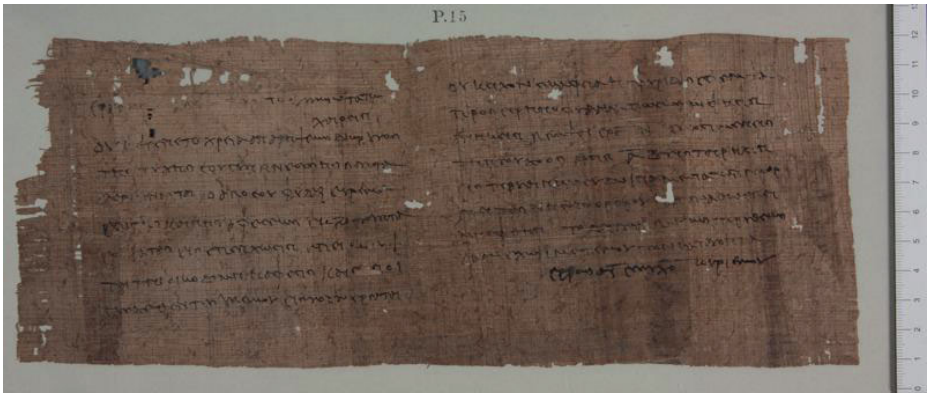

Fig. 15: P.Brem. 14, letter from Hermaios to Apollonios, ca. AD 113–120, w: 29 × h: 11 cm © Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Bremen.

Front side (recto, along the fibres)
Col. i

Ἑρμα[ῖ]ος Ἀπολλωνίωι τῶι τ{ε}ιμιωτάτωι
χαίρειν.
οὐκ ἐγένετο χρεία ἀναλήψεως διώρυγος·
τῆς τύχης σου συνπνεούσης πάντα
5 λελίμνασται. ὁ ἀπό σοῦ φύλαξ εὗρέ με
ἐπὶ τῆς καινῆς ἀφέσεως ἐκζητοῦντα
ἐργάτας εἰς ἐπένχωσιν. ἐπεὶ μὴ ὕψω-
ται τῆι οἰκοδομῇ ἡ ἄφεσις καὶ ν[ῦ]ν οἱ
συσχεθέντες ὑπ᾽ ἐμοῦ εἰς τοῦτο ἐργάται

Col. ii

10 οὐκ εἶχον σκαφεῖα ἢ σφυρίδας, ἔπεμψα
πρὸς εἰρηνοφύλακα Πώεως, ᾧι φησιν
ἀνήκειν πέμψαι ἐργ(άτας) ν, εἴκοσι μὲν εἰς
τὴν τοῦ χοὸς ἄρσιν, λ δὲ εἰς τήρησιν.
εἰς Τερῦθιν καθεύδω, ἵνα μετὰ τῶν γεωρ-
15 γῶν τὰς νήσους ὄρθρου καταμάθω, ἐπεὶ
μὴ ἔφθην. τὸ δεῖγμα Πώεως Τερύθεως
αἴρω ἔχων μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ τὸν κατάγοντα.
(Hand 2) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομ(αι), κύριέ μου

Back

(Hand 1) Ἀπολλωνίωι στρα(τηγῷ) Ἀπολλωνοπ(ολίτου) (Ἑπτα)κω(μίας)[417]

Translation

Hermaios to the most honourable Apollonios greetings. There has been no need to repair the canal. Thanks to your favour-breathing fortune everything has been irrigated. The guard sent by you found me at the time of the new flood, as I was looking for workers to do the filling. Since the flood has not reached the height of the construction and now the men who had been gathered by me for this work did not have spades or baskets, I sent to the police officer of Pois, to whom, as your guard says, it is fitting to send fifty workers, twenty for the carrying off of the debris, and thirty for guarding. I am sleeping in Terythis, in order to examine the islands early in the morning with the peasants, because I have not reached there (today). I will take the (grain) sample of Pois of Terythis, since I have a suitable man with me to bring it downstream. I wish you good heath, my lord.
Address: To Apollonios strategos of the Apollonopolite nome of the Heptakomia.

The format of P.Brem. 14 helps explain the unusual format of Vindolanda letters, which were written on thin rectangular sheets of wood, with the grains of the wood running along the long side of the sheets. The writers wrote along the grains of the wood in columns.

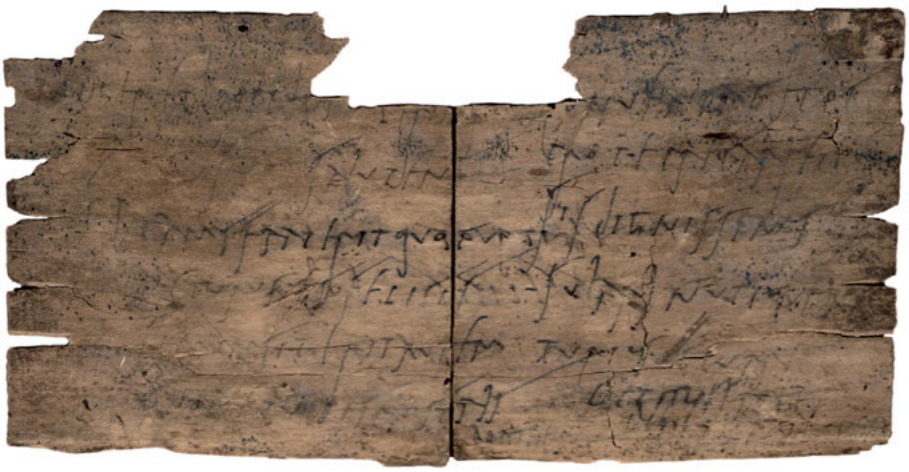

Fig. 16: T.Vindol. II 248 (=T.Vindol. I 21), letter from Niger and Brocchus to Cerialis, ca. AD 90–120, w: 17.8 × h: 9.1 cm © The British Museum, London.

417 The original editor indicates that the external address on the back was written by a 3rd hand, but careful examination of the handwriting suggests that it was probably the first hand writing in an elaborated style, as was common in this period.

Front

Col. i

Niger et Brocchus Çeriạḷị
suo salute
óptamus frater it (l. id) quot
acturus es felicis-
5 simum sit erit autem
quom et uotis nostris

Col. ii

conueniat hoc
pro te precari et tú
sis dignissimus con-
10 sulari n(ostro) utique mạ-
turius occurres
(Hand 2) op<t>amus frater
bene ụalẹṛẹ ṭẹ
domine *traces* ṇọ̣ ẹẋṣpẹç

Back

15 (Hand 1) [Fl]ạụ[io] Ceṛịạḷ[i]
[prae]f(ecto) coḥ(ortis)
traces?

Translation

Niger and Brocchus to their Cerialis, greeting. We pray, brother, that what you are about to do will be most successful. It will be so, indeed, since it is both in accord with our wishes to make this prayer on your behalf and you yourself are most worthy. You will assuredly meet our governor quite soon. (Hand 2) We pray, our lord and brother, that you are in good health … expect … (?) Address: To Flavius Cerialis, prefect of the cohort…[418]

In Vindolanda letters, as in T.Vindol. II 248, the columns are not equal in width, but very often the first column is broader than the second one. As a result the intercolumnium overruns the crease of the fold running vertically across the middle of the sheet. This indicates that the reason for making the second column narrower than the first one was not in order to place the crease of the fold in the intercolumnium.[419] This phe-

418 Transl. Bowman/Thomas, T.Vindol. II 248.

419 Cf. T.Vindol. I, p. 38 "The only practical reason … for using the two-column format is that, in theory, the cut and fold would come between the columns and thus would not interfere with the writing", but "in practice … the left-hand column very often overran the fold (which was made after the writing of the letter)."

nomenon does not appear only in Vindolanda, but it is probably related to a general tendency that appears in letters of the Roman period. More specifically, letters that consist of more than one column often have the second column narrower than the first, or, to be more precise, have the last column narrower than the previous one(s). This is attested, for example, in Greek letters on papyrus found in Egypt, such as BGU II 665 (1st c. AD, w: 26 × h: 17 cm). Although the feature tends to be more common in informal letters than in formal, there are also formal ones that address people of higher status than the senders,[420] which indicates that the width of the last column was not related to the typology or formality of a letter.

This stylistic feature is not attested in Hellenistic or earlier times,[421] but only in the Roman imperial period.[422] It was probably related to Romans' tendency to write long letters and fill all the available space on a sheet. Thus, if a letter reached the bottom of the column and the writer had another column to add, he would prefer to add a narrower one that would reach the bottom of the sheet than to add one of equal width to the previous column that did not extend to the bottom.

The tendency to write long letters that filled the whole space on the sheet is probably related to another feature observed in Roman letters: writing in the side margins. When writers reached the bottom of a column, but still had more text to add, instead of inserting another column, continued writing vertically in the margins. The left margin, which was usually wider than the right, was the one that was filled first. The same feature of filling the margins is attested in some ostraca of the Roman period, even though the available marginal space on ostraca is usually very limited—most ostraca are not larger than the palm of the hand and the text is rarely longer than 12 lines.[423] The back side of ostraca was customarily left blank, so any extra text had to fit the little space available in the margins on the front side only. For example, in SB XIV 12034 (mid/end of 2nd c. AD), a letter from Calpurnius to Onnophris, since space was not enough in the left margin, the writer filled the top margin.

420 E.g. P.Brem. 11 (AD 113–120, w: 52 × h: 22 cm; image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.brem;;11) is an elegant official letter from Ammonios and Hermokles to the strategos Apollonios. It consists of three columns and the last column is much narrower than the two first.

421 For example, the letter from Kledikos to Aristokrates found at Hermonassa (5th c. BC, w: 3.1 × h: 20.4 cm) consists of two columns of equal width. Also, P.Zen. Pestm. 39 from Pataikion to Zenon (250 BC, w: 19.5 × h: 15.8 cm) and P.Sijp. 45 from the dioiketes Athenodoros to the Agoranomoi (197 BC, w: 27.2 × h: 24.1 cm) contain two columns of equal width. It is characteristic that in both the letter of Kledikos and in the letters of Athenodoros and Pataikion the last column consists of a few lines allowing a long vacant space below.

422 Other examples are: P.Giss. Bibl. III 20 (AD 113–117, N.N. to N.N., w: 30 × h: 22.5 cm); P.Mil. Vogl. I 24 (AD 117, N.N. to Paulus, w: 29.5 × h: 24.5 cm); P.Mich. VIII 468 (early 2nd c. AD, 26.5 Terentianus to Tiberianus, w: 26.5 × h: 21.8 cm).

423 There are few exceptions being as long as 15 or even 20 lines, such as P.Thomas 8 and 9.

In Egypt writing in the margins is a feature attested only in letters of the Roman imperial period, from the first to the fourth century AD, with most of the letters dating between the second and fourth century.[424] In literary sources, the earliest known reference to this practice is in Cicero, who describes the final, vertically written marginal part of a letter as: *nunc venio ad transversum illum extremae epistulae tuae versiculum, in quo me admones de sorore* ("I come now to the line in the margin at the end of your letter in which you remind me about your sister").[425] Outside Egypt, the practice of filling the margins can be observed in the letters from Vindolanda, dated to the end of the first century and the early second century AD.[426] Given that the feature has been recorded in Roman literature of the first century BC and it can also be observed relatively early in Vindolanda, it seems probable that the practice was introduced by Romans and spread to the Greek-speaking part of the Empire.

Writing vertically in the margins is attested only in private letters, not in official ones. Most of the letters that have it are written in ordinary rapid and untidy hands, giving the impression that they were written by ordinary individuals, not professional writers. The phenomenon is also an indication that the writers wrote the letters directly, without previous drafts, which would have enabled a better estimate of the length of the sheets to be cut. This is supported by the content of marginal additions, which usually consist of last-moment thoughts, greetings, postscripts, or the closing lines of a letter.[427]

The *pagina* format in letters was used until the fourth century AD. It continues to be attested in the next centuries, but in lessening numbers, since from about the end of the fourth century, and especially from the sixth century, a new style of format came into fashion, in which the letter was written on wide sheets, having the horizontal side wider then the vertical one and the writing running against the fibres. In this format the roll was probably opened vertically, because long letters extend to the bottom, forming a single and wide column, the length of which would be longer than its width. The reasons for this change are not entirely clear, but they may be related to larger socio-cultural changes that took place in the fourth century, with the spread of Christianity and the cultural dominance of Constantinople, Syria, Cappadocia. In those regions the main writing material was not papyrus but pergament/parchment, which was available in large and wide sheets. This may have influenced the format of letters and documents also in Egypt.[428]

424 Homann 2012 collected letters with this feature, and found that there are more than 200 cases, most of which date between the second and fourth centuries.
425 Cicero, *Ad Atticum* 5.1.3 (transl. Shackleton-Bailey 1999).
426 E.g. T.Vindol. II 302; T.Vindol. II 316 with images online at http://vindolanda.csad.ox.ac.uk/.
427 See examples in Homann 2012.
428 In late antique times, besides the format, further changes can be observed in letters, discussed in Fournet 2009.

3.2 The Layout of the Main Parts of a Letter

In archaic and classical times there was no visual distinction between the constituent parts of a letter, while in the Hellenistic period some developments in the layout did occur. It was, however, from about the end of the first century BC and the early years of the first century AD that the layout and palaeography of letters started being more sophisticated than before. This was combined with a general interest in the style of letters, evident also in parallel developments in their content and linguistic style.[429] These stylistic developments should be viewed as part of a general rise in the care for the written text in the Roman period, especially in texts of classical literature, which is most clearly observed in the production of deluxe editions of classical literature in this period, read and collected as objects of art.[430] All these developments were part of the movement of the Second Sophistic. In this cultural context, there began an experimentation, according to the ability of each letter writer, the purpose of the letter, and the relationship between the correspondents, with the external appearance of the layout and palaeography of the opening address and the farewell greeting.

3.2.1 Opening Address

In surviving archaic and classical letters on lead the opening address was regarded as part of the main body of the letter, and it was not visually distinguished from it. In early Hellenistic times, the opening address continued to be written in the same line with the beginning of the body of the letter, but already in the third century BC there are cases in which the opening address is slightly distinguished from the body, either by some small vacant space or by a punctuation mark. For example, P.Cair. Zen. III 59479 (mid 3rd c. BC), a letter of the archive of Zenon, has a short vacant space after the opening address Ὀρφεὺς Ζήνωνι χαίρειν ("From Orpheus to Zenon greetings").

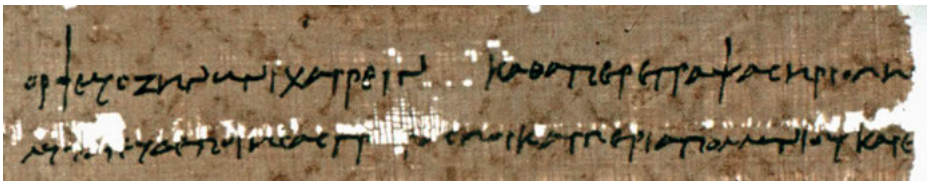

Fig. 17: P.Cair. Zen. III 59479, letter from Orpheus to Zenon, lines 1–2, mid 3rd c. BC © Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

429 In this chapter only aspects related to the layout and palaeography are discussed. For the linguistic style and content of the constituent parts of a letter see above pp. 27 and 40ff.

430 For the styles of hands in literary texts see Turner 1987. For the book as an object of art in the Roman period see Johnson 2010. For literary papyri with elegant layouts and bookhands, see Johnson 2004.

In P.Cair. Zen. III 59426 (mid 3rd c. BC), the opening address Δρόμων Ζήνωνι χαίρειν ("From Dromon to Zenon greetings") is distinguished from the body of the letter with a middle dot.

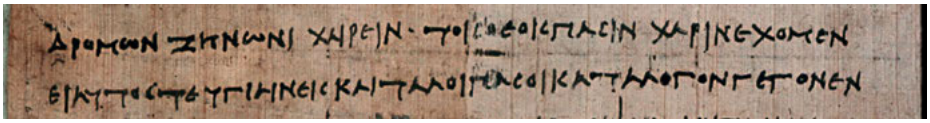

Fig. 18: P.Cair. Zen. III 59426, letter from Dromon to Zenon, lines 1–2, mid 3rd c. BC © Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

This suggests that the opening address had started being perceived as a fixed formulaic phrase that needed to be set off from the rest of the document. Still, the way in which it was distinguished was not different from how phrases or longer periods were set off. It was not until about a century later that the first examples of letters with the opening address divorced from the body appear.

P.Paris 65 (145 BC) is one of the earliest letters in which the opening address is clearly distinguished from the body of the letter by being placed in *ekthesis* on its own line.[431] The letter is an administrative document in epistolary format (ἐντολή), from a high official of the district of Thebes in Upper Egypt, Paniskos, to his subordinate, Ptolemaios, giving instructions about new procedures for registering Egyptian documents. The letter has been preserved in two copies, one a draft and the other an improved version of it.[432] Only in the improved version is the opening address in *ekthesis*. The same feature is attested in petitions of the same period, which suggests that this type of layout was regarded as formal.

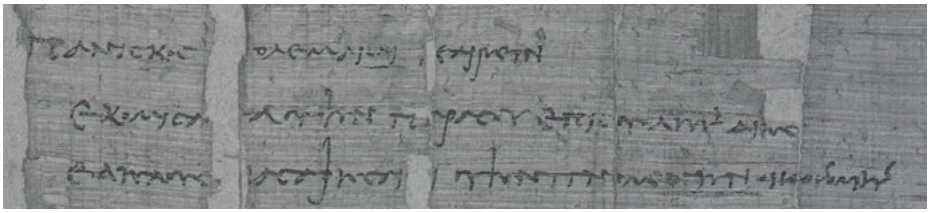

Fig. 19: P.Paris 65, letter from Paniskos to Ptolemaios, lines 1–3, 145 BC © Louvre Museum, Paris.

431 The first line in *ekthesis* is attested e.g. in BGU VI 1256 (147 BC).

432 P.Paris 65 has been re-edited in UPZ I p. 596 and in Pestman 1985 with commentary; a new interpretation for some lines has been proposed by Depauw 2011.

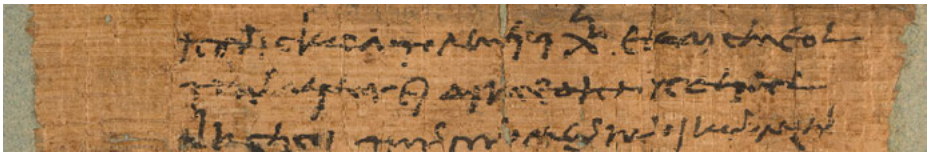

Fig. 20: P.Paris 65, letter from Paniskos to Ptolemaios, lines 1–3, 145 BC © Louvre Museum, Paris.

Around the reign of Augustus, the opening address started clearly to be set off from the body of the letter by being placed on a separate line(s) at the top. This was probably used in formal official letters, because the earliest known examples in this layout are letters of recommendation, which are private letters that imitate the layout of official letters. The earliest examples in this style were sent from people of relatively upper-class social circles to addressees of equal or higher social standing, such as the letters of recommendation in the archive of Isidoros of Psophthis, who was involved in a lawsuit with a strategos named Tryphon. Proklos, a man of relatively high social status,[433] sent at least two letters in support of Isidoros, P.Lond.inv. 2553 + P.Col. VIII 211[434] to the dioiketes Asklepiades and P.NYU II 18 to Tryphon, both probably written by a secretary.[435] In these letters the opening address is centred symmetrically in the two first lines, resembling the headings of literary texts.[436] Two other early representatives are P.Oxy. IV 746 (AD 16) and P.Oxy. II 292 (AD 25), both letters of recommendation, too.[437] Also, the elegant philophronetic letter P.Oxy. LV 3806[438] (AD 15) is among the early instances of this style, with its opening address placed symmetrically in the first two lines.

An elegant detail found in later letters is the placement in *ekthesis* of not only the first line of the opening address, but also the first line of the body of the letter, and, in official letters, that also of the dating formula, sometimes with the first letter of these lines enlarged as a decorative motif. This is observed in very elegant official letters, such as SB I 4639[439] (AD 209), from the prefect of Egypt Subatianus Aquila, and BGU I 106[440] (AD 199), from the epistrategos Aurelius Victor, both original letters from high state officials, written in chancery style hands, displaying the high formality and pro-

433 Hanson 1997, 421–423.
434 New edition with photo in Sarri 2014a, 37–44.
435 The letter to the dioiketes Asklepiades was certainly written by a secretary, because a personal postscript was penned by a second hand, presumably by Proklos. In the letter to Tryphon there is no personal addition by Proklos, but the letter seems to be in the same hand as the letter to Asklepiades.
436 See e.g. LDAB id 1048 Posidippus, *Epigrams* with photo in Turner 1987, no 45.
437 There are currently no published images of these letters, but I have consulted photos held in the photographic archive of University College London, Department of Greek and Latin.
438 See above p. 36 fig. 3.
439 See below p. 173 fig. 45.
440 Cavallo 1965, Tav. 2 = Cavallo 2005, Tav. Ib.

ficiency of the secretaries who penned them.[441] The same style can be observed in some very elegant private letters composed by capable writers for people of advanced socio-cultural standing, such as P.Oxy XIV 1664[442] (ca. AD 200) and P.Brem. 21[443] (AD 113–120) (fig. 21). These letters have very elegant, careful layout, with the opening address placed in *ekthesis* and the body of the letter in parallel *ekthesis* to the opening address. The opening address is spread along the whole length of the two first lines, filling them symmetrically.

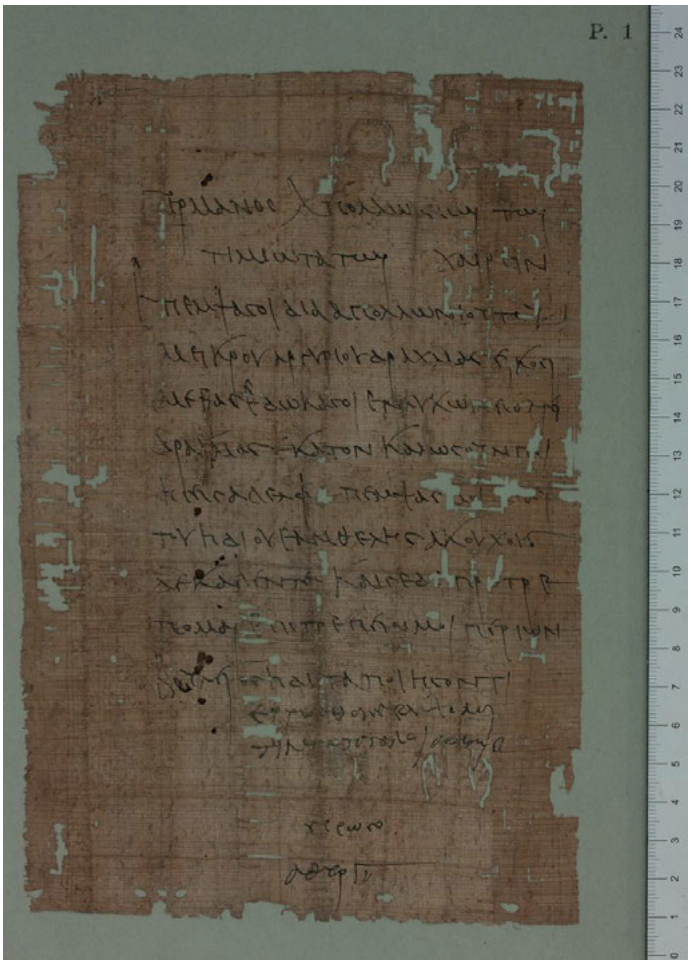

Fig. 21: P.Brem. 21, letter from Germanos to Apollonios strategos, AD 113–120 © Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Bremen.

441 For the chancery style see scripts of the second/third century AD in Cavallo 2005, 17–42.
442 See above p. 32 fig. 1.
443 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.brem;;21

Front

Γερμανὸς Ἀπολλωνίωι τῶι
τιμιωτάτωι χαίρειν.
ἔπεμψά σοι διὰ Ἀπολλωνίου τοῦ
μεικροῦ (l. μικροῦ) ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς εἴκοσι
5 μεθ᾽ ἃς ἔδωκά σοι ἐν Λύκων πόλει
δραχμὰς ἑκατόν. καλῶς οὖν ποι-
ήσεις, ἄδελφε, πέμψας μοι δι᾽ αὐ-
τοῦ ἢ δι᾽ οὗ ἐὰν θέλῃς ακουχους
δέκα πέντε. καὶ σὲ δὲ προτρέ-
10 ποματι ἐπιτρέπειν μοι περὶ ὧν
βούλει ὁς (l. ὡς) ἥδιστα ποιήσοντι.
(hand 2) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι,
τιμιώτατέ μοι ἄδελφε.
(hand 1) ἔρρωσο.
15 Ἀθὺρ ιβ

Translation

Germanos to the most honourable Apollonios greetings. I sent you by Apollonios, my young son, twenty silver drachmas, after which I gave you one hundred drachmas in Lykopolis. You will do well, brother, to send me fifteen [. . .] by him or by whomever you wish, and I urge you to leave to me whatever you want, because I will most gladly do it. (Hand 2) I wish you good health, my most honourable brother! (Hand 1) Farewell. Hathyr 12.

Familiarity with literary texts can be detected through the use of *ekthesis*, punctuation, lectional signs, *paragraphi*, upper and middle dots, and small vacant spaces between periods. Such elements were common in literary texts, but not in documents, so their use, especially in private letters, may be an indication of writers' familiarity with literature.[444] For example P.Alex. 23 (1st/2nd c. AD), a letter with philosophical and literary affinities,[445] has line fillers in the form of prolonged crossbars on ε and σ at the ends of lines. P.Heid. III 234 (1st/2nd c. AD), an elegant philophronetic letter, begins with an opening address in *ekthesis*, and has an enlarged N at the end of the address, which fills the space to the end of the line (fig. 22).

444 For the use of lectional signs in literary texts see Turner 1987, 8–11. For the use of lectional signs in documentary texts see Ast 2017.

445 Although the letter is partly broken and it is difficult to grasp its content, the remaining part contains unusual words, suggesting that its sender was a learned man, influenced by literary and philosophical readings; e.g. (3) ἤθους, (4) ἐξαιρέτως and (12) φιλόσοφε. Photo published in P.Alex. pl. XIV.

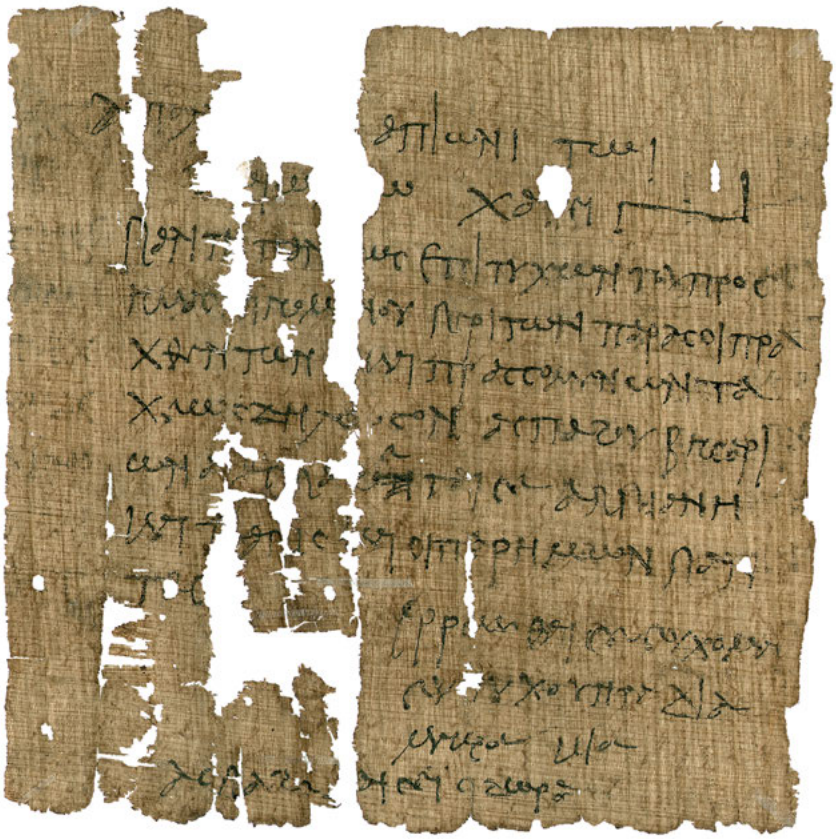

Fig. 22: P.Heid. III 234, letter from Apol- to Apion, 1st/2nd c. AD, w: 9.5 × h: 9 cm © Institut für Papyrologie, Ruprecht–Karls–Universität Heidelberg.

Front

Ἀπολ̣[- - -] Ἀπίωνι τῶι
τ̣[ι]μιωτ̣[άτ]ῳ χαίρειν.
πάντῃ πάν[τ]ως ἐπιτυχὼν τοῦ πρὸς
ἡμᾶς γ̣ε̣ινομ[έ]ν̣ου περὶ τῶν παρὰ σοὶ πρα-
5 χθέντων καὶ πρασσομένων τα-
χέως δήλωσον. ἀσπάζου Βησαρί-
ωνα. ἀσπάζ[[η]]\ε/ταί σε Ἀππιανὴ
καὶ Τ̣ρ̣ά̣πις καὶ οἱ παρ᾽ ἡμῶν πάν-
τ̣ε̣ς.
ἐ̣ρ̣ρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι
10 εὐτυχοῦντα διὰ
μακροῦ βίου.
ἀσπάζε[τ]αί σε Ἰσίδωρα(ῖ- pap.).

Translation

> Apol( ) to the most honourable Apion greetings.
> By all means, when you find someone coming to us send word at once about what's been done and is being done at your house. Greet Besarion. Appiane and Taapis and all our household greet you.
> I pray that you are well, in good fortune for a long life.
> (P.S.) Isidora greets you.[446]

In other letters the opening address is enlarged and elaborated, either centred in the first (or more) line(s) and/or spread along the whole length of the beginning line(s), like a heading. The enlargement of individual letters was a deliberate ornamental feature, attested mostly in private letters. In some printed editions, such elaborate openings have unnecessarily been considered to be in a different hand from the main body; however, there are often no changes of hand in this position, only changes in the style of handwriting. For example, P.Alex. 23 (1st/2nd c. AD) has an enlarged opening address; in the ed.pr. the opening address is said to be in a different hand from the body of the letter. Yet, personal characteristics of the hand suggest that the whole letter was written by a single person.[447] The same applies to P.IFAO II 21 (2nd/3rd c. AD), where a hand change is indicated in the edition, but in fact the opening address was written in an enlarged and elaborated style by the same hand that wrote the rest of the letter. The opening address of P.IFAO II 21 (lines 1–3) has another unusual feature: in the first line there is the name of the addressee in the dative, in the second line the name of the sender followed by the addressee's name in the dative, and in the third line the greeting χαίρειν. The repetition of the name of the addressee in the two first lines is unparalleled, and thus difficult to explain. It seems, however, that the first line functioned like a heading, and the letter opened in the second line in the usual way.[448]

3.2.2 Farewell Greeting

The use of a closing farewell was not common, and most letters in archaic and classical times end without any farewell formula. There are some exceptions, such as SEG

446 Edition includes the corrections published in BL V 42–42 and Sarri 2014b, 265.
447 Some personal characteristics of this hand can be observed in the formation of the ω, with the left belly being smaller than the right one, the crossbar of ε which slightly loops to touch the following ι (see especially χαίρειν in l. 2 and the end of l. 15), the formation of ρ in one movement, by beginning from the base of its eye, looping over and continuing to a looped leg. Characteristic is also the slight turn of finials, as observed at the feet of descending strokes.
448 Cf. Bagnall/Cribiore 2008, no 310. Photo: P.IFAO II, pl. IX B.

LIII 1153, a letter found at Emporion in Southern France, dated to 530–500 BC.[449] It ends with the imperative χαῖρε placed at the end of the body after some vacant space, but without change of line.

The use of a closing farewell was probably first introduced in the early third century BC. While P.Köln IX 364[450] (270 or 232 BC), which is perhaps the earliest surviving letter on papyrus, closes without a farewell greeting, but with only the date placed below and to the right of the main body of the letter, it appears from other letters that the farewell greeting started to become a standard element in the course of the third century BC. As with the opening address, the farewell greeting was gradually set off from the main body of the letter by being placed in a separate line. In most cases the farewell greeting was the wish ἔρρωσο ("be healthy"), followed by the date, as in P.Cair. Zen. V 59823 (253 BC), but there were also more elegant alternatives, such as εὐτύχει ("be prosperous"), which was used mostly in petitions or in letters addressing people of higher status than that of the sender. Another fine variant for the closing of a private letter was ὑγίαινε ("be healthy"), attested, for example, in UPZ I 62 (160 BC) and BGU VIII 1874 (69 or 40 BC), both letters with a polished linguistic style.[451] Unlike ἔρρωσο, which was usually followed by a dating clause, the more formal and elegant farewells, such as ὑγίαινε and εὐτύχει, were not accompanied by a date.

From the beginning of the first century AD there are very interesting developments in the layout and palaeography of the farewell greeting, such as elaborated farewell greetings or the introduction of a greeting in a different hand. The first was an ornamental feature that expressed personal care for the addressee and is attested mainly in private letters written by the authors themselves,[452] while the latter was a method of authentication used in letters written by secretaries and is attested mostly in official correspondence, less often in private letters. In papyrological editions there is currently no difference in the way in which changes of hands and changes in handwriting style are indicated, so the distinction between the two phenomena is not always straightforward; for this reason these phenomena will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.[453]

3.2.3 Dating

Dates were placed at the bottom of the sheet of a letter to record when the letter was written. Dated letters, both official and private, are attested since early Hellenistic

449 See above p. 42 with n. 181.
450 See above p. 92 fig. 9.
451 See also Appendix III.
452 See the relevant discussion below p. 188.
453 See below p. 146ff. esp. 188–189.

times until about the end of the first century AD. In the Roman period, dating formulas continued to be applied in official letters but were gradually abandoned in private ones. The dating formula was typically written in a rapid style, even in letters that were composed in very stylish and careful hands, such as SB I 4639 (AD 209) and BGU I 106 (AD 199). Writing the dating formula in a rapid style was a deliberate stylistic choice, influenced by documentary texts, where the date was often written rapidly and cursively. Moreover, the dating formula, being conventional and standard, could be understood without reading each single letter in it, so, unlike the main body, which needed to be clearly legible, dating formulas could be written rapidly. As a result of the stylistic difference observed between the dating clause and body of the letter, many editors would assign a different hand to the dating formulas (e.g. SB I 4639 and BGU I 106). Upon close analysis, it seems, however, that as a rule, at least in Roman imperial times, it was one hand that wrote the letter and recorded the date, even if the latter was written in a rapid style. We will return to the topic of dating formulas in the next chapter.[454]

3.2.4 External Address

The back of the sheet was intended for the external address. When a letter was completed it was rolled from side to side or, if the sheet was large, it was first folded in two or three and then rolled from side to side, enclosing the written text inside. The external address was then written on the outside of the closed letter.

The surviving letters on lead sheets from archaic and classical times were rolled from short side to short side, so after the opening of the letter, the position of the address is on the back, at one fold distance from the edge of the sheet, in perpendicular direction to the text on the front.[455] With papyrus letters, the external address is found on the verso side along the direction of the fibres. Letters written in *transversa charta* format have the external address along the fibres of the verso, in the same direction as the text on the front,[456] while letters written in *pagina* format have the external address on the verso along the fibres, in perpendicular direction to the text on the front.[457] Several letters written on wooden tablets found at Vindolanda contain external addresses, most of them written on the back of the second column of the letter, in the same direction as the text on the front.

454 See below p. 170ff.
455 SEG L 276 has some traces on the back, which probably belong to the external address (see p. 88 with fig. 8). An photo of SEG XXVI 845 folded with a well-preserved address has been published in the ed.pr., Vinogradov 1971, pl. 2.
456 See e.g. P.Cair. Zen. V 59823 (253 BC), with image at http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.cair.zen;5;59823.
457 Cf. P.Cair. Zen. I 59025 (258–256 BC) above p. 95 fig. 11.

In its simplest form, the external address contains only the name of the addressee, but not infrequently the address includes the name of the sender, too. This appears already in letters of archaic and classical times, as, for, example in SEG LIV 694 Ἀπατόριος Λεάνακτι ("Apatorios to Leanax"), and SEG XXVI 845 Ἀχιλλοδώρō τὸ μολί|βδιον παρὰ τὸμ (l. τὸν) παῖδα| κἀναξαγόρην ("Achillodoros' piece of lead, to his son and Anaxagoras"). Since letters were in most cases transferred by a trusted person of the sender, information about the location of the addressee was not necessary. However, there are some cases in which the external address contains information about the location of the addressee, such as SIG³ 1259, the external address of which provides detailed instruction to the letter carrier about the addressees and their location: Φέρεν ἐς τὸν κέραμ|ον τὸγ (l. τὸν) χυτρικόν·| ἀποδοναι(l. ἀποδοῦναι) δὲ Ναυσίαι| ἢ Θρασυκλῆι ἢ θυιῶι (l. τῶι υἱῶι) ("Take to the pottery and give to Nausias or Thrasycles or his son."

The content of external addresses of papyrus letters of the Hellenistic and Roman periods has been well examined.[458] The most common form of address has the name of the addressee in the dative. However, there are also letters with long addresses providing instructions about the location of the addressee or instructions to the letter carrier to give the letter to a third person through whom it could be delivered to the addressee.[459] In the Roman period, addresses were sometimes introduced with the verb ἀπόδος or ἐπίδος ("deliver"), which is comparable to φέρεν in SIG³ 1259. The name of the sender was often included, introduced with παρά ("by") or less often with ἀπό ("from"). Letters found at Vindolanda have the address written in a similar style: they contain the name of the addressee in the dative, and often, below the name of the addressee, the name of the sender introduced with the preposition *ab* ("from"). A place-name is sometimes added, which was presumably the destination of the addressee.[460]

The external address of letters could also sometimes be omitted. For papyrus letters, the reason for the omission varies: for example, the letter might have been a draft or a file copy that was not dispatched, or it might have been carried in a bundle. For letters on ostraca, which could not be folded, the carrier or anyone else could read the names of sender and addressee in the letter, so no external address was needed. Most ostraca do not contain instructions to the carrier, however there are some that include information about the location of addressee, written on the front side, in the margin below the letter.[461]

From about the late first / early second century AD onwards, the external address was sometimes written in large elongated letters. This special ornamental feature is

458 For addresses of papyrus letters see Llewellyn 1994a and 1994b.

459 Instructions, however, could also be given on a separate sheet; see the discussion on σημασία in Llewellyn 1994a, 30–34.

460 For addresses on letters found at Vindolanda see Bowman, T.Vindol. II pp. 42–46.

461 E.g. SB 26 16822.10–12, with Gonis 2001.

part of the overall tendency towards greater ornamentation of script, attested also in the opening address and farewell greeting from early Roman times to Late Antiquity. The phenomenon is also attested in letters on wooden tablets from Vindolanda (late 1st/2nd c. AD), suggesting that this calligraphic feature reached the Eastern Greek-speaking part of the Empire through Roman influence. This ornamental element was intended to flatter the addressee, while the name of the sender, if included, was written in ordinary, smaller letterforms. In editions, this change of style is often indicated as a change of hand; however, careful comparison of the handwritings suggests that in most cases there was no change of hand there. For example, in P.Col. X 252 the address on the back contains the name of the addressee Ἰουλίωι Εἰρων<ε>ίν̣[ῳ] ε̣ἰ̣ς Φιλαδ̣έλφ<ε>ιαν̣ ("To Julius Heironinus, at Philadelpheia") in elaborate letters with ornamental serifs, while the name of the sender, Λόνγος, is written in a smaller style of handwriting. In the ed.pr., the main text of the letter on the front side is said to be in one hand, while, on the back, the elaborately written name of the addressee and his location are assigned a second hand. And it does not end there: the name of the sender in the external address on the back is attributed to yet a third hand. However, careful attention to the handwriting suggests that the first hand wrote not only the letter on the front side of the papyrus, but also the external address on the back and the name of the sender. True changes of hand in the external address are detected only in cases were a second hand inserted additional information in the address for clarification.[462] In Late Antiquity, the names of sender and addressee were written only in the external address, while the letter written inside began without any opening address.[463]

462 E.g. P.Oxy. XII 1483.

463 For the external address in letters of late antique times see Morelli 2010.

4 Authentication

Ancient letters rarely contain personal secrets, however the privacy of their content was considered important, as appears from the preference of ancient letter writers for foldable materials that could enclose the message securely. The same can be deduced from relevant references in literature, which show that in the Graeco-Roman world the privacy of letters, and especially of private ones, was respected. Characteristic is the story in Plutarch about a letter sent to Demetrius Poliorketes, where it is reported that "when Phila his wife sent him letters, bedding, and clothing, the Rhodians captured the vessel containing them, and sent it, just as it was, to Ptolemy [Demetrius' opponent]. In this they did not imitate the considerate kindness of the Athenians, who, having captured Philip's letter carriers when he was making war upon them, read all the other letters, indeed, but one of them, which was from Olympias, they would not open; instead, they sent it back to the king with its seal unbroken"[464]

In modern times the postage system protects the privacy of letters. In antiquity, however, private individuals had to arrange on their own for the sending of their letters.[465] The best way to ensure secure delivery of a letter was to send it with a trusted person. For ordinary people, this was a serious concern, as indicated by references in numerous letters to the need to find someone trusted to carry a letter.[466] In order to assure the recipient that the letter had been delivered unopened, senders would secure the tie of the folded letter with a seal. Another way to verify the authenticity of the content of a letter was by recognizing the personal handwriting of the author, or (in case the letter had been written by dictation) through recognition of the sender's handwriting in the farewell greeting, which functioned like a signature. This method of authentication provides important evidence to modern scholars of papyrus letters, because it helps answer another pressing question, "who wrote ancient letters?", which is relevant to any study of ancient letter-writing not only because it may correlate with the degree of privacy and personal character of a letter, but also because it sheds light on the important and complex issue of the level and spread of literacy in the ancient world.[467] In what follows, discussion will focus on the methods of authentication of letters and the ways of distinguishing between letters written by secretaries and letters written by their senders.[468]

464 Plutarchus, *Life of Demetrius* XXII (transl. Perrin, 1920).

465 Military and other official personnel sometimes benefited from abuses of the official postal service, *cursus publicus*, for their private correspondence; see above p. 13 n. 53 and the prefectorial edict P.Lond. III 1171 v (c).

466 Head 2009a and 2009b.

467 Harris 1989.

468 For letters written by dictation, the term "scribe" will be avoided, in order to avoid confusion with the scribes of ancient Egyptian temples or medieval monastic scriptoria. Reference to the person who penned the letter will be made with the terms "writer" or "secretary", while the person from

4.1 Identification of the Writers of Letters

Many letters in antiquity were written by people other than their senders.[469] Official correspondence was customarily written by secretaries either by oral dictation or draft written instructions. In state offices of the Hellenistic kingdoms, professional writers were essential for dealing with the volume of paperwork generated for administrative purposes, the grandiose scale of which is nicely illustrated by a saying attributed to Seleucus by Plutarch: "if people in general knew what a task it was merely to read and write so many letters, they would not even pick up a crown that had been thrown away."[470] In the second century BC, in the office of the royal scribe Dionysios in the Herakleopolite nome, official correspondence was carried out with the help of secretaries, who wrote letters on the basis of written instructions.[471] In Rome, as Plutarch reports, Caesar could dictate more than one letter at the same time: "and in the Gallic campaigns he practised dictating letters on horseback and keeping two scribes at once busy, or, as Oppius says, even more."[472] In surviving letters on papyrus, the hands of professional writers can be observed in the elegant layouts and scripts of letters coming from offices of state officials, such as the letters of Apollonios, finance minister of Ptolemy II, to his estate manager Zenon, or in the letter of the prefect Subatianus Aquila to the strategos Theon.[473]

Professional or non-professional writers were sometimes employed to write private letters, but in this case it is difficult to detect the motivations of the authors. Sometimes it could be due to the author's illiteracy, sometimes to his desire to have the letter written in an attractive professional handwriting, especially if it was addressed to people in high positions in the state's bureaucracy. For example, professionals were usually employed to write petitions even by people who were able to write themselves. The situation is well illustrated in P.Abinn. 1 (AD 341/342), a petition written by a professional for Abinnaeus even though he was able to write himself, as suggested by comparison with P.Abinn. 43 (c. AD 348–351), which is a letter possibly written by Abinnaeus himself.[474]

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whom the letter emanated, and whose name is indicated in the opening address of the letter, will be referred to as "sender" or "author". For the term "scribe" see Parsons 2007, 262.

469 An earlier and shorter version of this chapter has been published as Sarri 2016, 797–819.

470 Plutarchus, *An seni res publica gerenda sit* 790a (transl. Fowler 1936).

471 See Armoni, P.Heid. IX, introd. esp. p. 5.

472 Plutarchus, *Caesar* 17.7 (transl. Rolfe 1914).

473 E.g. P.Cair. Zen. II 59155 (256 BC), see photo above p. 93 fig. 10; SB I 4639 (AD 209), see image below p. 173 fig. 45.

474 Flavius Abinnaeus was a military officer; his archive has been published in P.Abinn. For references to reproductions of P.Abinn. 1 and 43 see http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.abinn;;1 and http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.abinn;;43.

It was also customary, especially for members of the upper class, to dictate letters to secretaries for convenience or in order to save time. There are numerous references to dictation of private letters by elite Romans, often accompanied by excuses, since it was regarded as a courtesy for one to write personally letters to intimate friends.[475] Thus, Cicero excuses himself in some of his letters to Atticus, Fronto and his brother Quintus for not having written the letters in his own hand and provides a reason in each case, such as illness, pressing business, travel, etc. In a letter to his brother Quintus Cicero mentions: "contrary to my habit when writing to you I am dictating this letter instead of writing it myself, not because of pressure of business (though busy I certainly am) but because I have a touch of ophthalmia."[476] In other cases, the motivations of the authors for the dictation of their letters remain obscure, as for example in P.Oxy. XVI 1860 (6th/7th c. AD), where the sender expresses apologies to the addressee for not having written the letter in his own hand without adding the reason: P.Oxy. XVI 1860.13–14 σύγ\γ/νωθι δέ, δέσποτα, ἐπιδὴ (l. ἐπειδὴ) ὁ δοῦλός σου ὁ ἐμὸς ὑὸς (l. υἱὸς) ἔγραψα[477] τὴν παροῦσαν ἐπιστολὴν ταύτην ("And forgive, master, that your servant my son wrote this present letter.")[478]

For letters on lead, wood, papyrus or ostraca, it is not easy to be sure in each case whether a letter was written by its author or by someone else. The handwriting and overall layout of a letter can provide some indications; for example, a rapid and confident handwriting and a clear layout may have been the product of a professional writer, while a slow, unsteady, elementary hand and untidy layout may suggest that the author wrote the letter himself—however, these cannot be regarded as certain indicators. There must have been cases of authors who managed to write skilfully and who were able to write their private letters in an attractive layout and handwriting. Quintilian instructed Romans to exercise their personal handwriting in order to write personally their letters to intimate friends, "slow writing delays thought, ill-formed or confused writing is unintelligible, and this produces a second laborious stage of dictating what needs to be copied out. So, at all times and in all places, and especially

475 For this etiquette in the Roman world see McDonnell 1996, 474–475 and Miller 1914, 61.

476 Cicero, *Ad Quintum fratrem* 2.2.1 (transl. Shackleton-Bailey 2002).

477 An interesting detail here is the use of the first person singular for the verb ἔγραψα. In the rest of the letter, verbs in the first person refer to the author, but in this particular case the first person refers to the writer. Thus, although ἔγραψα appears to be grammatically incorrect and used instead of the expected ἔγραψε, it is notionally correct. Similar cases are P.Berl.Möller 11.16 (AD 33/34) and P.Oxy. XLIX 3505.24–25 (2nd c.? AD) where the greetings from the writer are in the first person.

478 As the editors mention, P.Oxy. XVI 1860 is written in a different hand from two other letters of the same sender, P.Oxy. XVI 1858 and 1859, which may suggest that the sender penned the two latter letters himself—although another letter from the same sender, P.Oxy. XVI 1857, is written by a different hand, leaving the case uncertain. Images at http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;16;1858; http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;16;1859; http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;16;1860; http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;16;1857.

in confidential and familiar letters, one will find pleasure in not having neglected this skill either."[479] Through Quintilian's statement it can be understood that there were certainly people capable of writing their private letters in their own hands in a beautiful style, which might not have been distinguishable from the style of professional writers.

On the other hand, it should not be taken for granted that any letter that looks non-professional must have been written by its author, since the person who wrote a letter for someone else need not have been a professional, but could have been a friend or family member asked by the author to write a letter for him or her. The appearance of the resulting dictated letter could be of low stylistic standards. For example, the above-mentioned P.Oxy. XVI 1860, which the author dictated to his son, is not superior in appearance to P.Oxy. XVI 1858 and 1859, which may have been written by the author himself. It is therefore difficult to tell for sure, only on the basis of the quality of the handwriting and appearance of a letter, whether a professional or a non-professional offered a helping hand, or an author wrote a letter himself.

Despite all the caveats discussed above, it is possible to work out, with a considerable degree of certainty, a set of criteria that may help determine whether a letter was or was not written by the author.

4.1.1 Reference to the Writer in the Letter

One clear indication that someone other than the sender wrote a letter is a reference to this fact in the letter itself. For example, if the writer was a common acquaintance of the sender and the addressee, he could add his own greetings in the letter.[480] Elsewhere the tiredness of the writer is used as a polite excuse to close a letter. This type of excuse is attested especially in letters that were sent by authors with apparently high cultural backgrounds, as suggested by the linguistic style of their letters, so care for the secretary functioned both as a polite way to close a letter and as a means to highlight the author's own polite manners and kindness. Concern for the secre-

479 Quintilianus, *Institutio Oratoria* 1.1.28–29 (transl. Russel 2001).

480 Thus, in P.Mich. VIII 482 (AD 133) 8–10 Πετεεῦς ὁ γρά[φων μο]ι τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἀσπά[ζε]τε (l. ἀσπάζεταί) σοι (l. σε) λίαν... ("Peteeus who is writing this letter for me sends you many greetings."); P.Merton II 82 (2nd c. ? AD) 19–20 Σαρα|πάμμων ⟦ο⟧ σὲ ἀσπάζομαι ("I, Sarapammon, greet you"); P.Oxy. XLIX 3505 (2nd c. AD) 24–25 ἀσπάσομέ (l. ἀσπάζομαί) σε Διονύσιος ("I Dionysios, greet you."); P.Iand. VI 103 (6th/7th c. AD) 16 προσαγορεύει σε ὁ σὸς δο(ῦ)λος Λυκᾶτος ὁ καὶ γράψας ("Your servant Lykatos, who wrote this letter, greets you."). The case of P.Berl. Möller 11 (AD 33/34) might be similar; this letter ends with the following clause, ll. 15–16: ἐπισκοποῦνταί σε οἱ ἐν οἴκωι| πάντες καὶ χαίρω ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολή(ν) ("All at home greet you and I, who wrote this letter, send greetings."). This case is not certain, because the writer does not mention his name, so it cannot be excluded that it may be the sender himself who wrote the letter and referred to himself at the end.

tary was part of the widespread use of expressions of politeness in letters of Roman and late antique times, especially among people who wished to be regarded as educated and upper class. For example, P.Mil.Vogl. I 24 (AD 117) closes with a reference to Patron's labouring, presumably from writing, who has allegedly started getting angry, 56–59 ὁ δὲ Πάτρων ἀβασκαντ[. .] φιλοπονεῖ· λείαν ὀξύτατος ἐξέβη. ἔρρωσσο, κύριε, σὺν τῇ κυρίᾳ μου συμβίῳ σο[υ]... ("And Patron, who may be free from the evil eye, is labouring; he has become very angry. Farewell to you, my lord, and to my lady your wife..."). Similar seems to be the case in P.Oxy. XLII 3057 (1st/2nd c. AD) 28–29 ἀλ<λ>' ὑποφέρει Λεωνᾶς. ἀσπάζομαί σε, δέσποτα, καὶ τοὺς σ[ο]ὺς πάντας. ἔρρωσο, τ̣ε̣ι̣μιώτατε (l. τιμιώτατε) ("Well, Leonas bears up. My best wishes to you, master, and all your people. Good health, most honoured friend.").[481]

4.1.2 Recognition of a Hand in an Archive of Letters

A second way of recognising dictated letters is by comparison with letters from the same archive, which may allow one to identify the hand of the author or of a secretary. It needs to be stressed here, that this is not always possible nor secure, since in most papyrus archives there are not enough samples of a hand to allow a certain identification of one's personal handwriting characteristics. In addition, in many cases the dating of the papyri of an archive is uncertain, so one needs to take into account the possibility of a natural development of one's handwriting style and possible changes to it over an unknown period of time. On the other hand, it should be said that, unlike well-trained and highly formalised literary hands, which conceal personal handwriting characteristics, the hands of letters, especially private ones, often look far from professional. The less formalised a hand the easier to recognise its personal characteristics, and thefore it is possible to find some cases of letters from archives, in which the hands of the senders can be identified.

In the archive of the engineers Kleon and Theodoros (mid 3rd c. BC) there are some letters sent to Kleon from his wife, Metrodora, and his sons, Philonides and Polykrates. According to the original editors' descriptions of the handwriting of the letters, they were probably written by the senders themselves.[482] I have been able to see enough images only of the hands of Metrodora[483] and Philonides.[484] Two letters

481 I have adopted the editors' (Parson's) punctuation. Rea's suggestion (P.Oxy. XLII 3057.27f. n.) to put a stop before Λεωνᾶς and assume that Leonas is a third person, perhaps the writer himself, who added his greetings in the letter, would be possible but seems less likely, because the verb ὑποφέρει would remain without subject.

482 The archive has been published in P.Petr. I 30; P.Petr. II 3–6, 9, 11–13, 15–16, 23, 42; P.Petr. III 42 H, G, C; SB VI 9440, and recently re-edited by van Beek 2006.

483 P.Petr. III 42 H 8 (a, b, c, e), with photos published in van Beek 2006, pl. I.

484 P.Petr. I 30 (1); P.Petr. II 42 (c); P.Petr. II 13 (19). I have seen images of the letters in microfilms held by the Institute for Papyrology of the University of Heidelberg.

that were sent from Metrodora are the fragmentary P.Petr. III 42 H 8 a and e (fig. 23 and fig. 24). The samples are small, so the identification of the hand cannot be certain; however, comparison of the two hands suggests that the same person wrote them both, which may have been Metrodora herself. In both letters, the hand has some peculiar personal characteristics that are not common, such as the left leg of δ and an α that forms a pointy wedge with the base and crossbar respectively; the tiny right-pointing serif at the feet of upright strokes, the shallow bowl of μ; the rightward inclination that seems to be inherent to this hand.

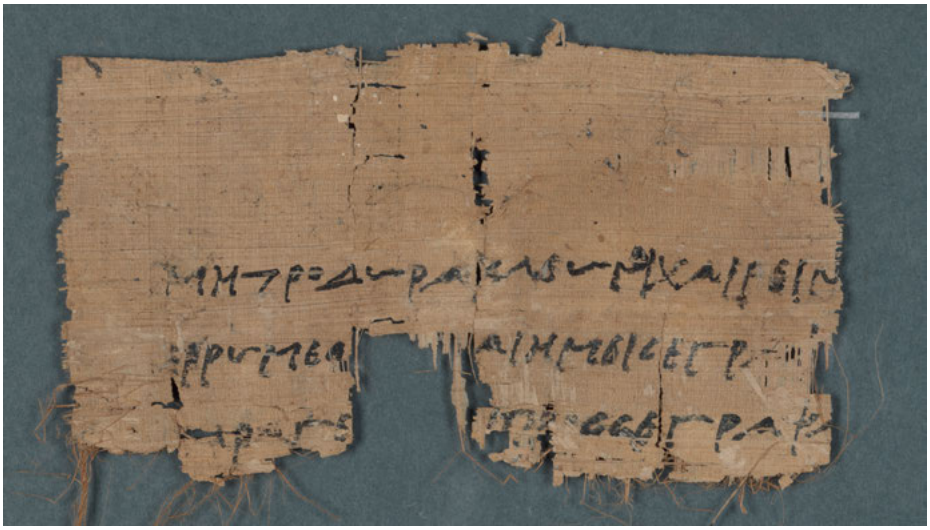

Fig. 23: P.Petr. III 42 H 8 a, letter from Metrodora to Kleon, mid 3rd c. BC © Trinity College Dublin.

Front

Μητροδώρα Κλέωνι χαίρειν. [- - -]
ἐρρώμεθ[α δὲ κ]αὶ ἡμεῖς. ἔγραψ[- - -]
[π]αραγε[νέσθα]ι πρὸς σὲ γραψα[-ca.?-]

Translation

Metrodora to Kleon, greetings. … We are in good health too. I have written … to come to you…[485]

485 Edition from P.Petr. III 42 H 8 (a); transl. van Beek 2006, 37.

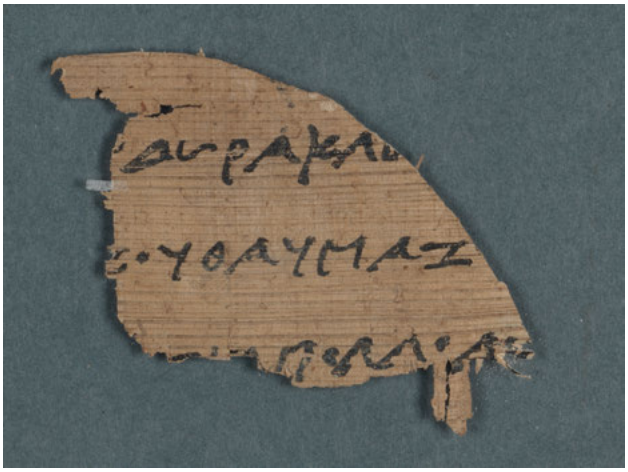

Fig. 24: P.Petr. III 42 H 8 e, letter from Metrodora to Kleon, mid 3rd c. BC © Trinity College Dublin.

Front

[Μητρ]οδώρα Κλέ[ωνι χαίρειν - - -]
[. . . .]σου θαυμαζ[- - -]
[. . . .]. . . Ἀπολλοδω[- - -]

Translation

Metrodora to Kle[on, greetings...[486]

Some more examples can be observed in the archive of the "secluded (κάτοχοι) in the Sarapeion." Two characteristic cases are UPZ I 59[487] and UPZ I 60[488] (179/168 BC). UPZ I 59 was sent to Hephaistion, a "secluded" in the Sarapeion, from his wife Isias. UPZ I 60 was sent to Hephaistion from his brother Dionysios. Both Isias and Dionysios asked Hephaistion to come back to his home and family (Dionysios mentioned Isias in his letter), and both letters were written on the same day and by the same hand. It seems unlikely that Isias, a woman, would write a letter for Dionysios, a man, so the hand of both letters may be the hand of Dionysios, although it cannot be excluded that a third person was asked to write both letters.[489] In P.Lond. I 42 (= p. 29), the ed.pr.

486 Edition from P.Petr. III 42 H 8 (e); transl. van Beek 2006, 38.
487 Photo: P.Lond. I, facs. 17; Montevecchi 1973, tav. 18; Mandilaras 1980, 43, p. 176; 1994, 45, p. 373; Bagnall/Cribiore 2008, no 14.
488 I have consulted an image of the papyrus held in the photographic archive of the Institute for Papyrology of the University of Heidelberg.
489 See also Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 111–112.

of UPZ I 59, there is no indication of a change of hand before the farewell greeting, which means that Isias did not undersign the letter. However a change of hand has been unnecessarily indicated there in the re-edition of the letter in UPZ I.[490]

Another example comes from the archive of the Roman veteran Lucius Bellienus Gemellus (1st/2nd c. AD). The most characteristic hand in this archive is the hand of Gemellus himself, which can be recognised in almost all of his letters. Gemellus wrote several letters to his estate manager Epagathos and his son Sabinus in his own hand, as, for example, P.Fay. 114 (fig. 26).[491] However, one of his letters to Epagathos, P.Fay. 110 (AD 94), displays a different professional-looking hand and layout, suggesting that this letter was penned by a professional writer (fig. 25).[492]

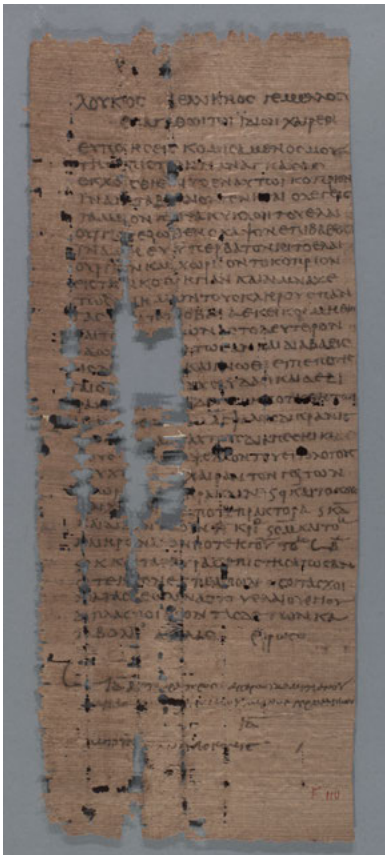

Fig. 25: P.Fay. 110, letter from Lucius Bellienus Gemellus to Epagathos, AD 94, w: 10.5 × h: 26.9 cm © Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

490 For the absence of a change of hand in UPZ I 59 see below Appendix III p. 349.

491 Other samples of Gemellus' hand are P.Fay. 111 (AD 95) with image at http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.fay;;111; P.Fay. 113 (AD 100) with image at http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.fay;;113.

492 According to Ast/Azzarello (2010, 67–71), in addition to Gemellus' hand, the hands of Sabinus and possibly Epagathos and Geminus can also be identified in this archive. The archive is still under study. I have been able to find and compare enough samples only of Gemellus' hand.

Front

Λουκι<ο>ς Βελλιῆνος Γέμελλος
Ἐπαγαθῶι τῶι ἰδίωι (ἴδ- pap.) χαίρειν.
εὖ ποιήσεις κομισάμενός μου
τὴν [ἐ]πιστ[ο]λὴν ἀναγκάσας
5 ἐκχῳσθῆναι τὸ ἐν αὐτῶι κόπριον
ἵνα (ἴνα pap.) καταβ[ο]λαῖον γένηται ὃ λέγεις
ταμ<ι>ε[ῖ]ον, κ[α]ὶ τὰ κύκλωι τοῦ ἐλαι-
ούργ<ε>ίου ἔξωθεν σκάψον ἐπὶ βάθος
ἵνα <ἵνα> μὴ εὐυπέρβατον (ευϋ- pap.) ᾖι τὸ ἐλαι-
10 ούργιον, καὶ χώρισον τὸ κόπριον
εἰς τὴν κοπρηγίαν, καὶ λιμναζέ-
τωσαν ἡμῶν τοὺς κλήρους πάν-
τας ἵ[ν]α τὰ πρόβατα ἐκεῖ κοιμηθῆι,
καὶ το[ὺ]ς ἐ[λαι]ῶνας τὸ δεύτερον
15 [ὕ]δω[ρ] ποτ[ισ]άτωσαν, καὶ διάβα εἰς
Διον[υ]σιά[δα] καὶ γνῶθι εἰ πεπότισ-
ται ὁ [ἐ]λαιὼν δυσὶ ὕδασι (ϋδ-) καὶ δεδι-
[κ]ράν[ισται, εἰ] δέ ṭι μὴ ποτισθήτω{ι}
ḳὰ ḛγ[.]ṭε.[..].. ἀσφαλῶς δικρανισ-
20 [θ]ῇ μ̣[..]ḳ.α.[.] αὐτοὺς διαπέσηι, καὶ
[δ]οὺς .[... κα]ὶ Ψέλλον του<ς> σιτολόγους
[.].υχ.[.. καὶ] Χαιρᾶν τὸν γρ(αμματέα) τῶν
[γε]ωρ[γῶν καὶ] Ἡρακλᾶν (δραχμὰς) ϙ καὶ τόκους,
καὶ Χα[ιρᾶ]ν [τό]ν ποτε πράκτορα (δραχμὰς) κδ,
25 καὶ Διδᾶν [.]ḍoṵν τιμ(ὴν) κριθ(ῆς) (δραχμὰς) σμ καὶ τόκ(ους),
καὶ Ἥρωνα τόν ποτε ἡγούμ(ενον) τόκ(ους) (ἐτῶν) β
(δραχμὰς) ρκ. καὶ τὰς θύρας ἐπιστησάτωσαν
οἱ τέκτονες· πέμπω δέ σοι τὰ σχοι-
νία. τὰς δὲ ὠλένας τοῦ ἐλαιουργ<ε>ίου
30 δ[ι]πλᾶς ποίησον, τὰς δὲ τῶν κα-
ταβολα[ί]ω(ν) ἀ[π]λᾶς. ἔρρωσο.
(ἔτους) ιδ Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Δομιτιανοῦ
[Σ]εβασ[τοῦ Γερμ]ανικοῦ, μηνὸς Γερμανικοῦ ιδ.
μὴ οὖν [ἄ]λλως ποιήσῃς.

Translation

Lucius Bellienus Gemellus to his own Epagathos, greetings. When you receive my letter, please have the manure heaped up in order that you may make the store place which you mention, and dig a deep trench around the oilpress outside in order that access to the winepress may not be easy, and remove the manure to the manure pile, and let them flood all our fields in order that the sheep may be folded there, and let them irrigate the oliveyards for the second time, and go over to Dionysias and find out whether the oliveyard has been watered twice and dug; and if not, let it be watered . . . and give to . . . and Psellos, the sitologi (i.e. keepers of the public granaries) . . . and Chairas, the scribe of the cultivators, and to Heraklas ninety drachmas and interest, and to Chairas, the former tax collector, 24 drachmas, and Didas . . . the price of the barley, 240 drach-

mas and interest, and to Heron, the former president (?), two years' interest, 120 drachmas. And let the carpenters set up the doors; I am sending the measurements to you. Make the hinges(?) of the oil-press double, and the ones of the stores single. Farewell.
(Year) 14 of the Emperor Caesar Domitianus Augustus Germanicus, the 14th of the month Germanicus.
P.S. Do not neglect these instructions.[493]

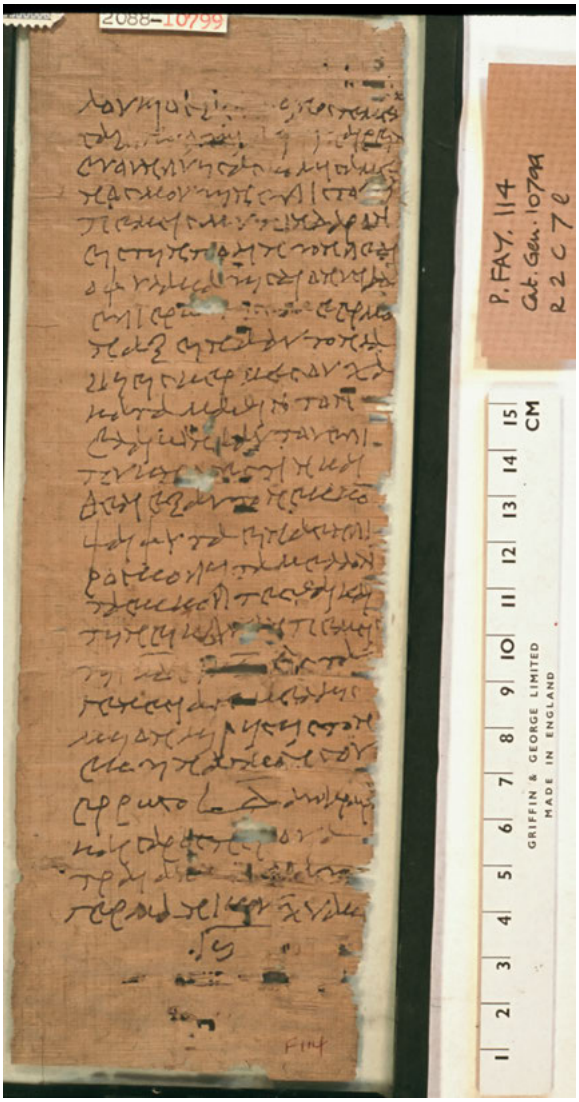

Fig. 26: P.Fay. 114, letter from Lucius Bellienus Gemellus to Sabinus, AD 100, w: 8.1 × h: 24.2 cm BC © Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

493 Transl. White 1986, 149–150.

Front

Λούκιος Βελλῆνος Γέμελλος
Σαβίνῳι τῶι οιεῖῶι (l. υἱῷ) χαίρειν.
εὖ οὖν πυήσας (l. ποιήσας) κομισάμε-
νός μου τὴν ἐπιστολὴν
πέμσ<ε>ις (l. πέμψεις) μυ (l. μοι) Πίνδαρον
εἰς τὴν πόλιν τὸν πεδι-
οφύλακα τῆς Διονυσιάδο(ς),
ἐπ<ε>ὶ ἐρώτησέ με Ἑρμο-
ναξ (l. Ἑρμῶναξ) {ε}ἵνα αὐτὸν λά-
βῃ εἰς Κερκεσοῦχα
καταμαθ<ε>ῖν τὸν
ἐλαιῶνα αὐτοῦ ἐπεὶ
πυκνός ἐστιν καὶ
θέλι (l. θέλει) ἐξ αὐτον (l. αὐτῶν) ἐκκό-
ψαι φυτά, {ε}ἵνα ἐνπί-
ρος (l. ἐμπείρως) κοπῇ τὰ μέλλον-
τα ἐκκόπτεσθαι· καὶ
τὴν εἰκθυὶν (l. ἰχθύν) πέμσ<ε>ις
τῆι κδ εἶκε (l. ἧκε) εἰς τὰ
γενέσια Γεμέλλης.
μὴ ο<ὖ>ν ληρήσῃς τὸν
ἐκτιναγμόν σου.
ἔρρωσο. (ἔτους) δ Αὐτοκράτορος
Καίσαρος Νερούα
Τραιαν[οῦ] Σεβαστοῦ
Γερμανικοῦ, Χυακ (l. Χοιακ)
ιη.

Translation

Lucius Bellenus Gemellus to his son, Sabinus, greetings. Upon receipt of my letter, please send Pindaros, the estate guard at Dionysias, to me at the city, since Hermonax has asked me to let him take him to Kerkesouchos to inspect his olive grove, since it is overgrown and he wants to cut out some trees, and in order that those to be cut out may be cut skilfully. And send the fish on the twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth for the birthday of Gemella. Therefore, do not talk foolishly about your threshing.
Farewell. (Year) 4 of the Emperor Ceasar Nerva Trajanus Augustus Germanicus, Choiach 18.[494]

Another set of letters that allows the comparison and identification of hands may be found in the archive of Apollonios, strategos of the Apollonopolite nome of the Heptakomia (2nd c. AD). His family estate was located at Hermopolis, but during Apollonios' appointment as strategos of the Apollonopolite nome, he received a

494 Transl. based on White 1986, 152.

number of letters from his mother Eudaimonis. His wife Aline was with him, but sometimes she would go back to Hermopolis and stay at the home of Eudaimonis, from where she sent some letters to her husband. The letters of Eudaimonis and Aline are fascinating for their content, revealing their care for Apollonios, especially during the Jewish revolt (AD 115–117), when he was on military duty. For our discussion the letters are interesting for their handwriting, especially P.Giss. Apoll. 10 (fig. 27) from Eudaimonis and P.Giss. Apoll. 8 (fig. 28) from Aline, which are in the same hand. Perhaps they were both penned by a member of the household, or a secretary.[495]

Fig. 27: P.Giss. Apoll. 10, letter from Eudaimonis to Apollonios, AD 116 © Universitätsbibliothek, Gießen.

Front

Εὐδαιμο̣ν̣ὶς Ἀ̣πολλωνίωι τῶι
υ̣ἱῶι πο̣λλὰ χαίρειν.
ο̣.ω̣.. τ̣ὰς παρ᾽ ἡμεῖν ταραχ̣[ὰς] οὐ
καρτε̣[ρ]ῷ νυ̣κτ[ὸ]ς ἡμέρας ε[ὐ]χ̣[ο-]
5 μέγη τ̣οῖς θεο̣[ῖ]ς π̣ᾶσ̣ι καὶ π[άσαις]
[ὅ]π̣ως [σε] δ[ι]ασυ[λ]λα[β]ῶσι [...]π[- - -]

495 So also Kortus, P.Giss. Apoll. p. 53; Cribiore 2002, 152; Bagnall/Cribiore 2008, no 33.

[.ως. παρ]ακλ̣[η]θεὶς ο[ὗ]ν [..]σ̣[..]ν̣
σ̣εαυ[τὸ]ν διάγ[α]γε μ̣έ̣χρι οὗ πρ[..]τ̣α-
θ[ωσι αἱ] τοῦ καιροῦ τούτου ταραχαὶ
10 κ[αὶ ..α]παυ̣τᾷ̣ς ἡμῖν εἰς παραμύ̣-
[θιον]. μὴ ὀ̣κνήσ̣η̣ς π̣[ερὶ τῆς] σ̣ῆ̣ς
[σωτη]ρίας δηλῶσα[ί μοι. ἀσπάζε-]
[ταί σε] Ἡραιδοῦς ἡ [μικρὰ καὶ]
[- ca. 9 -]οι̣κο[-ca.?-]

Translation

Eudaimonis to her son Apollonios, many greetings.

Seeing the disturbances near us, I cannot endure and pray day and night to all the gods and goddesses to watch you . . . please . . . behave yourself until the disturbances of this time are gone and you can meet us to console us. Do not delay in informing me about your well-being. (Young) Heraidous salutes you and . . .[496]

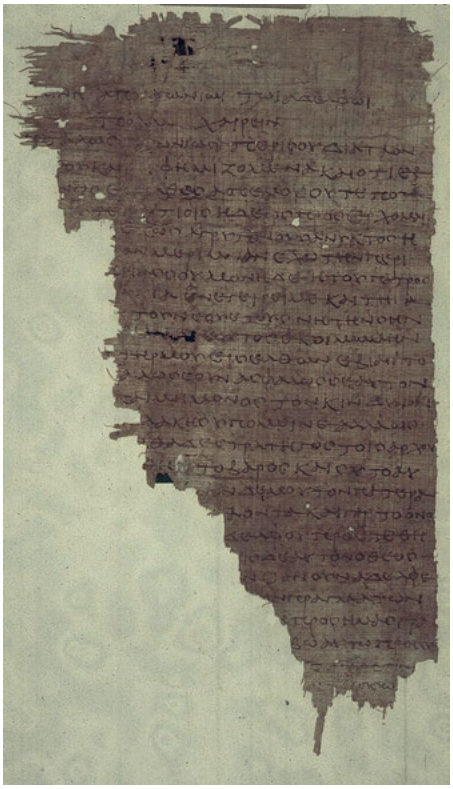

Fig. 28: P.Giss. Apoll. 8, letter from Aline to Apollonios, AD 115 © Universitätsbibliothek, Gießen.

496 Transl. Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 14.

Front

[Ἀ]λ̣ι̣νὴ Ἀπολ̣λ̣ωνίωι τῶι ἀδελφῶι
πολλὰ χαίρειν.
μ̣εγάλ̣ως [ἀγ]ωνιῶσα περί σοῦ διὰ τὰ ὅν-
[τα τ]οῦ καιρ[ο]ῦ φημιζόμενα καὶ ὅτι ἐξ-
[άφ]νως ἐ[ξῆ]λθες ἀπ᾽ ἐμοῦ· οὔτε πο-
[. . . ο]ὔτε [σε]ι̣τίοις ἡδέως προσέρχομαι,
[ἀλλὰ συν]εχῶς ἀγρυπνοῦσα νυκτὸς ἡ-
[μέρας μ]ίαν μέριμναν ἔχω τὴν περὶ
[τῆς σωτ]η̣ρίας σου. μόνη δὲ ἡ τοῦ πατρός
[μου πολ]υ̣ω̣ρ̣ία ⟦ε⟧\ἀ/νεγείρει με καὶ τῆι α
[ἡμέρᾳ] τοῦ νέου ἔτους, νὴ τὴν σὴν
[σωτη]ρ̣ί̣ᾳ̣ν̣, ἄ̣[γ]ε̣υ̣στος ἐκοιμώμην,
[εἰ μὴ ὁ π]ᾰ̣τήρ μου εἰσελθὼν ἐβιάσατό
[με. παρακ]αλῶ σε οὖν ἀσφαλῶς σεαυτὸν
[φύλαττε] καὶ μὴ μόνος τὸν κίνδυνον
[ἄνευ] φ̣υ̣λακῆς ὑπόμεινε ἀλλὰ ὡς
[καὶ ὁ ἐ]γ̣θάδε στρατηγὸς τοῖς ἄρχου-
[σι ἐπιτί]θη̣σ̣ι̣ τὸ βάρος καὶ σὺ τὸ αὐ-
[τὸ ποίει . . .]. . ν δέ μου τὸν πατέρα
[- ca.14 -]α ὄντα. καὶ γὰρ τὸ ὄνο-
[μα - ca.11 - ἀ]δελφοῦ προετέθη
[- ca.15 -]ις δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ θεὸς
[- ca.15 -]ν. ἐὰν οὖν, ἄδελφε,
[- ca.15 - τῶ]ν πραγμάτων
[- ca.17 -]ς πρὸς ἡμᾶς γρά-
[ψον - ca.15 -]βω αὐτῷ πρός σε
[- ca.20 - τ] ᾰ̣γ̣[αβ]ᾰ̣ί̣ν̣ε̣ι
[- ca.21- τῆ]ς σω[τη-]
[ρίας -ca.?-].

Translation

Aline to her brother Apollonios many greetings.
I am very worried for you on account of the things that people reported about what is happening and you because you left me so suddenly. I take no pleasure in food and drink, but always stay awake day and night with only one thought, your safety. Only my father's care revives me, and by your safety I lay without eating on New Year's Day but my father came and forced me to eat. I beg you therefore to (look after) your safety and not to face danger alone without a guard. Do the same as the strategos here who puts the burden onto the magistrates... the name of my brother was posted...[497]

In the same archive, more hands can be identified. A group of letters from Eudamonis consists of P.Giss. Apoll. 2, 4, 5, and perhaps 7, which have been written by the same

497 Transl. Bagnall/Cribiore 2008, 151.

person.[498] It has been argued that this may be the hand of Eudaimonis herself, which is possible albeit not certain.[499]

Two other letters from Eudaimonis, P.Flor. III 332[500] to Apollonios and P.Brem 63[501] to Aline, are in yet a third hand. It has been suggested that P.Giss. Apoll. 1[502] was also written by the same person, [503] but this seems less likely because both the handwriting and the layout are very different from P.Flor. III 332 and P.Brem. 63.[504] The case of these letters becomes more complicated, because in some of the editions a change of hand has been indicated in the farewell greetings, meaning that Eudaimonis dictated the letters and wrote the farewells herself, while in other editions there is no indication of changes of hands there.[505] Close analysis, however, reveals that in none of these is the handwriting in the farewell greeting likely different from the bodies of the letters. [506] This suggests that Eudamonis has not undersigned in any of the letters. Whether she dictated them to a secretary is unclear.

498 Images: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.giss.apoll;;2, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.giss.apoll;;4, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.giss.apoll;;5, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.giss.apoll;;7. P.Giss. Apoll. 7. seems to be in the same hand and perhaps it was sent from Eudaimonis, too, but its top is broken and this remains uncertain.

499 So suggested in Kortus, P.Giss. Apoll., p. 52; Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 49 and 2008, para. 234.

500 Photo: Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 148 and 2008, no 43.

501 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.brem;;63.

502 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.giss.apoll;;1.

503 Kortus, P.Giss. Apoll., pp. 52–53; Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 147 and 2008, para. 234.

504 The general alignment of handwriting on unlined paper is considered to be of great significance for the identification of hands by many graphologists. See Harrison 1981, 335.

505 More specifically, in the ed.pr. (P.Flor. III 332) and in the re-edition of the letter (Sel.Pap. I 114) there is no sign of a change of hand. However, Bagnall/Cribiore commented that "the body of this letter [P.Flor. III 332] was written by a capable scribe... The personal greetings of Eudaimonis are also fast and fluent." (Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 147 and 2008, no 43). In the ed.pr. of P.Brem 63 and P.Giss. Apoll. 1 (= P.Giss. 21) handshifts have been indicated before the farewell greetings and Kortus (P.Giss. Apoll., pp. 52–53) commented that the farewells were penned by a different hand.

506 Kortus (P.Giss. Apoll., pp. 52–53), Cribiore (2006, 147), and Bagnall/Cribiore (2008, letter no 43) commented that this is clearly the hand of a scribe, because the farewells were penned by a different hand. However, there is no change of hands in the farewell greetings of P.Flor. 332, P.Brem. 63 and P.Giss. Apoll. 1 (= P.Giss. 21), since the ink, the inclination of the script, the speed of writing, the size and formation of the letters, the interlinear spaces remain exactly the same as in the main bodies of the letters (for the criteria that help in the recognition of changes of hands see below pp. 151ff.). A further difficulty with the suggestions of Kortus, P.Giss. Apoll., pp. 52–53 and Cribiore 2006, 147 is that if, as they suppose, Eudaimonis wrote herself P.Giss, Apoll. 2, 5, 7 (= P.Giss. I 22, 23 and 24), then the hand of the subscriptions of P.Flor. III 332, P.Brem. 63 and P.Giss. Apoll. 1 (= P.Giss. 21) should be the same as the hand that wrote P.Giss, Apoll. 2, 5, 7 (= P.Giss. I 22, 23 and 24). However, it is clear that this is not the same hand. Kortus and Cribiore have recognized this divergence in the handwriting and tried to explain it, but the explanations are not persuasive. Kortus (P.Giss. Apoll., p. 53) suggested that it is a second scribe who subscribed on behalf of Eudaimonis under a letter written by another scribe "Da in P.Brem 63 die Schlußklausel von 2. Hand angefügt ist, handelt es sich jedoch nicht um

From the above examples, it can be generally observed that some private letters, such as UPZ I 59 from Isias to her husband and P.Fay. 110 from Gemellus to his estate manager Epagathos, though probably written by dictation, do not have changes of hands in the farewell greetings. Similar seems to be the case with the letters of Eudaimonis, who probably dictated at least some of her letters but did not put her signature on them. The lack of a change of hands in the farewell greetings of these likely dictated letters can be observed in some other cases, too: for example, some letters of Sempronius, in the archive of Saturnilla and her sons (late 2nd c. AD), were written by dictation, but, as Rowlandson commented, they "do not exhibit a change of hand between body and closing greeting."[507] All these are private letters, some of them from senders of high social status, and it seems that the authors did not feel the need to insert their personal handwriting under their dictated letters.

4.1.3 Recognition of Change of Hand in the Farewell Greeting

Detection of a change of hand in the farewell greeting is the most common way to recognise that a letter was written by someone other than the sender. The author's personally written farewell greeting was a method of authentication, so it seems useful, before examining changes of hands in the farewell greetings, to see more closely the development of the methods of authentication of letters in the Graeco-Roman world.

In the Minoan period, Greeks authenticated their letters and documents by means of seals.[508] Seals were made by the impression of the author's personal ring or amulet on a piece of fresh clay, which secured the string that was tied around the folded letter; when the string was removed, the seal was destroyed. Seals were used to secure not only letters, contracts, double documents and similar texts, but also goods and containers such as jars.[509] Sometimes it is possible to tell the kind of material on which a seal had been impressed from the traces of the impression on the back of the

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die Schrift der Eudaimonis, sondern die eines Schreibers", while Cribiore (2002, 153) commented that "the discrepancy between her [Eudaimonis'] confident subscriptions and the uneven appearance of the characters in the body of the letters [P.Giss, Apoll. 2, 5, 7 (=P.Giss. I 22, 23 and 24)] is visible in some school exercises that are written clumsily even when the student is able to sign and date his work with confidence, or in other private letters." But attention to the handwriting of the letters P.Giss, Apoll. 2, 5, 7 (=P.Giss. I 22, 23 and 24) suggests that the hand that wrote them is not an elementary one, but a capable round hand writing at medium speed, with ornamental elements, clearly not a poorer version of the hands of the farewell greetings of P.Flor. III 332, P.Brem. 63 and P.Giss. Apoll. 1 (=P.Giss. 21), but a different hand.

507 Rowlandson 1998, 144.

508 See also the discussion above p. 84 Leather – Parchment.

509 E.g. P.Gen. I2 74.8–10 διὸ ἐρωτηθεὶς ἐκλαβὼν ἀντίγραφον καὶ βαλὼν εἰς ἀγγ<ε>ῖον σφρά̣γι[σ]ον ("therefore, at my request, take a copy, put it in a jar and seal it").

clay seal (e.g. traces of papyrus or leather). However, due to the deterioration of the surfaces of unbaked clay, this is not always possible, and in most cases it is impossible to tell if a seal had been used to secure a document or a container unless it is preserved with the original string or object on which it had been impressed.

In classical times seals were used to authenticate letters, regardless of whether the author had written the letter in his/her own hand or not. We see this, for example, in Euripides, *Hippolytus*, where it can be assumed from the context that Phaedra wrote her letter in her own hand on a set of wooden tablets. The authenticity of this letter, which was crucial for the plot, needed to be verified after her death; Theseus verified it not from her handwriting but from the stamp of her ring on the seal: καὶ μὴν τύποι γε σφενδόνης χρυσηλάτου τῆς οὐκέτ' οὔσης οἵδε προσσαίνουσί με. φέρ' ἐξελίξας περιβολὰς σφραγισμάτων ἴδω τί λέξαι δέλτος ἥδε μοι θέλει ("See, the impress of the dead woman›s gold-chased seal attracts my eyes. Come, let me open its sealed wrappings and see what this tablet wishes to tell me").[510]

The practice of sealing continued into the Ptolemaic period. Despite the fact that clay seals disintegrate fairly easily, so that they have not survived well, we do, in fact, have examples of them. One of the best preserved seals was attached to P.Col. IV 122 (181 BC), a letter sent by Lysimachos to Leontiskos and associates in the Arsinoite nome. In the ed.pr., there is an image of the seal, which carries a Greek-style portrait of a man. Another example is P.Cair. Zen. I 59027 (258 BC), sent from Aristeus to Apollonios, which was found with a seal lying loose inside the letter. There is no available image of the seal, but according to the ed.pr., it bore a representation of Athena Promachos, with shield and spear.[511] Not all letters were necessarily secured by stamped seals, but presumably only those from senders who had a personal seal and considered their letters important enough to be protected from unauthorised opening. For example, P.Mich. I 14 (257 BC) is a letter from Nikon to Zenon, asking for the price of some dishboards. The letter was found with its seal attached to it. The surface of the seal is well preserved, but it has no stamp traces; it is only a piece of clay pressed on the strings with the finger (fig. 29).

510 Euripides, *Hippolytus* 862–865 (transl. Kovacs 1995).
511 P.Cair. Zen. I 59027 introd.

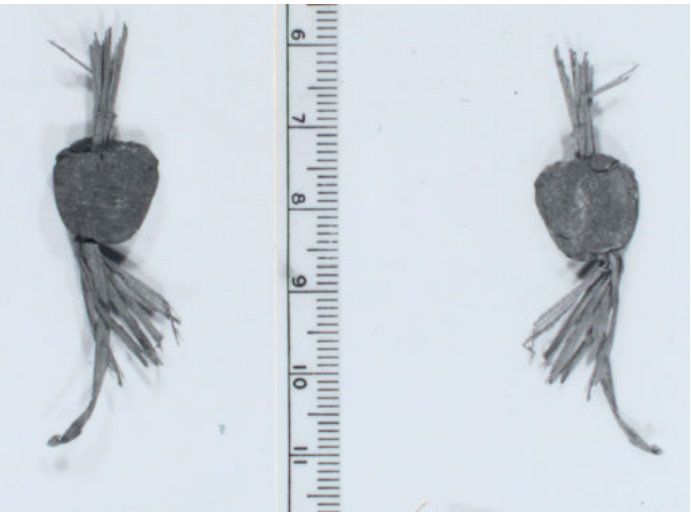

Fig. 29: P.Mich. I 14, letter from Nikon to Zenon, seal, 257 BC © Papyrology Collection, Graduate Library, University of Michigan.

It has been stated that in official letters of the Hellenistic period, besides the author's seal, authentication was also secured by the personal handwriting of the author in the farewell greeting. Welles described the processing of royal administrative correspondence in the Ptolemaic kingdom and noted that, after a long and complicated process, in the chancery office the outgoing correspondence would be "submitted to the *dioecetes*, and only after his approval had been given were the clean copies of the texts prepared, checked for their correctness, and finally returned to him for his signature." He added that the signature "consisted of the addition of the word ἔρρωσο, 'farewell'" and referred to UPZ I 14 as an example.[512] However, in the edition of UPZ 14 there is no ἔρρωσο at the end of the letter,[513] and the whole argument seems to have been a misinterpretation of the editor's comment "Nach Analogie des Geschäftsganges in der kaiserlichen Kanzlei (vgl. auch den der modernen Behörden) ist zu vermuten, daß die Reinschriften nunmehr dem Dioiketen zur Vollziehung durch Unterzeichnung mit Ἔρρωσο vorgelegt worden sind."[514] As will be argued below, the indication of changes of hands in farewell greetings in editions of letters of the Hellenistic period seems to be due to editorial whim, applying anachronistically a custom that was introduced first in the Roman period.

512 Welles 1934, xxxvii–xxxviii with n. 4.
513 Not to be confused with the ἐρρωσο in l. 56 which has no handshift indicator and belongs to a letter that is embedded in UPZ I 14. I refer to the ἔρρωσο that the editor supposed should have been added by the author's hand as a subscription at the end of UPZ I 14.
514 Wilcken, UPZ I 14.124–125n., p. 171.

The Hellenistic custom of securing letters with the seal of the ring or amulet of the author continued in Roman times. Suetonius reports about Augustus that "in passports, dispatches, and private letters he used as his seal at first a sphinx, later an image of Alexander the Great, and finally his own, carved by the hand of Dioskourides; and this his successors continued to use as their seal. He always attached to all letters the exact hour, not only of the day, but even of the night, to indicate precisely when they were written."[515] From the description of Suetonius about Augustus' method of authentication, it seems that the practice of sealing letters was adopted from the Hellenistic kings, but the reference to the addition of the date in letters is something new. From the wording of Suetonius, it seems that Augustus wrote the date and hour himself in letters that had been written by secretaries. This would function as a kind of authentication of letters, and in fact this method of authentication is attested in P.Rain. Cent. 57 (AD 47), one of the earliest surviving official letters of the Roman administration in Egypt, dated to the first century AD. It is also the earliest known official letter with text added at the bottom by its author: the author did not write a farewell greeting, but only the date, with year month and day.[516]

From other instances it appears that attention to the personal handwriting of an author was a custom that was invented by the Romans, because Greeks of earlier periods paid no attention to one's handwriting for the authentication of a letter.[517] References to the personal handwriting of an author can be found in early Latin literature, such as Plautus' *Pseudolus* (ca. 254–184 BC). In the opening dialogue of the play, Pseudolus reads the letter of his master's girlfriend to his master and makes jokes with sexual connotations about her handwriting: "Really, I ask you, have chickens got hands? Surely a chicken wrote this one."[518] It is clear from the dialogue that it was taken for granted by Pseudolus that the letter had been written by the girl herself. Over a century later, Cicero observes that a letter was written by the hand of a secretary and not by Atticus himself: "and I read him your letter or rather your secretary's."[519]

In Greek literature references to the personal handwriting of an author are not attested before the first century BC. The early Greek treatises, Demetrius' *De elocutione* and ps.-Demetrius' *Epistolary Types*,[520] do not refer either to the etiquette of writing one's private letters personally or to authors' personal subscriptions below dictated letters. In Greek literature, references to the personal writing of an author in a letter start appearing from the first century AD onwards. One of the earliest cases

515 Suetonius, *Augustus* 50 (transl. Rolfe 1914).
516 See below p. 170 with fig. 43.
517 See above p. 141 the example of Phaedra's letter in Euripides, *Hippolytus*.
518 Plautus, *Pseudolus* 29–30: *An, opsecro hercle, habent quas gallinae manus? nam has quidem gallina scripsit*. (transl. De Melo 2012). On the appearance of the handwriting of the letter to Pseudolus, see also the discussion of Clark 2001–2002, 183–189.
519 Cicero, *Ad Atticum* 6.6.4 *eique legi litteras non tuas sed librari tui* (transl. Shackleton-Bailey 1999).
520 For the dating of these two works see above p. 28.

concerns a letter of Callirhoe in Chariton's novel *Chaereas and Callirhoe*.[521] Callirhoe wrote her letter to Dionysios in her own hand, as she mentions explicitly in the letter, ταῦτά σοι γέγραφα τῇ ἐμῇ χειρί ("I wrote these in my own hand").[522] When Dionysios received the letter and recognised Callirhoe's personal handwriting, he kissed and hugged the letter as if it was Callirhoe herself, γνωρίσας τὰ Καλλιρόης γράμματα πρῶτον τὴν ἐπιστολὴν κατεφίλησεν, εἶτα ἀνοίξας τῷ στήθει προσεπτύξατο ὡς ἐκείνην παροῦσαν ("when he recognised Callirhoe's handwriting, first he kissed the letter, then he embraced the letter in his breast, as if she was present").[523]

Similarly, Saint Paul wrote the conclusion of his letter to the Galatians in his own hand and drew attention to the fact: Ἴδετε πηλίκοις ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα τῇ ἐμῇ χειρί. ("See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand").[524] In the fourth century, Libanius mentions that he was about to write the farewell at the end of a letter that had been dictated to a secretary, μέλλοντός μου τῇ χειρὶ τὸ ἔρρωσο προσθήσειν ("being about to add the farewell with my own hand"),[525] and his contemporary Saint Basil speaks about the dubious authenticity of a letter which was a copy of the original and lacked the signature of its author: Ἀλλὰ μία ἐπιστολὴ καὶ αὐτὴ ἀμφίβολος. Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν εἴποις ἐκ τῶν τῆς ὑπογραφῆς συμβόλων αὐτὴν ἐπεγνωκέναι, ὅς γε οὔπω τὴν πρώτως γραφεῖσαν, ἀλλὰ τὴν μεταγραφεῖσαν εἰς χεῖρας ἔλαβεν. ("But one letter and that dubious! For one could not say that one recognised it from the marks of the signature, since he received into his hands not what was written originally, but a copy.")[526]

The novelty of writing the closing farewell greeting in a dictated letter in the author's own hand may have been influenced by the private letter-writing customs of Senate politicians. Customarily, private letters were written by the authors themselves; however, senators and other members of the upper social strata in Rome often employed private secretaries to assist with letter-writing and very often the authors added some text in their own hand below a dictated letter. This functioned as a mark of authentication: as Cicero states in a letter to Atticus, he could be recognised through his handwriting and seal: "And I shall not write in my own hand or use my seal, that is if the letter is such that I should not want it to get into strangers' hands."[527]

521 Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe* is regarded as the earliest extant work of Greek prose fiction, dated to the mid 1st c. AD. For the dating of this novel and the function of letter writing in it see Rosenmeyer 2001, 137–147.
522 Chariton, *Chaereas and Callirhoe* 8.4.6.
523 Chariton, *Chaereas and Callirhoe* 8.4.13.
524 Saint Paul, *Epistle to the Galatians* 6.11.
525 Libanius, *Epistula* 1223.1.
526 Saint Basil, *Epistula* 223.6 (transl. based on Deferrari 1930).
527 Cicero, *Ad Atticum* 2.20.5 *neque utar meo chirographo neque signo, si modo erunt eius modi litterae quas in alienun incidere nolim* (transl. Shackleton-Bailey 1999).

The same conclusions about author's subscriptions may be drawn from an examination of the meaning of the word ὑπογραφή. In Hellenistic times the term mostly occurs in official or documentary contexts and describes text that was added at the foot of another text. The word ὑπογραφή there has its literal meaning of "write under" (ὑπο-γράφω); it does not refer to farewell greetings, but to notes or instructions written below another text. Such notes or instructions were mainly written at the foot of letters or petitions, after they had been received by the addressed officials or a member of their staff. The focus on such ὑπογραφαί was not on their handwriting but on their content, and so they could be copied without any risk of being discredited.[528] This kind of ὑπογραφαί continues to be attested in Roman times—in Latin they are called *subscriptiones*[529]—but they should not be confused with the so-called ὑπογραφαί that were written below dictated letters by the authors of the letters.[530] In a relevant reference to Caesar's subscriptions in letters, ἔτυχε ἐπιστολάς ὑπογράφων, ὥσπερ εἰώθει, κατακείμενος ("he chanced to be signing letters, as his custom was, while reclining at table"),[531] it is not clear if Plutarch meant subscriptions that Caesar wrote below letters that he had dictated to his secretaries or subscriptions that he wrote below petitions that he had received (*libelli*). The distinction between letters (*epistulae*) and petitions (*libelli*) becomes clear in the *Historia Augusta* with reference to Commodus, "ipse Commodus in subscribendo tardus et neglegens, ita ut libellis una forma multis subscriberet, in epistulis autem plurimis 'Vale' tantum scriberet" ("Commodus himself was so lazy and careless in signing documents that he answered many petitions with the same formula, while in very many letters he merely wrote the word 'Farewell.'")[532]

The use of the ὑπογραφή as a method of authentication was also applied to notarial documents, especially from the first century AD onwards. These documents usually contain the personal subscriptions of one or more of the contracting parties; as Pestman noted: "A new element was added to the form of the notarial deeds at the beginning of the first century A.D., namely the ὑπογραφή. After this time one of the contracting parties, and sometimes both of them, writes a personal statement at the bottom of the formal part of the deed — the statement is therefore called ὑπογραφή — in order to confirm the terms of the agreement."[533] Unlike in letters, the ὑπογραφή

528 E.g. UPZ I 118.1 with n. (147/136/83 BC) τῆς γεγενημένης ὑπογραφῆς ὑπόκειται τὸ ἀντίγραφον; P.Mich. IX 534.6 (AD 156) ἀντίγραφον ὑπογραφῆς.

529 Thomas 1983.

530 Wilcken 1920, 3: "Unter *subscriptio* ist hier nicht die gleichfalls *subscriptio* genannte eigenhändige Unterzeichnung der epistula zu verstehen [...], sondern eine Antwort, die unter die Originaleingabe gesetzt ist."

531 Plutarchus, *Caesar* 63.7 (transl. Perrin 1919).

532 *Historia Augusta*, *Commodus* 13.7 (transl. Magie 1921).

533 Pestman 1990, 43. Some examples of documents that are subscribed by their authors are SB XXII 15351 (AD 81), a parachoresis (contract for the giving up of a holding of land) from Taroutilios to the

in documents is not a greeting but the word "σεσημείωμαι", which literally means "I have signed."[534]

Authors' personally written farewell greetings and/or dating clauses below dictated letters certified that the content of a dictated letter had been checked, approved and authorised by its author, but this practice did not completely replace seals. The latter continued to be used for the protection of letters against unauthorised opening, as references from the Roman period bear witness to.[535] Signatures and seals complemented each other: the authors' personal addition guaranteed the authenticity of the text, while the seal ensured that the letter had not been opened on the way. An alternative sealing method was developed in Roman times, by drawing patterns (X) over the clay and strings of a closed letter.[536] If the original strings or clay were removed and reapplied, this would remain evident from the interrupted lines of the drawings. The reason for this change is not clear, but it must have been a convenient alternative way of authentication for authors who did not have a personal seal or who did not wish to use one, but still wanted to protect their letters from being tampered with.

4.2 Changes of Hands in the Farewell Greetings

In editions of letters on papyrus or ostraca one often finds an indication that the farewell greeting is written in a different hand from the body of the letter. However, it is not always certain that there is a true change of hand there. With the exception

agoranomoi (public notaries), written by a professional, and subscribed by Taroutilios in his own hand, verifying what had been written above, (23–25) Ταρουτίλλιος σεση(μείωμαι) (ἀρούρας) |εἴκοσι. (ἔτους) τρίτου Αὐτοκρ(άτορος) |Τίτου Καίσαρος Οὐε[σπ(ασιανοῦ)] |Σεβ(αστοῦ), Μεχεὶρ η Σεβ(αστῇ) ("I Taroutilios undersign, twenty arourai, of the third year of the Emperor Titus Caesar Vespasian Augustus, Mecheir 8, day of Augustus"), photo in Montserrat/Fantoni/Robinson 1994, plate 2; SB XXII 15354 (AD 88), a parachoresis from Ploutarchos to the agoranomoi, ending with a farewell and a date written by the secretary, but in l. 32 Ploutarchos signed in his own hand: Πλούταρχος σεση(μείωμαι) ("I Ploutarchos undersign"), photo in Montserrat/Fantoni/Robinson 1994, plate 5; P.Oxy. I 45 (AD 95) is a contract from Phanias, Heraklas, Diogenes and Hermaios to the agoranomoi, ending with a farewell and date by the secretary, and below Heraklas' signature in his own hand (18–20) Ἡρακλ(ᾶς) σεση(μείωμαι) ἄρουραν μίαν| ἥμισυ τρίτον δωδέκατον,| (γίνεται) (ἄρουρα) α ∠ γ´ ιβ´. χρ(όνος) ὁ αὐ(τός) ("I Heraklas have undersigned on one aroura and a half and a third and a twelfth, makes aroura 1 1/2 1/3 1/12, of the same year"), image at http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;1;45.

534 See examples of letters and orders closing with an author's personally written σεσημείωμαι below p. 177 n. 624.

535 E.g. P.Flor. II 140 (AD 264, Anoubion to Alypios) (3–5) [ἐπισ]τόλιον τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου Κλαυδιανοῦ| [ἐσφρ]αγισμένον τῇ αὐτοῦ σφραγῖδι| [ἔπε]μψά σοι ("I sent you a letter from your brother Claudianus, sealed with his own seal"); P.Oxy. XLVII 3557 (late 1st c. AD) (15–18) πέμψον μοι| διὰ τῶν ὀνηλατῶν ἢ διὰ ἄλλου| ἀσφαλοῦς συνελίξας| ἀχρήστῳ καὶ σφραγίσας ("send it to me by the donkey-drivers or by another reliable person, rolling it up in something useless and sealing it").

536 Vandorpe 1996, 241–243.

of a short discussion about this problem by Bagnall/Cribiore,[537] there has been no systematic study of farewell greetings and the changes of handwriting in this position. The section below makes it its task to question the validity of the claims concerning the change of hands in farewell greetings by careful examination of the alleged instances of the practice.

4.2.1 Handshifts

Changes of hands are found in all types of texts and their analysis helps us understand the mechanisms of writing in antiquity, and the stages leading to the completion of a text, which include making notes, corrections, revisions. They also shed light on the reading process, on what one might call the consumption of texts, which, for its part, may include making marks, notes, additions etc. In literary papyri changes of hands are usually found in marginal annotations, interlinear additions, corrections, scholia or other notes revealing the readership or use of a text by later generations. Although the changes of hands are routinely indicated in the editions of literary papyri, their systematic study is still difficult, due to the lack of a comprehensive full-text database, which would allow one to collect and investigate cases of changes of hands.[538] For documentary papyri this is possible, thanks to the *Duke Databank of Documentary Papyri* (*DDbDP*), where changes of hands flagged in editions are indicated as "handshifts" (HS). I have adopted this term "handshift" to refer to the indication of a change of hand in the edition of a text.

Table 6 shows the texts and letters that contain handshifts in the editions, according to a search in the *DDbDP* and *HGV*.[539] As letters are considered all those documents that are characterised as "Brief" in the *HGV*, which are further classified, following *HGV*, by their content as official (amtlich) and private (privat), the latter including those labeled "geschäftlich" in *HGV*.[540] The focus of the present study is on letters of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, since the editions of letters on lead do not contain handshifts.

537 "Editors hurry to proclaim the existence of a second hand, but this may not be right." (Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 46).

538 A full-text *Digital Corpus of Literary Papyri* is currently under construction as part of a joint project being conducted at the Institute for Papyrology of the University of Heidelberg and New York University. It currently hosts information of about ca. 15.000 literary texts, and transciptions of several hundred Greek papyri; see www.litpap.info.

539 Search conducted in March 2013.

540 See the relevant discussion about the typological categorization of letters above p. 65.

Table 6: Letters with indications of handshifts in their editions.

	400 BC–AD 800						400 BC–AD 300			
			Private letters				Private letters			
	All Texts	All Letters	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	(*HGV*: Brief geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	(*HGV*: Brief geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
Total	60112	7736	1574	1031	3741	1663	1008	622	2349	1125
Handshifts	9346	943	326	84	374	182	219	38	204	126
%	16%	12%	21%	8%	10%	11%	22%	6%	9%	11%

The compiled data shows that texts said in their editions to have one or more changes of hands account for about 16% of the total of all texts in the *DDbDP*, while letters with indicated handshifts constitute about 12% of the total of letters in the *DDbDP*. In letters, most handshifts are indicated before the farewell greetings, but there are also handshifts in other positions. For example, the large number of handshifts in official letters (21%) is due to their occurrence in dockets that were added upon receiving a letter, and most of them are observed in the archive of Zenon, who marked systematically all his incoming correspondence.

Handshifts in letters can be broken into two general categories: i) those that indicate text that was added by a second hand before the dispatch of a letter and ii) those that indicate text that was added after receiving a letter. The first type of handshifts includes those indicated in the farewell greetings, dating clauses, addresses on the back, and interlinear or marginal insertions or corrections, which are found in all types of letters. The second type of handshifts refers mostly to dockets, marginal annotations, notes or drafts, responses written in the margins or on the back of original letters by the recipients. The handshifts of the second type are found mostly in official letters, because they often have dockets recording their receipt. Marks or notes written by the recipients and replies or forwarding messages written in the margins or on the back sometimes occur in letters about business transactions or in orders. In personal letters, since most of them have no text or docket added by the recipient, handshifts of the second type are relatively rare. As a rule, private letters were personal in character and were not meant to be forwarded or reused. Cicero ridicules the use of a palimpsest for a letter.[541] Private letters with dockets are mostly found among the letters of people who received many official letters, such as Zenon.

As mentioned above, in papyrological editions there is currently no clear distinction between changes of hands and changes in the style of handwriting by the same hand. A further problem is that although "handshifts" are ubiquitously indicated in editions of letters, their use is very rarely discussed in commentaries. Even in cases of re-editions of letters, in which indications of handshifts are changed from the previous editions, by being removed or inserted, editors either make this change silently, without commenting on it, or provide only a brief note to explain the change. For example, a letter originally published as P.Paris 46 (152 BC) had no indication of a handshift before the farewell greeting (l. 23) ἔρρ(ωσο) (ἔτους) κθ Μεσορὴ κς ("Farewell, year 29 Mesore 26"). An unnecessary handshift, however,

541 Cicero, *Ad familiares* 7.18.2 nam quod in palimpsesto, laudo equidem parsimoniam; sed miror quid in illa chartula fuerit quod delere malueris quam non haec scribere nisi forte tuas formulas; non enim puto te meas epistulas delere ut reponas tuas. ("As for the palimpsest, I applaud your thrift. But I wonder what could have been on that scrap of paper which you thought proper to erase rather than not write these screeds. Your forms of procedure, perhaps? I scarcely suppose that you rub out my letters in order to substitute your own.", transl. Shackleton-Bailey 2001).

was silently inserted in the re-edition of this letter in UPZ I 71.[542] The same letter was re-edited as Sel.Pap. I 104, where there is (correctly) no handshift. Similarly, SB I 5216[543] (1st c. BC) has no handshift before the farewell greeting (l. 13) ἔρρωσ(θε). (ἔτους) ιδ, Ἀθὺρ κε ("Farewell, year 14 Hathyr 25") in the ed.pr. by Lefebvre (1912, 194–196) nor in its re-edition by White (1986, 61), but a handshift, although unnecessary, was silently inserted when the letter was reprinted as SB I 5216. And there are more cases of disagreements in the indications of handshifts in multiple editions of a single papyrus.[544]

For a systematic study of letters that are signed by their authors, it would be necessary to examine the handwritings of all letters for which handshifts have been indicated in editions.[545] A problem presents itself, however, on account of the absence of images for some of the published letters. This study is based on letters with handshifts, which have published images available in printed editions or online, as well as some letters for which digital images could be sent to me by various institutions and collections.[546]

My examination of handwriting for the purpose of determining true changes of hands as opposed to changes in the style of handwriting has been informed by some principles applied to handwriting analysis in the area of forensic document examination. Although ancient Greek and Latin scripts show differences from corresponding modern scripts and the materials of writing have changed, the details in a script that

542 Photo: P.Paris, pl. XXXIV; see also below Appendix III.

543 Photo: Lefebvre 1912, pl. X.

544 Some examples: P.Strasb. II 111 (215/214 BC) had a handshift marked before the farewell greeting in l. 24 [ἔρ]ρ̣[ω]σο (ἔτους) η [.....]δ, but in the re-edition of the letter by Clarysse (1976, 200–201) the handshift was correctly but silently removed. In SB XIV 11996 (1st c. ? AD), a letter about some books of Epicurus, the farewell and dating are preceded by a handshift marker in the ed.pr. (Keenan 1977, 93) and in SB XIV 11996—Keenan allowed some room for doubt commenting that "not inconceivably, it is the same hand writing more quickly" (1977, 91 n. 4), and later in the re-edition of the letter by Obbink, *Corpus dei papyri filosofici Greci e Latini* (*CPF*) I.1.5, the handshift marker was removed with the note "Sia il saluto finale sia la data sembrano scritti da una mano differente o almeno più corsivamente che non il testo" (Obbink, *CPF* I.1 p. 106). In O.Flor. 30 (mid/end 2nd c. AD), a letter on an ostracon found in Upper Egypt, the farewell greeting is partly preserved and the extant part suggests that there is no change of hand. In the ed.pr. there is no handshift, but in the re-edition of the letter in CEL I 161 a handshift marker was silently inserted.

545 The opposite method, i.e. to examine all the letters that do not have handshifts in the farewell greetings in order to identify cases where true changes of hand may have escaped the notice of editors seems to be unnecessary. Although it cannot be excluded that some cases may appear from such a study, their number would be negligible. From my examination of a large number of images of letters, it seems that variations in the style of handwriting have not escaped the attention of editors, but the opposite applied: editors tended to indicate handshifts excessively in order to signal any variation in the style of the handwriting.

546 This research was enabled thanks to the generosity of a large number of institutions and scholars who have sent me digital images of letters (see above p. V Acknowledgements).

help identify the individual characteristics of a particular hand are in many respects the same. The following section refers to the principles of handwriting analysis that I have applied in my study after consultation of relevant works.[547]

4.2.2 Criteria for the Recognition of Changes of Hands

The following quotation from Harrison can serve as an introduction: "All handwriting exhibits identifying features which will hereafter be referred to as its 'characteristics.' The characteristics of a handwriting fall into two classes: 1) those derived from the general style to which the handwriting conforms, termed 'style characteristics,' and 2) those which have been introduced into the handwriting, whether consciously or unconsciously, by the writer. These will be referred to as 'personal characteristics.'"[548]

The handwriting styles that can be observed in papyri of the Graeco-Roman world are broadly distinguished by scholars between literary and documentary scripts, with each of the two groups having further sub-categories of styles.[549] The style of handwriting that was taught to children at school followed the style of informal round literary hands, in evolving degrees of skill.[550] In administrative offices secretaries used documentary styles of scripts, ranging from formal chancery hands to informal cursive styles. In letters one finds various styles, depending on the typology of a letter and the skill and educational background of a writer. In certain parts of a letter, such as the farewell greetings or the external address, there may be deliberate alterations in the style of handwriting for the purpose of decoration or in order to draw the attention of the reader.[551]

Style characteristics are more pronounced and easier to identify than personal handwriting characteristics. The first are helpful for dating a text, according to the style that was in fashion in each period, however they are of little value for the identification of individual hands, in which case one needs to look for personal handwriting characteristics, that is, the small habitual variations of every hand, which are consciously or unconsciously repeated in a person's handwriting and contribute to its unique individual character. As Harrisson explains "unlike 'style characteristics,' which are usually obvious on the most cursory examination, the majority of 'personal

547 Osborn 1910; Harrison 1981, 288–348; Hilton 1982, 153–171 and 210–223; Ellen 1989; Huber/Headrick 1999, 87–139; Koppenhaver 2010, 7–25 and 97–111.
548 Harrison 1981, 288.
549 Studies of the handwriting styles in Greek and Latin papyri and their chronological development: Roberts 1955; Seider 1967, 1970 and 1990; Cavallo/Maehler 1987; Turner 1987; Cavallo 2005; Cavallo 2008.
550 Cribiore 1996, 114.
551 See also above pp. 120ff.

characteristics' are inconspicuous and have to be diligently sought for, even by those experienced in the critical examination of handwriting."[552]

In some hands the personal characteristics are pronounced, while in others they require careful examination to be identified. For example, the unsteady, trembling hand of Lucius Bellienus Gemellus is unusual and thus relatively obvious.[553] However, in the case of P.Oxy. XLV 3253 (fig. 30),[554] a letter from a certain Zoilos to Horion dated to the third/fourth century AD, closer examination of the script is required to identify personal characteristics in the hand and distinguish them from natural variations. In the ed.pr. of P.Oxy. XLV 3253, the farewell greeting (22) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι, is preceded by a handshift indicating a change of hand. Determining whether there is a change of hand there may be challenging, because at first sight the change in the inclination may appear to be the product of a different hand. However, detailed comparison of the script of the farewell greeting to the body of the letter suggests that the farewell greeting was, in fact, written by the same person as the body of the letter. The initial ε of the ἐρρῶσθαί is enlarged, which has resulted in some variation in its shape, but the movements for its formation are similar to the formation of other ε, e.g. in (13) ἄφες and (17) ἐποικίῳ. In all these cases the ε is formed by a downward stroke that turns upwards at its end, and the cap is formed in a separate movement that ends in a close curve that "softens" at its end. The ρ is formed by a single continuous movement beginning with the back or top of the circlette, continuing to form a round, and looping downwards in a long, straight leg, e.g. in (1) Ὡρίωνι, (7) -ριδίου, (22) ἐρρ-. Characteristic is also the small loop which frequently decorates the end of descending strokes, especially in the case of ρ and ι, but also discernible at the end of the right foot of π, e.g. in (16) πινώντων̣. A frequent feature in this hand are the occasional curves at the end of strokes, observable, e.g., in (12) φυ-, and the end of εὔχομαι.

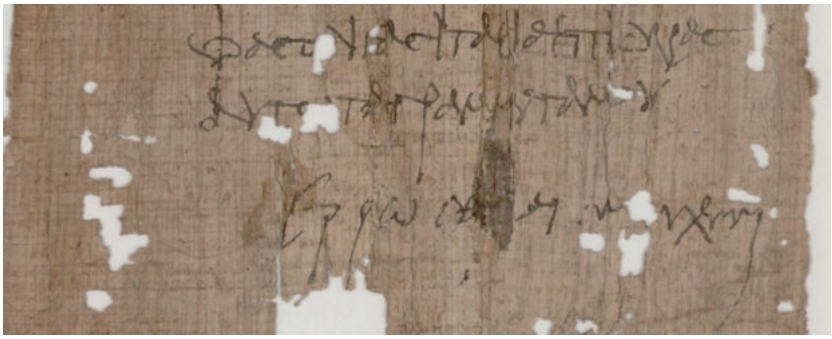

Fig. 30: P.Oxy. XLV 3253, letter from Zoilos to Horion, lines 20–22, 3rd/4th c. AD © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

552 Harrison 1981, 291.

553 See above, p. 132 fig. 26, P.Fay. 114, written by Gemellus' hand. For the peculiarities of the hand of Gemellus see Ast/Azzarello 2010, 69.

554 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;45;3253.

The form of letters is helpful for the recognition of a hand, but, since the style of letterforms is usually influenced by the style that was in fashion in a given period, the degree of individuality of a hand may vary in this respect. Inherent repetitive characteristics that help to identify a hand are the relative proportions of letters, i.e. their relative height, lateral expansion and length of descending strokes, and their relative layout, i.e. the position of each letter between the upper and lower notional lines and in respect to the other letters standing before or after in the line. Important characteristics can also be the way in which connecting strokes are done and the positions at which parts of letters start or join. Some individuality may also be identifiable in the movements that form letters (called *ductus* by palaeographers). It is not always necessary to compare exactly the same letters, because all letters are designed with combinations of basic lines that are normally repeated.

Besides the above mentioned repetitive characteristics that are inherent in each hand, it needs to be stressed that natural variations are also inherent in all hands, and although each person's handwriting has unique and individual personal characteristics, no hand is able to write two perfectly identical replicas of the same sample of text. The basic axiom of handwriting identification is that "no two writings by the same or different persons are identical."[555] Every hand usually has more than one variant form (allophorm) for each letter. The extent and nature of variation is unique to each hand and can also be helpful in identifying someone's handwriting. For example, in the body of the letter of P.Oxy. XLV 3253, besides the one type of ε described above, there is allophorm exemplified in (5) ὅπερ and (8) σεαυτῷ. Possible reasons for the variation in the formation of a letter may be its position in a word and the letters that precede and follow it. Harrison noted that "effective comparisons can only be made when the letters are similarly placed in the word. Initial letters should only be compared with initial letters, terminal with terminal, and medial with medial."[556]

Another detail that sometimes helps identify whether there is a change of hand in the farewell greeting is the density of the ink. The way the pen is held and the amount of pressure put on the pen while writing tends to be steady. This is not always observable in papyri, due to the age of the materials, but in P.Oxy. XLV 3253 this characteristic is discernible. Due to the inclination of the pen, the rightward descending oblique strokes are thicker than the upright ones, which is very clearly identifiable especially in χ, e.g. (22) εὔχομαι, in υ, e.g. (21) αὐτῷ, in ν, e.g. 19 -ναι, in δ, e.g. (19) διατρο-.

The use of punctuation and lectional signs and their position relative to the letters are among one's personal handwriting characteristics; however letters rarely contain punctuation. The same applies also for abbreviations, with the exception of the year symbol which is often attested in the dating formulas of official letters. However, if existent, punctuation marks and lectional signs may be helpful. For example the

555 Huber/Headrick 1999, 81.
556 Harrison 1981, 301.

abbreviated χ(αίρειν) in the opening addresses of a group of letters of the archive of Apollonios strategos, including P.Giss. Apoll. 2, 4, and 5,[557] supports the claim that they were written by the same person.

Another important parameter that needs to be taken into account in the examination of changes of hands in the farewell greetings of letters is that, unlike documents that are usually analysed for forensic purposes, papyrus letters are not the product of forgeries. If a letter was written by dictation and its author wished to write personally the farewell greeting, his purpose was to authenticate the letter, and he had no reason to try to imitate the hand of his secretary. In other words, if the hand of the farewell greeting exhibits strong "likeness" to the hand of the body of the letter, unless there are other differentiating personal characteristics, it is possible that it is the same hand. For example, in the ed.pr. of SB XVI 12835 (fig. 31), a letter dated to AD 16, the editor commented that the hand in the farewell greeting is similar to the letter above,[558] but, nevertheless, indicated a handshift before the farewell greeting and date (10) [vac. ? (hand 2) ἔ]ρρωσο. (ἔτους) λθ Καίσαρος Μεχεὶρ κβ. ("Farewell.

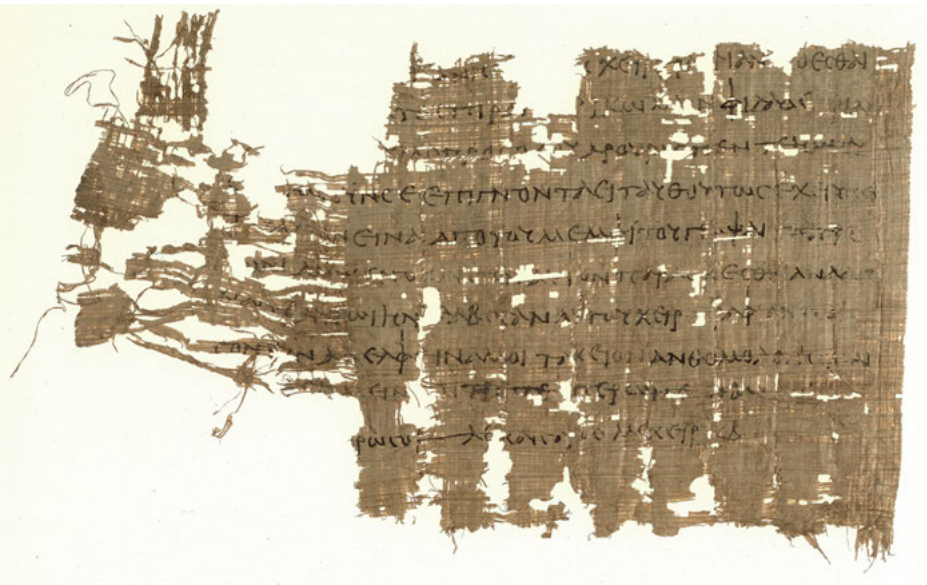

Fig. 31: SB XVI 12835, letter or petition from N.N. to the Prefect P. Ostorius Scapula, AD 6
© Papyrology Collection, Graduate Library, University of Michigan.

557 For the images of letters see above p. 139 n. 499.

558 "Although he [i.e. the sender] writes in a hand similar to that of his scribe, the differences in hands are best seen in the writing of χειρογραφίαν of line 7 by m. 1, and directly below in Μέχειρ of line 10 by m. 2." (Hanson 1984, 84). However, the alleged differences are natural variations that are inherent in every hand.

Year 39 of Caesar Mecheir 22”). Close attention to the handwriting shows that the χειρ of (10) Μεχειρ is formed with the same movements as (1) χειρογραφίαν and (7) χειρογραφίαν. Characteristic personal details of this hand are the small ornamental curve at the top of the left branch of χ, and the leftward turn that is often formed at the foot of descending strokes (e.g. ρ, ι).

If one compares the above case with SB V 7743, a letter from Claudia Dionysia to Teiron, dated to the first/second century AD, where there is a true change of hand in the farewell greeting, the difference is clear (fig. 32).[559] The handwriting and layout of the letter, which was perhaps written by a secretary, look more elegant than Dionysia’s hand, which was responsible for the farewell greeting, (26–28) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔ|χομαι, κύριέ μου| ἄδελφε, πανοικεί, and the date, (29) Μεχεὶρ ι. The farewell is placed exactly at the end of the letter and continues below in narrower lines, forming a “box” at the end of the body of the letter. The date is written further below, centred towards the bottom of the sheet, also by the hand of Dionysia. Being contemporary, the letter-forms of the two hands in SB V 7743 have similarities, but the personal characteristics of each hand clearly differ. Besides the formation of the letters (e.g. ε in the hand of the secretary and in the hand of Dionysia), and the thickness of the pen, there is also a difference in the inclination of the script: the first hand has a slight backward inclination, while the hand of Dionysia is upright.

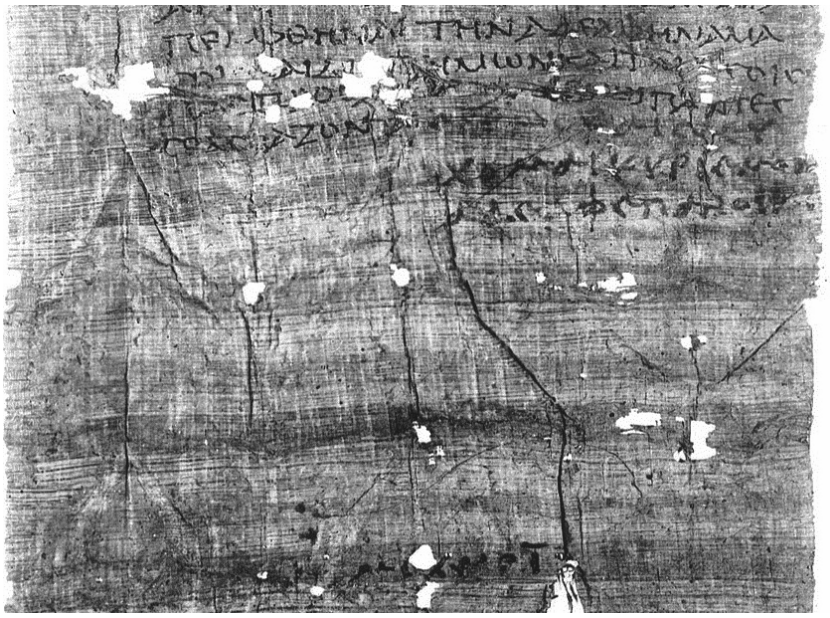

Fig. 32: SB V 7743, letter from Claudia Dionysia to Teiron, lines 23–29, 1st/2nd c. AD © Institut français d’archéologie orientale, Cairo P. 120.

559 Photo: Hohlwein 1934, plate III, after p. 200.

Another example of a letter with change of hand in the farewell greeting is SB XVIII 14057, sent from Claudius Macareus the superintendant of Calpurnius Reginnianus, consularis to Reginnianus the πραγματευτής, and dated to AD 150–200 (fig. 33). The body of the letter is in an elegant chancery style script, apparently by a professional writer, and lacking grammatical errors. The farewell greeting, (9–11) ἐρρῶσθαί σε| εὔχομε (εὔχομαι) τι|μωιταται (l. τιμιώτατε), was written by the author in a slower hand, and it contains spelling errors. At the bottom of the sheet (line 12), the month Χοιάκ was penned by the first hand in a more cursive style than the body of the letter. The difference in the hand of the author is evident in the formation of letters in the farewell greeting; compare e.g. the proportionally tall ε in the body of the letter, e.g. in (5) ἐπειδή, (6) σέ, with the author's ε in the farewell greeting which is equal in height to the other letters, e.g. (10) εὔχομαι; also compare the long left leg of μ in (6) γράμματα and the short μ in (10) εὔχομαι.

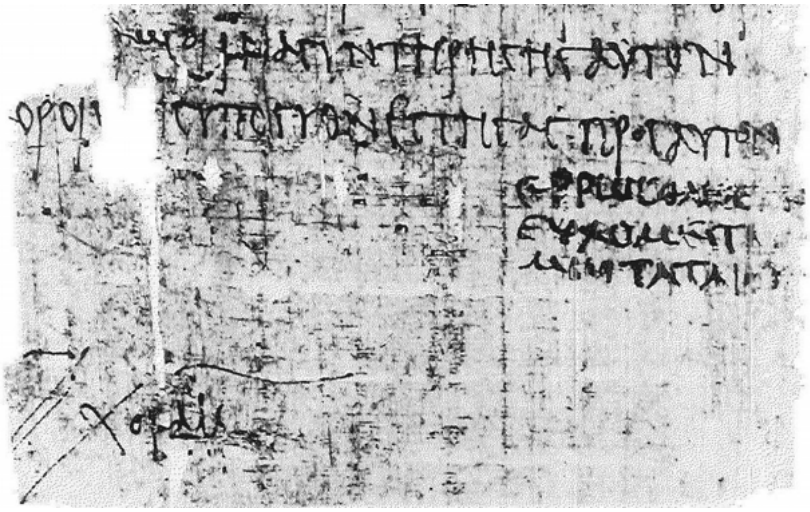

Fig. 33: SB XVIII 14057, letter from Claudius Macareus to Reginnianus, lines 7–12, AD 150–200
© Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Bremen.

The inclination (backward/upright/forward) of the script and the degree to which it is inclined is a feature that generally characterises a hand, and in the above-mentioned SB V 7743 this is one of the differentiating characteristics between the two hands. However, an important consideration is that a forward inclination may occur as a natural variation in any hand when it tries to speed up. [560] The drawing of letters requires movements that interrupt and delay the forward movement of the hand and,

560 Harrison 1981, 312 and 354; Huber/Headrick 1999, 106.

consequently, the more rapid the hand, the smaller the size of the letters and the more forward inclined and cursive the script becomes. This transformation is very common in farewell greetings and dating clauses, because these parts, being formulaic and conventional, were often rapidly written. For example, in P.Oxy. XXXI 2560, a letter from the strategos of the Lykopolite nome to Aurelius Chairemon strategos of the Hermopolite nome dated to AD 258 (fig. 34),[561] the body of the letter was written by a secretary and the farewell greeting, (21–22) ἐρρῶσθ[αί σε] εὔχομαι| φίλτατε ("I pray for your health, dearest"), was penned by the author, as indicated in the ed.pr. The dating clause, (23–27) (ἔτους) ε Αὐτοκ̣[ρατόρ]ων Κ̣[αισ]ά̣ρων Π[ο]υ̣πλίου Λικιννίου ... ἐπιφαν̣[ε]στάτου Καίσαρος Σεβ̣α̣στῶν. Μεσορὴ α̣ ̣(“In the fifth year of the Emperors Caesars Publius Licinius ... the most noble Caesar, Augusti. Mesore, 1st”), is preceded by a handshift indicating a third hand in the ed.pr., but the editor allowed room for doubt.[562] As the editor correctly suspected, the dating clause is by the first hand, having significant similarities with the body of the letter: the interlinear spaces remain proportionally the same, and the formation and joins of letters are similar, too; see e.g. the join of λλ in (16) ἀλλά and (24) Γαλλιηνοῦ; the join of ων in (16) Πεβων and (23) καισάρων; the relative height of ε, protruding above the upper notional line in (14) εἶναι and (24) Γερμαν-. The farewell greeting, on the other hand, was more slowly written, has fewer joins, and some awkwardness may be observed in the overwriting of some strokes, such as ρρ in ἐρρῶσθαι and χ in εὔχομαι, showing that there is a change of hand there.

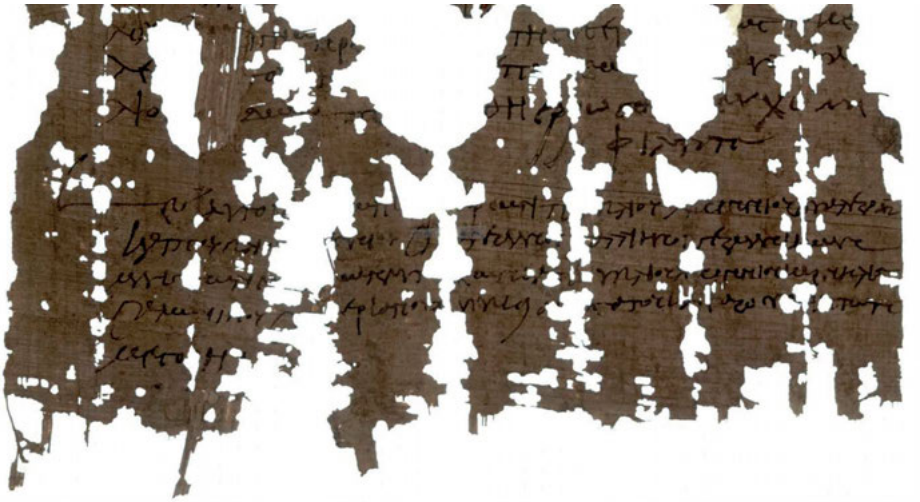

Fig. 34: P.Oxy. XXXI 2560, letter from the strategos of the Lykopolite nome to Aurelius Chairemon strategos of the Hermopolite nome, lines 19–27, AD 258 © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

561 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;31;2560.

562 "The date is in a more cursive hand than the body of the letter but it may be by the same scribe." (Rea, P.Oxy. XXXI 2560.23n.).

In opposition to P.Oxy. XXXI 2560, in which the forward inclination in the dating formula was due to the increase in speed by the same hand and not indicative of a hand change, is P.Mich. VIII 472, from Tiberianus to Longinus Priscus, dated to 100–125 AD (fig. 35).[563] As correctly indicated in the ed.pr., the farewell greeting in this letter is written by a second hand, (24–25) *opto ṭ[e] ḍọmine| ben[e v]ạlerẹ* ("I pray for your good health, my lord").[564] In this case the change in the inclination between the body of the letter and the farewell greeting is not the result of change in speed of handwriting, but it is due to the change of hand. More specifically, the secretary's hand has a natural forward inclination, while the hand of the author is upright. The "backward" change in the inclination of the farewell greeting cannot be explained as a result of increase in the speed of writing. Besides, there are more differences between the two hands, such as the proportionally large and oval "o" in the farewell greeting as compared to that in the main body of the letter, the formation of "m" and the way it joins to the next letter, e.g. "mi" in (8, 11) *domine*, which can be compared with (24) *domine*.

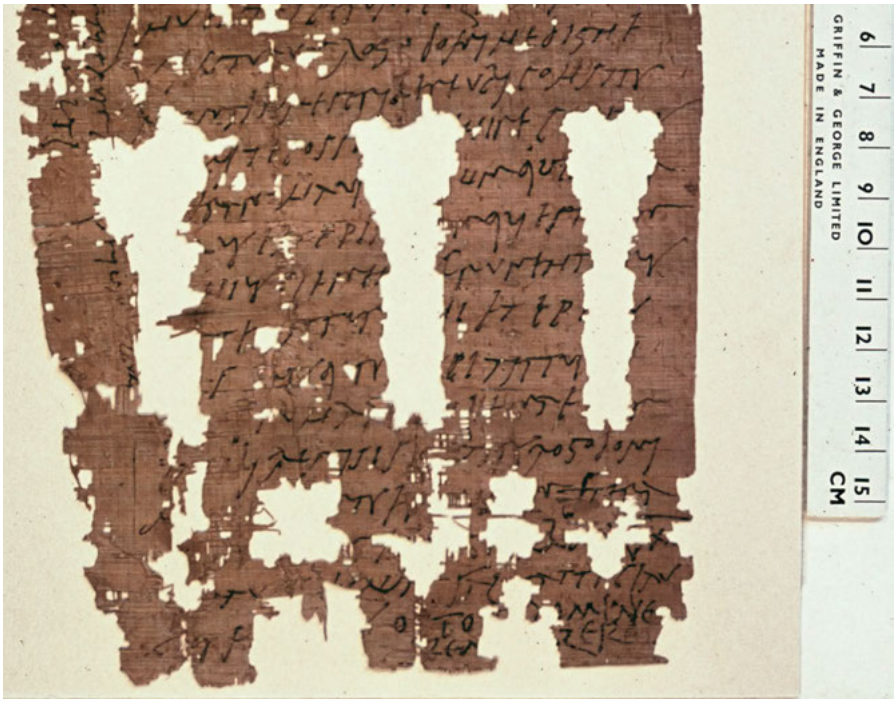

Fig. 35: P.Mich. VIII 472, letter from Claudius Tiberianus to Longinus Priscus, lines 11–25, early 2nd c. AD © Papyrology Collection, Graduate Library, University of Michigan.

563 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.mich;8;472.
564 The postscript in the left margin is written by the first hand.

One of the most important personal characteristics in a hand is the arrangement of writing, because this is an inherent usually unconscious personal handwriting characteristic. This is related to the sense of placement, balance and proportion of the text, the dimensions and proportions of margins, the interlinear spacing, the parallelism of lines, the depth of indentions, and the position of signatures. The habits of arrangement are related to the educational background, aesthetic sense and ability of a writer, but they are personal and tend to remain stable in a hand. As such, they are important indicators in handwriting analysis.[565] The arrangement is especially helpful in ancient documents, because there were no ruling lines and the relative proportions of margins and spaces were personally arranged by a writer. For example, in P.Oxy. XXXIII 2668, a letter from the strategos Aurelius Dioskourides to the praepositus Claudius Herakleios, dated to 311 AD, the farewell greeting, (21–22) ἐ[ρ]ρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι| φίλτ(ατε) ("I pray for your health, dearest"), is written by a second hand, while the dating clause, (23–24) ὑπατείας τοῦ δεσπότου ἡμῶν Μ̣α̣ξιμίνου Σεβαστοῦ| τὸ β Μεσορὴ κ̣θ [-ca.?-] . .[-ca.?-]κ̣θ ("The 2nd consulship of our lord Maximinus Augustus, Mesore 29…"), is written by the first hand (fig. 36). Comparison of the handwriting, however, suggests that also the farewell greeting and the dating clause were written by the first hand in a more cursive style. Characteristic personal detail in this hand can be seen in the position of υ high above the other letters, especially in words ending in ου (see e.g. in 22 and 23 του), but see also the υ in the farewell greeting which is the same as in the main body of the letter (e.g. in 1 Ἰουλιανός). The inclination of the writing is suggestive, too: in the body of the letter the script has a forward inclination that remains almost unchanged in the farewell greeting, while in the dating clause the degree of inclination is increased due to the speed of writing. Comparison of the arrangement of writing in the body of the letter and in the dating clause shows that this aspect remains unchanged too. In the second line of the body of the letter there is an indentation, which is exactly equal to the second line of the dating clause. In the second line of the opening address, the indentation is wider, because the writer tried to spread the words to fill the whole length of the second line of the opening address.

Control of the pen and the ability (or lack of it) to follow a straight line, to maintain parallel lines, to keep margins and interlinear spaces even tend to be characteristic of a writer and remain unaltered. Consequently, these characteristics are very helpful for the identification of hands in the farewell greetings and in the dating clauses, because the alignment remains the same as in the body of the letter, while if the hand changes, some differences can always be observed in the alignment. Thus, in P.Oxy. XXXIII 2668, the interlinear spaces of the body of the letter and of the dating clause remain unchanged, but the farewell greeting looks "squeezed" at the end of the body of the letter.

565 Osborn 1910, 141; Huber/Headrick 1999, 91.

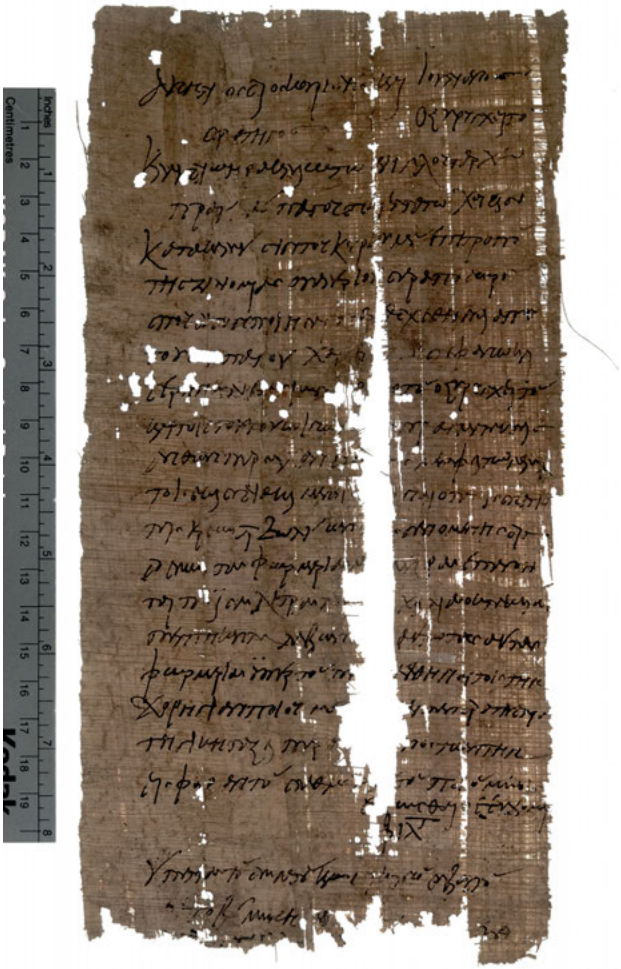

Fig. 36: P.Oxy. XXXIII 2668, letter from Aurelius Diskourides to Claudius Herakleios, AD 311 © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

In PSI XII 1246 (fig. 37), a letter to the strategos of the Hermopolite nome Apollonianos, dated to 219–222 AD, there is a change of hand in the farewell greeting (ll. 7–9) ἐρρῶσθαί σε| εὔχομαι θεοῖς πᾶ|σιν, ἄδελφε, ἀεί ("I pray for your health to all the gods, brother, always"), as indicated in the ed.pr. The farewell shows indeed significant differences from the first hand, and among the most characteristic of these are differences in the lateral expansion of letters, in the "height" of interlinear spaces, and in the tendency of the second hand to form more curvy strokes than the first.

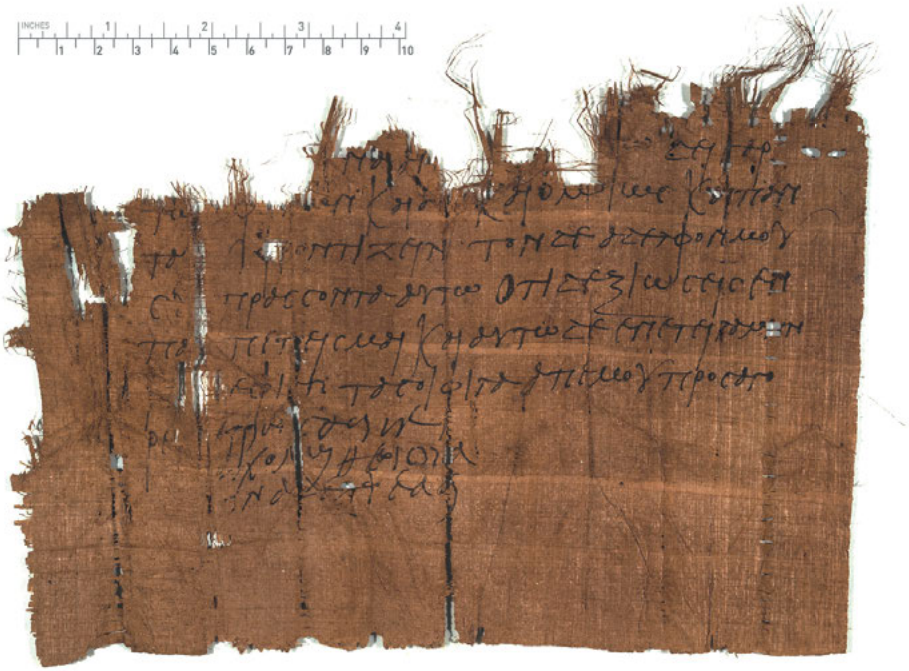

Fig. 37: PSI XII 1246, AD 219–222 © Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Firenze.

Personal handwriting characteristics tend to persist, even if a writer changes handwriting style. For example, as mentioned above,[566] in some letters, especially from the Roman period, the farewell greetings and the addresses on the back are enlarged and elaborated, revealing the care of the writer to ornament his or her final greeting. Despite this stylistic change, individual characteristics that help to identify the hand of a writer remain largely unaffected. Thus, P.Col. VIII 216, a letter from Severianos to Ammonianos, dated to ca. AD 100, closes with an elaborated farewell greeting, (11) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι ("I pray for your health") (fig. 38).[567] In the first edition of the letter and in its re-edition as P.Col. VIII 216, the farewell greeting is preceded by a handshift indicator, and the editors commented that the letter was dictated and the author wrote the farewell greeting below in his own "crude"[568] and "extremely painful hand."[569] However, close inspection of the handwriting suggests that there is no change of hand there. This is supported by the evenly maintained parallel base lines, the interlinear spaces and the axis of writing, which remain unchanged. Also, the for-

566 See above pp. 120–121.
567 Image: www.papyri.info/ddbdp/p.col;8;216
568 Keyes 1935, 147.
569 P.Col. VIII 216 introd.

mation of some letters and combinations of letters remain characteristically the same, especially the peculiar χ, which is considerably extended in one of its oblique strokes and curved at the bottom, e.g. (1) χαίρειν, (5) ἀπόχυμα, and (11) εὔχομαι, the way that αι is ligatured, e.g. at the end of (9, 10) καί and (11) εὔχομαι, and the cap of σ which is sometimes formed with a separate stroke, e.g. (8) Ὀνορᾶτος, (11) σὲ.

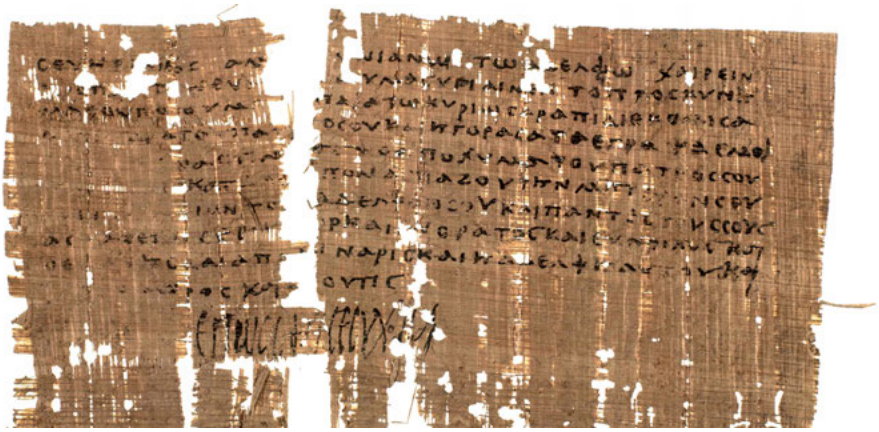

Fig. 38: P.Col. VIII 216, letter from Severianos to Ammonianos, lines 7–11, ca. AD 100 © Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

A similar case is O.Claud. I 139, a private letter on an ostracon found at the quarry site of Mons Claudianus, and dated to ca. AD 110 (fig. 39).[570] The farewell greeting ἔρρωσο is elongated for decoration, not due to a change of hand as indicated in the ed.pr. Characteristic personal details can be observed in the formation and joins of letters, such as the curved stroke that joins the crossbar of ε with the top of the ρ, in (15) ἔρρωσο, which is similar to the join of the crossbar of ε with the ι in (6) γράψεις and in (8) τειμήν; the formation of ρ in two separate movements, with an upright stroke and a semi circle, e.g. in (15) ἔρρωσο and (5) γὰρ ἀραβ-. The ink density is thinner in the farewell, but this was probably done purposefully by the writer as part of the decoration, by turning the calamos in his fingers.

Another ostracon from Mons Claudianus, in which the same decorative feature can be observed, is O.Claud. IV 866, from Ioulas to Olbanus, dated to the early or mid 2nd century AD (fig. 40). The letter closes with an elongated farewell, ἔρρωσ(ο), followed by the date Φαρμοῦθι ι¯. In the ed.pr., ἔρρωσ(ο) is preceded by a handshift, but most probably there is no change of hand there. The ε has two allophorms, one of which, the ε of (9) ἔρρωσο, is used also in (1) χαίρειν and in (4) εἰς; the peculiarly small circlette of ρ in (9) ἔρρωσο and Φαρμοῦθι is the same as in (5) ἠρότησα and

570 Photo: O.Claud. I, pl. XX.

Ἀθηνόδωρον; also the ω in ἔρρωσο has an unusually closed right curve, which is the same as in (1) τῶι and (2) θέλω. As for non-alphabetic features, the inclination of the script remains the same, the notional base of the farewell is exactly the same as in lines in the body above, and the tendency of the hand to avoid ligatures remains unaltered, too.

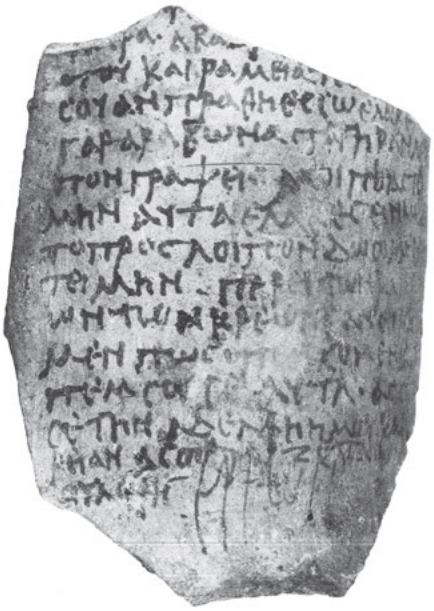

Fig. 39: O.Claud. I 139, letter from N.N. to N.N., lines 12–15, ca. AD 110 © A. Bülow-Jacobsen.

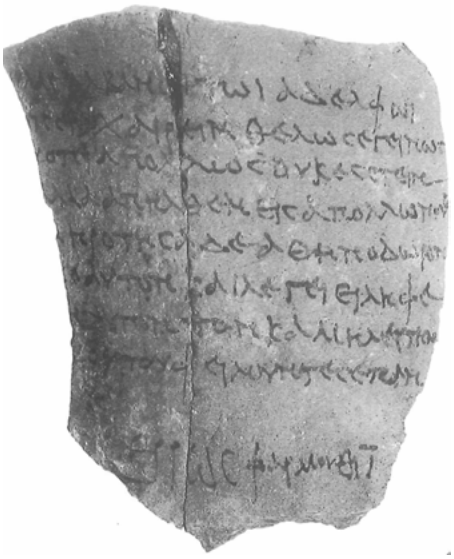

Fig. 40: O.Claud. IV 866, letter from Ioulas to Olbanus, early/mid 2nd c. AD? © A. Bülow-Jacobsen.

In some letters, only the initial ε of ἔρρωσο/ἐρρῶσθαι is enlarged, and as such it may vary in form from other epsilons in the body of the letter. However, this feature alone is not a secure indicator for the identification of a hand. For example, P.Oxy. LV 3807 is a private letter about business matters, dated to AD 26–28 (fig. 41).[571] In the ed.pr. the farewell (32) ἔρρωσο is preceded by an uncertain handshift, most probably because the ε of the farewell is enlarged. However, there is no change of hand there. The formation of the ε in three strokes is due to its larger size, but it resembles the formation of other ε, e.g. in (24) Χαιρέα, (30) εἶπον; also the tall ρ in ἔρρωσο is also used in e.g. (26) πρὸς and (28) γὰρ.

571 Image: www.papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy/55/3807.

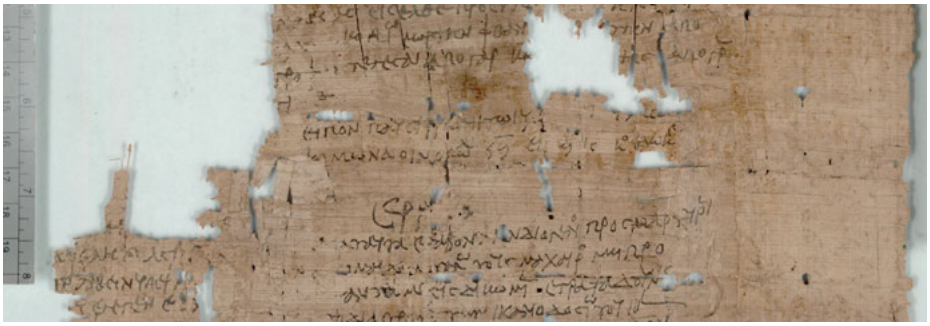

Fig. 41: P.Oxy. LV 3807, letter from N.N. to N.N., lines 27–36, AD 26–28 © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

The general rhythm and quality of writing (smooth, rapid, slow or unsteady), the frequency of the raises (i.e. liftings off) of the pen and the relative length of the spaces between letters are also important factors. For example, in P.Lond.inv. 2553 + P.Col. VIII 211, from Proklos to Asklepiades, dated to AD 6, these characteristics help to distinguish between the hand of the writer and the hand of the author.[572] The letter was written by dictation to a secretary and it closes with a farewell, below which there is a postscript containing a personal note. The farewell greeting and the date (l. 14) are written upright like the letter above; the script is not continuous, but the letters are frequently kept separate, and the ends of the descending strokes are occasionally ornamented with wedge-serifs. The postscript is continuously written, has a rightward inclination and the ends of the descending strokes do not have serifs. Furthermore, its lines are not straight or parallel to the letter above, but bend upwards and have a very narrow interlinear space. It seems fair to conclude that the farewell greeting and the dating clause are in the same hand as the body of the letter, while the postscript was written by a second hand.

Variation is natural in every hand and "is due principally to the lack of machine-like precision in the human body, but it is also accentuated by external factors, such as writing position, writing instrument and care of execution."[573] If the external conditions change, some variation is natural. In ancient letters this can be noticed in postscripts that were added at a later time. For example, P.Bad. IV 48 (127 BC) is a private letter containing a postscript with greetings (fig. 42).[574] In the ed.pr., a hand-shift is marked in l. 13, indicating that both the postscript and the farewell greeting (ll. 13–17) were written by a second hand. Analysis of the features discussed above, however, does not bear this out: the farewell and dating clause (l. 15) have parallel

572 New edition with photo in Sarri 2014a, 43.
573 Hilton 1982, 159.
574 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.bad;4;48.

alignment to the body of the letter and the ink is the same, which suggests that it was written together with the main body of the letter. The postscript may have been written at a later time, and due to the altered writing conditions it is slightly different: the ink is darker, lines are slightly squeezed, the letters are packed together and smaller too, but the formation, relative proportions and relative distances between the letters, as well as the frequency of joins and lateral expansion of the letters remain unchanged.[575]

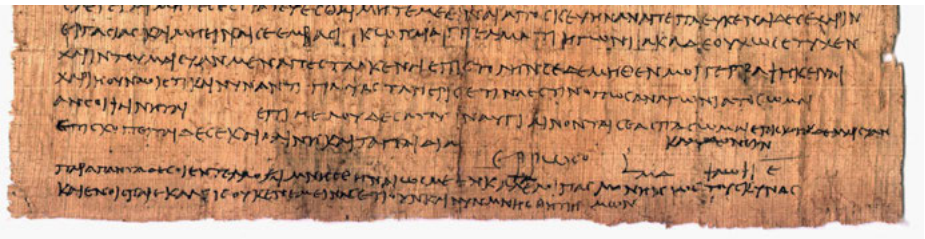

Fig. 42: P.Bad. IV 48, letter from Dionysia to Theon, lines 10–17, 127 BC © Institut für Papyrologie, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg.

There are more cases that may or may not have changes of hands in the farewell greetings and/or dating formulas, but it is not possible to analyse all of them here; a number of examples of letters with correctly or unnecessarily indicated handshifts in the editions are presented in Appendix III. The purpose of the above discussion was to explain the main principles of handwriting analysis that have been applied for the recognition of changes of hands in ancient letters. The following discussion will present the results of the examination of handshifts in letters focusing especially on the characteristics of true changes of hands in the farewell greetings.

4.2.3 Archaic and Classical Times

From the archaic and classical period there have survived around forty-five letters on lead, but in none of them is there a change of hand. The farewell greetings are not separate from the main body of the letter, and in most of the surviving letters there is no farewell formula at all. It is impossible to tell from the handwriting alone of each letter, if the sender wrote it himself or if a third person wrote it by dictation.[576] Since the persona of the verbs is either in the third or in the first person singular or changes

575 See also Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 108.

576 For example SEG XXVI 845 and SEG L 276 are written in clear and confident hands but other letters, such as SEG XLVIII 1024, SEG XLVIII 1029, SEG XLIX 325, are less evenly written.

from the third person to the first, it is not clear if someone else was employed to write a letter or if this was a conventional style in early letters to be expressed like oral messages transferred by a third person.[577]

The level of literacy and the extent of diffusion and penetration of writing in ancient societies are topics that are still debated in scholarly literature, but there appears to be consensus that in classical Greece, in the course of the fifth and fourth centuries, numbers of certainly literate people in Athens and other regions of the Greek world increased.[578] The growing number of publications of private letters on lead adds further to this evidence, by showing that writing was employed in the private sphere by individuals who were by no means among the ruling elite, since among the senders and recipients are slaves, women, and tradesmen.[579]

For the process of writing letters in classical times, its presentation on the dramatic stage is insightful. A number of dramatic characters wrote letters on stage, most of them in their own hands, without giving an excuse for this. In *Iphigenia Aulidensis* Agamemnon wrote a letter to Clytemnestra, and it is clear from the plot that Euripides wanted the content of the letter to be read aloud to the audience before being dispatched. Agamemnon wrote the letter with his own hand and relayed its content to the servant who delivered it; he did not dictate the letter to his servant.[580] Iphigeneia in *Iphigenia Taurica* is the only tragic character who appears to be illiterate, explaining that she had a letter to her brother written by a captive who took pity on her.[581] The illiteracy of Iphigeneia seems to have been preferred by Euripides in this case, because it helps the dramatic economy: by having the letter written before her meeting with Orestes, it is emphasised that Iphigeneia never forgot her family and her emotions for Orestes were lasting and remained the same for a long time.[582] Although tragic characters cannot be regarded as representatives of ordinary people, it seems that letter writing on stage was regarded as conventional and no explanation was owed to the Athenian audience. The presentation of letter writing in comedy seems to support this view: in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae* Mnesilochos writes a letter to Euripides, inscribing it on wood in his own hand, without any comment about the fact that he wrote it personally.[583] The same can be observed in historical works: Although secretaries and clerks were used in the assembly and in the courts

577 See above p. 41 with n. 175.
578 The most comprehensive study of ancient literacy remains Harris 1989, but it has been challenged by more recent scholarly works, such as Humphrey 1991, esp. 59–76, and Bagnall 2011. A convenient bibliography of ancient literacy studies has been compiled by Werner 2009, 333–382.
579 See also above p. 87.
580 Euripides, *Iphigenia Aulidensis* 34–42.
581 Euripides, *Iphigenia Taurica* 584–585.
582 Burnett 1971, 54–55; Rosenmeyer 2001, 73.
583 Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazusae* 768–775.

of Athens,[584] official letters were written by the authors themselves.[585] Even in Sparta, where the level of literacy may have been lower than in Athens, letters on the scytale were written by the ephors who sent the letters.[586]

4.2.4 Hellenistic Times

In the Hellenistic period we find the earliest examples of letters with the farewell greetings written separately from the body of the letter, often followed by a dating clause. The farewell greetings were sometimes written rapidly, which resulted in smaller and more cursive handwriting, and they were occasionally abbreviated. Twenty letters from this period have handshift indicators in the editions before farewell greetings (and dates), and I have been able to find and examine images of fifteen of them, but in none of these have I seen a true change of hand.[587] Examination of the collected letters suggests that in Hellenistic times it was not customary for the authors to write the farewell greetings (and dates) in their own hands below dictated letters. The application of handshift markers in the editions of these letters was probably influenced by conventions mentioned in Latin epistolary literature or an anachronistic application of a practice attested in letters of the Roman period. That the insertion of handshifts in the farewell greetings of letters of this period has been due to editorial whim is also suggested by the fact that in almost half of the cases, the handshifts were not indicated in the original editions, but were inserted in re-editions. It seems that certain editors were inclined to insert handshifts before farewell greetings, while others were not.[588]

There are more cases from the Hellenistic period of unnecessary handshift indicators before the farewell greetings (and dates). They have not been included here because they are not clearly letters, but stand somewhere between letters and official documents.[589] For example, UPZ I 106 (99 BC), a circular letter from Ptolemy Alexan-

584 E.g. in the parody of the Athenian assembly in Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazousae* 431–432, there is reference to a secretary who wrote down the proceedings.

585 E.g. the letter of Nikias in Thucydides 7.10–14.

586 References to the scytale e.g. in Thucydides 1.131.1; Xenophon, *Hellenica* 3.3.8. For the writing on the scytale personally by the ephors and the level of literacy in Sparta see Harris 1989, 113.

587 See Appendix III.

588 For example, Wilcken and Preisigke tended to insert handshifts before the farewell greeting, as appears from a number of re-editions of letters, which in their first editions were transcribed without handshifts (e.g. UPZ I 59; 62; 71; P.Freib. III 38; Chrest.Wilck. 300 in Appendix III pp. 347ff.). Other editors, such as Witkowski, Grenfell and Hunt, used handshifts sparingly and generally correctly (see e.g. the Sel.Pap. editions of letters such as SB I 5216 and UPZ I 62 in Appendix III pp. 347ff.).

589 As mentioned above, p. 147 handshifts can be found in all types of documents, but this research has been limited to documents that are described as letters in *HGV*.

der I has a handshift indicator before the farewell, which was unnecessarily inserted in the re-edition of the letter in UPZ I; in the ed.pr. of the letter there was, correctly, no handshift noted, since there is no change of hand there.[590] It has been argued that the absence of an author's subscription in UPZ I 106 could imply that this is not the original circular letter.[591] However, based on the description of the letter in the ed.pr. —that it was found with its original seal (depicting an eagle) and that it was written on a good quality papyrus with large dimensions and in an elegant chancery hand—it seems very likely that UPZ I 106 is the original official circular letter. It may have been written by a secretary of king Ptolemy Alexander I, but the king did not undersign it, because at that time signing letters was not customary—a seal was enough to prove that the letter was original. Similarly, P.Bingen 45, the famous ordinance granting tax exemptions to a Roman,[592] which was allegedly signed by Cleopatra herself, was not undersigned by her, since it has no change of hand in the farewell greeting. Even if the queen herself gave the orders for the composition of the document, she did not write the closing γινέσθω ("make it happen") in her own hand.[593]

To conclude, changes of hands in farewell greetings were not customary in the Hellenistic period. Official letters, such as those from Apollonios to Zenon (of the homonymous archive) or P.Bingen 45, were almost certainly written by secretaries. However, in the private sphere, it seems likely that ordinary people who were able to write on their own would write letters to their beloved ones personally, as may be the case with the letters sent to Kleon from his wife and sons.[594] If an author was not able

590 Ed.pr. Reuvens 1830, 42–43, with drawing of the seal in Tab. IIa no 14. Photo of the papyrus in Raven 1982, 64.

591 P.Heid. VIII 418, p. 252 n. 87, where the editor correctly commented that there is no change of hand in the farewell greeting of UPZ I 106, but wrongly proceeded to suggest that the letter should not be viewed as the original letter, but as a copy of the original due to this absence of change of hand in the farewell greeting.

592 The papyrus is damaged and the name of the Roman in P.Bingen 45 cannot be certainly deciphered. Van Minnen 2000, 29–34 reads Publius Canidius, the general of Marcus Antonius, while Zimmerman 2002, 133–139 corrects this to Quintus Cascellius. Zimmerman also argues that the exemptions were granted not by Cleopatra but by her son Caesarion.

593 Van Minnen 2000, 29–34 argues that the closing γινέσθω was penned by Cleopatra, but see Bagnall/Derow 2004, no 63 who correctly comment that there is no change of hand there. The density of the ink in the subscription is exactly the same as in the document above, which suggests that the pressure on the pen did not change. Also, the alignment is the same as in body, maintaining the tendency for a slight upward direction of the hand as it moves along the baseline. Although the γινέσθω is more rapidly written, which has resulted in it being smaller than the letterforms in the letter above, the personal characteristics of the handwriting remain the same. See for example the height of ε, which in this hand respects bilinearity; the position of the joins between letters (e.g. γε, εσ, σθ); the small serif at the foot of ι.

594 For the letters sent to Kleon from his sons and wife, P.Petr. III 42 H 8 see above p. 170 (fig. 23 and fig. 24).

to write, a relative or friend could give a helping hand, as may be the case with the letter of Isias.[595]

4.2.5 Roman Times

In editions of letters from the Roman period there are many cases of incorrectly applied handshifts before the farewell greetings. These represent not true changes of hands but changes of handwriting style by the same hand. A systematic examination of such cases leads to the conclusion that there is an excessive use of handshift indicators before the farewell greetings in editions, without distinction between changes of hands and changes in style. Most of the incorrectly indicated handshifts in editions belong to either of two categories: i) farewell greetings that were rapidly and cursively written, i.e. more rapidly and cursively than the main body of the letter. This was due to the fact that farewell greetings functioned as typical formulaic closures of letters and legibility was not aimed at in this position, so the speed of the pen was often higher; ii) farewells that are written in larger or more elaborate characters than those found in the main bodies of the letters. These farewell greetings are found in a small number of letters. Their use was deliberately ornamental, being an expression of care for the overall appearance of the letter and thus for the addressee.[596] A solution for the confusion between changes of hands and changes in style would be to indicate the first with the sign "H" for hand (e.g. H1, H2 etc.) and the latter with the sign "S" for style (e.g. S1, S2 etc.).[597]

The earliest letters with true changes of hands in the farewell greetings date to the early first century AD. In the first two centuries their number is relatively low, but increases over time. Changes of hands in the farewell greetings are proportionally more common in official letters than in private letters.[598]

595 For the letter of Isias, UPZ I 59, see Appendix III p. 349.

596 See p. 121.

597 I thank J.-L. Fournet for this solution, proposed to me in a private discussion at the International Congress of Papyrology in Warsaw 2013.

598 Checking through the combined database of letters of *DDbDP* and *HGV* I have found around 280 letters dating to the imperial period that contain handshift indicators before the farewell greetings in the editions. Of these I have collected and examined the images of approximately 190. In many of these letters it appears that the handshifts have been unnecessarily indicated in the editions and there is no true change of hand, but there are around 80 letters, 25 official and 55 private, in which handshifts before the farewell greetings appear to have been correctly indicated. This suggests that changes of hands in the farewell greetings were more commonly applied in official letters than in private ones, since approximately 600 official letters and 3000 private letters have survived from this period. These numbers do not include letters found at Vindolanda, among which there are a relatively large number of letters with true changes of hands in the farewell greetings (for the Vindolanda letters see below p. 178 with n. 625).

4.2.6 Official Letters

The earliest surviving official letter in which a change of hand might be detected is probably P.Rain. Cent. 57, dated to AD 49 (fig. 43).[599] Only the lower part of this letter survives, in which the author does not write a farewell greeting, but adds the dating clause, (8–9) (ἔτους) θ Τιβερί[ο]υ Κλα̣[υ]δ̣ίου| Κα̣ί̣σαρος Σεβαστοῦ Γερμα̣νικοῦ| Αὐτοκράτορος, Φαμενὼθ η Σεβαστῇ ["(year) 9 of Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus Imperator, Phamenoth 8, *dies* Augusta"]. The dating clause is not placed on a new line at the bottom of the sheet, as was the customary position for dating formulas in official letters, but is squeezed exactly at the end of the body of the letter, as was the typical position of authors' farewell greetings in dictated letters. The unusual content of this subscription may represent an early stage in the development of authors' subscriptions in official letters, and it seems to accord with Suetonius' report, as mentioned above, that Augustus would attach to all of his letters the exact day and time. The author of P.Rain. Cent. 57 dated the letter only by year, month and day, but Suetonius emphasised Augustus' preciseness by mentioning that he included even the hour of the day.[600]

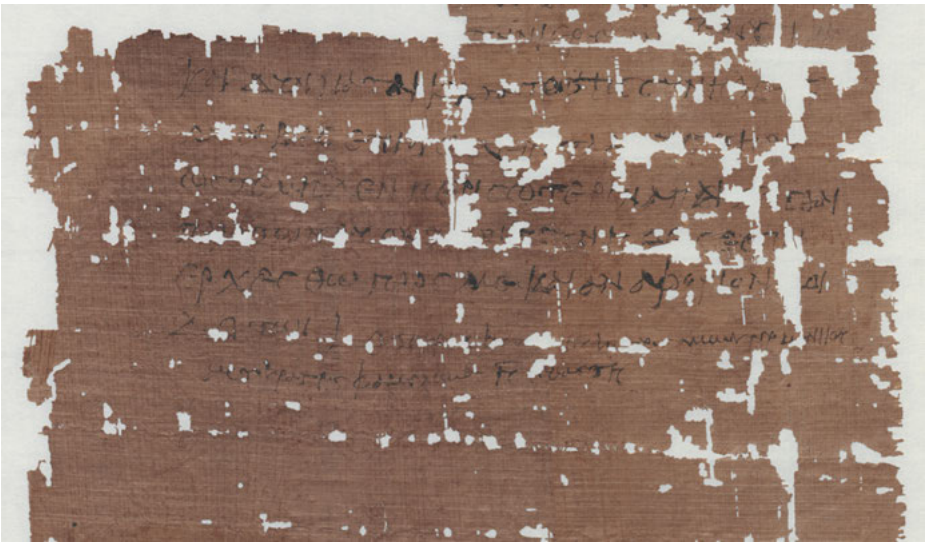

Fig. 43: P.Rain. Cent. 57, letter from N.N. to N.N., lines 3–10, AD 49 © Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien.

599 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.rain.cent;;57.
600 Suetonius, *Augustus* 50, see above p. 143 n. 516.

In letters of the first and early second century, the author who wrote the farewell greeting added the dating clause, too, but from the second century AD and onwards the dating clause was written by the secretary, while the author wrote only the farewell greeting. It seems that this was a gradual change that took effect for the convenience of the author, who thus wrote personally only a farewell to verify the whole letter. For example, in P.Oxf. 3 (fig. 44), dated to AD 142, a letter from Aelius Felix, an official in the Arsinoite nome, to a komogrammateus, the body of the letter and the dating formula are written by the first hand, while the second hand wrote only the farewell greeting, (13–14) ἐρρῶσθαι| ὑμᾶς εὔχομαι ("I pray for your health").[601] The same applies also to private letters; see, for instance, SB V 7743, mentioned above, from Claudia Dionysia to Teiron, dated to the first/second century AD, which has the dating formula written by the author.[602]

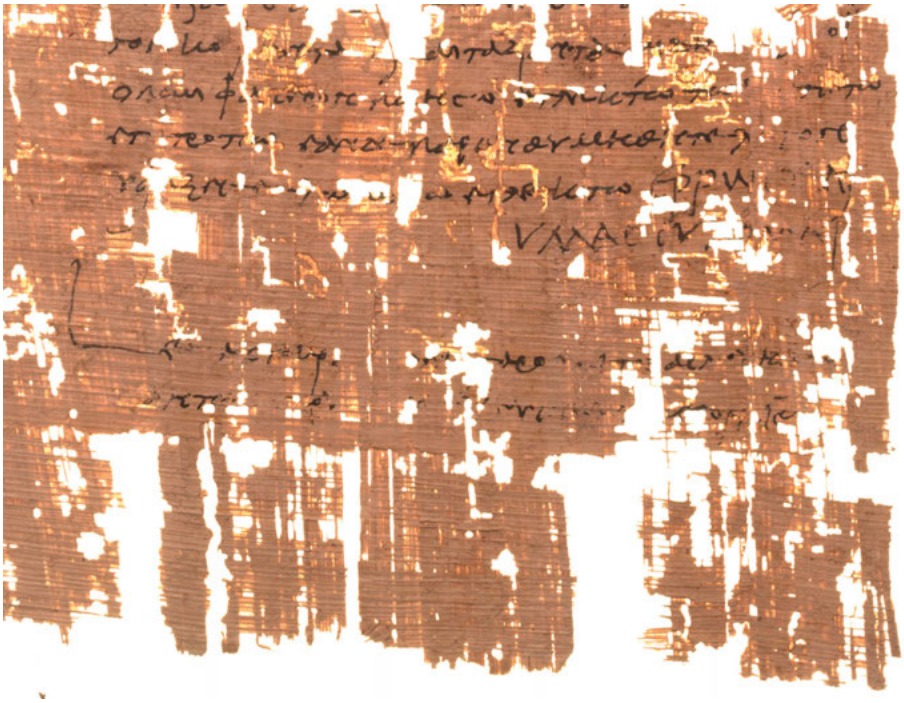

Fig. 44: P.Oxf. 3, letter from Aelius Felix to N.N., lines 10–16, AD 142 © Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

601 Transl. Wegener, P.Oxf. 3.
602 See above p. 155 fig. 32.

The correct identification of the hands of the dating formulas is important, because it has consequences for our understanding of the process of writing official letters and the functioning of the state bureaucracy in the Roman Empire. In editions of letters there is often inconsistency in the indication of the hand in this position. In some editions cursively written dating formulas are not preceded by handshift-indicators, while in others there are handshifts, indicating a third hand—assuming that the first hand wrote the body of the letter, a second hand wrote the farewell greeting, and a third hand wrote the dating formula. For example, in P.Oxy. XLIV 3182,[603] a letter from an unknown sender to a gymnasiarch, dated AD 257, and in P.Oxy. L 3569,[604] from the strategos Aurelius Horion to the epistrategos Septimius (?) Diodoros, dated AD 282, the editors have indicated that the dating formulas were written by the same secretaries who wrote the bodies of the letters, while in SB I 4639 (fig. 45), from the prefect Subatianus Aquila to the strategos Theon, dated AD 209, and in P.Oxy. XLII 3030[605] from Ammonios the royal scribe of the Herakleopolite nome to the royal scribe of the Arsinote nome, dated AD 207, the editors have indicated that the dating formulas were in different hands from the bodies of the letters. In P.Oxy. XXXI 2560,[606] a letter from the strategos of the Lykopolite nome to Aurelius Chairemon the strategos of the Hermopolite nome, dated AD 258, in P.Oxy. XXXIII 2668,[607] from the strategos Aurelius Dioskourides to Claudius Herakleios, dated AD 311, and in P.Oxy. LVIII 3930,[608] from the strategos Aurelius Apollonios to the heirs of the exegetes Herakleides Sarapion, dated AD 290, the editors have expressed uncertainty about the hand of the dating formula, whether it was the first or a third hand in each case. In fact, in all these letters it seems that the dating formulas were written by the secretaries who wrote the bodies of the letters, but in a more rapid style.

A letter of special interest is SB I 4639, which is the only originally surviving prefectorial letter from the pre-Diocletian period.[609] Different scholars have expressed different opinions about the number of hands detectable in this letter, which has led to varied opinions about the steps that were followed for the writing of letters in the offices of high Roman officials, such as the prefect of Egypt. Preisigke identified four different hands in the letter, and described the following process for the composition of high official letters: a secretary wrote the body of the letter (1–6), a second secretary wrote the dating formula (9–10), then a hierarchically higher secretary (Mauricianus Menios) read the letter and added the day (8 Μαυρικιανὸς Μήνιος ἀνέγνων, 11 Τῦβι νεομηνίᾳ ("I Mauricianus Menios read this", "Tubi first day of the month"), and in

603 See below p.362 fig. 68.
604 See below p. 363 fig. 69.
605 Image: http//papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;42;3030.
606 See above p. 157 fig. 34.
607 See above p. 160 fig. 36.
608 See below p. 364 fig. 70.
609 Haensch 2000, 261.

the end the prefect wrote personally the farewell greeting (6–7 ἐρρῶ|σθαί σε βούλομαι "I wish you to be healthy").[610] However, Mourgues suggested that the dating formula was written by Mauricianus Menios, who as *a libellis* in the prefect's office checked that the content of the letter was identical to the copy kept in the prefect's archive, and wrote also the docket (8 "I Mauricianus Menios read this", 11 "Tubi first day of the month"). So, according to Mourgues there are only three hands in the letter, that of the secretary who wrote the body of the letter, that of Mauricianus Menios who wrote the dating formula and the verification that he checked the letter, and, finally, that of the prefect who wrote the farewell greeting as a signature.[611]

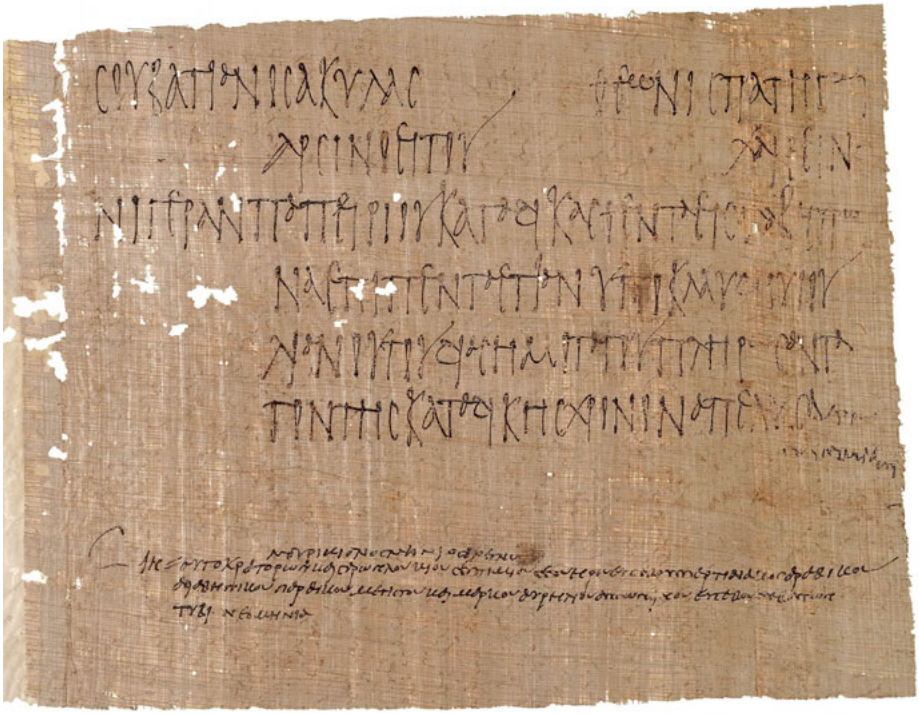

Fig. 45: SB I 4639, letter from the prefect Subatianus Aquila to Theon strategos, lines 1–11, AD 209 © Ägyptisches Museum P. 13035, Berlin.

610 "Die Zeitfolge der Hände in der uns vorliegenden Reinschrift ist demnach die folgende: zuerst Hand des Kanzlisten [main body of the letter, ll. 1–6], sodann Hand des Bürobeamten [dating, ll. 9–10], hierauf Hand des Kanzleivorstehers Menius [l. 8 Μαυρικιανὸς Μήνιος ἀνέγνων and Τῦβι νεομηνίᾳ], schließlich Hand des Statthalters [ll.6–7 ἐρρῶ|σθαί σε βούλομαι]." (Preisigke 1917, 23–24).

611 "C'est par contre très loin au bas de l'acte que se trouve la marque de recognition, Μαυρικιανος Μήνιος ἀνέγνων, d'une troisième main qui semble avoir aussi mis les formules de datation." (Mourgues 1995, 285). Haensch 2000, 260, who otherwise followed Mourgues, did not express any opinion about the handwriting of the dating formula.

Both Presigke and Mourgues were partly right. More specifically, as Mourgues suggested, three hands can be identified in this letter, but as Presigke rightly observed the hand of the dating formula (9–10) is different from the hand of Mauricianus Menios (8, 11). From careful comparison of the hands it seems that the first hand, i.e. the secretary who wrote the body of the letter (1–6), wrote also the dating formula (9–10), in a more cursive style.[612] The change in the style of handwriting was customary and reasonable in this position. Unlike the body of the letter, which was clearly and slowly written, because it contained the main message of the letter and was intended to be easily and precisely read, the dating formula was a bureaucratic and formulaic element that the reader could easily understand, even if he read only a few words of it, so it was written rapidly and cursively. From an examination of dating formulas in official letters, it appears that these were written either by the author who undersigned the letter or by the secretary who wrote the body of the letter. From about the second century onwards, the secretaries who wrote the body of the letters wrote the dating formulas too. The letter was handed to the prefect to insert a farewell greeting as a signature. In SB I 4639 a certain Mauricianus Menios has added "ἀνέγνων" ("I read") with his name and the day, which shows personal responsibility. It is not clear if he was an upper official in the prefect's office (perhaps the "a libellis") who read and collated the letter against the copy that was kept in the prefect's archive, to make sure that both copies were exactly the same[[insert here footnote: Mourgues 1995, 285]] or if he was a secretary in the recipient's office who recorded the reception of the letter in an official way. This process of writing high official letters was probably followed until the end of the end of the 3rd c. AD.[613]

612 The dating formula has a rightward inclination because it is rapidly written. Details in the handwriting that suggest that the first hand wrote both the body of the letter and the dating formula are the leftward looped ends at the tops of uprights strokes (e.g. ι and κ) or at the foot (e.g. μ), κ breaching the top notional line (1 Ἀκύλας, 9 αὐτοκρατόρων), the join of τι, the top end of υ. Also, the dating formula begins and ends exactly parallel to the body of the letter. Details that suggest that the hand of Mauricianus Menios is different from the hand that wrote the dating formula is the lateral expansion (Menios' hand's expansion is wider than that of the dating formula) and Menios' avoidance of ligatures.

613 In late antique times this method of composition is applied in most letters, but there are some cases of high official letters in which the dating formula was written by a third hand: P.Oxy. L 3577 was sent from the praeses of Augustamnica to Aetios and Dioskoros, leading citizens of Oxyrhynchos, and is dated AD 342. As rightly shown in the edition, the first hand wrote the body of the letter (1–8), the author wrote the farewell greeting (8 ἔρρωσθε), and a different hand wrote the date (9). Similarly, in P.Oxy. XLIII 3129, sent from the prefect Flavius Philagrius to the strategos Synesios and dated AD 335, the first hand wrote the body of the letter (1–9), the author wrote the farewell greeting (9 ἔρρωσο), and a different hand wrote the date (10–11). In both letters the bodies of the letters and the farewell greetings are in Greek, while the dating formulas that are written by a different hand are in Latin. Also, in both letters there are dockets in Latin in the left margins, reporting the day of delivery. As the editor of both letters comments (Rea, P.Oxy. L 3577, introd.), it is difficult to be certain if the dating formula in the bottom of the letters and the dockets in the side margins were written by the same

The content of farewell greetings depended on the relationship between the correspondents. Generally, in official letters, authors' personally written farewells are briefer than in private letters. In private letters, if an author added a personal farewell at the end of a dictated letter, the greeting would usually be longer and more eloquent than a simple ἔρρωσο or ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι. Too short a farewell greeting would be regarded as impolite, as suggested by the *Historia Augusta*, where Commodus was criticised and characterised as lazy, because he subscribed his letters with a mere *vale*.[614] The *Historia Augusta* probably referred to the private correspondence of Commodus, since in official correspondence, especially in letters from very high officials to their subordinates, farewell greetings are often very brief, expressed with simple phrases such as ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι, ἐρρῶσθαί σε βούλομαι or ἔρρωσο. Characteristic examples are the letters from very high officials found in Egypt, in which the farewell greeting is ἐρρῶσθαί σε βούλομαι/θέλω ("I wish/want you to be healthy") or similar verbs, as in SB I 4639 (AD 209), from the prefect Subatianus Aquila to the strategos Theon, (6–7) ἐρρῶσθαί σε βούλομαι, P.Brem. 6 (AD 117–119?), from the epistrategos Flavius Philoxenos to the strategos Apollonios, which has the farewell greeting (6) ἐρρῶσθαί σε βούλομαι,[615] and P.Oxy. XLIII 3129 (AD 335), from the prefect Flavius Philagrios to the strategos Synesios, which has the farewell (9) ἔρρωσο.[616]

In letters between officials of nearly equal rank, such as strategi and royal scribes, or people of relatively equal social status to them, such as gymnasiarchs, who may have had friendly relationships with officials, the farewell greetings usually were more eloquent than a bare ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι, adorned with adjectives and attributives like those attested in the opening addresses of the letters (e.g. φίλτατος, τιμιώτατος, ἀδελφός etc.) or well-wishes for the addressee's household. Examples include:[617] PSI XII 1246, a fragmentary letter to Apollonianos strategos (AD 219–222),

hand, but it seems possible. In P.Oxy. L 3577 the dating formula contains only the consular year, while the docket contains the date. In 3129 the docket contains the day, and the dating formula contains the year. Since P.Oxy. XLIII 3129 is partly broken, it remains uncertain whether the day was included in the dating formula, but if the case was similar to 3577, the day should have been written only in the left margin.

614 *Historia Augusta*, *Commodus* 180–192. See also the discussion above p. 145.

615 See below p. 356 fig. 60.

616 Image: http//papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;43;3129.

617 More examples are: P.Oxy. XXXI 2559 (2nd c. AD), an official letter from a certain Arrius Eudaimon to Dionysios strategos, the linguistic style of which is elegant and friendly, with sophisticated constructions. The friendly relationship between the correspondents are suggested by the appellation "brother" in the opening address, which is repeated in the farewell greeting in the author's hand, (16–17) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι, ἀδελφὲ| τιμιώτατε ("I pray for your health, most honoured brother"); P.Oxy. XLII 3030 (AD 207), from Ammonios royal scribe of the Herakleopolite nome to the royal scribe of the Arsinoite nome, in which Ammonios wrote (16–17) ἐρρῶ|σθαί [σε ε]ὔχ[ο]μαι, φ̣ίλτ(ατε) ("I pray for your good health my dearest friend"); P.Oxy. XXXI 2560 (AD 258), from the strategos of the Lykopolite nome to Aurelius Chairemon strategos of the Hermopolite nome, in which the strategos wrote (21–22)

from a sender with an upper socio-cultural background, which closes with the author's farewell greeting (7–9) ἐρρῶσθαί σε| εὔχομαι θεοῖς πᾶ|σιν, ἄδελφε, ἀεί ("I pray for your health to all the gods, brother, always").[618] P.Alex. Giss. 38 (AD 113–120), an official letter from an unknown sender to the strategos Apollonios, in which the author writes (20–22) ἐρρῷ̣σ̣θ̣[αί] σε εὔ̣[χ]ο̣μαι, τιμιώτατε Ἀπολλών<ι>ε| μετὰ τῶν ἀβ[ασκά]ντων ("I wish good health to you, most honourable Apollonios, with (those) who may not reach the evil eye").[619]

4.2.7 Private Letters

Similarly to official letters, authors' subscriptions in private letters began in the early first century AD, and their number increased over the next centuries. Generally, the number of private letters with authors' subscriptions is proportionally lower than official letters.[620] The earliest known private letter with a subscription by its author is probably P.Lond.inv. 2553 + P.Col. VIII 21, from Proklos to Asklepiades, dated to AD 6, a letter of recommendation from a man of high social status.[621] The author did not write a farewell greeting and date, but only a postscript with a personal message for the addressee, (15–16) ἐρωτ̣ῶ̣ι [σ]ε̣ [δ]ι̣οικητ̣ὰ ε|ἰ̣ς τ̣ὴν ἐμὴν [κα]ταλ̣ο̣γὴν ποιῆσαι| τὸ π̣[ᾶ]ν̣ τῶι Εἰσιδώρῳ·| μ̣έλει γάρ μ̣οι π̣ερὶ αὐτ̣οῦ ("I ask you, dioiketes, on my account to do everything for Isidoros, for I am concerned about him"). This way of "undersigning" a letter is unusual, probably representing an early stage of authors' subscriptions. In other private letters, as in official letters, authors' subscriptions were placed exactly at the end of the bodies of the letters, protecting the letters from unauthorised additions.

Among the earliest letters containing authors' subscriptions there is a relatively large number of private letters from authors coming from Rome or a Latin-speaking milieu. This can be deduced either from the names of the authors, or from the archaeological context in which the letters have been found. One of the earliest examples is O.Claud. IV 788, written on an ostracon, found at the military camp of Mons Claudianus and dated to AD 98–117 (fig. 46). It is a letter from the decurio Marcus to Sabinus, requesting the delivery of some tools. The first hand, perhaps a secretary, wrote the letter in Greek (1–3), and the decurio Marcus added a further request and a farewell greeting in Latin, (4–7) *Ç̣ụbiṇo* (or *Sabino*) *salut(em)*| *cados mit<t>e* (or *mit<t>e <et>*)|

ἐρρῶσθ[αί σε] εὔχομαι| φίλτατε ("I pray for your good health my dearest friend").

618 The letter has an elegant linguistic style, pointing to a sender with an upper educational and socio-cultural background; see e.g. rare word (4) δεξιώσεις (give the right hand, greet), and the *parechesis* (6) φ̣ί[λτατ]ε, φιλητά σοι φίλα. See also above p. 161 with fig. 37.

619 Image: http//papyri.info/ddbdp/p.alex.giss;;38.

620 See above p. 169 with n. 599.

621 New edition with photo in Sarri 2014; see also Hanson 1997, 421–423.

ṗaḷẹaṣ u| tenues. vale. ("To Cubinus (?) greetings. Send pots (for the water wheel) (and) 5 thin old water-skins (?). Farewell."). Similarly to other authors' subscriptions, Marcus started writing exactly where the first hand had ended and continued below in narrower lines, forming a "box" at the end of the letter.

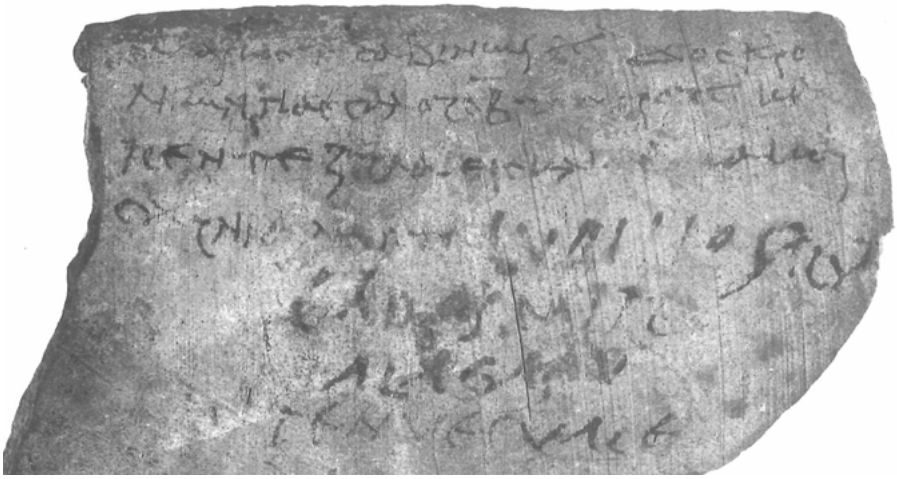

Fig. 46: O.Claud. IV 788, letter from Marcus (decurio) to Sabinus, AD 98–117 © A. Bülow-Jacobsen.

Another example is SB V 7743[622] dated to the 1st/2nd century AD, sent from Claudia Dionysia to Teiron. The letter is about the dispatch of some goods, and its friendly tone suggests close familiar relationships between the correspondents. The handwriting and layout of the body of the letter look professional; Dionysia wrote the farewell greeting, (26–28) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔ|χομαι, κύριέ μου| ἄδελφε, πανοικεί ("I wish good health to you, my brother, and all your household", and the date, (29) Μεχεὶρ ι. Another case is SB XVIII 14057,[623] dated to AD 150–200, a letter of recommendation between correspondents of high social status with Roman citizenship. The sender of the letter, Claudius Macareus, was superintendant (ἐπίτροπος) of the consularis Calpurnius Reginnianus, and the addressee was Reginianus, agent (πραγματευτής) of the same consularis. The purpose of the letter was to support Theon, a land cultivator, asking to let him continue having a contract on the basis of the agreed terms. The letter closes with a farewell greeting written by Calpurnius Reginnianus (9–11) ἐρρῶσθαί σε| εὔχομε (εὔχομαι) τι|μωιταται (l. τιμιώτατε) ("I pray for your health, most honourable").

622 See above p. 155 fig. 32.
623 See above p. 156 fig. 33.

Besides the evidence from Graeco-Roman Egypt, a large number of letters containing authors' subscriptions have been found at the Roman military camp of Vindolanda, dated to the late first and early second century AD. In the three published volumes of tablets excavated at Vindolanda (T.Vindol. I–III) there are some forty letters containing authors' subscriptions, both official and private,[624] which is a very high number compared to the proportion of letters with authors' subscriptions found among the letters from Egypt.[625] This evidence seems to support the view formed from literary texts,[626] that authors' subscriptions in dictated letters was a custom that was introduced among the aristocracy of Rome and from there it spread to the rest of the Empire. It must have been used first by people of high social status, who had secretaries at state offices or could afford secretaries at home, and from there it spread to people of lower social strata.

As mentioned above, authors' subscriptions are proportionally more common in official letters than in private ones. Private letters with farewell greetings by second hands are mostly related to business matters of the correspondents or are letters of recommendation or letters to social acquaintances combining polite wishes and greetings with formal requests. This is related to the fact that authors would preferably write letters to their beloved ones personally, not by dictation to a third person. However, even in cases when private letters to close friends or family members were penned by a third person, the authors would very rarely add personal farewells, which suggests that this element functioned mostly as a mark of authentication and formality rather than of personal care and intimacy for the addressee. Few are the cases of letters that may have been addressed to family members or close friends and have the closing greetings by second hands. Two potential examples are P.Oxy. LXXIII 4959,[627] dated to the second century AD, and PSI XII 1247,[628] dated to ca. AD 235–238, which could have been addressed to family members, although this is not clear since the familial appellations could have been used metaphorically. As discused below, in these letters the authors' greetings are eloquent and elaborate, since short greetings would be too impolite for a friend or family member.

624 E.g. T.Vindol. II 248 from Aelius Brocchus, probably an equestrian officer, and Niger; T.Vindol. II 252 from Caecilius September, probably an equestrian officer; T.Vindol. II 255 from Clodius Super, probably a centurion; P.Vindol. II 258 from an unknown sender to the prefect of the Ninth Cohort of Batavians, Flavius Cerialis; T.Vindol. II 291 from Claudia Severa, mentioned above p. 38 fig. 4. I thank A. Bowman and C. Crowther for providing me with high resolution images, in which I have checked and verified the handshifts indicated in the editions of the letters—I agree almost everywhere with the editors regarding the insertion of handshifts before the farewell greetings. For images of the letters see http://vindolanda.csad.ox.ac.uk.

625 See above p. 169 with n. 599.

626 See above p. 143.

627 See below p. 358 fig. 63.

628 See below p. 360 fig. 65.

The archive of Apollonios strategos, dated to the first quarter of the 2nd c. AD, is a rich source of letters with farewell greetings by second hands. However, the letters that were sent to the strategos from his mother or from his wife do not carry any subscriptions, although it is certain that at least some of these letters were written by dictation to third persons.[629] Letters with authors' subscriptions were mostly from friends, colleagues or social acquaintances of the strategos or are related to his official or business affairs; there are also letters of recommendation. Examples include P.Brem. 5, a letter of recommendation from Vaberius Mundus (fig. 47), with a personally written farewell greeting by the author (14–16) [ἐ]ρρῶσθαί σε εὔ|χομαι, ἄδελφε τ{ε}ιμι|[ώτ]ατε ("I pray for your health most honourable brother");[630] P.Brem. 21, a polite letter from Germanos, about the delivery of a certain amount of money;[631] P.Giss. Apoll. 25, from a certain Apollonios—not the strategos—about business matters.

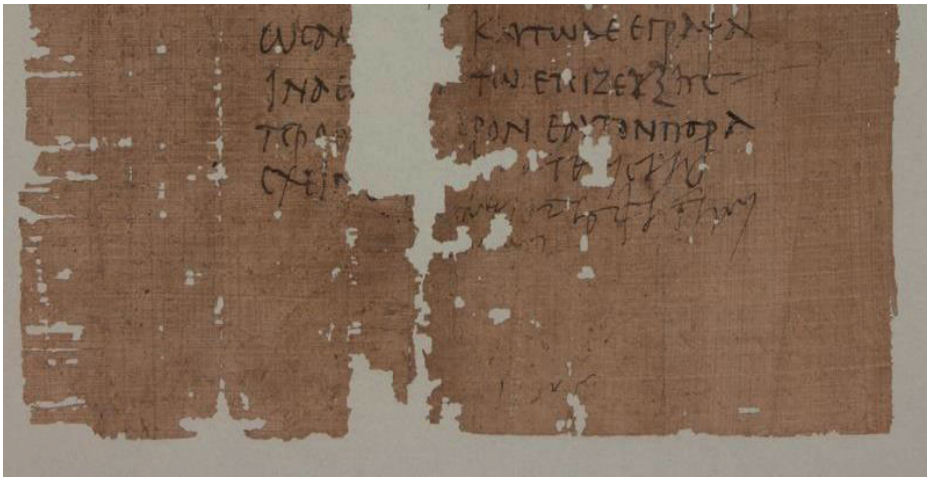

Fig. 47: P.Brem. 5, letter from Vaberius Mundus to Apollonios strategos, lines 11–17, AD 117–119? © Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Bremen.

629 In the editions of some of the letters of Aline and Eudaimonis have handshift indicators before the farewell greetings, however as discussed above the handwritings suggest that there are no changes of hands there. See the discussion above p. 139 with notes 506 and 507.

630 At the bottom of the sheet there are some faded ink traces that are difficult to read. The editor read them as ἔρρωσο, which would point to a "double farewell greeting" (see below p. 184), however the thinness of the ink suggests that these traces were written in the author's hand, which would suggest that the traces belong to the date (SB V 7743 is a comparable case of a dictated letter that has both the farewell and the date written by the author). Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.brem;;5.

631 See above p. 117 fig. 21.

Most private letters with authors' subscriptions have an elegant layout and handwriting, suggesting that they were written by professional writers, perhaps secretaries of the authors. As it appears from relevant information mentioned in the letters, the authors in most cases were either Romans, as suggested by their names (at least until the end of the second century), or Graeco-Egyptian people of high social status, such as strategi or gymnasiarchs; these must have been the people who could afford secretaries. Although the letters are well-written, the authors' personal subscriptions in the letters are in rapid, unornamented, informal hands, presumably because they functioned as elements of authorisation, like modern signatures, so the authors would wish to use their ordinary handwritings there.

Private letters with authors' subscriptions are mostly those from colleagues, social acquaintances or friends, while those from close family members, even when they were written by dictation, do not contain authors' subscriptions. The insertion of the authors' personal farewell greetings was an element expressing formality and a polite personal gesture to the addressee. Thus, authors' personally written farewell greetings tend to be eloquent, often extending to more than one line, forming a small block at the end of the body of the letter, since too short a farewell would be regarded as impolite. The content of an author's farewell depended on the relationship between the correspondents. Most of the authors' subscriptions are friendly and polite, often with wishes for the whole household. Examples include SB V 7743 (1st/2nd c. AD), (26–28) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔ|χομαι, κύριέ μου| ἄδελφε, πανοικεί ("I pray for your heath, my lord, brother, with all your household");[632] SB IV 7335 (AD 117–138), (8–9) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι| διὰ παντὸς σὺν τοῖς τέκνοις ("I pray for your health through all things along with your children");[633] SB XXII 15757 (3rd c. AD), (17–19) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι| πανοικησίαι θ̣ε̣οῖς| πᾶσιν εὔχομαι ("I pray to all gods for your good health for your whole household");[634] P.Iand. VI 116 (3rd c. AD), (12–14) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομ̣(αι) εὐδοξοῦντα κ[αὶ] ὁλοκληρ[οῦ]ντα ("I wish you good health, to be honoured and to have good health in your whole body").[635] PSI XII 1247 and P.Oxy. LXXIII 4959 have unusually long farewell greetings, which is indicative of the close relationships between the correspondents.[636]

In the private sphere, short farewell greetings were written in letters from superiors to their subordinates. A characteristic example are orders written in epistolary style.[637] Orders contain business instructions from superiors to their subordinates,

632 See above p. 155 fig. 32

633 See below p. 185 fig. 51.

634 See below p. 361 fig. 67.

635 See below p. 361 fig. 66.

636 See below pp. 358–360 fig. 63 and fig. 65.

637 Although the classification of epistolary orders as letters is dubious (see the relevant discussion above p. 15 with n. 69) many of them are characterised as "Brief" in *HGV* and have been automatically included in the search for handshifts in letters, and therefore will be briefly discussed here.

such as land-owners to their estate managers. Many of these orders open with the name of the sender, π(αρὰ) τοῦ δεῖνος, omitting the name of the addressee, while others open like letters and include the name of the addressee. Many of them were written by secretaries and the authors undersigned with a farewell greeting (ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι) and/or the σεση(μείωμαι) ("I have signed"). Not all orders written by secretaries carry the signatures of their authors. This presumably depended on the idiosyncrasy of the sender and on the circumstances. Among the orders of the Heroninos archive, it is mostly those from Alypios that carry their author's signature. Alypios was manager of the Appianus estate, and most of his orders are addressed to his subordinate Heroninos, passing instructions about works related to the estate. From the available images in P.Flor. II, it is clear that the main body and the dating of orders used to be written by dictation, and Alypios subscribed with a farewell ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι and/or the signature σεση(μείωμαι). As in other types of letters, author's personally written signatures are placed exactly at the end of the body of the order that the secretary wrote. There are numerous orders undersigned by the author with a signature σεση(μείωμαι).[638] In some of them, called ἀπολυσίδια ("release chits"),[639] the addressee is instructed to issue some amount of produce. In these cases, for enhanced security, besides the farewell and signature, the author repeated in his own hand the amount of produce that he wanted issued, although it is mentioned in the main body of the order that had been written by the secretary.[640]

638 E.g. in P.Flor. II 132 (AD 257), as indicated in the edition, the secretary wrote the body of the letter, the name of the addressee and the date at the bottom of the sheet; the author wrote the farewell greeting and the signature in the form of an abbreviated σε(σημείωμαι). Other examples of handshifts in orders addressed from Alypios to Heroninos with images in P.Flor. II are P.Flor. II 118.7–8 (AD 260), P.Flor. II 120.8–9 (AD 251–261), P.Flor. II 129.8–9 (AD 259), P.Flor. II 132.13–14 (AD 257), P.Flor. II 140.10–12 (AD 264), P.Flor. II 142.11–12 (AD 264), P. Flor. II 166.6–7 (AD 249–268).

639 For the ἀπολυσίδια see Rathbone 1991, 297.

640 For example in P.Flor. II 123 (AD 261) from Alypios to Heroninos, Alypios wrote in his own hand (ll. 11–15) ἐρρῶσθαί σε| εὔχομ(αι)| σε(σημείωμαι) καὶ ἀπόλυσον| τὰ τοῦ οἴνου μονόχ(ωρα)| ἑκατὸν ὡς τοῦ μονοχώ(ρου)| πρὸς δραχμ(ὰς) δεκαέξ ("I pray for your health. I signed, and release the one hundred monochora of wine, for sixteen drachmas per monochoron"). In the ed.pr. lines 16–17 (at the bottom of the sheet, containing the name of the addressee and the date) have been attributed to the second hand, but it seems more likely that these were written by the first hand (compare the density of the ink, the lateral expansion of the letters, and the frequent long strokes of the first hand, with the frequent curves and the dense arrangement of the script of the second hand). Other examples with photos in P.Flor. II are P.Flor. II 135.9–13 (AD 262), P.Flor. II 139.11–15 (AD 264), and P.Flor. II 146.12–16 (AD 264). In P.Flor. II 124 (AD 261) the author wrote (ll. 9–12) ἐρρῶ|σθαί σε εὔχ(ομαι). σεσ(ημείωμαι)| καὶ ἀπόλυσον τὰ τοῦ οἴνου| μονόχ(ωρα) ἑκατόν, as indicated in the ed.pr. Preisigke (BL I 149) corrected σεσ(ημείωμαι) into φ(ίλτατ)ε and suggested that ll. 9–12 were written by a second hand and φ(ίλτατ)ε alone was written by a third hand; however the version of the ed.pr. seems to be preferable. In P.Flor. II 141 the signature of Alypios is in ll. 10–11, and in ll. 12–14 there is a signature by the recipient of the wine, Palas.

An interesting—and to my knowledge unparalleled—case is P.Oxy. LXI 4118 (fig. 48), dated to the third century AD, a memorandum from Pecyllus to the comarchs about liturgical appointments, ending with the signature σεση(μείωμαι) ("I have signed"). A second hand cancelled the σεση(μείωμαι) with a horizontal cross-stroke and wrote below ἐση(μειωσάμην) ("I signed"). In the ed.pr. three hands have been indicated and the editor comments that "a clerk would have written the main text and the countersignature would have been appended by Pecyllus himself. It is impossible to guess why another person should have intervened."[641] Another possibility is that σεση(μείωμαι) was written by the first hand, i.e. by the secretary, but the author cancelled the secretary's σεση(μείωμαι) in order to write ἐση(μειωσάμην) in his own hand. This interpretation is supported by the position of σεση(μείωμαι), which is not positioned at the end of the text of the scribe but below and to the right. Although in our view the change of σεση(μείωμαι) to ἐση(μειωσάμην) seems to be trivial, in Roman and Byzantine times the handwriting may have mattered and this change of hand in the signature may have been important.

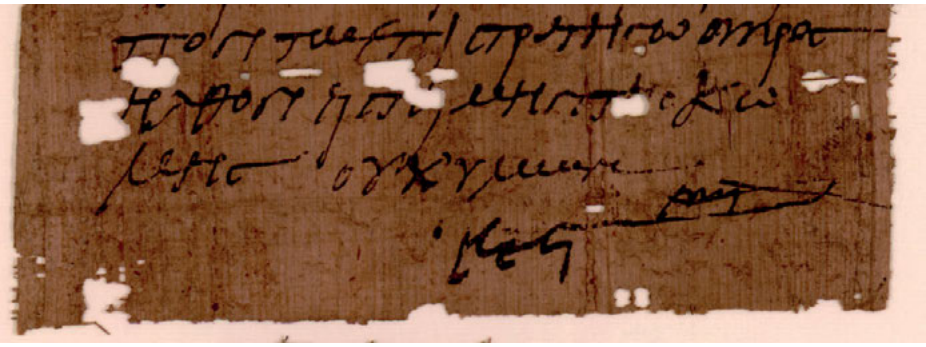

Fig. 48: P.Oxy. LXI 4118, memorandum from Pecyllus to the komarchs of Dositheou, lines 14–17, 3rd c. AD © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

Like orders, receipts were often formed like letters and sometimes contained signatures—the signing party was the person who received the money. For example, P.Heid. IV 332 (fig. 49),[642] from Claudia Posidonia to Sarapion, dated to the second or third century AD, is a receipt written by two hands; the first wrote the body of the receipt, and Claudia Posidonia wrote a farewell and repeated in her own hand the amount that she received (ll. 7–11) ἔρρῳ[σο].| [Σα]ρ̣α̣πί̣ω̣ν̣ι̣ [μετ]ε|[β]λήθ̣[η]σ̣α̣ν αἰ| ἀ̣ργυ[ρί]ο̣υ δρα̣|[χμαὶ χ]{ε̣}ίλια[ι] ("farewell; to Sarapion, the one thousand silver drachmas have been submitted").

641 Lewis, P.Oxy. LXI 4118.16n.
642 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.heid;4;332..

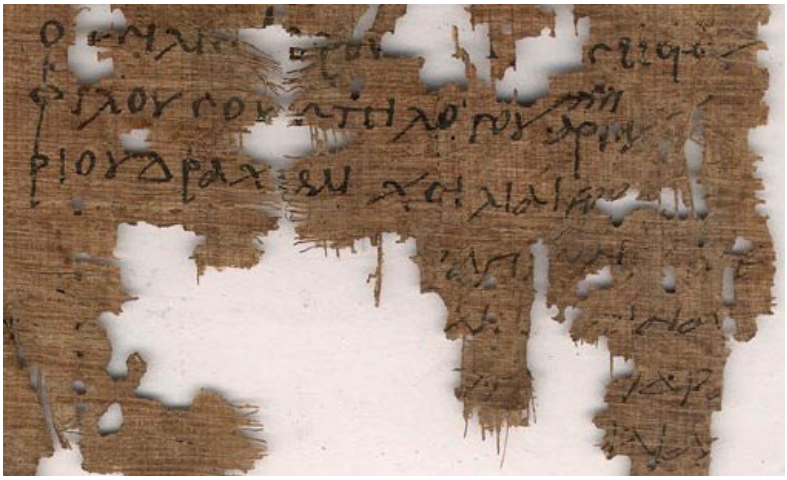

Fig. 49: P.Heid. IV 332, receipt from Claudia Posidonia to Sarapion, lines 5–11, 2nd/3rd c. AD © Institut für Papyrologie, Ruprecht–Karls–Universität Heidelberg.

Besides the relationship between the correspondents and the typology of the letter, the length and content of the farewell greeting unavoidably depended on the ability and level of literacy of the author. Thus, for example, in P.Oxy. XLIX 3505 (fig. 50), from Papontos to Alexandros, a private letter about the dispatch of some goods, dated to the second century AD, the author's personally added farewell is only a short ἔρ<ρ>ωσο, written with difficulty and containing a spelling error. Papontos was probably not able to write a longer one. Cases like P.Oxy. XLIX 3505, however, are rare. The writer of the letter was a friend of the author and the addressee, as it appears from the addition of his own greetings in the letter, (ll. 24–5) ἀσπ̣άσομέ (ἀσπάζομαί) σε Διονύσιος ("I greet you, Dionysios"). The writer penned also the date and the postscript (ll. 26–8).

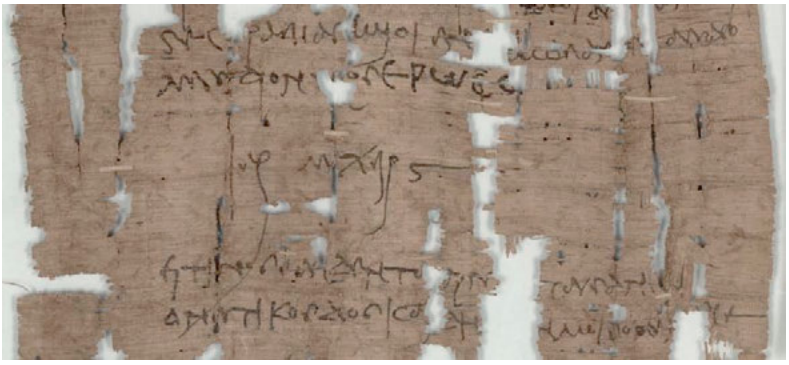

Fig. 50: P.Oxy. XLIX 3505, letter from Papontos to Alexander, lines 25–28, 2nd c.? AD © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

4.2.8 Double Farewell Greetings

A special sub-category are letters that contain two farewell greetings, one written by the author, and another, small and cursive, by the secretary. The letters with this feature are private in content but formal in appearance; they include business correspondence, letters of recommendation, or philophronetic letters with polite greetings to the addressee. In most cases the letters containing double greetings were written in very elegant secretarial hands. In the editions the small cursive ἔρρωσο is sometimes preceded by a handshift marker, indicating that it was written by a third hand (the farewell of the author is indicated as written by a second hand). However, close attention to the handwriting suggests that the small ἔρρωσο was written by the person who penned the body of the letter. The secretaries who penned the letters also wrote a small farewell greeting at the bottom of the sheet, allowing space above for the author to add his own personal farewell greeting. The discreet farewell greeting of the writer is a detail that must have added elegance and politeness, and it is not by chance that the majority of the letters with this feature are very elegant in both format and linguistic style. Almost all the letters that display this feature date to the early decades of the second century AD and most of them come from the archive of the strategos Apollonios, having been sent to him by various official or social acquaintances, all being people of high status. A possible explanation for this feature may be that it was a scribal trend imitated and furthered by secretaries belonging to the same social circle.

A letter written in this style is P.Brem. 21 (AD 113–120) from Germanos to Apollonios strategos.[643] In the ed.pr. four hands have been indicated: one for the body of the letter, a second one for the personal farewell greeting (12–13), a third one for the second small farewell in the lower margin (14), and a fourth one for the dating (15). However, it seems more likely that there are only two hands at stake. The first hand, i.e. the hand of a secretary, wrote the body of the letter and the small farewell (14) ἔρρωσο. The author then added in his own hand a personal farewell greeting, (12–13) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι,| τιμιώτατέ μοι ἄδελφε ("I pray for your health, most honourable brother"). The dating, (15) Ἀθὺρ ι ("Hathyr 10"), could have been written either by the author or by the secretary—in this case the palaeographical characteristics of the handwriting suggest that the dating was written by the secretary.[644]

Another example is SB IV 7335 (AD 117–138) from Claudius Agathos Daimon to Sarapion kosmetes (fig. 51). This polite personal letter contains greetings to the addressee from the Thebaid, exhorting him to write back and ask for anything that he may need from there. The secretary who wrote the body of the letter wrote also a small

643 See above p. 117 fig. 21.

644 In the dating at the botton of the sheet, the ends of the descender of ρ and of the horizontal stroke over the date are smooth, while the hand of the author looks coarser and his prolonged strokes do not end smoothly.

cursive ἔρρωσο (10). The author wrote the long farewell greeting (8–9) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι| διὰ παντὸς σὺν τοῖς τέκνοις ("I pray for your health through all things along with your children").

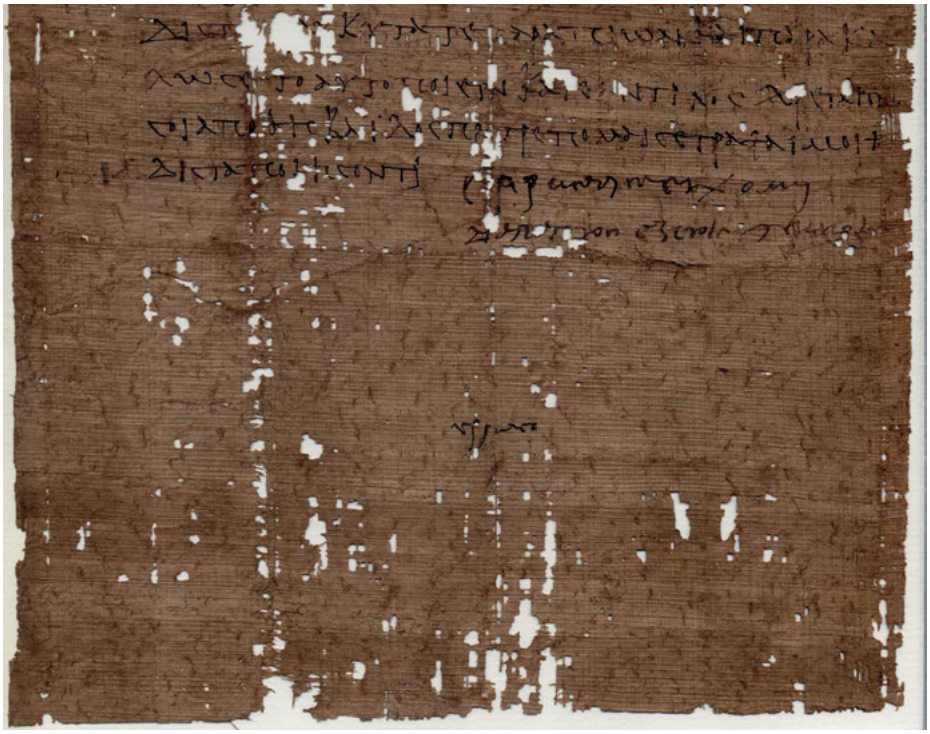

Fig. 51: SB IV 7335, Claudius Agathos Daimon to Sarapion kosmetes, lines 7–10, AD 117–138
© Nationalbibliothek, Wien.

A similar case is P.Giss. Apoll. 35 (fig. 52), dated to AD 113–120, a letter from the ἱεροποιός Herakleides to the strategos Apollonios, asking the strategos to release someone. The secretary who wrote the letter wrote also a small cursive ἔρρωσο (11) at the bottom. The author of the letter, Herakleides, added a longer farewell greeting (19–21) Ἡρακλείδης ἔναρχος| ἱεροποιὸς ἐρ̣ρ̣ῶσθαί σε| εὔχομαι τ̣ι̣μ̣ιώτατε ("Herakleides, overseer of sacrifices, I pray for your health most honourable."). Similar is P.Brem. 50 (AD 117–120) from Aelius Phanias, reporting the sending of letters and other information and wishes.[645] The secretary wrote a small cursive ἔρρωσο in the middle, below the main body of the letter, while Aelius Phanias wrote personally a farewell

645 See p. 357 fig. 61.

exactly at the end of the body of the letter, (8–9) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι, κύριέ μου ("I pray for your health, my lord").

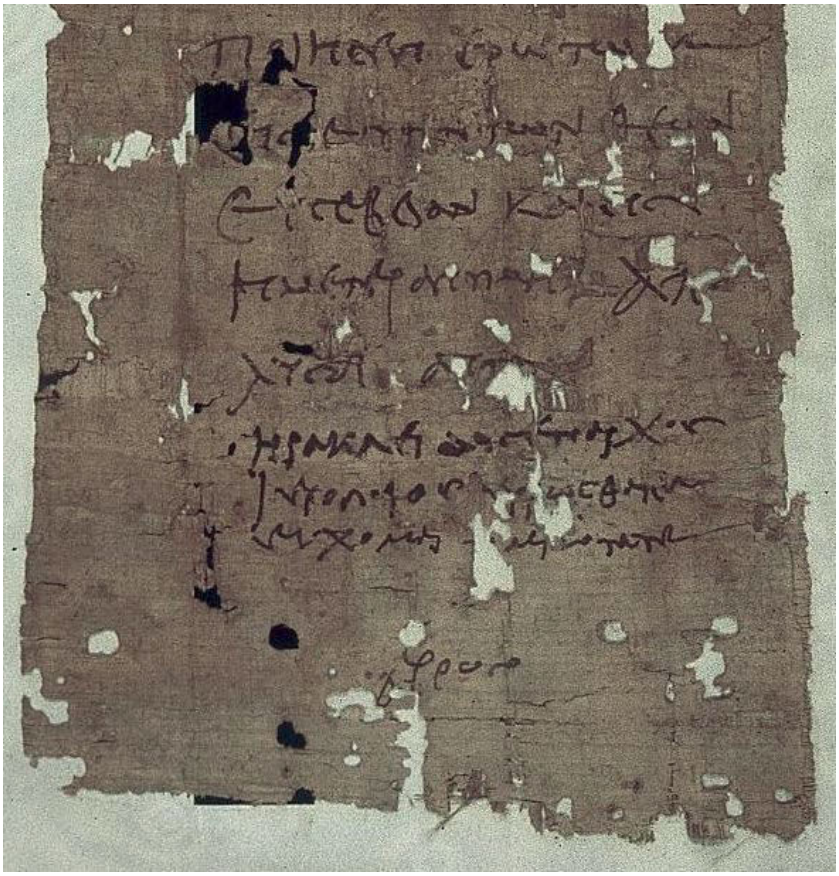

Fig. 52: P.Giss. Apoll. 35, letter from Herakleides hieropoios to Apollonios strategos, lines 14–22, AD 113–120 © Universitätsbibliothek, Gießen.

In a small number of cases the long farewell greeting, which one might expect to be in the author's hand, seems to have been written by the secretary, too. In these cases the secretary wrote two farewell greetings: a long one on behalf of the author and another short one on his own behalf. Such an example is P.Giss. Apoll. 33 (AD 113–120) from Longos to Apollonios strategos (fig. 53). This is a private letter about business matters, informing the addressee about the reception of monthly allowances. In the ed.pr. there is a handshift before (8) ἔρρωσ<ό> μοι φίλτατε ("farewell, my dearest") indicating that this is a second, while before the small ἔρρωσο̣ (9) there is a handshift indicating that it is the first hand. We would indeed expect ἔρρωσ<ό> μοι φίλτατε to have

been written by the author, but handwriting characteristics suggest that there might be no change of hand here and that the secretary wrote both farewell greetings.[646]

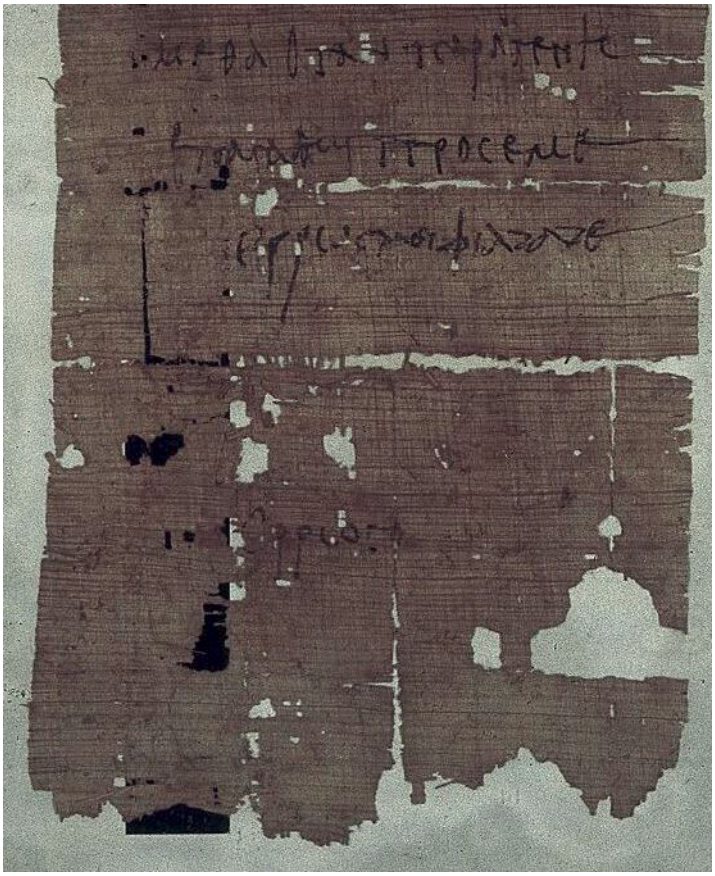

Fig. 53: P.Giss. Apoll. 33, letter from Longos to Apollonios strategos, lines 6–9, AD 113–120
© Universitätsbibliothek, Gießen.

Comparable cases suggest that the secretary could write the author's personal farewell. For example, in the dictated letter of Gemellus, P.Fay. 110, the farewell is written by the secretary, although one would expect it to have been written in the author's hand.[647] Also, in P.Oxy. XLII 3057 (fig. 54), which was penned by a secretary, the fare-

646 See for example the formation of the ε with a closed cap and long crossbar. Two more cases with double farewell greetings, where it seems probable that the writer wrote both farewells, are P.Giss. Apoll. 33 and P.Laur. II 39, see Appendix III.
647 See above p. 132 fig. 25.

well greeting was written by the secretary in the position where one would expect the author to write it. This need not imply that the authors were illiterate, but it was simply their personal choice on that occasion, perhaps for convenience: the author of P.Fay. 110 was certainly literate, since there are many letters written in his own hand;[648] P.Oxy. XLII 3057 has an advanced linguistic style with philosophical elements, which suggests that the author would have been literate enough to write the farewell himself.

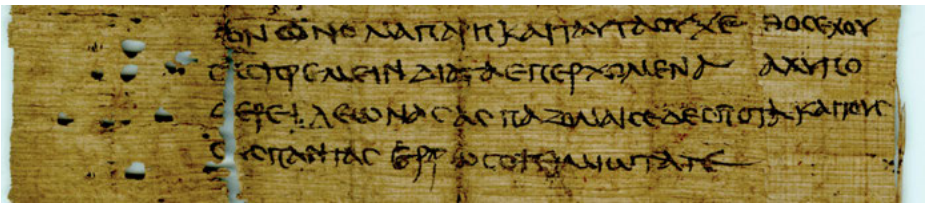

Fig. 54: P.Oxy. XLII 3057, letter from Ammonios to Apollonios, lines 27–30, 1st/2nd c. AD © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

4.2.9 The Position of Farewell Greetings

The most characteristic feature of farewell greetings written by second hands is their position exactly at the end of the bodies of the letters, often squeezed into place. This positioning is common in both official and private letters and indicates that authors' personally written farewells functioned like a signature, with the purpose to authenticate the dictated text and protect it from unauthorised additions.[649]

Farewell greetings that were written by the first hands (i.e. the hands that wrote also the bodies of the letters) are usually separated by some vacant space from the body of the letter, being placed either below or below and to the right, or to the right but with some space, as, for example, in P.Wash, Univ. II 106, from Dionysia to Panechotes, dated 18 BC (fig. 55), where the farewell greeting written by the first hand is set off from the end of the body of the letter by a small vacant space. It seems that there was a tendency by letter writers to separate automatically the farewell greeting from the body of the letter, probably because by that time the greeting was regarded as a distinct part of the letter and as such it was distinguished from it. This convention aids the recognition of changes of hands in letters, because if there is vacant space between the body of the letter and the farewell greeting, a change of hand is unlikely.

648 See e.g. above p. 132 fig. 26.
649 Rea remarked this feature for official letters (P.Oxy. L 3577 introd.), but the same applies for private letters too.

However, this does not imply the opposite, i.e. it does not imply that a farewell greeting that is placed in the same line as the end of the body of the letter or very close to it was necessarily written by a different hand from the body of the letter. From the second century AD and increasingly from the third century, farewell greetings by first hands started to be placed close to the body of the letters, too. This development in the position of farewell greetings by first hands was probably influenced by the positioning of farewell greetings by second hands. Since the style of letters written by professional secretaries was regarded as classy and stylish, authors who wrote their letters themselves would have imitated stylistic characteristics of letters written by secretaries, and may have also imitated the position of farewell greetings written by second hands at the end of the bodies of the letters. Some examples can be found in the archive of Theophanes, dated to the early 4th c. AD.[650]

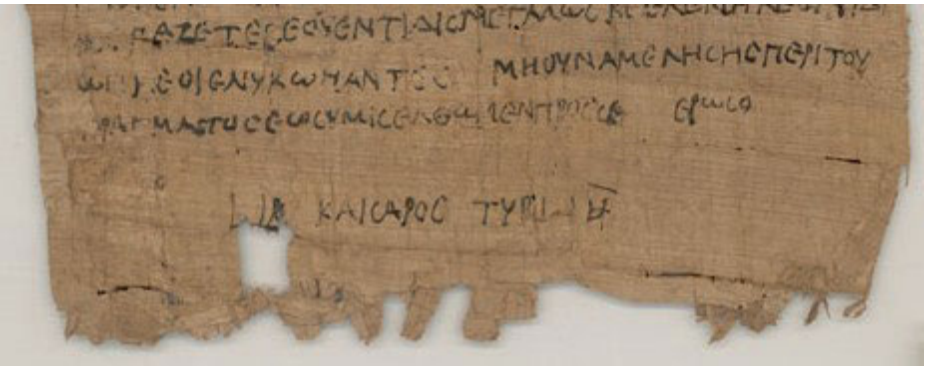

Fig. 55: P.Wash. Univ. II 106, letter from Dionysia to Panechotes, lines 11–13, AD 18 © Washington University, Saint Louis.

4.2.10 Elaborated Farewell Greetings

Calligraphic ornamentation in the farewell greeting begins to be applied from the first century AD, with the farewell greeting being enlarged or elongated, placed in the centre below the main body of some letters. The sender expected that the addressee would appreciate this ornamentation as an expression of care. This phenomenon is not attested in official letters, where formality was prefered over personal care. Thus, private letters that imitate the style of formal official letters, such as, for example, letters of recommendation, never display this stylistic feature. Ornamentation in this position is attested in private letters to friends or family in which the sender wished

650 E.g. P.Herm. 2 with plate I, P.Herm. 3 with plate II, P.Herm. 4 with plate III.

to express in an artful way. This kind of elaboration of the farewell greeting was possibly introduced by the Romans, because the most elegant representatives of this feature are attested in letters from senders who were of Roman origin or from a Latin speaking milieu, such as Roman soldiers or people with Roman names. Examples are P.Col. VIII 216 from Severianos to Ammonianos (AD 100),[651] and ostraca found at the Roman site of Mons Claudianus, such as O.Claud. I 139 (AD 110),[652] O.Claud. IV 866 (early/mid 2nd c.? AD); O.Claud. I 120[653] (AD 100–120 AD);[654] O.Claud. II 228 (mid 2nd c. AD).[655] On the other hand, there are some letters from senders who appear to be of Greek or Graeco-Egyptian origin that have enlarged farewell greetings (though not as elaborated and elongated as those written by Romans). This may suggest that the feature developed in parallel in the whole Graeco-Roman world; such examples are P.Oxy. LV 3807 (26–28 AD), in which the closing farewell (32) ἔρρωσο is written in larger and slower characters than the rest of the letter,[656] and P.Yale I 83 (ca. 200 AD) a private business letter from Ptolemaios to Ammonas, a steward to his boss, in which the farewell greeting [ἐρρῶσθαί σ]ε εὔχομαι is placed below the letter in enlarged and elaborated letters.[657]

In editions of letters such elaborated farewells are sometimes preceded by handshift markers, even though there are no changes of hands there. Elaborated farewell greetings were always written by the first hand, i.e. the same hand that wrote the body of the letter. As suggested by the handwriting of letters displaying this feature, the letters were written by the authors themselves, not by dictation to secretaries. They are placed in the centre of the line below the main body of the letter in a decorative manner. They are never eloquent in content, but consist of only the typical ἔρρωσο or ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι. With the decoration of the script in the farewell greeting the senders intended to express special care and affection for the addressees— the ornamentation of the script balanced the brevity of the content of a simple farewell.

651 See p. 162 fig. 38.
652 See p. 163 fig. 39.
653 Photo: O.Claud. I, planche XIII.
654 See p. 163 fig. 40.
655 Photo: O.Claud. II, planche X.
656 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;55;3807. In the edition the farewell is preceded by an uncertain handshift marker, but there is no change of hand.
657 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.yale;1;83. In the edition there is an unnecessary handshift marker before the farewell greeting. The end of the body of the letter is broken, and the remaining ερ[has been supplemented as ἔρ[ρωσο] in the ed.pr followed by [ἐρρῶσθαί σ]ε εὔχομαι. However, it would be unlikely to have a short ἔρ[ρωσο] exactly before the [ἐρρῶσθαί σ]ε εὔχομαι. It is more probable that there was ἐρ[ρωμένους] there, for ἀσπ[άζου -ca.?-]ν τὸν φίλον καὶ| Ἀπολιν[ᾶριν καὶ τ]οὺς παρά σοι πάν|τας ἐρ[ρωμένους] and then the enlarged farewell greeting [ἐρρῶσθαί σ]ε εὔχομαι.

4.3 Closing Remarks

To sum up what has been discussed above, authors started adding personal subscriptions in dictated letters from the first century AD. They are relatively few in the first two centuries, but their number gradually increases. Generally, this feature was more common in official letters than in private ones. In letters of the first two centuries of the Roman Empire, the social status of the authors who add personal subscriptions in letters is relatively high. The number of private letters with subscriptions to family or very close friends is low. If a third person was employed to write a letter to a close family member, a subscription was not considered necessary. This is due to the fact that the subscription was not a mark of personal care in letters, but of formality and authority, since the purpose of authors' personal subscriptions was mainly authentication. However, in the Roman imperial period, and especially from about the second century AD, when letters started being used for polite social exchange, especially among elite circles, author's subscriptions are also attested in private philophronetic letters, as an element of formality and politeness, revealing the high social status of an author who could employ a secretary.

The content of authors' personal farewells depended on the relationship between the correspondents. In official letters from high officials to their subordinates, such as letters from prefects to strategi, the content of the subscription is laconic, usually something like an ἐρρῶσθαί σε βούλομαι. In letters between minor officials or in private letters a mere ἔρρωσο or ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι would be regarded as too impolite, so in such letters the farewell tends to be personal and eloquent, usually extending to more than one line, forming a small block at the end of the body of the letter. The content of the farewell depended also on the ability of the sender, thus in P.Oxy. XLIX 3505 the author's personally written farewell is simply an ἔρ<ρ>ωσο written with difficulty and a spelling error; but cases like P.Oxy. XLIX 3505 are rare.

Most of the letters with authors' subscriptions have an elegant appearance and confident handwriting, suggesting that they were written by well-trained professionals. The fluency of the authors' personal farewells show that the employment of secretaries was not due to illiteracy but rather custom. The authors of the letters, at least until the third century, are of high social status, being mostly Romans or elite Greeks. These are the people who had high official posts in the state's bureaucracy and could employ secretaries. If, as suggested in literary sources, this custom had its roots in Roman elite circles, the employment of a professional would have been preferred by Greeks who aspired to be regarded as upper class. On the other hand, since writing was a mark of literacy, people with a certain level of "paideia" would wish to add the farewell greeting personally. A special category are private letters that contain an additional ἔρρωσο written at the bottom of the sheet by the secretary. Letters with this feature are always written in extremely elegant hands and layouts, apparently by well-trained secretaries. The discreet farewell of the secretary was a detail that added

politeness and elegance to the letter, showing the professionalism of the secretary and his polite manners.

Given that the majority of the surviving letters from Graeco-Roman times are written in informal, amateur hands, less capable than the secretarial hands of letters with changes of hands in the farewell greetings, it seems that many of these letters were probably written by the authors themselves. This does not imply that everyone was able to write in the Graeco-Roman world, since the surviving letters do not represent the whole society. However, it seems clear that hiring scribes for the writing of private letters was not common in the Graeco-Roman world and that the vast majority of the very large number of surviving private letters that circulated and have been preserved to us were probably written by their authors themselves.

Appendices

Appendix I: Letters in Archives

The purpose of this part is to provide a convenient list of the letters that have been grouped in archives. The definition of an archive and the question whether there should be a distinction between "archives" (groups of papyri that had been deliberately collected together by their ancient owners and have been found together in their ancient repositories) and "dossiers" (groups of papyri which have been reconstructed by papyrologists) has been debated.[658] However, since the information about the finding circumstances of papyri is in most cases insufficiently known or remains completely unknown—most of the papyri have been found by clandestine diggers or by excavations conducted in the late 19th or early 20th c., which have not documented details about the archaeological context—it is in most cases difficult to know which groups are "dossiers" and which "archives." Therefore, in the present study no distinction has been made between "archives" and "dossiers," but any group of papyri that belong together are regarded as archives. The vague notion of "belonging together" includes i) those groups of papyri that were collected together by their ancient owners and have been found together in repositories, ii) those groups that were discarded by their ancient owners and have been excavated together in rubbish dumps or have been reused in mummy cartonnage, and iii) those groups of papyri that have been reconstructed by papyrologists on the basis of the prosopographical details of their protagonists according to the content of the texts and/or the information about the acquisition of the papyri by museums and collections ("museum archaeology," Vandorpe 1994).

The number of texts that each archive contains is given in accordance with *Trismegistos* (July 2014), and the typological categorisation of the letters of each archive (official, business, private) follow *HGV* (July 2014).[659] The information about the finding circumstances of each archive, current location of the papyri and short descriptions of the content of the archives has been collected by H. Enders mostly from the online database of *Trismegistos*; when other sources have been consulted this is indicated. This list contains 116 archives, but it is not definitive, since both databases are continuously updated with the publication of new letters, the identification of new archives and the reorganisation of letters into archives. For example, the archives of the Vindolanda papyri have not been included, because when I compiled this list, the Vindolanda letters had not yet been included in *HGV*. Even though information about the finding circumstances of the archives is also continuously updated and enriched, it has seemed useful to include this appendix in order to give a general view of the number and types of letters that belong to archives.

658 For a summary of the debate, see van Beek 2007; For the types of papyrus archives see Vandorpe 2008.

659 As discussed above p. 65ff. business letters should be included in the category private letters.

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Temple of Pathyris	-332 — -30	26	1	1	0	0	0
485	Pathyris (Gebelein)						
Kleon and Theodoros engineers	-275 — -225	75 (74)	63	2	42	17	2
122	Arsinoite nome						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Grenf. I 40	This archive was partly excavated in 1891 by E. Grébaut and G. Daressy and partly purchased on the antiquities market. (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 485. 2011; Leospo 1985, 10) London, British Library	This archive contains Greek and Demotic documents and was kept in the temple of Hathor in Pathyris. It consists mainly of lease contracts, temple accounts, lists of priests, requests to the temple, religious texts or hymns, reports of the temple. It also contains some Greek and Demotic documents concerning a dispute about a plot of land between this temple and a temple at Hermonthis. (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 485. 2011)
P.Petr. I 30; P.Petr. II 3–6, 9, 11–13, 15–16, 23, 42; P.Petr. III 42 H, G, C; SB VI 9440	The papyri of this archive come from mummy cartonnage that was excavated by Petrie in 1889 at a cemetery at Gurob, near the south-eastern entrance of the Fayum. (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 122. v.2 2012) Dublin, Trinity College; London, British Library; Oxford, Bodleian Library	This is both an official and private archive. Its protagonists are Kleon and his successor Theodoros, who inherited Kleon's archive. They were engineers responsible primarily for irrigation works in the Arsinoite nome. Most of the documents are official correspondence endorsed with dockets for archiving purposes, but there are also 16 private letters to Kleon from his wife Metrodora and sons. Further text types are accounts, a law case, registers of correspondence and fragments. Van Beek mentions that there are more letters from this archive that still await publication (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 122. v.2 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Nikanor banker 153	-275 — -221 Oxyrhynchos	21	10	8	0	0	2
Hippodamos 104	-268 — -257 Oxyrhynchite nome (?)	7	7	7	0	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
BGU X 1917–1918; 1922; P.Hamb. II 169, 175–178, 180, 181	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage. Most of the documents seem to originate from the Oxyrhynchite nome. (Snell, P.Hamb. II, p. VIII; Müller, BGU X, p. 5) Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum; Hamburg, Bibliothek	This official correspondence was kept by Nikanor, a banker at Oxyrhynchos. Most of his papers deal with government funds, though he also had private clients; the archive contains official letters, receipts and orders for payment (Lewis 1986, 50–52).
P.Sorb. I 9–12; SB XII 11055–11057	P.Sorb. I 9–12 come from a mummy mask from Herakleopolis, which was bought and probably extracted by P. Jouguet. Two other letters of this archive, SB XII 11055–11056, were also extracted from mummy cartonnage that comes from Herakleopolis and are now conserved at Jena University (Cadell, P.Sorb. I, p. 37); SB XII 11057 comes from mummy cartonnage too (Uebel 1974, 89 and Ast, http://papyri-leipzig.dl.uni-leipzig.de/receive/IAwJPapyri_schrift_00002110) Jena, Universität; Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie; Oxford, Bodleian Library	This official archive was kept by the recipient of the letters, Hippodamos, or possibly his son, Pythokles, who was a secretary of the hipparchy. Lykomedes appears to be Hippodamos‘ superior. Caddel assumed Lykomedes to be strategos and Hippodamos to be a secretary (or military intendant) in the Arsinoite or the Oxyrhynchite nome. Uebel states that both were officials related to cleruchial government. The documents deal with legal and fiscal affairs of soldiers, as well as agricultural matters. (Uebel, 1974, 98–99)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Zenon son of Agreophon 256	-263 — -229 Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	1932 (1819)	1183	42	439	260	442
Harimouthes toparches 95	-262 — -253 Herakleopolite nome	6	5	5	0	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.XV Congr.; P.Bingen 29; P.Cair. Zen. I–V; P.Col. III–IV; P.Hamb. I; P.Iand. Zen.; P.Lond. VII; P.Mich. I; P.Ryl. IV; P.Strasb. IX 801; P.Yale I 45; P.Zen. Pestm.; PSI IV–VIII; PSI XIII; SB XVI 12810; SB XVIII 13616; SB XVIII 13617; SB XX 14623; SB XX 14640; SB XXII 15228; SB XXII 15229; SB XXII 15557	This archive was kept together since antiquity, probably protected in a trove. It was found in Gharabet el-Gerza (Philadelpheia, Fayum) by sebbakh diggers. It was sold through antiquities market to various collections; its first appearance on the antiquities market was in 1911. (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 256. v.1 2013). Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library; Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum; Cairo, Egyptian Museum; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana; Florence, Istituto Papyrologico ‚G. Vitelli'; Giessen, Universitätsbibliothek; Hamburg, Bibliothek; London, British Library; Manchester, John Rylands Library; New Haven, Yale University; New York, Columbia University; Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie.	Zenon was the secretary and later estate manager in the Arsinoite nome (Fayum) of Apollonios, διοικητής (finance minister) of Ptolemy II. Zenon's archive is the largest known archive, consisting of letters, petitions, contracts, accounts as well as a few fragments of literature and other texts. It contains more than 1000 letters, which are mainly official or related to business matters, but there are also about 260 letters that are described as private in *HGV*. (Vandorpe *Trismegistos* ArchID 256. v.1 2013)
P.Hib. I 40–44	The papyri of P.Hib. I come from mummy cartonnage excavated at the Ptolemaic necropolis of el-Hibeh. They were obtained by Grenfell and Hunt in 1902 partly by purchase, partly from their first excavations at that site. This archive was extracted from mummy 13. (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Hib. I, p. V and pp. 182–186) Graz Universität; London, British Library; New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library; Oxford, Bodleian Library; Pittsburgh, Carnegie Museum.	This official archive was kept by Harimouthes, who was presumably the nomarch and later the toparch of the Oxyrhynchite nome (See P.Hib. 85 for the former, and P.Hib. I 40 for the latter). The archive deals with the activities of government officials. (White, 1986, p. 23) and consists of letters and one loan. (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Hib. I, pp. 182–186, 246)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Leodamas 130	-257 — -255 Herakleopolite nome	6	6	6	0	0	0
Diogenes nomarches 68	-256 — -250 Arsinoite nome	40 (39)	1	1	0	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Hib. I 45–50	The papyri of P.Hib. I come from mummy cartonnage. They were obtained by Grenfell and Hunt in 1902 partly by purchase, partly from their first excavations at that site. P.Hib. 45–47 and 49–50 were extracted from mummy A 16, and P.Hib. 48 from Mummy A (probably also 16). (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Hib. I, p. 187–194) Cambridge, University Library; Leuven, University Library; New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library; Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Museum.	This official archive consists of six letters all written by Leodamas, who was an official presumably from the Oxyrhynchite nome concerned with the corn-revenues. Four letters are addressed to a certain Lysimachos, who was his subordinate responsible for collecting and transporting grain. One letter was addressed to a further subordinate, Laomedon, and one further letter to another official, Theodoros. (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Hib. I; pp. 187–194)
P.Sorb. I 22	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated by Jouguet at Ghoran (Fayum) in 1901–1902. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 68. v.2 2013) Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie	It is unclear whether this official archive was kept by Thrasymedes or his superior Diogenes, nomarch of the southern part of the meris of Themistos and one part of the meris of Polemon (Héral 1992, 150). Diogenes appears also in P.Petrie III 42 g, and maybe PSI IV 359; whilst we do not know Thrasymedes' function—a subordinate to Thrasymedes, Herakleitos, appears to have been sitologos (head of the granary). The archive contains declarations of small livestock, one official letter, orders for payments, incoming and outgoing documents. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 68. v.2 2013).

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Python Banker 376	-253 — -237 Krokodilopolis (Arsinoite nome)	15 (13)	1	1	0	0	0
Akestias 4	-250 — -249 Arsinoite nome (or Herakleopolite nome?)	9	6	6	0	0	0
Ameneus beer-seller 7	-250 — -200 Tholthis (Oxyrhynchite nome)	6	1	0	0	0	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Petr. II 27 (2)	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated by Petrie at Gurob in 1889. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 376. v.2 2012) Oxford, Bodleian Library	This official archive was kept by Python, the royal banker at Krokodilopolis, who is frequently mentioned in the Zenon archive. Python‘s archive consists of bank receipts, an order for payment, an official diary, an official account, a register of payments, which are all incoming or internal documents. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 376. v.2 2012)
BGU X 1911–16	Six letters of this archive, now kept in the Berlin collection, have been published and originate from mummy cartonnage that was bought before 1945; three letters of the same archive, now kept in the Jena collection, bought before 1950, are unpublished (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 4. v.1 2011) Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum	This official archive consists of nine incoming letters (orders) addressed to Akestias who was an official from an unknown place, probably in the Arsinoite, seven of which originate from his superior, Kallistratos. Kallistratos may have been a strategos or oikonomos. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 4. v.1 2011; Montevecchi, 1988, 249 no 6d)
SB XX 14428	This archive is part of the Freiburg collection and comes from mummy cartonnage, though there seems to be some doubt on this matter in the case of SB XX 14428 specifically. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 7. 2005; Clarysse 1988, 11–21) Freiburg, Universitätsbibliothek	Ameneus son of Thotortaios was a brewer and/or beer-seller in Tholthis in the Oxyrhynchite nome. This official archive centres around the beer monopoly and contains three surety documents for a brewer, a letter, a petition and a demotic fragment. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 7. 2005; Clarysse 1988, 11–21)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Apollonios oikonomos 17	-250 — -200 Arsinoite nome	17 (15)	9	7	0	0	2
Aristarchos nomarches 23	-250 — -238 Herakleidou Meris (Arsinoite nome)	28 (25)	18	0	16	2	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Köln VI 259–260, 262–267, 269	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage acquired through Fackelmann in the 1970s/1980s (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 17. v.2 2013) Universität zu Köln, Papyrussammlung	Apollonios was a local oikonomos (finance officer) in the meris of Polemon of the Arsinoite nome. His archive is official in content, consisting of official letters and one public announcement, and perhaps also a petition and a list of signatures. Some of the incoming letters were sent to Apollonios from his superior, the finance officer Metrodoros, and some of the outgoing letters are addressed to Metrodoros. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 17. v.2. 2013).
P.Sorb. III 75, 77, 79, 84, 86–93, 95–98, 100, 102	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated by Jouguet at Ghoran (Fayum) in 1901–1902. (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 23. v.2 2013) Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie	Aristarchos was nomarches in the Arsinoite nome in the mid third century BC. His archive consists of Greek texts (and some Demotic or bilingual ones). The archive consists mainly of incoming official correspondence from other officials of the Arsinoite nome, and one letter from Aristarchos to a certain Chrysippos. To this archive may belong a private letter to Aristarchos from his father (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 23 v.2 2013).

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Ptolemaios policeman 204	-250 — -244 Tholthis (Oxyrhynchite nome)	18 (16)	17	3	0	0	14
Hermolaos oikonomos or his subordinate Apollonios 382	-250 — -247 Arsinoite nome	4	3	0	3	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Hib. I 51–62, 130, 167–170	The papyri of P.Hib. I come from mummy cartonnage excavated at the Ptolemaic necropolis of el-Hibeh. They were partly bought by Grenfell & Hunt in 1902 and partly obtained from their first excavations at that site. With the single exception of I 57, it is probable that the whole archive originates from the same mummy (A9). (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 204. 2004) Brussels, Musées Royaux; Cairo, Egyptian Museum; Cambridge, University Library; Chicago, McCormick Theological Seminary; Cleveland, Case Western Reserve University; Evanston, Seabury–Western Theological Seminary; Graz, Universität; Hawarden, St Deiniol's Library; London, British Library; New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Oxford, Bodleian Library; Philadelpheia, University of Pennsylvania Museum; Toronto, Victoria University; Washington, Smithsonian, Library	Ptolemaios was the holder of a minor post in the Oxyrhynchite nome; his exact position is uncertain but he might have been a phylakites or an archiphylakites at the village Tholthis. His archive consists of official documents and letters sent to him from various superior officials, and one memorandum (P.Yale II 240) written by Ptolemaios to Zenodoros. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 204. 2004)
SB VI 9089–9091	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated by Grenfell & Hunt at the cemetery of Rubbayat (Philadelpheia, Fayum) in 1901, and they were donated to the Bodleian library by the widow of Hunt in 1934. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 382. v.2 2013). Oxford, Bodleian Library	This archive consists of four official letters, two of them addressed to Apollonios and two to Hermolaos. *Hermolaos*, who is also known from the Zenon archive, was probably oikonomos (financial officer) of the Memphite nome and superior of Apollonios. It is unclear whether the archive was kept by Apollonios or Hermolaos. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 382. v.2 2013).

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Kresilaos 509	-246 — -238 Herakleopolite nome	5	4	4	0	0	0
Patron archiphylakites? 409	-245 — -200 Oxyrhynchite nome	7	6	5	0	1	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
SB III 7176–7179	This archive is related to the Herakleopolite nome, but it has been extracted from mummy cartonnage found at Ghoran (Fayum). All the papyri of the archive come from the same mummy, Ghoran 288. (Collart/Jouguet 1925, p. 109) Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie	Kresilaos was an official in the Herakleopolite nome. The archive contains one letter from him to Artemidoros, two letters addressed to him from his subordinates, Philon and Horos, and a letter from Diocles, agent of Sosibios, to Ammonios, and an enteuxis to the king (Collart/Jouguet 1925, 109–134).
P.Tebt. III.1 744–749	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated at Umm el-Baragat (Tebtynis) by Grenfell before 1920 (P.Tebt. III.1 744 and 749 from mummy 9; 745–748 from mummy 97) (Hunt/Smiley, P.Tebt. III.1, p. VII and XV) Berkeley, Bancroft Library	This official archive consists of one official circular addressed in general to various officials of the Aphroditopolite, Herakleopolite, Oxyrhynchite and Cynopolite nomes, in the vicinity of the Arsinoite nome, as well as six letters written by or to a certain Patron in the reign of presumably Ptolemy III. He was a man of some importance in the Oxyrhynchite nome, possibly an archiphylakites, though his exact position is not known. One of the letters, P.Tebt. III.1 744, seems to be private in nature. (Hunt/Smiley, P.Tebt. III.1, p.110; 162–163)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Chonouphis 51	-241 — -64 Memphis	32	1	0	0	1	0
Dionysodoros subordinate of the oikonomos 70	-232 — -229 Arsinoite nome	8	3	2	0	0	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
UPZ I 109 Z. 1–24	This archive was sold by Anastasi in the first half of the nineteenth century in Europe. Leiden acquired papyri in 1828, and the British Museum purchased several documents in 1839. Further documents might have been sold after Anastasi's death at the Paris auction in 1857. (Thompson 2012, 146) Leiden, National Museum of Antiquities	This is a family archive spanning five generations of first choachytai and later undertakers. They appear to have had some influence and held the post of supervisor of the necropolis for two generations. The archive concerns itself mainly with legal matters. Text types include property and marriage contracts, a loan contract, a lease, documents relating to legal disputes, a receipt, a renunciation and an endowment contract. (Thompson 2012, 148–150)
P.Köln VIII 343–344; SB XX 14699	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage bought on the antiquities market through Fackelmann in the 1980s. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 70. v.2 2013) Universität zu Köln, Papyrussammlung; Rome, Vatican, Biblioteca del Vaticano	The protagonists of this archive are the financial officer (oikonomos) Asklepiades, and his subordinate Dionysodoros. It is more likely that the archive was kept by Dionysodoros, as most of these papyri, purchased by Fackelmann, come from the meris of Polemon, where Dionysodoros was active. This official archive consists of official correspondence and one royal oath. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 70. v.2 2013).

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Pythonikos	-232 — -231	4	4	2	0	2	0
292	Apollonopolis						
Kleitarchos Banker	-230 — -224	18 (17)	12	4	0	0	8
121	Koites						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Hal. 7–8; P.Strasb. VII 621; SB III 7165	P.Hal. 8 belonged to the private collection of Blass and was offered to Halle University in 1912 (Bechtel et al., P.Hal., p. VI); P.Strasb. VII 621 was offered to the Strasbourg collection by Reitzenstein in 1911 or 1912 (Schwartz, P.Strasb. VII, p. 29). SB III 7165 was part of ca. 2000 papyri purchased in 1904–1913 by Jena University; it is not possible to reconstruct its provenance. (Ast, P.Jena II, p. XXI) Halle, Universität; Jena, Universität; Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale	The keeper of this archive was Pythonikos, who was employed in the postal system in the Apollonopolite nome (Edfu). It is an official archive consisting of official incoming letters. (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 292. 2003)
P.Fuad I Univ. App. II 20; P.Grad. 2; P.Hib. I 66–70, 160–163	The relevant papyri from P.Hib. I come from mummy and were partly purchased in 1902 from the necropolis of el–Hibeh, and partly excavated by Grenfell & Hunt in 1902–1903. (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Hib I, p. V and 1); P.Hib. I 160–162=P.Yale I 47–49 were given by the Egypt Exploration Society to Yale. (Oates et al., P.Yale, p. 130); P.Grad. 2 was purchased with help from the Deutsche Papyruskartell by Prof. Gradenwitz. (Plaumann, P.Grad. p. 3). P.Fuad I Univ. App. II 20 used to be in the Gradenwitz collection. Cairo, Egyptian Museum; Cambridge, University Library Heidelberg, Private collection Gradenwitz; Leipzig, Universität; London, British Library; New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library Oxford, Bodleian Library; Princeton, University Library	This archive was kept by Kleitarchos, who was a government banker in the Koites toparchia of the Herakleopolite nome. All are incoming documents, and most were sent by his superior, the banker Asklepiades (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Hib, I, p. 212). Text types include orders, letters, a royal oath, surety, and a receipt. (Oates et al, P.Yale, p. 130–131)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Milon praktor 141	-228 — -221 Apollonopolis	32	3	2	0	1	0
Glaukos policeman (? and Demetrios, epistates) of Mouchis 384	-226 — -218 Mouchis (Arsinoite nome)	38 (35)	9	8	0	1	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Eleph. 13, 18, 29	This archive comes from papyri found in a jar in a cellar in Elephantine by Rubensohn in the excavations of 1906. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 141. 2003; Rubensohn, P.Eleph., p. 34) Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum	Milon and his predecessor Euphronios were praktores at temples. Milon was the last keeper of the archive, which deals mainly with an Egyptian priestly family in financial difficulties. The majority of documents address Milon (19), and three of them Euphronios. The archive consists mostly of official letters; there are also contracts of surety, lists and other documents. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 141. 2003)
P.Sorb. III 129–132, 134, 136–139	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage bought on the antiquities market through Fackelmann in 1978. On the basis of comparison with the Paris petitions (Petitions from Magdola ArchID 80) it is possible that this cartonnage too came from Magdola. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 384. v.1 2013) Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie	The protagonists of this archive were the epistates Demetrios and the policeman Glaukos at Mouchis. According to Clarysse, it is more propable that the archive was kept by Glaukos. It contains mixed, both private and official, documents, including petitions and correspondence related to the petitions as well as two private letters. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 384. v.1 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Tesenouphis toparches 238	-224 — -217 Themistou Meris (Arsinoite nome)	18	1	1	0	0	0
Diophanes strategos 71	-222 — -221 Krokodilopolis (Arsinoite nome)	5 (4)	3	1	0	2	0
Harmachis oikonomos 96	-215 — -214 Herakleopolite nome	8	2	1	0	0	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Sorb. I 46	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated by Jouguet at Ghoran (Fayum) in 1901–1902. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 238. 2004) Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie	This official archive consists of official letters addressed to Tesenouphis. According to Cadell (P.Sorb. I), it is possible that Tesenouphis is identical with the contemporary toparch Tesenouphis, who is mentioned in P.Ent. 10 and was active in the village Alexandrou Nesos in the meris of Themistos. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 238. 2004)
P.Petr. II 2 (2–4)	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated by Petrie at Gurob in 1889. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 71. v.2 2013) London, British Library	The protagonist of this archive is Diophanes, strategos of the Arsinoite nome who is also known from two other archives, that of Glaukos the policeman (*Trismegistos* ArchID 384) and that of the enteuxeis from Magdola (*Trismegistos* ArchID 80). This archive contains both private and official documents; petitions, an official letter and letters of introduction. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 71. v.2 2013)
P.Strasb. II 93, 111	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage acquired by the Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft of Strasbourg before 1914. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 96. 2003) Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale	This archive contains the official correspondence of Harmachis, “agent of the oikonomos Horos” who was active in the area around Techtoi, in the Herakleopolite nome. Most documents are related to the transport of tax grain. (Clarysse *Trismegistos* ArchID 96. 2003)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Theomnestos 437	-214 — -210 Herakleopolite nome	14 (12)	8	8	0	0	0
Nektenibis komarches of Kaminoi 148	-205 — -204 Kaminoi (Arsinoite nome)	8 (7)	7	4	1	0	2
Adamas sitologos 2	-199 — -197 Tebtynis (Arsinoite nome)	7 (6)	7	3	0	4	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Köln XI 442–447, 449–450	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage, purchased by the Kölner Papyrussammlung. (Armoni/Maresch, P.Köln XI, p. V and p. 82) Universität zu Köln, Papyrussammlung	This official archive consists mostly of official letters, all directed to Theomnestos from various officials. Theomnestos' titles include archiphylakites as well as police official of an area within the toparchy Agema Kato and, later, sitologos. (Armoni/Maresch, P.Köln XI, 82–87, 138–165).
SB XII 10845–10848, 10871; SB XX 14404–14405	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated by Jouguet at the necropolis of Medinet el–Nehas (Magdola) in 1901. (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 148. v.2 2013) Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie	This archive contains seven letters addressed to Nektenibis, who was village head (komarches) of Kaminoi in the meris of Polemon. The texts are mainly official in content, dealing with agricultural and administrative matters. (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 148. v.2 2013)
P.Tebt. III.1 750–754, 756; P.Tebt. III.2 941	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated by Grenfell/Hunt at Umm el-Baragat (Tebtynis) in 1899–1900. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 2. v.1 2012) Berkeley, Bancroft Library	This archive consists of the official correspondence of Adamas, partly written by him, partly addressed to him. The letters are mainly about the collection and transport of grain. Grenfell/Hunt identified this Adamas with the granary director (sitologos) Adamas, active in the meris of Polemon. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 2. v.1 2012).

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Dryton, Apollonia and descendants 74	-199 — -80 Pathyris (Gebelein)	65 (61)	1	0	0	1	0
Euphron 85	-199 — -150 Kynopolite nome	4 (3)	4	0	0	1	3

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Dryton 36	The first papyrus of the archive of Dryton was found before 1891, and the remaining were discovered partly by official excavations conducted in 1891 and partly by clandestine diggers, through whom the papyri found their way to the antiquities market between 1891 and 1912. The papyri and ostraca are located at various collections and have been published together by Vandorpe in P.Dryton. (Vandorpe/Waebens 2009, 103 = Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 74. 2011) Paris, Louvre	This family archive spans three generations; it was first kept by Dryton and his wife Apollonia, then by Apollonia alias Senmouthis and her husband Kaies; after Kaies' death, it is not clear who kept it. Dryton was a citizen of the Greek polis Ptolemais in Upper Egypt, and served as a cavalryman in several places. The archive consists of wills, marriage and divorce contracts, loans, receipts, petitions, letters, lists, accounts, one literary text and tax receipts. (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 74. 2011)
P.Princ. II 19; SB XX 14184–14186	The papyri of this archive were purchased by Garrett in Egypt and arrived at Princeton University in the 1920s. (Hanson/Sijpesteijn 1989, 133; P.Princ. II, p. V; Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 85. 2003) Princeton, University Library	The keeper of this official correspondence is a certain Euphron to whom these letters are addressed and who used to docket his incoming correspondence. The letters are too fragmentary to state with certainty what his position as an officer was. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 85. 2003)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Katochoi of the Sarapeion 119	-199 – -100 Memphis	127 (124)	23	2	0	21	0
Spemminis 227	-199 – -100 Lykopolite nome	6	6	0	0	5	1
Village administration of Oxyrhyncha; royal farmers/ crown tenants of Oxyrhyncha 252	-199 – -100 Oxyrhyncha (Arsinoite nome)	33 (32)	9	7	2	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
UPZ I 59–76, 78, 93, 110 Z. 193–213, 111; P.Med. I 28	This archive consists of a group of papyri that were excavated in the Memphis area between 1815 and 1825. They were sold anonymously to famous collectors like D'Anastasy, Salt and Drovetti, through whom they ended up in collections all over Europe. (Legras 2011, 7; Hoogendijk 1989, 47). P.Lond. I 42, 28, 33b (=UPZ I 59, 73, 74) were acquired by the British Museum before the end of 1890. (Kenyon, P.Lond. I, p. III). UPZ I 59–62, 73 were found at Memphis (Witkowski 1911, p. 66–92). London, British Library; Milan, Università Cattolica; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale; Paris, Louvre; Rome, Vatican, Biblioteca del Vaticano	This private archive was kept by Ptolemaios, son of Glaukias who was a "katochos" in the Serapeion of Memphis, where he lived with his younger brother Apollonios and two Egyptian girls, Taues and Taous. The archive consists of petitions, letters, accounts, dream texts and literary texts (Hoogendijk, 1989, 47–69; Legras 2011).
P.Mil. I 21–24, 26	The papyri of this archive were donated to the Università Cattolica di Milano by Castelli between 1922 and 1924. The place of their excavation is unknown, but they have been linked to the Lycopolite nome on the basis of the content of the texts. According to Daris the papyri come from mummy cartonnage (Daris 1961, 37). Milan, Università Cattolica	This archive consists of official correspondence including incoming letters adressed to Spemminis from Diogenes, Stasagoras and Lysiskos, and Apollonios, a letter from Numenios to Demetrios, and Herakleidas to Nikias, and a fragment of a letter. (Daris, P.Med. I, 19–25).
P.Tebt. III.1 711, 713, 715, 718, 766; P.Tebt. III.2 904, 907, 932; PUG III 99	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated by Grenfell and Hunt at Umm el–Bagat (Tebtynis) in 1899–1900. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 252. v.1 2013) Berkeley, Bancroft Library	This official archive was presumably kept by the komarches (village head) of Oxyrhyncha in the vicinity of Tebtynis. It consists of petitions, incoming and outgoing official correspondence, namelists, land surveys and accounts. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 252. v.1 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Peteharsemtheus son of Panebchounis 183	-199 — -62 Pathyris (Gebelein)	116 (114)	3	0	0	3	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Lips. I 104; P.Lond. III 665, 680 descr.	The papyri were discovered in Pathyris in the late 19th century, and were sold subsequently on the antiquities market from 1896–1910. It is uncertain whether the papyri were found together with tablets and ostraca associated with the family, as little is known of the purchase of the ostraca and tablets. (Waebens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 183. 2011) London, British Library; Leipzig Universität	This family archive covers over three generations: it was first kept by Totoes, including documents of his wife Takmeis and daughters, then by his son Panebchounis, including documents of his wife Kobahetesis and his half-sisters, and finally by Peteharsemtheus, a wealthy business man with some property, who included documents from his wife Sennesis and his sisters. Besides two internal documents (archival notes), all other papyri were incoming, amongst them letters, sale contracts, loan contracts, acknowledgments and repayments of debt, tax receipts, lease contracts and receipts, wills and marriage contracts, title deeds, mortgage contracts, cessions, transfers, a temple oath, a declaration. (Waebens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 183. 2011)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Royal Bank of Thebes 205	-199 — -1 Dios Polis (Eastern Thebes)	34 (31)	6	3	0	1	2
Sitologoi of the meris of Herakleides 539	-199 — -170 Boubastos	22 (19)	1	1	0	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
UPZ II 199–201, 215–216, 224	It is not known under which circumstances these papyri were found. Wilcken surmises that they may well have been found together. The papyri in Berlin were purchased through R. Lepsius in Paris from the collection of d'Anastasy. The London papyri were presented by Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson of the British Museum in 1834. UPZ 215 was purchased by Chasle from d'Anastasy (Wilcken, UPZ II, p. IV). Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum; Paris, Louvre	This official archive consists of the papers of the royal bank at Thebes. It includes tax receipts, diagraphai, payment orders, receipts for amounts paid (antisymbola), letters, lists and a receipt for the price of a property (for the prosopography of this archive see Bogaert 1988, 115–138).
P.Tebt. III.2 905	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated in 1899–1900 by Grenfell and Hunt at Umm-Baragat (Tebtynis). (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 539. v.1 2013) Berkeley, Bancroft Library	This official archive must clearly belong together due to their distribution on the mummies. The ergasterion (granary) of Bubastos is referenced most prominently in the documents, and the sitologos Ammonios is mentioned. We cannot however decisively state whether the archive was kept by the sitologos of the meris, or the royal scribe of the nome. It consists of accounts, official letters, an order for payment, and naukleros receipts. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 539. v.1 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Temple of Soknopaiou Nesos 236	-199 — -99 Soknopaiou Nesos (Dimeh)	101	3	0	0	0	3
Leon toparches 131	-190 — -187 Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	6 (4)	8	5	0	2	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Amh. II 40–41, 162	This archive was acquired by Grenfell and Hunt in 1898. (Chauffray, *Trismegistos* ArchID 236. 2008) New York, Pierpont Morgan Library	This is the temple archive of the priests of Soknopaios and Isis Nepheres, to whom more than half of the papyri are addressed. Most prominent in this archive is Tesenouphis son of Marres, who was agent and scribe to the priests and occurs in about one fifth of the papyri. In part this includes Tesenouphis' personal papers, which makes it possible that the archive is mixed with his private documents. It consists of contracts, offers for contracts, receipts or payment orders, letters, memoranda, oracle questions; a literary fragment, petitions, loans, a list, and an account. (Chauffray, *Trismegistos* ArchID 236. 2008)
P.Yale I 36, 38–44	The papyri of this archive come from mummy cartonnage and were acquired on the antiquities market by the Beinecke Library from M. Nahman in 1935. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 131. v.2 2013) New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library	This archive of an official contains mixed letters, both private and official. Leon was the district head or toparches presumably of Philadelpheia. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 131. v.2 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Nekrotaphoi of Hawara 2 359	-187 — -181 Haueris (Hawara)	54 (5)	3	1	0	2	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
PSI VII 857; SB I 5216; SB XIV 11411	This archive as well as the archive ‚Nekrotaphoi of Hawara 1' was excavated by sebakh diggers in 1911 in the area to the west of the Hawara pyramid. Clarysse surmises that the papyri might well have been stored in a jar or jars in the tomb of the mortuary priests. The papyri at Chicago, Copenhagen and London were purchased from M. Nahman. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 359. v.1 2013) Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Alexandria, Graeco-Roman Museum; Oxford, Ashmolean Museum	This family archive of undertakers spans, together with the archive called Nekrotaphoi of Hawara 1, more than 300 years, though separated by a gap of 25 years. These two archives were possibly at some point kept together. The younger archive contains three subarchives: the first family were Harmais II and Koloulis, then Apollonios alias Haryothes; the second family is related to the first and features most prominently Maresisouchos, Peteesis and Maron. The third family is not related to the first two families, which was kept by Marres II, son of Harthotes. Besides letters, text types include title deeds (sales and cessions, mortgages), an annuity marriage contract, contracts, loans, oaths, petitions, tax receipts and lists of tombs which are all incoming documents. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 359. v.1 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Leontiskos and partners 75	-182 — -177 Philadelpheia (Gharabet el-Gerza)	6	2	2	0	0	0
Dioskourides phrourarchos 295	-175 — -125 Herakleopolite nome	18	3	1	0	2	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Col. IV 121–122	The archive was purchased in 1925. Part of the documents came to Michigan, and some to Columbia. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 75 v.2 2013) New York, Columbia University	This is a professional archive that was probably kept by Leontiskos and partners. Most texts deal with a financial dispute concerning a vineyard in Philadelpheia, owned by Eirene, daughter of Orpheus. Only one document, P.Mich. III 200, which deals also with some other properties of Eirene, might let the keeper of this archive be doubted. The archive consists of contracts, a receipt, an account and letters. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 75 v.2 2013)
P.Phrur. Diosk. 15–17	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage that must have been kept at Herakleopolis before being used as mummy cartonnage. The papyri kept in Cologne were purchased with assistance from the Stiftung Kunst und Kultur des Landes Nordrhein–Westfalen; the Heidleberg papyri were purchased with assistance from the Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften and the Verein zur Förderung der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften. (Cowey/Maresch/Barnes, P.Phrur. Diosk., V–VI) Universität zu Köln, Papyrussammlung; Heidelberg, Institut für Papyrologie	This archive was kept by Dioskourides, an official (phrourachos and hegemon) at the harbour of Herakleopolis, during the reign of Euergetes II (around the middle of the 2nd c. BC). It is probable that he was the first phrourarchos at the newly erected Phrourion. The documents reveal little of his military activities, but more of his civilian responsibilities. The archive consists of petitions, two private and three professional letters, and a lease contract. (Cowey/Maresch/Barnes, P.Phrur. Diosk., pp. V, 1–8)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Sitologoi of Oxyrhyncha 272	-175 — -125 Oxyrhyncha	47 (45)	2	0	0	0	2
Pankrates 550	-175 — -125 Arsinoite nome	9 (3)	1	1	0	0	0
Oikonomoi of the Herakleopolite nome 157	-163 — -100 Herakleopolis	44 (19)	3	2	0	0	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Erasm. I 16–17	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage and was purchased from Fackelmann in 1970 by the University of Rotterdam. A further papyrus, SB XIV 11962, was probably bought at the same occasion by a Dutch private collection. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* AtrchiID 272. v.1 2013) Rotterdam, Erasmus University Library	The protagonists of this archive are the heads of the granary (sitologoi) at Oxyrhyncha, Dionysios and his successor Theon. The archive consists of loading orders, naukleros receipts, receipts for wages to sack carriers; letters (incoming documents) and an outgoing petition. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 272. v.1 2013)
SB XIV 12164	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage and was excavated in Magdola in 1901–1902 by Jouguet. It was rediscovered in Lille in 1972 (Clarysse/ Criuscuolo, *Trismegistos* ArchID 550 v.1 2013) Lille, Université Charles de Gaulle	This official archive is addressed to Pankrates who was an archisomatophylax and head of the syntaxis of the catoecic cavalrymen (katoikoi hippeis). The archive consists of official letters and one petition, as well as fragmentary texts. (Clarysse/Criuscuolo, *Trismegistos* ArchID 550 v.1 2013)
P.Hels. I 30, 32, 46	The papyri of this archive were purchased in 1977 by the University Library of Helsinki and they derive from two mummy cartonnages (Frösen et. al., P.Hels. I, p. 3), specifically a mummy head opened by Fackelmann. Fragments from the same archive were also found at Vienna, and Frösen speculates that fragments may also be found in other collection belonging to the archive (Frösen et. al., P.Hels. I, p. 31) Helsinki, University	This official archive from Herakleopolis gives insight into the dealings of the oikonomoi, primarily on taxation, agriculture and transport. Oikonomi include Phillipos (?), Dionysios, Straton and Alexandros. The archive consists of property declarations, official correspondence and surety documents, lists, a contract, petitions, an account, and a report. (Frösen et. al., P.Hels. I, p. 31–32)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Dionysios the royal scribe 378	-161 — -136 Herakleopolite nome	25	11	11	0	0	0
Dioskourides dioiketes 73	-156 — 178 Bousiris (Herakleopolite nome)	3 (2)	3 (2)	3 (2)	0	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Heid. IX 427–431, 434–438, 441	The papyri of this archive come from mummy cartonnage, and they were acquired by the Heidelberg Institute for Papyrology in 1999. (Armoni, P.Heid. IX, pp. VII and 3) Heidelberg, Institut für Papyrologie	This official archive was kept by the royal scribe (basilikos grammateus) Dionysios, who is also mentioned in P.Berl. Zill. 1–2. His main function according to these papyri was to inform other administrative and policing entities via reports, most notably Ptolemaios VI and Kleopatra II. Besides letters this archive contains petitions and reports. (Armoni, P.Heid. IX, pp. 3–13)
P.Berl. Zill. 1–3	P.Berl. Zill. were transcribed and edited in 1938–1939 in Berlin. P.Berl. Zill 1 and 2 come from mummy cartonnage from Abusir el Melek; in the case of P.Berl. Zill. 3 no such information is given. (Zilliacus, P.Berl. Zill., pp. 5, 23) Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum	This official archive gives insight into the reconstruction of the defences of the Herakleopolite nome and was presumably kept by Dioskourides dioiketes. The three main characters were besides Dioskourides, the hypodioiketes Sarapion and king Ptolemy. P.Berl. Zill. 1 contains six different letters in copy. (Peremans/Van t'Dack 1957, 189–186). Although P.Berl. Zill. 3 is listed with this archive in Trismegistos.org this is doubtful, because it is dated to AD 178 and seems not to be related to this archive.

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Village scribes of Kerkeosiris (Menches) 140	-139 — -107 Kerkeosiris (Herakleopolite nome)	168 (158)	22	17	0	0	5
Village epistatai of Euhemeria 12	-132 — -131 Euhemeria (Arsinoite nome)	26 (18)	5	2	0	3	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Tebt. I 10, 12–20, 22–23, 25, 28–29, 33, 38, 55, 58, 134	This archive comes from mummified crocodiles excavated by Grenfell and Hunt at Umm el-Baragat (Tebtynis) in 1899–1900. (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 140. v.1 2012) Berkeley, Bancroft Library	The main protagonist of this official archive of the village scribes of Kerkeosiris is Menches, whose papers were taken over by his successor Petesouchos. The archive is a waste paper archive: first, the outdated papers of Menches were discarded; then, these documents were recycled by private persons, most prominently by Akousilaos. Subsequently, they were used for mummy cartonnage. The archive contains field-by-field lists and reports, official accounts, petitions, incoming official correspondence, one uncertain private document and miscellaneous documents partly written on the back of other documents. (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 140. v.1 2012)
P.Giss. Bibl. I 4; SB VIII 9675–9676; SB XIV 11608, 11883	The Giessen papyri of this archive were purchased from M. Nahman in Cairo in 1913 by the Deutsche Papyruskartell (Sijpesteijn/Worp 1976, p. 41; Sijpesteijn 1975, 585ff.). The papyri at Jena were purchased by the Deutsche Papyruskartell and came to Jena in 1913. By comparison with other fragments Uebel assumes that the papyri were discovered at Euhemeria, which had been excavated by Grenfell and Hunt in 1898–1899 (Uebel 1962, 115 and Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 12. 2003). Giessen, Universitätsbibliothek; Jena, Universität	This official archive consists mostly of petitions and official letters, directed to Aniketos (village epistates and archiphylakites) and Apollonios (village epistates of Euhemeria; Uebel identifies him with the logeutes Apollonios). Other text types are contracts, a prescript, a petition, lists, a report, a complaint, a receipt (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 12. 2003).

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Chief guards of Kerkeosiris 411	-125 — -90 Kerkeosiris (Herakleopolite nome)	3	1	1	0	0	0
Village epistatai of Kerkeosiris 410	-115 — -111 Kerkeosiris (Herakleopolite nome)	4	2	2	0	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Tebt. I 138	This archive comes from the cartonnage of mummified crocodiles excavated in 1899–1900 by Grenfell and Hunt at Umm el-Baragat (Tebtynis) (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 411. v.1 2012). Berkeley, Bancroft Library	This official archive is one of four archives from Kerkeosiris, which were all reused for cartonnage in Tebtynis after 91 BC (cf. village scribes of Kerkeosiris, ArchID 140; village epistatai of Kerkeosiris, ArchID 410; Akousilaos, ArchID 412). The archive consists of one petition addressed to the chief constable Kronios and official correspondence addressed to the chief constable of the village. (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 411. v.1 2012; Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 410. v.1 2012)
P.Tebt. I 21, 35	This archive comes from the cartonnage of mummified crocodiles excavated in 1899–1900 by Grenfell and Hunt at Umm el-Baragat (Tebtynis). (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 410. v.1 2012) Berkeley, Bancroft Library	This official archive is one of four archives from Kerkeosiris, which were all reused for cartonnage in Tebtynis after 91 BC (cf. chief guards of Kerkeosiris, ArchID 411; village scribes of Kerkeosiris, ArchID 140, Akousilaos, ArchID 412). The archive contains two petitions, one addressed to Polemon and one to Agatharchos, who were both village heads (epistatai) of Kerkeosiris, an official letter addressed to Polemon and a circular letter sent by their superior official Apollonios to various officials of the meris of Polemon. (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 410. v.1 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Akousilaos and partners	-105 — -99	14	1	1	0	0	0
412	Kerkeosiris						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Tebt. I 165 2. Document	This archive comes from the cartonnage of mummified crocodiles excavated by Grenfell and Hunt in 1899–1900 at Umm el-Baragat (Tebtynis). (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 412 v.1 2012) Berkeley, Bancroft Library	This family archive is mixed up with the archive of the village scribes of Kerkeosiris (ArchID 140). It seems to originate from the second period of the archive of the village scribes, in which their official documents were recycled for private purposes. The most significant protagonist of this period is Akousilaos, as well as Chairemon, who according to Verhoogt (1998) may well be the village taxation officer (praktor) of the same name. The family lived most probably in Kerkeosiris. The official documents were either washed off, or reused on the verso. This archive consists of literary texts, decrees (which were probably merely writing exercises), contracts and private accounts. (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 412 v.1 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Correspondence of Pates and Pachrates 59	-103 — -101 Pathyris (Gebelein)	9 (8)	5	0	0	1	4

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
C.Jud. Syr. Eg. 1–2, 4, 7–8	The archive was found at Pathyris, partly during the excavations of 1891 and partly acquired on the antiquities market shortly afterwards. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 59. 2011). Cairo, Egyptian Museum, London, British Library, Paris, Louvre	The private correspondence was sent between soldiers during the Judean–Syrian war to multiple addressees. The letters originate from various places (Pelousion and Mendes in the Eastern Delta, and Palestine). In the majority of letters, Pates, son of Tsounis/Panebchounis as well as Pachrates, son of Peteharsemtheus, who were both officers, are addressed first of multiple addressees. Upon the end of the campaign, the letters were brought to Pathyris. Clarysse surmises that it is more probable that the keeper of this archive was in Pathyris. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 59. 2011)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Athenodoros dioiketes 26	-99 — 5 Herakleopolite nome	75 (74)	59	21	1	11	26
Platon correspondence 484	-88 — -88 Pathyris (Gebelein)	6 (5)	5	4	0	1	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
BGU XVI 2605–2625, 2627–2637, 2639–2664, PSI XV 1539	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage found in the beginning of the 20th century at Abusir el-Melek (Busiris) (Bagnall/Cribiore, 2006, p. 123). The papyri of BGU XVI were extracted from cartonnage coffins during the later years of 1975–1981 in the Egyptian Museum of Berlin. (Brashear, BGU XVI, pp. 5–6). Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum; Florence, Istituto Papirologico ‚G. Vitelli'	The protagonist of this official archive is Athenodoros, who was an estate manager and minor official in the Herakleopolite nome. At one point, he was the estate manager (phrontistes) of Asklepiades, son of Dionysios, presumably the same as Asklepiades the strategos of the Heraklepolite nome and a landowner. (Bagnall/Cribiore, 2006, p.123); Brashear states further that he was a dioiketes of a district in the Herakleopolite nome. Text types include petitions, letters, accounts, an inventory list and a list of priests (Brashear BGU XVI, p. 5).
P.Bour. 10–12; SB III 6300; P.Bad. II 16	P.Bour. was acquired on the antiquities market by U. Bouriant as from 1891. (Collart, P.Bour., p. 7 and Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 484. 2011); SB III 6300 was acquired at Luxor by Grenfell in 1894. (Grenfell 1919, p. 251); P.Bad. II 16, as do the other Gebelein papyri in the Heidelberg collection, comes from clandestine excavations. (Bilabel, P.Bad II=P.Heid. I 2, p. X) Heidelberg, Institut für Papyrologie; London, British Library; Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie	The sender of this official correspondence is Platon who was strategos of the Thebaid and worked at Latopolis (Esna). The letters are addressed to inhabitants or priests at Pathyris, and most prominently to Nechthyris, the military leader at Pathyris. Vandorpe surmises that the correspondence was most probably archived at Pathyris' fortress or some other official archive at Pathyris. (Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 484. 2011)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Officials of the Herakleopolites 156	-80 — -1 Herakleopolis	21	9	9	0	0	0
Asklepiades 111	-29 — -23 Bousiris (Herakleopolite nome)	12 (11)	8	0	0	8	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
BGU VIII 1741–1745, 1747–1750	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage; the majority of the cartonnage papyri were excavated by O. Rubensohn at Abousir el-Melek (Bousiris) in 1903–1905. (Sarischouli 2001, 1177). This is certain for BGU IV (Generalverwaltung, BGU IV, pp. 171, 328, 337, 339, 341), as also for BGU VIII (Kunkel 1927, 169; Schubart/Schäfer, BGU VIII, Vorwort) Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum	This official archive deals with the administration of the Herakleopolite nome. The most prominent protagonist is the village scribe (basilikos grammateus) Paniskos. Kunkel surmises that he most probably was the owner of the archive, and that outgoing documents were copies kept by him. The other main correspondents were the dioiketes Athenaios and the strategos Dionysios. (Kunkel, 1927, 169–172). The archive includes a prostagma, orders, documents on grain transport, lists, official correspondence, decrees and edicts, reports, drafts, a protocol, a circular decree, petitions, documents, official correspondence, receipts, pisteis, private letters, and others.
BGU IV 1203–1209; BGU XVI 2665	This archive comes from mummy cartonnage excavated by O. Rubensohn at Abusir el-Meleq (Herakleopolite nome) in 1903, 1904 and 1908. The documents of this archive were found pasted together in a *tomos synkollesimos*. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 111. 2004) Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum	This archive consists of eleven private letters, mainly the correspondence of a wealthy family living in the Herakleopolite nome. All letters are addressed to Asklepiades (or 'Asklas'), apart from IV 1203, which is in all likelihood a draft. Six of these letters were sent by his sister, Isidora. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 111. 2004)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Satabous son of Herieus 151	-20 — 88 Soknopaiou Nesos (Arsinoite nome)	51 (42)	1	1	0	0	0
Correspondence of Asklas 274	1 — 199 Panopolites	4	4	0	0	4	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Lond. II 276 a (S. 148)	It is not known under what circumstances this archive was found. Hoogendijk and Feucht suggest that it might have been found at the end of the 19th century during clandestine excavations. The Berlin papyri might have been found by Zucker in 1909. The papyri in London were acquired in 1890–1895. (Hoogendijk / Feucht, *Trismegistos* ArchID 151. v.1 2013) London, British Library	This family archive was kept by Satabous, son of Herieus, his sons and grandchildren. He described himself as 'priest in charge' of the second phyle, and from 11 to 5 BC he filled the position of 'scribe of the priests'. Most of the documents deal with the lawsuit between the families of Nestnephis and Satabous concerning a dispute over property. The archive contains petitions, contracts, receipts, letters, copies of official letters, a report, a memorandum, title deeds, a court proceeding, an oath, and two literary texts. (Hoogendijk / Feucht, *Trismegistos* ArchID 151. v.1 2013)
P.Lugd. Bat. XXV 31; SB X 10529 a–b; SB XII 11148	Two of the papyri of this archive (SB X 10529 a and b) are now kept at Sorbonne University. The origin of these documents is unknown (Boyaval 1967, 81); SB XII 11148 was found in Firenze in 1971 by Pruneti; P.Lugd. Bat. XXV 31 was acquired by the Papyrologisch Instituut of the Leiden University in 1939 (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 274. 2003). Florence, Istituto Papirologico 'G. Vitelli'; Leiden, Papyrological Institute; Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie	This private correspondence is linked by their sender, Asklas. All texts are business letters, one sent to his son Asklepiades, one to the archemporos Sarapias, a third to an unnamed archemporos, and a fourth to a certain Demosthenes; the latter may have been sent by Asklas himself, or potentially his son, Asklepiades. (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 274. 2003)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Lawsuit of Isidoros vs. Tryphon 113	5 — 6 Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	8	6	0	0	6	0
Komon son of Mnesitheos 123	25 — 99 Oxyrhynchos	19 (16)	3	0	1	1	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
Greek Roman Byzantine Studies 54 (2014) 37–44 (=joint edition of P.Col. VIII 211 + P.Lond.inv. 2553); Pap.Congr. XXVI p. 323; P.NYU II 18; SB XVI 12835; SB XXIV 15909–15910	This archive was acquired in Cairo by Bell from M. Nahman and came in 1923–1924 to various collections in the U.S. via the British Museum. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 113. v.2 2013). P.Lond.inv. 2553, which contains the left portion of P.Col. VIII 211, remained in the British Museum. (Sarri 2014, 37–44) Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library; New York, Columbia University	This lawsuit archive deals with a legal dispute concerning the farming of land in Philadelpheia between Isidoros, who was from Psophthis in the Memphite nome, and Tryphon, who was the strategos of the Arsinoite nome. It is not clear who was the keeper of this archive, as there are at least three addressees. Besides letters, the archive contains also petitions. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 113. v.2 2013).
P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2835, 2838, 2844	The papyri P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2834–2846 were excavated by Grenfell and Hunt in 1904 at Oxyrhynchos, whilst P.Oxy I 48 was found during their first excavation season in 1897. The archive was identified in the 1960s by J. Rea. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 123. 2004). PSI X 1109 was purchased on the antiquities market by M. Norsa and E. Brecchia. (Vitelli, PSI X, p. VII) Oxford, Sackler Library, Papyrology Rooms	This family archive mostly contains incoming documents addressed to various members of a moderately wealthy family who farmed land in Tholthis in the Thmoisepho toparchy. The most prominent protagonists were Mnesitheos, son of Petesouchos, his wife Aline, and their son Komon III. This archive consists of a private letter, receipts, a declaration of death, a sales contract as well as manumission documents (a letter regarding manumission; a declaration of status; a business letter; a list of praktores). (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 123. 2004)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Tryphon weaver	25 — 83	44 (43)	4	0	0	4	0
249	Oxyrhynchos						
Nemesion	30 — 61	66 (64)	8	1	2	3	2
149	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Oxy. II 259, 269, 325 descr.–326 descr.	The archive was found at el-Behnesa (Oxyrhynchos) by Grenfell and Hunt in 1897–1898. No further details concerning the finding circumstances are known (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Oxy. II, p. V; Pestmann 1989, 74; Biscottini 1966, 60). Oxford, Bodleian Library; Philadelpheia, University of Pennsylvania Museum	The protagonist of this private family archive is Tryphon who was a weaver in Oxyrhynchos. The archive deals in part with a dispute between Pesouris and his wife Saraeus regarding the identity of a child Pesouris had given Saraeus to wetnurse. The archive contains apographai, horoscopes, tax receipts, mortgage money (contract), letters, a copy of a declaration, petitions, a contract between spouses, apprenticeship contracts, sale contracts, a report, an apolysis certificate and a copy of proceedings. (Pestmann, 1989, 74–77; Biscottini, 1966, 61–62)
P.Graux II 10–11; P.Lond. VI 1912; P.Mich. XII 656; P.Princ. II 65; SB XII 11125; SB XIV 11585, 12143	This archive was acquired around 1920 on the antiquities market at Cairo by the British Museum and the universities of Cornell, Michigan and Princeton. There are also some papyri that found their way to Geneva, the Graux collection at Paris, and Manchester. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 149. v.1 2012) Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library; London, British Library; Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie; Princeton, University Library	The keeper of this archive, containing mixed documents, both private and official, is Nemesion, son of Zoilos, who was a collector of capitation taxes in Philadelpheia. The documents centrally show economic problems from AD 45–56, in which the collectors were struggling to recover the tax money. His private business documents revolve around lending money, farming and sheep. The archive consists of lists, declarations of death, a house-to-house survey; petitions and letters; it includes incoming, outgoing and internal documents. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 149. v.1 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Pompeius Niger	31 — 64	15 (14)	5	0	0	5	0
195	Arsinoite nome						
Aphrodisios (letters)	38 — 40	4	4	0	0	4	0
517	Arsinoite nome						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Fouad I 75; P.Merton II 63; SB VI 9120–9122	This archive was purchased in the early 1930s. We know that six of these documents were purchased in 1934. PSI XI 1183 was purchased in two parts, part A in 1933, part B in 1934. In 1933, the two Yale papyri were purchased in Cairo by M. I. Rostovtzeff from M. Nahman. No purchase information is available for PSI XIII 1318. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 195. v.2 2013) Cairo, Egyptian Museum; Dublin, Chester Beatty Library; Oslo, University Library	This private archive was kept by Lucius Pompeius Niger, who was born in Oxyrhynchos. He was a soldier of the legio XXII Deiotariana and he retired later in AD 44, though it is not certain where he retired to. It is probable that he settled in either Oxyrhynchos or Oxyrhyncha. Most documents are related to his legal affairs, whilst his private letters show aspects of his family life. The archive consists of private letters, a petition, contracts, a private *tomos synkollesimos*, a census return and a report of a court session with the prefect. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 195. v.2 2013)
P.Ryl. II, 229–231, p. 381,	P.Ryl. I, p. 381(= P.Lond. III 893 descr.) arrived at the British Library (British Museum) before 1907; the remaining three papyri came to the John Rylands Museum before 1915. (Verreth, *Trismegistos* ArchID 517 v.2 2012) London, British Library; Manchester, John Rylands Library	This is the private correspondence of Ammonios and his agent (epistates) and friend Aphrodisios. The archive was most probably kept by Aphrodisios. The letters are mostly about agricultural matters. The documents show that Ammonios was engaged with making wine in Boubastos, but more precise information as to their location is not given. (Verreth, *Trismegistos* ArchID 517 v.2 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Apollonios of Bakchias	50 – 99	19	15	0	0	15	0
	Arsinoite nome						
16							

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
BGU I 33, 248–249; BGU II 417, 531, 594–597; BGU III 844, 850, 884–886; P.Michael. 15	This archive was acquired in 1891 from the private collection of Brugsch (information provided by Prof. G. Poethke.) (Smolders; *Trismegistos* ArchID 16. v.2 2013). Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum	This private archive was kept by Apollonios who lived and worked as an estate manager in Bakchias. The majority of letters are sent by the gymnasiarch Chairemon, though there are also letters from other persons (most prominently a certain Theoktistos) to Apollonios, and drafts of letters from Apollonios to Chairemon. The archive also contains copies of documents. (Smolders; *Trismegistos* ArchID 16. v.2 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Apollonios strategos	44 – 121	232 (229)	130	35	5	75	15
19	Hermopolis						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Alex. Giss. 38–46, 48–61; P.Brem. 1, 3, 5–9, 10–22, 48–66, 71–73, 78; P.Flor. III 332, 334 R; P.Giss. Apoll. 1–13, 15–28, 31–43; P.Giss. I 41, 45–46, 61–62, 64–65, 69, 86, 90, 92; P.Laur. II 38; P.Lips. II 138; P.Palau Rib. 29; P.Ryl. II 233; P.Strasb. IV 178, 187; P.Strasb. VIII 745; PSI IV 308; SB VIII 9842; SB X 10277–10278; SB XXVI 16536	This archive was excavated during unofficial excavations in Hermopolis, presumably found in the family's private residence or suburban villa. They are now located at various institutions mainly in Europe (Rowlandson 1998, 118). P.Brem. were acquired by the Deutsche Papyruskartell in 1902 in Egypt. According to the merchant, the papyri had been found at Eschmunen (Hermopolis) (Wilcken, P.Brem., p. 6). The Giessen papyri were acquired through the Deutsche Papyruskartell in 1902–1913 (Kortus, P.Giss. Apoll., pp. 1 and 4). SB VIII 9842 was also purchased in this context, probably in 1912 by the Deutsche Papyruskartell for the Giessen papyrus collection (Gerschmann 1962, 235). Similarly, SB X 10277–10278 had been purchased in 1902 by the Deutsche Papyruskartell, though they were subsequently displaced in the Focke Museum, and found in 1965. (Maehler 1966, 342). P.Lips. II 138 was purchased by Borchardt from H. Makran in 1904 (Duttenhöfer, P.Lips. II, p. 133). Alexandria, Graeco-Roman Museum; Barcelona, Palau-Ribes; Bremen, Private collection G. Bergfeld; Bremen, Staatsbibliothek; Bremen, Überseemuseum; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana; Giessen, Universitätsbibliothek; Leipzig, Universität; London, British Library; Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale	This is the private and official archive of Apollonios, strategos of the Apollonopolite nome of the Heptakomia in 113/4–120 AD. His wife Aline and smaller children lived in the Apollonopolite nome, whilst his mother Eudaimonis and daughter Heraidous stayed in Hermopolis. After laying down the office of strategos, he moved back to the family house at Hermopolis and took his papers back with him. The archive includes private letters from his family, and official correspondence, official reports, petitions. (Kortus, P.Giss. Apoll., pp. 7–12)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Soterichos and Didymos	65 – 135	43 (42)	1	0	0	1	0
226	Theadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Soterichos 28	This archive was discovered in unofficial excavations. Forty papyri were found at Theadelphia by Egyptian farmers, which came together with other papyri with different provenance to Cairo in 1927. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 226. 2005) Cairo, Egyptian Museum	This private family archive, covering over two generations, was kept by Soterichos, and after his death by another family member, and finally by his son Didymos. The family does not seem to have owned land, but mostly earned their living by leasing and cultivating land near Theadelphia. Though they were taxed as metropolitans and able to hire personnel, they appear to have had cash flow problems. When Soterichos died, he left a considerable amount of debt to his family. The archive consists of receipts for rent of fields, contracts of lease, receipts for repayment of loans, receipts for poll tax, and five other. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 226. 2005)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Eutychides son of Sarapion	90 – 195	136 (134)	32	0	4	28	0
87	Magdola Mire (Hermopolite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Sarap. 54 V, 80–103	The archive was discovered after 1895, but part of it was stolen. The Amherst papyri were bought in 1896–1899 through Grenfell and possibly Hunt, and then in turn sold to P. Morgan in 1914. Part of the London papyri were bought in 1896 by W. J. Myers. Other London papyri were bought in 1901 and 1903. P.Heid. was bought from C. Reinhardt by the University of Heidelberg in 1897. The Strasbourg papyri were bought in winter 1898–1899 by Reitzenstein and Spiegelberg on behalf of the University of Strasbourg. The Würzburg papyri were bought by Wilcken through the Deutsche Papyruskartell after 1902, and according to Schwarz they include many of the originally stolen papyri of this archive. The Würzburg papyri were destroyed in 1945. We do not know the date of entry of the Berlin museum papyrus, which has been destroyed unphotographed. (Schwarz, P.Sarap., pp. 1–12; Wilcken 1933, 5). Heidelberg, Institut für Papyrologie; London, British Library; New York, Pierpont Morgan Library; Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale; Vienna, Nationalbibliothek; Würzburg, Universität	This private family archive contains documents of Sarapion, his brother Anoubion and his son Eutychides, who was the last keeper of the archive. They were a family of landowners who cultivated a substantial amount of land in the Hermopolite nome, near the city Hermopolis and to the north of the nome. They were also engaged in renting and leasing out parcels of land. The archive consists of letters, declarations of property, accounts and leases of land. (Kehoe 1992, 67–72)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Gemellus Horion	93 – 214	37 (28)	1	1	0	0	0
90	Karanis (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Mich. VI 364	This archive was discovered in 1924 during the Michigan excavations in Kom Aushim (Karanis), specifically in a courtyard and structure 50062E. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 90. v.2 2013) Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library	The main protagonists in this family archive, covering over three generations, are Gaius Iulius Niger, his son Gaius Apollinarius Niger and his grandson Gemellus Horion, who was its last owner. Gaius Iulius Niger was a cavalry veteran who had settled after his discharge in Karanis. The family owned considerable land, and according to one petition, Horion represented landowners and public cultivators of the village Kerkesoucha. The archive contains petitions, tax receipts, declarations to officials, documents of a house archive, a birth certificate, an official letter, an epikrisis document and a reused document. The outgoing documents are either drafts or copies, or contain a reply along the bottom (in the case of four documents the bottom is lost). (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 90. v.2 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Epagathos estate manager of Lucius Bellienus Gemellus 134	94 – 110 Euhemeria (Arsinoite nome)	51 (38)	18	0	0	17	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Fay. 110–124, 248–249; P.Laur. II 39	The archive was excavated in 1898–1899 by Grenfell and Hunt in Qasr el-Banat (Euhemeria). The documents were found in the rubble of a house in two rooms. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 134. v.2 2013) Bristol, Museum; Brussels, Musées Royaux; Cairo, Egyptian Museum; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana; Graz, Universität; Liverpool, Harold Cohen Library; New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library; New York, Columbia University; Philadelpheia, University of Pennsylvania Museum; Toronto, Victoria University; Washington, Smithsonian, Library	The protagonists of this professional archive were Lucius Bellienus Gemellus in Euhemeria, his son Sabinus and his estate manager Epagathos. Upon leaving his post as a legionary, Gemellus settled in Aphrodites Berenikes Polis and seems to have owned a substantial parcel of land. It is more probable that the archive was kept at Epagathos' house, as most documents are addressed to him, and he acted on Gemellus' behalf. The archive consists of letters, contracts, and an account. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 134. v.2 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris	96 – 147	25 (19)	14	0	0	14	0
116	Karanis (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Mich. VIII 465–466, 482, 485–487, 493, 496–501, 509	The archive was excavated in Kom Aushim (Karanis) by the University of Michigan in 1929–1930 and 1930–1931 and found in a structure known as granary C123. In part, this archive comes from the same context as the archive of the family of Satabous (ArchID 407. (Claytor and Feucht, *Trismegistos* ArchID 116. v.2 2013) Ann Arbor, Michigan University; Cairo, Egyptian Museum	This family archive was kept by Gaius Iulius Sabinus, son of Neilos, and later his son Gaius Iulius Apollinarius. Their family was wealthy and metropolitan, and though of Graeco-Egyptian descent, later acquired Roman citizenship. The father served as a soldier in the legio III Cyrenaica and legio XXII Deiotariana, as did his son Apollinarius, who later served in the legio III Cyrenaica. Apollinarius also later assumed the responsibilities of frumentarius. After his successful career, he returned to his native Karanis. The archive is presumably a wastepaper archive and consists mostly of letters, but also a census declaration, a declaration of property, a contract, a will, a lease, a loan, an oath, receipts, an account and legal proceedings. (Claytor and Feucht, *Trismegistos* ArchID 116. v.2 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Administrative archive of Theadelphia 247	98 – 225 Theadelphia (Batn el–Harit)	93 (66)	1	0	0	1	0
Thermouthas' family 525	99 – 105 Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	6 (4)	6	0	0	6	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
SB III 7264	The archive was probably found in an administrative building in Batn el-Harit (Theadelphia) by sebakh diggers, presumably before 1908 and certainly by 1911. Seven of the Berlin papyri were purchased in 1912 by W. Schubart from an Arab merchant; BGU IX 1900 was acquired from the British Museum in 1912–1913 (though it most probably is not part of this archive). Four further Berlin papyri were acquired in Gizeh and said to have been found in Batn el-Harit (Theadelphia). The papyri published in P.Berl. Leihg. were purchased by Zucker in 1909 (said to have been found at Theadelphia). Of the Columbia papyri, ten were purchased in 1923 through the British Museum consortium, equally marked to have been found in Theadelphia. The papyri at Ghent were bought in 1908 by F. Cumont. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 247. v.1 2011) Ghent, University	This official archive was presumably kept by the village scribe or as part of the state archives of Theadelphia. Kortenbeutel surmises that it was kept at the records office of the district head (toparches). Part of the archive is comprised of older texts from different contexts (AD 125–140), which were reused for this archive; the other texts (AD 155–180) are often written on the verso of the older texts and deal with the concerns of the toparchy. Most documents are concerned with taxes. Document types include tax lists and other lists, reports, accounts and abstracts of official documents. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 247. v.1 2011)
BGU I 261; BGU III 822; P.Mich. III 201–202; P.Wisc. II 69; SB V 7572	This archive was possibly discovered at Gharabet el-Gerza (Philadelpheia). The two uncertain Berlin texts were discovered in the Fayum and purchased in 1884; P.Mich. III 201–202, P.Wisc. II 69 and SB V 7572 were purchased in Egypt by Grenfell and Kelsey in 1920, but we know nothing of their provenance. (Azzarello, *Trismegistos* ArchID 525. v.1 2012) Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library; Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum; Madison, Wisconsin State University	This family archive kept over one generation contains six private letters from Thermouthas and her husband Antoni(u)s to family members. They presumably were kept in the house of Thermouthas' family. First she lived to the north of the Arsinoite nome, and later returned to Philadelpheia after the birth of a child and the disappearance of her husband. (Azzarello, *Trismegistos* ArchID 525. v.1 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Claudius Tiberianus	100 – 125	17	18	0	0	17	1
54	Karanis (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
ChLA V 299; P.Mich. VIII 467–481, 510	This archive was excavated in Kom Aushim (Karanis) by the University of Michigan in 1928–1929 and found in house C/B167. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 54. v.1 2011) Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library	This private correspondence of mostly incoming letters was archived by Claudius Tiberianus. The sender of most of these letters is Claudius Terentianus, who may have been his son. Both Tiberianus and Terentianus appear to have enjoyed military and civil careers. Their letters are written in both Latin and Greek. The letters deal mostly with Claudius Tiberianus' family and business affairs. Probably Terentianus was writing from the region of Alexandria, whilst Tiberianus was stationed elsewhere. Later, he moved to Karanis, and took his letters with him. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 54. v.1 2011; Strassi 2008)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Kronion and Isidora	100 — 199	42 (16)	10	2	0	3	5
279	Tebtynis (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Tebt. II 291 Z. 37–53, 314–315, 616; P.Tebt. Tait. 47–48	P.Tebt. II was excavated by Grenfell and Hunt at Umm el-Baragat (Tebtynis) in 1899–1900. P.Tebt. Tait was probably discovered in clandestine excavations and then purchased by Grenfell and Hunt after 1899–1900. Further, SB VI 9458 was purchased in 1931 by Rostovtzeff on the antiquities market at Cairo. (Feucht, *Trismegistos* ArchID 279. v.1 2012) Berkeley, Bancroft Library; Oxford, Sackler Library, Papyrology Rooms	This family archive over four or five generations consists of the documents of Kronion‘s parents, Pakebkis and Thenmarsiosouchos and Isidora‘s father Pakebkis and paternal grandfather Marsisouchos and maternal great-grandfather Harpochration. These were bequeathed to Kronion and Isidora, and possibly subsequently to their son-in-law Maron. Kronion and Isidora were priests, and the majority of the documents are related to priestly affairs, although about a quarter are private in nature. The archive consists of applications, reports and returns, accounts, receipts, letters, as well as miscellaneous documents comprising lists of persons, literary/medical fragments, a resignation of a lease, a petition and a text concerning priests. (Feucht, *Trismegistos* ArchID 279. v.1 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Neilos	100 – 199	5	5	0	0	5	0
388	Arsinoite nome						
Memphite official	100 – 299	51	1	1	0	0	0
403	Memphis						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
BGU II 601–602; BGU III 714, 801; P.Giss. I 97	This archive was purchased before 1898 and seems to have been found in the Fayum. (Verreth, *Trismegistos* ArchID 388. v.1 2012) Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum; Giessen, Universitätsbibliothek	This private correspondence consists of five letters written by Tasoucharion to her brother Neilos. Neilos lived in the Arsinoite, whilst Tasoucharion, a married woman with children, seems to have lived in the region in or around Alexandria. The letters reveal that Tasoucharion was also engaged in business matters. (Verreth, *Trismegistos* ArchID 388. v.1 2012)
P.Leipz. 2	This archive was discovered around the year 1855 in Memphis in clandestine excavations. The papyri were sold in pieces to different people. 57 fragments were purchased by Brugsch in 1853 in Cairo for the 'small library at Berlin'. The University of Leipzig purchased 25 fragments, which had been brought to Leipzig by Tischendorff from Egypt. According to Parthey, they were purchased in Sakkara near Memphis. According to Zündel, one further fragment was gifted to Tischendorff by Mariette, who then took a number of papyri from the same find context to St. Petersburg. Zündel also reports that a further, possibly related, papyrus had been purchased by A. von Rougement von der Schadau. (Wessely, P.Leipz., p. 237–238) Leipzig, Universität	This archive was kept by a Roman official at Memphis. One of its chief features are remnants of tachygraphical writing. Text types include a letter, lists, report, accounts, apographe, tax proposals, an inventory, a contract, and various official fragments. The private letter seems to be addressed from one official to another, and deals with delayed registration. (Wessely, P.Leipz., p. 238–274)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Turbo 277	100 — 299 Tebtynis (Umm el-Baragat)	4 (3)	4	0	1	3	0
Gaius Iulius Agrippinus 91	103 — 148 Karanis (Kom Aushim)	21 (17)	5	0	0	4	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Mil. Vogl. II 79; P.Mil. Vogl. IV 255–257	This archive was excavated in the 'insula dei papyri' (a block of houses including the 'cantina dei papyri') in Tebtynis in 1934. Apart from P.Mil. Vogl. IV 255 which was found in another part of the insula, they were found in the cellar of an adjacent house together with a terracotta statue of Aphrodite. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchiID 277. 2005) Milan, Università Statale	The private archive seems to have been kept by Turbo, to whom these letters are addressed from Herakleides. He was probably his estate manager (phrontistes). (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchiID 277. 2005)
BGU XI 2129; ChLA X 434; P.Bour. 23; P.Gen. I (2e éd.) 74; SB XVI 12556	There is little precise data on the finding circumstances of this archive. They were found unofficially and sold to various people. The Berlin papyri appeared in 1890–1910. The other papyri were purchased in 1887–1896. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 91 v.2 2013) Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum; France, Private collection Bouriant; Geneva, Bibliothèque	This court case or family archive over two generations was first kept by Gaius Iulius Agrippinus, and later his son Agrippinus. The majority of texts deal with the lawsuit of the widow of Valerius Apollinarius, Tertia Drusilla, though there are also some private documents. The widow filed suit, in part successfully, against the father and later the son to reclaim the land that Agrippinus had possessed to regain the loan he had lent to Valerius Apollinarius. The son was a soldier of the legio II Traiana Fortis. The archive contains court case documents; loans, sales and private letters; of the outgoing documents, many are copies or drafts. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 91 v.2 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Sokrates tax collector and family	107 — 185	37 (29)	7	0	0	7	0
109	Karanis (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Mich. VIII 488, 495, 505–507, 512; SB XIV 12082	This archive was found during excavations of the University of Michigan in house B17 as well as neighbouring houses B18, B2 and street BS1 in Karanis in 1926. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 109. 2009) Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library	This mixed archive (both private family and official archive) was kept by Socrates, son of Sarapion, who was a village liturgist, and collected money taxes (praktor argyrikon) in Karanis several times. He also once was a census official (laographos) for the census of AD 145/146. After his death, it is most likely that the archive was passed to one of his family members The archive consists both of incoming documents and copies of outgoing documents; tax receipts, a petition, a copy of an edict, census documents in a tomos synkollesimos, a lease, a contract, private letters, reports, a list, an acknowledgment of a deposit of money and literary texts. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 109. 2009).

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Patron's decendants	108 – 176	97 (87)	21	1	6	14	0
66	Tebtynis (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.IFAO II 17; P.Mil. Vogl. I 24; P.Mil. Vogl. II 50–51, 59–62, 66 R; P.Mil. Vogl. IV 217–219, 279–282; P.Tebt. II 411, SB VI 9487; SB VIII 9643–9645	The archive was found in the 'cantina dei papiri' in Umm el-Bagarat (Tebtynis) in 1934, where discarded material had been brought from different places, perhaps to be used as fuel. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchiID 66. v.2 2013). This is an underground room of a house in Tebtynis, where A. Vogliano and G. Bagnani found in 1934 the well-known roll of diegeseis of Callimachus and some hundreds of various documents. (Gallazzi 1990, 283; Begg 1998, 203–207). The building was adjacent to the so-called grapheion (public records office), and had been partly excavated clandestinely in years before. The archives of Kronion, son of Cheos (ArchID 125), of Pakhebis' descendants (ArchID 64) and of Turbo (ArchID 277) were discovered in the vicinity of the cantina at the same time. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 66. v.2 2013). Berkeley, Bancroft Library; Cairo, IFAO; Geneva, Bibliothèque; Milan, Università Statale	This archive of a family who owned property at Tebtynis started with the sons of Patron, Geminus I, Amatius and Paulinus. After AD 130, the family might have relocated to Ptolemais Euergetis or Antinoopolis permanently. Before this date, the documents mainly deal with family matters, while after it, they deal with the management of their land through their phrontistai. Most prominent among the phrontistai are Laches, after whom the archive was erroneously named for a while, and Turbo. The archive most probably is linked to the 'archive of Pakhebis' descendants' and 'the archive of Turbo', or indeed all three may form one large archive. The archive consists of accounts, leases and related documents, letters and miscellaneous texts. The majority of letters were sent by family members to the phrontistai with instructions. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 66. v.2 2013).

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Sarapion alias Apollonianus and sons 210	120 — 299 Oxyrhynchos	55	13	4	1	7	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Iand. VI 116; P.Oxy. I 80; P.Oxy. XVIII 2184; P.Oxy. XIX 2227; P.Oxy. XXXI 2560; P.Oxy. XLVI 3291; PSI XII 1246–1248, 1259–1261; PSI XV 1553	The P.Oxy. were excavated by Grenfell and Hunt at Oxyrhynchos (Houston 2007, 327), and the PSI papyri come partly from excavations and partly from purchases in Egypt. PSI XII 1243, 1245, 1246–1248 and 1259–1261, XV 1554 come from excavations by E. Brecchia in Oxyrhynchos (dal Kom Ali Gamman) (Norsa, PSI XII, p. iv; Bartoletti, PSI XV, p. 336). PSI X 1148 was excavated by C. Anti at Tebtynis in a repository adjacent to the temple of Soknebtynis in 1931 (Vitelli/Norsa (et al.), PSI X, p. VII; http://www.psi-online.it/documents/psi;10;1148). PSI VII 734 was purchased from an Egyptian merchant by G. Capovilla and gifted to 'Società Italiana per la ricerca e lo studio dei papiri greci e latini in Egitto' in 1922. (Vitelli/Norsa (et al.), PSI VII, p. V). SB I 5806 was part of the Gradenwitz collection before being gifted to the cloister Beuron (Hagedorn/Worp 2001, 175). P.Iand. VI 116 was acquired through C. Schmidt from merchants at Madinet el-Fayum in 1926. (Rosenberger, P.Iand. VI, p. 117). Cairo, Egyptian Museum; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana; Florence, Istituto Papirologico 'G. Vitelli'; Giessen, Universitätsbibliothek; Oxford, Sackler Library, Papyrology Rooms; Winchester, College Library	This private archive features the affluent family of Sarapion alias Apollonianus, who lived in Oxyrhynchos. Despite initially lacking Roman citizenship, several members of this family held some form of municipal office, and Sarapion rose from gymnasiarch to strategos in the Arsinoite and later Hermopolite nome. The archive was presumably later kept by his son Spartiates alias Chairemon. The family owned some land that they leased out. (Rowlandson 1996, 111–112) Their papers were found mixed up among a substantial library of literary texts; it is possible that the library belonged to Sarapion's family (Houston 2007, 346). Text types include contracts, an invoice, letters, a transfer, orders, a confirmation, reports, an oath, lists, a registration, an agreement, receipts, a sale, a loan, applications, a copy of a negotiation, an affidavit, a demand, a liturgy and petitions.

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Temple of Narmouthis: house of the ostraca 534	124 – 225 Narmouthis (Arsinoite nome)	529	1	0	0	0	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
O.Narm. I 114	This archive was found by A. Vogliano during Italian excavations in Medinet Madi (Narmouthis) in 1938 in the so-called 'house of the ostraca' in the direct vicinity of the temple dedicated to the goddess Hermouthis and Sokonopis. In room III of this building were found approximately 1300 ostraca, which were in part stored in two vessels, whilst others were lying against the northern wall; room IV, which appeared to be a grain storehouse, yielded a further 250 ostraca. Ten further ostraca were found in an Italian excavation in 2006 (Vandorpe and Verreth, *Trismegistos* ArchID 534. v.1 2012) Cairo, Egyptian Museum	It is clear that at the very least the documents of room III represent a real temple archive of the temple of Narmouthis. In part, the documents seem to have been kept by a priest concerned with school education and the instruction of staff at the temple, and in part were written by a priest Phratres as part of a juridical dossier. Though ultimately the keeper of this archive is unknown, it is possible that the school ostraca were also kept by Phratres. The archive consists of school texts or writing exercises, horoscopes and birth notes, notes and drafts for a petition, lists, accounts, labels. (Vandorpe and Verreth, *Trismegistos* ArchID 534. v.1 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Marcus Lucretius Diogenes	132 – 248	69 (34)	2	0	0	1	1
137	Philadelpheia (Gharabet el-Gerza)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Diog. 48, 50	This archive was purchased in 1920–1923 on the antiquities market. Some papyri were purchased by the British Museum through the papyrus cartel presided by H. I. Bell from M. Nahman in Cairo. The dealer stated that the papyri were discovered in a basket at Gharabet el-Gerza (Philadelpheia). The Birmingham papyri were purchased by J. Rendel Harris in Cairo in 1922–1923. P.Mich. XVIII 791 was purchased by F.W. Kelsey in 1922 from M. Nahman, and P.Customs 354 was acquired in the early 1920s. The Paris papyri were purchased 'through a legacy from C.H. Graux' possibly in Alexandria or the Fayum in 1921–1922). (Waebens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 137 v.1 2013). London, British Library	The most prominent person in this private family archive over three generations is M. Lucretius Diogenes, Marcus Lucretius Clemens' great–grandson, of whom one document also survives. The last owner of the archive was his daughter Aurelia Kopria and her great–uncle Aurelius Sarapion, who added further documents. The archive consists of birth certificates, extracts from epikrisis (status check) records, tax receipts and a sale receipt, offers to lease, a lease contract, wills and a document recording the opening of a will, acknowledgements of debt and a repayment of debt, declarations, petitions, a guardianship application, sale contracts and cessions, a custom house receipt, a loan contract, census declaration, a request for parathesis (deposit), accounts and lists. (Waebens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 137 v.1 2013).

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Petaus komogrammateus	135 – 187	140 (134)	30	25	1	2	2
	Ptolemais Hormou						
182							

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Petaus 10–22, 24–30, 46–47, 49, 52–56, 59, 84	The University of Michigan purchased 27 papyri through C. Schmidt in 1937 (inv. nos. 6869–6895); the Institute of Papyrology of Cologne purchased inv. nos. 300–409. (Geens and Broux, *Trismegistos* ArchID 182. v.1 2012). Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library; Universität zu Köln, Papyrussammlung	The main protagonist in this official archive is Petaus, son of Petaus and village scribe (komogrammateus) of Ptolemais Hormou and some villages nearby. It seems that during the Roman period, a komogrammateus could not work in his home town, and in keeping with this, Petaus himself came from Karanis. Despite his profession, it appears that Petaus was not literate. Most prominently, the archive concerns itself with the public affairs of Petaus' office. The archive contains incoming and outgoing (copies and drafts) as well as internal documents, and consists of letters, petitions, drafts, copies, reports, lists, nominations, writing exercises and second hand papers. (Geens and Broux, *Trismegistos* ArchID 182. v.1 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Diogenis	138 – 147	5 (4)	2	0	0	2	0
276	Tebtynis (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Mil. Vogl. II 76–77	Five of these texts were excavated in 1934 in Umm el-Baragat (Tebtynis) in the 'cantina dei papiri', and a sixth document nearby. The 'cantina dei papyri' is an underground room of a house in Tebtynis, where A. Vogliano and G. Bagnani found in 1934 the well-known roll of diegeseis of Callimachus and some hundreds of various documents. (Gallazzi 1990, 283; Begg 1998, pp. 203–207). The cantina contained discarded material brought there from different places probably for burning. (Verreth and Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 276. v.1 2012). The building was adjacent to the so-called grapheion (public records office), and had been partly excavated clandestinely in years before. Other archives in this context are Patron's descendants, Kronion senior, Turbo and Kronion, son of Cheos and descendants, which presumably includes Diogenis' papyri (cf. ArchID 64, 66, 277). (Verreth and Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 276. v.1 2012) Milan, Università Statale	The main protagonist in this private archive is Diogenis, daughter of Lysimachos alias Lupus, who was a landowner. Her family and manager, probably Kronion, lived in the countryside, whilst she lived elsewhere, possibly in Ptolemais Euergetis. We do not know whether the papyri mentioning Diogenis were kept in their own archive or were part of Kronion's archive. The archive consists of letters, a cancellation of a lease, receipts, and a contract of agreement. (Verreth and Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 276. v.1 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Sarapias and Sarapammon	165 – 270	10 (9)	1	0	0	1	0
209	Tebtynis (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Tebt. II 424	P.Tebt. II were excavated at Umm el-Baragat (Tebtynis) in 1899–1900 by Grenfell & Hunt for the University of California and consists of the papyri found in the houses of the town during the first month of excavation. P. Tebt. II 335 (the verso of which is 404 and 424) was found tied up with several other documents: 285, 319, 326, 378, 406 and 558 (Grenfell/Hunt/Goodspeed, P.Tebt. II, pp. VI, 136, 148, 302 and Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 209. 2003). Berkeley, Bancroft Library	The main protagonists in this private family archive are Sarapammon, mentioned in four documents, and Sarapias, mentioned in two documents. Sarapias was the wife and later widow of Paulus, and may have been related to Sarapammon, possibly his daughter. Smolders states that it is slightly more possible that this archive was bundled by Sarapias, as her documents belong to a short time span to the end of the documents of Sarapammon, who in one document is declared unsound of mind. Sarapammon may have been a citizen of Antinoopolis and his family was wealthy and owned land. Sarapias lived in Antinoopolis and owned land in the Arsinoite. The archive consists of a rescript, an application, a petition, a division of property, land leases and a private letter. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 209. 2003)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Saturnila and her sons 212	175 — 199 Karanis (Arsinoite nome)	8	8	0	0	8	0
Strategos of the Panopolites 328	175 — 199 Panopolites	6	1	1	0	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Heid. VII 400; P.Mich. III 206, 209; P.Mich. XV 751–752; P.Wisc. II 84; SB III 6263; SB XXVI 16578	This archive was sold to various institutions in Europe and the US. The British Library purchased SB III 6263 in 1919 as part of a lot of texts that mostly belonged to the Zenon archive. This fact suggests that the papers might come from the Fayum. Those texts published in P.Mich. (P.Mich. III 206 and 209; P.Mich. XV 751–752) were purchased in Egypt by F. W. Kelsey in 1920. SB 26 16578 was purchased by H.I. Bell from M. Nahman in 1924. There is no information on the provenance of P.Heid. VII 400 and P.Wisc. II 84. (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchID 212. 2004) Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library; Heidelberg, Institut für Papyrologie; London, British Library; Madison, Wisconsin State University	The main protagonists in this family correspondence are Saturnila and her sons. The family was Roman and might have lived in the Arsinoite nome, or Karanis. The majority of letters are sent by Sempronius, her eldest son, and most of them are addressed to Saturnila; on the basis of the verso of two double letters and the only extant verso of a single letter, it is surmised that Saturnila herself was illiterate and all letters were sent to one of her sons. The archive has been termed 'the happy family archive' on account of the strong relationship between mother and sons. (Van Beek, *Trismegistos* ArchilD 212 v.2 2013)
P.Achm. 8	P.Achm. entered the Bibliothèque Nationale in 1887 and originates from Achmim (Panopolis). P.Bour. were purchased in Egypt by U. Bouriant. Collart believes that it probably was bound in a codex in the White Monastery of St. Shenute at Atripe. P. Achm. 6, 7, 8 and 9 (and P. Bour. 41a–b) were glued together to form a codex, and P. Achmim 1/P. Bour. 3 and a Coptic text were written on their verso. (Collart, P.Achm., pp. I–II and 37ff) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale	This public archive shows centrally a strategos of the Panopolites. Further persons mentioned are Claudios Polybianos, a landowner, and Claudios Diognetos, the epitropos ousiakon. The archive consists of a description of land parcels, a γραφὴ ἱερέων and connected pieces, copies of official letters relating to religious affairs, a tax list, and documents relating to ἐπίσκεψις. The texts are often arranged in columns (Collart, P.Bour., pp. 128–134; Collart, P.Achm., pp. 19–52).

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Aelius Sarapammon 532	175 — 225 Ankyropolis (Herakleopolite nome)	8	1	0	0	1	0
Theognostos 241	175 — 238 Hermopolis (El-Ashmunein)	27	1	0	0	0	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Vet. Aelii 8	The Vienna texts were probably acquired in 1892–1893 and seem to originate from the village Ankyronon in the Herakleopolite nome. The Heidelberg papyri seem to corroborate this, as they were found in houses in Ankyronon in or about 1914 during the 'Badische Grabungen' by F. Bilabel; there is no further information available regarding the other papyri. (Sänger, *Trismegistos* ArchID 532. v.1 2013; Sänger, P.Vet.Aelii, pp. 116–117) Vienna, Nationalbibliothek	This private archive was kept by the veteran and former standard-bearer (signifier) of the Legio II Traiana, Aelius Sarapammon. After leaving the military, he settled in the Herakleopolite nome, where he owned and cultivated some land. The archive deals with several legal disputes, and consists of petitions, a sworn promise, an appeal, a copy of a census declaration, an abrochia (failure of the inundation declaration), a contract and a private letter. (Sänger, *Trismegistos* ArchID 532. v.1 2013)
P.Lond. III 1178 (p. 214)	Most papyri from this archive were, along with many others, purchased in 1901 by the British Museum in London, and in 1903 a large document was added. One fragment was found in Strasbourg (P.Strasb. VI 573), which is a copy of P.Lond. III 946. (Van Minnen 1989, 107; Sijpesteijn 1989, 214) London, British Library	This is a private archive of a family living in Hermopolis. Most prominent amongst them is Theognostos whom Van Minnen assumes to be the owner of the archive. One of his brothers, Hermeinos, was a boxer, and they both shared the additional name Moros. Document types include a letter, a diploma, a renouncement, registration documents, contracts, a receipt, a notice of birth declaration, a receipt of a wetnurse, list, a subscription. (Van Minnen 1989, 106–133; Sijpesteijn 1989, 213–218)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Iulius Serenus	179 – 219	16	1	0	0	1	0
117	Karanis (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Hamb. I 54	The archive was purchased, apparently on a single occasion, on the antiquities market before 1913 for the Hamburg collection. (Clarysse, *Trismegistos* ArchID 117. v.2 2013) Hamburg, Bibliothek	This both private and official archive was kept by Iulius Serenus, to whom all documents are addressed. He was a veteran soldier who retired at or near Karanis. One military roll (P.Hamb. I 39) remains from his career as summus curtor of the ala veterana Gallicana. Otherwise the archive is comprised of tax receipts and a private letter. His private documents allow insight into the land he cultivated and animals he owned. (Clarysse, Trismegistos ArchID 117. v.2 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Heroninos	199 – 275	446 (436)	293	2	17	196	78
103	Theadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
BGU IV 1030; BGU XIII 2352; P.Alex. 27; P.Berl. Sarisch. 10; P.Corn. 50; P.Eirene III 37; P.Fay 128; P.Flor. II 118, 120–127, 129–154, 156–162, 164, 166–173, 175–206, 208–215, 217–262, 266–268, 270–277; P.Flor. III 338, 345, 373; P.Gen. I (2e éd.) 1; P.Gen. II 117; P.Giss. Bibl. III 27; P.Gron. 16; P.Horak 24; P.Laur. I 19; P.Laur. III 102–106; P.Laur. IV 188; P.Oslo II 57; P.Prag. I 20 V, 102–115; P.Prag. II 123, 126 V, 198–204; P.Rein. II 113, 115; P.Ryl. II 236–240, 245; P.Strasb. V 349–350; P.Strasb. VIII 747, 774 V; P.Strasb. IX 855–856; P.Ups. Frid. 10; PSI I 92; PSI VII 840; PSI VIII 930; SB VI 9082, 9361–9362, 9364, 9415, 9466, 9467–9471, 9473–9478; SB XIV 11295, 12003; SB XVI 12392, 12577; SB XVIII 13332, 13609; SB XX 14453; SB XXIV 16323	In part, the archive was found in official excavations: some documents were excavated by Grenfell and Hunt in 1899 in Batn el-Harit (Theadelphia), as well as by Rubensohn in 1902, by Lefebvre in 1908, and finally by Breccia in 1913. The remaining documents were found in unofficial excavations in 1900–1903. The documents were sold subsequently to various collections, most prominently Florence and Prague. (Verreth/Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 103. v.1 2013) Alexandria, Graeco-Roman Museum; Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library; Athens, Archaeological Society; Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum; Cairo, Cairo University; Cairo, Egyptian Museum; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana; Geneva, Bibliothèque; Giessen, Universitätsbibliothek; Groningen, University Library; Leipzig, Universität; London, British Library; Manchester, John Rylands Library; Milan, Università Cattolica; Oslo, University Library; Oxford, Ashmolean Museum; Paris, Sorbonne, Institut de Papyrologie; Prague, National Library; Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale; Uppsala, University Library; Vienna, Nationalbibliothek	This professional archive was kept primarily by Heroninos, one of the estate managers (phrontistes) of the estate in Theadelphia of the councillor of Alexandria and eques, Aurelius Appianus, and then his daughter Aurelia Appiane Diodora alias Posidonia. The estate eventually returned to the crown. There are also some accounts of Heroninos' son Heronas. Text types include letters, accounts, and a report, and outgoing letters seem to be drafts or copies. This archive is related to five further dossiers: that of the Poseidonios estate, the Alypios estate, the Herakleides estate, the Dios estate and the Philoxenos estate. Many texts are written on the verso of other texts. (Verreth/Vandorpe, *Trismegistos* ArchID 103. v.1 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Aurelius Asklepiades, Adelphios, Aurelia Charite and Demetria alias Ammonia 28	200 — 355 Hermopolis	71 (69)	5	2	0	2	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
CPR XVIIA 39; P.Cair. Salem 8; P.Charite 38, 40; SB XXIV 16333	The majority of papyri are kept at Vienna and Cairo, as well as some individual documents at Heidelberg and Berlin (Mitthof, P.Kram, p. 135). Three of the texts at Vienna are marked to be from the year 1886 in the hand of C. Wessely, and P.Charite states that most probably the texts had reached Vienna by 1886–1887. The texts at Cairo were described by Grenfell and Hunt to be 'probably from Ashmunen', and were probably found at the same occasion as the Vienna texts. (Worp, P.Charite, p. 1) Vienna, Nationalbibliothek; Cairo, Egyptian Museum	The main protagonists of this private family archive are Aurelius Adelphios, strategos and Aurelia Charite, presumably his wife, who owned substantial amounts of land, as well as her son, Aurelius Asklepiades. Father and son also had a seat in the curia of Hermopolis. Furthermore, papers of the mother of Charite, Demetria alias Ammonia are part of this sprawling family archive, and Mitthof identifies a subarchive for each of these persons. The identification of these protagonists is very probable, but not certain (Mitthof, P.Kramer, pp. 134–135). The archive consists of contracts, lists of land, receipts, petitions, letters, fragments, certificates and others.

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Boule of Oxyrhynchos 45	200 – 375 Oxyrhynchos	53	6	4	0	0	2
Corn dole of Oxyrhynchos 57	200 – 299 Oxyrhynchos	48 (46)	1	0	0	0	1

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Mich. XX 816; P.Oxy. I 59; P.Oxy. VIII 1104; P.Oxy. XXVII 2476–2477; SPP V 119 v	A large part of this archive was excavated by Grenfell and Hunt, partly in the excavations of 1903–1904 and partly 'with a few exceptions' in 1904–1906. (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Oxy. X, p. V; XII, p. V). Other papyri of this archive have been scattered in Ann Arbor, Heidelberg, Milano and St. Louis. (Sijpesteijn/Worp, P.Mich. XX, p. V). London, British Library	This official archive is associated with the Boule of Oxyrhynchos.The documents published in P.Mich. deal mostly with tax grain and its transport from Oxyrhynchos to Alexandria (Sijpesteijn/Worp, P.Mich. XX, pp. 17–23). Text types include sureties and declarations, a rescript, receipts, lists, a copy of a hypomnema, letters, substitution of a liturgy (?), protocols, a message, reports, notes, an application, orders, a confirmation, and possibly petitions.
P.Oxy. XL 2926	The largest part of this archive was excavated by Grenfell and Hunt during their third season at Oxyrhynchos, and a few documents were found during their first season excavations there. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 57. 2004) Oxford, Sackler Library, Papyrology Rooms	This official archive was kept by the officials of the corn dole (siteresion) of Oxyrhynchos. Carrié notes two distinct levels of administration, on the level of the urban phyle and a superior instance at Oxyrhynchos. The archive consists of applications (many pasted in *tomoi synkollesimoi*), petitions, registers, lists, extracts of the public records and official correspondence between officers of the corn dole. (Carrié 1998, 271–295; Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 57. 2004)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Nepheros 150	200 — 399 Phathor (Herakleopolite nome)	42	17	1	0	16	0
Aurelius Nikon alias Aniketos 280	200 — 299 Hermopolite nome	5	1	0	0	1	0
Philantinoos 393	200 — 399 Oxyrhynchite nome	6	1	0	1	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Nepheros 1, 3–14, 17–20	This archive was purchased in 1982 by the universities of Heidelberg and Trier from the German 'Kunsthandel'. According to the merchant, the papyri derive from a single find, possibly at Hathor. (Kramer/Shelton, P.Neph., pp. IX, 3–5) Heidelberg, Institut für Papyrologie; Trier, Universität, Papyrologie	This monasterial correspondence is mostly addressed to an important priest named Nepheros at the Hathor monastery. Amongst the purchased documents there are also some letters addressed to other people and various documents, amongst which a receipt for the payment of taxes, receipts, contracts, accounts, loans, sales. (Kramer/Shelton, P.Neph., pp. 3–5)
P.Harrauer 35	P.Harrauer 35 was found at Hermopolis and is now located at the Vienna Nationalbibliothek (Frösén, P.Harrauer, pp. 99–100). Vienna, Nationalbibliothek	This private archive focuses on Aurelius Nikon alias Aniketos, son of Eudaimon, and his mother Koprilla, who both lived at Hermopolis. Aurelius Nikon was a *bouleutes*. The archive consists of a letter, sales, and a renewal of mortgage (Frösén, P.Harr., pp. 99–100)
P.Oslo III 146	P.Oslo III were acquired by Oslo University between 1920 and 1936. (Eitrem/Amundsen, P.Oslo. III, p. III) The provenance of P.Harris may well be Oxyrhynchos. (Ankum/Pleket/Sijpesteijn, P.Harris II, pp. VII, 163) Oslo, University Library	This official archive contains orders sent to/from a certain Philantinoos and concerns cereals or wine. Philantinoos was an agent of Seuthos, a gymnasiarch and bouleutes at Oxyrhynchos (Ankum/Pleket/Sijpesteijn, P.Harris II, p. 163). This archive consists of delivery orders and one letter.

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Tryphon Phibas 408	200 — 250 Hermopolite nome	4	1	0	0	1	0
Nekrotaphoi of the oasis 147	200 — 325 Oasis Magna–Kysis (Dush)	20	1	0	0	1	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Yale I 84; *Zeitschrift fur Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 158 (2006) 226–234	This archive was purchased from Dr Kondilios by M. Rostovtzeff and C. B. Welles for Yale University on the antiquities market in Cairo (Benaissa 2006, 226 and 233) New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library	This business correspondence is addressed to Trypon Phibas. On the basis of the letters, it seems that he may have had an administrative position at a temple, possibly at an Ibis cult of Thoth. Further one might speculate that Tryphon may have been a secretary or himself a priest. Three of these letters were sent by a certain Apion. (Benaissa 2006, 226–234)
P.Grenf. II 77	This archive was dispersed at the end of the 19th century. SB I 4651–4657 were bought at Louqsor by A.H. Sayce. The papyri in P.Grenf. II were bought in 1894 and 1895 in different places. Those kept at the Sorbonne were bought at Akhmin by P. Jouguet. Other texts of this archive exist elsewhere, e.g. the papyri kept at Heidelberg were acquired from the University of Cairo (apart from SB I 5679). (Bingen 1964, 157) London, British Library	This private archive deals with the undertakers from the Great Oasis; one prominent member is Sarapion alias Philosarapis. (Bagnall 1997, 149–151; Bingen 1964, 157–166). Text types include mandates, contracts, a receipt, a letter, and petitions.

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Boubastites nomos	205 — 224	5	3	3	0	0	0
22	Boubastos (Delta)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Bub. I 1, 4; B.Bub. II 5	Papyri from Bubastos appeared in various collections as from the 60s. P.Bub. I 1 was found in Bubastos and was sold on the antiquities market to the Universität zu Köln Papyrussammlung. P.Bub. I 1 and 2 were found in the same stack of burnt papyri, but not lying immediately on top of each other (P.Bub. II 5 lying inbetween); P.Bub. I 4 is a *tomos synkollesimos* originating from two stacks of burnt papyri (Frösén/Hagedorn, P.Bub. I, 7, 13–14, 97; Hagedorn/Maresch, P.Bub. II, p. 1). Universität zu Köln, Papyrussammlung	This official archive is addressed in part to the strategos of Bubastites from the dioiketes Claudius Severianus. These letters are probably copies made by the office of the strategos. The archive includes letters, contracts and lists of liturgical candidates joined together in a *tomos synkollesimos*, mostly addressed to the strategos Aurelius Herakleides from the dioiketes Septimius Arrianus (Frösén/Hagedorn, P.Bub. I, pp. 13–16, 97–98). Further, there is a roll of copies of letters to and from the eklogistes Zoilos and the strategos Domittios Diosarapis alias Balbillos. (Hagedorn/Maresch, P.Bub. II, p. 4)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Cohors XX Palmyrenorum 55	205 — 256 Mesopotamia (Dura– Europos)	78	51	1	0	0	50
Tesenouphis wine merchant 413	211 — 211 Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	5 (4)	1	0	0	1	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Dura 55–81	This archive was excavated by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters in 1921–1935. The texts were found at Dura to the north in the area from the main gate and Tower 3, to Block E7 along the fortifications, more specifically in room W13 of the Temple of Azzanathkona. (Perkins, P.Dura, pp. 3 and 36) New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library	This archive was kept by the Cohors XX Palmyrenorum. The most prominent person is a tribune named Postumius Aurelianus, who is the addressee of ten and sender of three letters in a *tomos synkollesimos* containing more than 50 letters. The *tomos synkollesimos* probably contains mostly incoming letters addressed to the tribune, as well as some outgoing letters in copy and a few other relevant documents. Other text types include a festival list (feriale duranum), a file of circular letters, the correspondence file of Postumius Aurelianus, lists, morning reports and other reports, rosters, juridicial protocols (decisions of a tribune), fragments of an official journal, a receipt, a label, and a marking of equipment. (Perkins, P. Dura, pp. 191–405)
P.Gen. I (2e éd.) 72	The archive was purchased as part of a lot by Nicole in 1892, and subsequently gifted to the Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire in Geneva. It seems that most of this lot of papyri came originally from Philadelpheia. (Verreth, *Trismegistos* ArchID 413. v.1 2012) Geneva, Bibliothèque	This private archive was kept by Tesenouphis, son of Nikon. He was a wine merchant living in Philadelpheia. According to one document, he was the 'head of a local association' (collegiums). The archive consists of incoming letters, contracts and receipts, and, potentially, a register. (Verreth, *Trismegistos* ArchID 413. v.1 2012)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Aelius Syrion	222 — 263	11	3	1	0	2	0
533	Ankyropolis (Herakleopolite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Vet. Aelii 14, 18, 19	The precise origin of the papyri is unknown. The Vienna texts were probably acquired in 1892/1893. On the acquisition of the London text there is no information available. (Sänger, *Trismegistos* ArchID 533. v.1 2013; Sänger, P.Vet.Aelii, pp. 116–117) Vienna, Nationalbibliothek	This private archive was kept by Aelius Syrion, who was a veteran of the Legio II Traiana and a land owner in the villages of Ankyronon and Muchon. The archive bears many similarities to the archive of Aelius Sarapammon (*Trismegistos* ArchID 532). Besides the land he owned, Aelius Syrion also leased substantial plots of land, e.g. in the Koites toparchy. The archive also deals with several of his legal disputes. Besides letters, text types include petitions, a trial transcript, a request for registration, contracts and a receipt. (Sänger, *Trismegistos* ArchID 533. v.1 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Aurelius Apollonios royal scribe	229 – 238	7	1	1	0	0	0
32	Lykopolite nome						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
CPR V 3	These seven papyri are part of the Vienna collection, which was acquired by purchase from a variety of places and by official excavations: papyri were excavated by T. Graf in 1881-1882 in Medinet el-Fayum (Krokodilopolis/Arsinoe) and Ehnas (Herakleopolis Magna), and sold to the collection in 1883 ('first Fayum find'). The 'second Fayum find' was found in 1884–1885 and purchased as from 1884 by Graf; the papyri from Dimeh (Soknopaiou Nesos) were found in 1891 and purchased as from 1893; this purchase may have included other papyri from the Fayum and El-Ashmunein as well. Papyri were purchased from Graf for the last time in 1897, whilst papyri were purchased from Graf Carlo Landberg who had himself purchased the documents in Kairo in 1898. Two further purchases occurred in 1899 and 1911 the latter of which had been purchased in Edfu. Apart from smaller purchases, papyri were also purchased in 1968, and as from 1973 more purchases were possible. (Loebenstein, P.Rain. Cent, 3–11). Though the archive is linked to the Lykopolite nome, J. R. Rea notes whilst discussing CPR V 3 that it is not probable that it was discovered at Lycopolis on account of the fact that neither official nor inofficial excavations seem to have occurred at this location. (Rea/Sijpesteijn, CPR V, p. 5) Vienna, Nationalbibliothek	This official archive was kept by the royal scribe of the Lycopolite nome, Aurelius Apollonios, and contains three reports, a notice of death, declarations and an official letter. (Hagedorn 1983, 236). P.Rain Cent. 65–67 relate to the office management of the priests. (Boswinkel, P.Rain. Cent., p. 356)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Claudia Isidora alias Apias 53	237 — 237 Oxyrhynchos	1	1	1	0	0	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Oxy. XLIII 3118	This archive was partly purchased and partly excavated at Oxyrhynchos by Grenfell and Hunt. The papyri published in P.Oxy. VI were excavated 'largely' in 1897 (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Oxy. VI, p. V), those published in P.Oxy. VII were mostly excavated in 1905–1906, though some were also discovered in 1903–1904 and 1897, and those published in P.Oxy. XII were excavated at Oxyrhynchos 'with a few exceptions' in 1904–1906 (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Oxy. XII, p. V). The relevant papyri in P.Oxy. XIV were found chiefly in 1904–1906. (Grenfell/Hunt, P.Oxy. XIV, p. V). The papyri that are held in American collections were purchased from M. Nahman through H. I. Bell; P.Col. X 276 was purchased by Columbia University in 1926–1927. P.Yale I 69 was purchased in 1926 (Oates/Samuel/Welles, P.Yale I, p. 223), P. Mich. XV 707 was purchased in 1926 by the University of Michigan (Sijpesteijn, P.Mich. XV, p. 43). SB XX 14292 was purchased by D. M. Robinson in 1903–1910 in the Fayum from Dr. D. L. Askren (Willis 1988, 99). The other two papyri of the archive were purchased in about the same time; P.Oslo was purchased between 1920 and 1936 (Eitrem/Amundsen, P.Oslo III, p. III), and SB XIV 11403 (BGU XI 2126 col. ii) was purchased as part of the Blechkiste 206 (http://ww2.smb.museum/berlpap/index.php/record/?TM=18129). Oxford, Sackler Library, Papyrology Rooms	This private archive was kept by Claudia Isidora alias Apia, who owned extensive parcels of property in the Oxyrhynchite nome, the small Oasis and maybe even the Arsinoite nome. If we assume that the register of SB XVI 12235 relates to her, she was a female gymnasiarch with extensive estates. Eventually, her property was confiscated in AD 225. (Rowlandson 1996, 114–115; Kehoe, 1992, 124–126). Text types include petitions, contracts, lists, instructions, accounts, demands, acknowledgments, and an official letter.

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Sakaon	254 – 343	76	7	6	0	1	0
206	Theadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)						

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Sakaon 5–7, 30, 50, 55–57	The archive was excavated in Batn el-Harit (Theadelphia) (cf. the archive of Heroninos, ArchID 103). Partly, the archive entered the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in 1903 (inventory numbers 58993–59049) and partly was sold on the antiquities market to various institutions (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 206. v.2 2013) Cairo, Egyptian Museum	The main protagonist of this mixed private and official family archive is Aurelius Sakaon, son of Satabous and Thermoutharion. Sakaon is also known from other archives (the archive of Flavius Abinnaeus, and that of the sheep lessees of Theadelphia). His family was influential and owned land in Theadelphia, and Sakaon filled the positions of village head (komarches) and granary director (sitologos) multiple times. The archive consists of census declarations, a land register, petitions, contracts, reports of sitologoi, accounts, nominations, a report, an extract from a breviarum of dyke works, official correspondence and one private letter. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 206. v.2 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Sheep-lessees of Theadelpheia 217	260 – 306 Theadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	19	2	0	0	2	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
SB V 8087; SB VIII 9914	This archive entered the Bibliothèque Nationale of Strasbourg at the beginning of the 20th century, as did also some papyri from the Theadelphian archives of Heroninos and Sakaon. This makes it probable that they were found in the same context, although no precise information about their find place is available. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 217. 2005) Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale	This professional archive was kept by the brothers Neilammon and Kalamos/ Kalamon and later potentially by Neilammon's son, Pasis. The brothers made a living leasing sheep from larger estates of metropolitan citizens, and kept their herds in the village Sentrepaei. The son Pasis lived in Thraso, which could be the location where the archive was found, whilst Kalamos' son, Pabous, lived at Euhemeria. The archive consists mostly of incoming documents, and contains receipts, orders, a business letter, contracts of loan and sale and tax receipts. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 217. v.2 2013)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from — to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Aurelius Isidoros 34	267 — 324 Karanis (Arsinoite nome)	175	5	0	2	2	1
Melas 518	275 — 299 Egypt	7	7	0	0	7	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Cair. Isid. 126, 132–134	This archive was potentially found in the house with dovecotes (C35/37) in Karanis according to Van Minnen, and was subsequently acquired on the antiquities market in 1923–1925 amongst many other papyri from Karanis belonging to the late third and fourth century. The Cairo papyri were purchased in 1923, and some large lots of Karanis papyri were purchased by H. I. Bell from M. Nahman, Blanchard, Askren and Abdullah (1924) and Kondilios (1925) for a consortium. Bell commented specifically on Box XV purchased in 1924 that it contained similar documents from a single find. SB XX 14378 was purchased by J. F. Lewis before 1925 via A. Khayat. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 34. v.2 2013). Cairo, Egyptian Museum	The main protagonist of this family archive is Aurelius Isidoros. The archive is closely related to two further subarchives, the archive of the stepbrothers Aion, son of Sarapion and Valerius, son of Antinourios, and a group of documents pertaining to Aurelia Tetoueis. Aurelius also possessed some papers of his parents, Ptolemaios and Herois, and documents related to his brothers' affairs, most particularly Palemon and Heras. Bagnall surmises that these three brothers as well as Heras' wife Taesis operated jointly. Isidoros owned some land in Karanis and was a tenant farmer who leased land, as well as filled some liturgical offices, amongst which komarches and sitologos. Text types include receipts, contracts, petitions, lists and accounts, reports, declarations and correspondence. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 34. v.2 2013).
P.Ryl. IV 692–698	P.Ryl. IV were acquired either among the earliest acquisitions of the Library, or through R. Harris in 1917 or B. P. Grenfell in 1920. (Roberts/Turner, P.Ryl. IV, p. IX) Manchester, John Rylands Library	This archive consists of private letter from Melas to Olympius, Boukolos, and Narcissus. In some cases, the upper part of the letter has not survived, and identifications have been based on the handwriting. (Roberts/Turner, P.Ryl. IV, p. 178)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Aurelius Ammon scholasticus son of Peteharbescahinis 31	281 – 399 Abu el-Matamir (Delta)	129	1	0	0	1	0

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Ammon I 3	The archive was acquired in part by the Duke University Library in Achmim in 1968, in part by Duke in 1971 together with some other fragments, and partly later. As from 1971, the documents of this archive kept at Cologne were added to the Duke collection. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 31. 2004) Universität zu Köln, Papyrussammlung; Durham (NC), Duke University	This family archive over two generations was last kept by Aurelius Ammon, son of Petearbeschinis, although papers of his father are also included. Whilst his parents' generation was mostly priests and Ammon might have been a priest for some time, Ammon becomes a lawyer (scholastikos). The family also owned extensive property in the Panopolite nome. The archive concerns itself in part with a lawsuit between Ammon and the delator Eugeneios, in part with family matters. Text types include court documents, a deputation, protestations, petitions, declarations of property, contracts, farming accounts, lists of property, receipts, letters and literary texts. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 31. 2004)

Archive name and ArchID (from *Trismegistos*)	Date (from – to) and Provenance (from *Trismegistos*)	Total (certain) texts (from *Trismegistos*)	Total letters (from *HGV*)	Official letters (*HGV*: Brief amtlich)	Private letters		Uncategorised letters (*HGV*: Brief)
					(*HGV*: Brief Geschäftlich)	(*HGV*: Brief privat)	
Ploutogeneia	297 – 297	9	8	0	0	7	1
167	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)						
Aurelia Tapais	298 – 307	6	1	1	0	0	0
327	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)						
SUM: 116 archives			2435	326	545	855	709

Editions	Finding circumstances and present location of letters (based on *Trismegistos*)	Brief description (based on *Trismegistos*)
P.Mich. III 214, 216–221; SB XVI 12326	This archive originates from Philadelpheia in the Fayum and was acquired by the University of Michigan from M. Nahman in 1923. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 167. v.2 2013) Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library	The central protagonists of this family correspondence are Ploutogeneia and her husband Paniskos. It is clear that Ploutogeneia at some point went to her family's (?) house, which might account for the fact that letters addressed to Ploutogeneia are mixed up with letters addressed to her brother Aion, mother Heliodora and grandmother Isidora. Paniskos may have been some kind of soldier or merchant. (Smolders, *Trismegistos* ArchID 167. v.2 2013)
P.Mich. XII 627	The archive was found clandestinely in Gharabet el-Gerza (Philadelpheia) in 1920; the Sorbonne papyri were acquired by Graux in the Fayum or possibly Alexandria in 1921 and 1922. P.Mich. XII 627 amd P.Wisc. II 58–59 were acquired by B. P. Grenfell and F. W. Kelsey for the universities of Michigan and Wisconsin in 1920. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 327. v.2 2013) Ann Arbor, Michigan University, Library	This private archive of Aurelia Tapais contains documents dealing with her purchase of a building containing a mill, as well as a transfer of a house in Philadelpheia to her. The archive consists of a contract of sale and two duplicates of this document, and a request for provisional registration (parathesis); outgoing documents are copies. (Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 327. v.2 2013

Appendix II: Dimensions of Letters

This list contains a selection of completely preserved letters (they have published images from which it could be confirmed that their margins been preserved intact or almost intact; measurements of their original dimensions can be regarded as accurate).

Publication	Provenance (*HGV*)	Dating (*HGV*)	Height	Width	Width : Height	fibres direction
P.Sorb. I 9	Oxyrhynchite nome or Herakleopolite nome (?)	268 BC	10.7	37.2	3.5	recto, ↓
P.Cair. Zen. I 59025	Alexandria	258–256 BC	31.5	10	0.3	recto, →
P.Cair. Zen. I 59034	Alexandria (?)	257 BC	30	35	1.2	recto, →
P.Cair. Zen. I 59046	Alexandria	257 BC	31	14	0.5	recto, →
P.Cair. Zen. I 59057	unknown	257 BC	12.5	33	2.6	recto, ↓
P.Cair. Zen. I 59093	Syria	257 BC	22.5	34	1.5	recto, ↓
P.Cair. Zen. I 59107	Alexandria (?)	257 BC	19.5	32	1.6	recto, ↓
P.Mich. I 6	unknown	257 BC	10	32	3.2	recto, ↓
P.Mich. I 23	Alexandria (?)	257 BC	8	25	3.1	recto, ↓
P.Mich. I 26	Arsinoite nome (?)	257 BC	14	32	2.3	recto, ↓
PSI IV 330	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	257 BC	14.7	32.9	2.2	recto, ↓
P.Cair. Zen. II 59150	Alexandria	256 BC	31	19	0.6	recto, →
P.Col. III 31	unknown	256 BC	16	33	2.1	recto, ↓
P.Petr. II 6	Arsinoite nome	256 BC	18.5	34	1.8	recto, ↓
P.Petr. II 13 (1)	Arsinoite nome	256 BC	13.5	17.5	1.3	recto, ↓
P.Petr. II 13 (2)	Arsinoite nome	256 BC	24.5	7.5	0.3	recto, →
PSI IV 335	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	256 BC	11.7	23.5	2.0	recto, ↓
P.Mich. I 32	unknown	255 BC	32.5	9.5	0.3	recto, →

Publication	Provenance (*HGV*)	Dating (*HGV*)	Height	Width	Width : Height	fibres direction
P.Petr. II 4 (11)	Arsinoite nome	255 BC	11.5	33	2.9	recto, ↓
P.Mich. I 35	Memphite nome (?)	254 BC	8	24	3.0	recto, ↓
P.Mich. I 36	unknown	254 BC	23	33	1.4	recto, ↓
P.Mich. I 41	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	253 BC	31	11	0.4	recto, →
P.Mich. I 42	unknown	253 BC	20.5	33.5	1.6	recto, ↓
P.Mich. I 43	Arsinoite nome	253 BC	13.5	29	2.1	recto, ↓
P.Col. III 51	unknown	251 BC	33	6.7	0.2	recto, →
P.Mich. I 72	unknown	251 BC	33	13	0.4	recto, →
PSI IV 361 Z. 1–19	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	251 BC	34.5	34	1.0	recto, ↓
P.Mich. I 51	Arsinoite nome	250 BC	22.5	11	0.5	recto, →
P.Mich. I 57	Arsinoite nome	248 BC	17.5	33.5	1.9	recto, ↓
P.Col. IV 91	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	242 BC	13.5	13	1.0	recto, →
P.Petr. III 43 (3)	Arsinoite nome	241 BC	30	34	1.1	recto, ↓
P.Haun. I 9	Arsinoite nome	240 BC	19	32.5	1.7	recto, ↓
P.Mich. I 55	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	240 BC	36	11.7	0.3	recto, →
P.Köln XI 438	Herakleopolite nome	214 BC	10	31	3.1	recto, ↓
P.Köln XI 439	Herakleopolite nome	213 BC	31	16	0.5	recto, →
P.Heid. VI 366	Kerkeosiris (Arsinoite nome)	3rd c. BC	31	7.5	0.2	recto, →
P.Cair. Zen. III 59526	unknown	mid 3rd c. BC	12	34.5	2.9	recto, ↓
P.Col. IV 103	Philadelpheia (?) (Arsinoite nome)	mid 3rd c. BC	23	8	0.3	recto, →
P.Mich. I 74	Arsinoite nome	mid 3rd c. BC	34	9	0.3	recto, →
P.Mich. I 81	Arsinoite nome	mid 3rd c. BC	11.5	5.5	0.5	recto, →
P.Petr. II 4 (7)	Arsinoite nome	mid 3rd c. BC	9.5	30	3.2	recto, ↓
P.Petr. II 11 (1)	Alexandria	mid 3rd c. BC	11	27.5	2.5	recto, ↓
P.Haun. I 10	Arsinoite nome	end of 3rd c. BC	31.5	11.5	0.4	recto, →
P.Sijp. 57	Arsinoite nome	3rd/2nd c. BC	31	21.5	0.7	recto, →

Publication	Provenance (*HGV*)	Dating (*HGV*)	Height	Width	Width : Height	fibres direction
P.Sijp. 45	Arsinoite nome or Herakleopolite nome (?)	197 BC	24.1	27.2 (2 columns)	1.1	recto, →
P.Col. IV 121	Krokodilopolis (Arsinoite nome)	181 BC	11	31	2.8	recto, ↓
UPZ I 59	Memphis	179 BC	31.8	14.6	0.5	recto, →
P.Phrur. Diosk. 15	unknown	158 BC	32	14.5	0.5	recto, →
UPZ I 69	Memphis	152 BC	8	33	4.1	recto, ↓
UPZ I 70	Memphis	152 BC	33	12	0.4	recto, →
UPZ I 71	Memphis	152 BC	31	12	0.4	recto, →
UPZ I 72	Memphis	152 BC	26	8	0.3	recto, →
P.Phrur. Diosk. 16	unknown	151 BC	31.5	15.7	0.5	recto, ↓
P.Phrur. Diosk. 17	Herakleopolite nome	151 BC	28.6	15	0.5	recto, →
P.Bad. IV 48	Hipponon (Herakleopolite nome)	127 BC	32	17	0.5	recto, ↓
P.Tebt. I 35	Arsinoite nome	111 BC	31.2	19.5	0.6	recto, →
SB I 5216	Labyrinthos (Arsinoite nome)	101 BC	23.5	12.5	0.5	recto, →
P.Köln IX 365	unknown (Arsinoite nome?)	2nd c. BC	29.5	15	0.5	recto, →
UPZ I 148	unknown	2nd c. BC	22.2	10.8	0.5	recto, →
P.Mich. XV 688	Soknopaiu Nesos (Arsinoite nome)	2nd/1st c. BC	32	11.2	0.4	recto, →
P.Tebt. I 34	Arsinoite nome	ca. 100 BC	30	12	0.4	recto, →
P.Tebt. I 59	Alexandria	99 BC	32.5	12	0.4	recto, →
P.Lips. I 104	Pathyrite nome (?)	95 BC	28	9	0.3	recto, →
P.Grenf. II 38	Arsinoite nome	80 BC	24.1	10.2	0.4	recto, →
SB V 8754	Herakleopolite nome	77 BC	30	35 (2 columns)	1.2	recto, →
P.Lips. I 104	Pathyrite nome (?)	62 BC	28.5	9	0.3	recto, →
PSI VIII 969	unknown	51 BC	24.3	15	0.6	recto, →

Publication	Provenance (*HGV*)	Dating (*HGV*)	Height	Width	Width : Height	fibres direction
P.Coll. Youtie I 17	unknown	37 BC	21	7	0.3	recto, →
BGU IV 1204	Busiris (Herakleopolite nome)	28 BC	23	13	0.6	recto, →
BGU IV 1205	Busiris (Herakleopolite nome)	28 BC	25	33+ (3 columns)	1.3	recto, →
BGU IV 1206	Busiris (Herakleopolite nome)	28 BC	25	32+ (3 columns)	1.3	recto, →
BGU IV 1209	Busiris (Herakleopolite nome)	23 BC	24	15	0.6	recto, →
BGU XVI 2655	Herakleopolite nome	21/20 BC	27	10	0.4	recto, →
BGU XVI 2622	Herakleopolite nome	ca. 21–5 BC	26	13	0.5	recto, →
BGU XVI 2612	Herakleopolite nome	15 BC	20	16.5	0.8	recto, →
BGU XVI 2613	Herakleopolite nome	14 BC	22.7	13.3	0.6	recto, →
BGU XVI 2661	Herakleopolite nome	12 BC	31.4	10.8	0.3	recto, →
BGU XVI 2611	Herakleopolite nome	10 BC	25.5	13.5	0.5	recto, →
BGU XVI 2608	Herakleopolite nome	10–1 BC	21.6	13.5	0.6	recto, →
BGU XVI 2610	Herakleopolite nome	9 BC	20.2	9.5	0.5	recto, →
BGU XVI 2651	Herakleopolite nome	9 BC	23	15.3	0.7	recto, →
BGU XVI 2643	Herakleopolite nome	8 BC	33	15	0.5	recto, →
BGU XVI 2606	Herakleopolite nome	7 BC	26.5	11.5	0.4	recto, →
BGU XVI 2624	Herakleopolite nome	7 BC	19.7	16	0.8	recto, →
BGU XVI 2654	Herakleopolite nome	6 BC	31.2	14	0.4	recto, →
BGU XVI 2629	Herakleopolite nome	4 BC	25.2	14.5	0.6	recto, →
BGU XVI 2637	Herakleopolite nome	3/2 BC	25.5	19.8	0.8	recto, →
BGU XVI 2627	Herakleopolite nome	2 BC	17.5	10	0.6	recto, →
SB XIV 11294	Arsinoite nome (?)	2 BC	22.5	10	0.4	recto, →
P.Oxy. IV 744	Alexandria	1 BC	25	14.7	0.6	recto, →
PSI VIII 968	Arsinoite nome	1st c. BC	22.9	11.5	0.5	recto, →
PSI XV 1539	Thosbis (?) (Oxyrhynchite nome) or Herakleopolite nome	end of 1st c. BC	23.1	10.2	0.4	recto, →
P.Oslo II 47	unknown	1 AD	26	9.7	0.4	recto, →

Publication	Provenance (*HGV*)	Dating (*HGV*)	Height	Width	Width : Height	fibres direction
P.Tebt. II 408	Tebtynis (Arsinoite nome)	3 AD	23.9	8.7	0.4	recto, →
P.NYU II 18	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	6 AD	21	17	0.8	recto, →
SB XIV 12172	unknown	7 AD	21.2	8	0.4	recto, →
P.Tebt. II 289	Ptolemais Euergetis (Arsinoite nome)	23 AD	18	9.8	0.5	recto, →
P.Oxy. II 292	Oxyrhynchos	25 AD	20	14.7	0.7	recto, →
P.Oxy. X 1291	Oxyrhynchos	30 AD	8.2	4.8	0.6	recto, →
P.Oxy. XXII 2353	Oxyrhynchite nome	32 AD	27.5	15.7	0.6	recto, →
SB XIV 12143	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	41–54 AD	28.5	8.5	0.3	recto, →
P.Oxy. II 297	Oxyrhynchos	54 AD	31.6	9.4	0.3	recto, →
P.Oxy. II 269	Oxyrhynchos	57 AD	20.5	33 (1+ columns)	1.6	recto, →
P.Oxy. XLVII 3356	Oxyrhynchos	76 AD	20.5	8.8	0.4	recto, →
P.Sarap. 103 bis	Hermopolite nome	90–133 AD	22	10	0.5	recto, →
P.Wisc. II 68	Theadelpheia or Philadelpheia (?) (Arsinoite nome)	93 AD	22.8	12.3	0.5	recto, →
P.Fay. 110	Euhemeria (Arsinoite nome)	94 AD	26.9	10.5	0.4	recto, →
P.Fay. 111	Euhemeria (Arsinoite nome)	95 AD	25.2	9.3	0.4	recto, →
P.Lips. I 106	Arsinoite nome (?)	99 AD	24.5	8	0.3	recto, →
P.Mich. III 201	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	99 AD	21.8	12.5	0.6	recto, →
P.Fay. 114	Euhemeria (Arsinoite nome)	100 AD	24.2	8.1	0.3	recto, →
P.Fay. 122	Euhemeria (Arsinoite nome)	100 AD	7.7	23.7	3.1	recto, →
P.Oxy. I 46	Oxyrhynchos	100 AD	25.3	7.8	0.3	recto, →

Publication	Provenance (*HGV*)	Dating (*HGV*)	Height	Width	Width : Height	fibres direction
SB XXII 15708	Oxyrhynchos	100 AD	22.6	27 (2 columns)	1.2	recto, →
P.Oxy. XIV 1756	Oxyrhynchos	1st c. AD	21.8	9.4	0.4	recto, →
P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2844	Oxyrhynchos	second half of 1st c. AD	32.5	11.3	0.3	recto, →
P.Pintaudi 53	Koptos (?) or Berenike	second half of 1st c. AD	20.5	8.5	0.4	recto, →
P.Col. X 252	Alexandria (?)	late 1st c. AD	23.4	11.5	0.5	recto, →
P.Phil. 32	unknown	end of 1st c.? AD	21	8.5	0.4	recto, →
P.Wisc. II 69	Philadelpheia (Arsinoite nome)	100/101 AD	23	10.4	0.5	recto, →
P.Mich. III 202	Philadelpheia (?) (Arsinoite nome)	105 AD	21.5	10.5	0.5	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 466	Bostra (Arabia)	107 AD	30.2	15.5	0.5	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 465	Bostra (Arabia)	108 AD	30	13.5	0.5	recto, →
P.Sarap. 90	Alexandria (?)	108 AD	20	12	0.6	recto, →
P.Fay. 121	Euhemeria (Arsinoite nome)	110 AD	21.3	7.5	0.4	recto, →
P.Giss. Bibl. III 20	Alexandria	113–117 AD	22.5	30 (2–3 columns)	1.3	recto, →
P.Brem. 12	Hermopolis (?)	113–120 AD	25	8	0.3	recto, →
P.Brem. 14	Hermopolis (?)	113–120 AD	11	29 (2 columns)	2.6	recto, →
P.Brem. 19	Hermopolis (?)	113–120 AD	21.5	14	0.7	recto, →
P.Brem. 21	Hermopolis (?)	113–120 AD	22	14	0.6	recto, →
P.Brem. 58	Hermopolis (?)	113–120 AD	17	9	0.5	recto, →
P.Giss. Apoll. 20	Apollonopolite nome (Heptakomia)	113–120 AD	21	11	0.5	recto, →
P.Brem. 53	Hermopolis (?)	114 AD	25	29 (2 columns)	1.2	recto, →
P.Brem. 13	Hermopolis (?)	114/115 AD	24	10.5	0.4	recto, →
SB X 10278	Apollonopolite nome (Heptakomia)	114–119 AD	22.8	13.6	0.6	recto, →

Publication	Provenance (*HGV*)	Dating (*HGV*)	Height	Width	Width : Height	fibres direction
P.Brem. 63	Hermopolis (?)	116 AD	21.5	10	0.5	recto, →
P.Giss. Apoll. 06	Koptos	117 AD	33.5	21	0.6	recto, →
P.Mil. Vogl. I 24	Tebtynis (Arsinoite nome)	117 AD	29.5	24.5 (1+ columns)	0.8	recto, →
P.Brem. 5	Hermopolis (?)	117–119 AD	22.5	18	0.8	recto, →
P.Brem. 49	Hermopolis (?)	117–120 AD	20	11.5	0.6	recto, →
SB IV 7335	Soknopaiu Nesos (?) (Arsinoite nome)	117–138 AD	23	19.3	0.8	recto, →
P.Brem. 48	Hermopolis (?)	118 AD	36	13	0.4	recto, →
P.Giss. Apoll. 31	Apollonopolite nome (Heptakomia)	118 AD	22.5	10	0.4	recto, →
P.Wisc. II 73	Oxyrhynchite nome	122/123 AD	21.3	9.9	0.5	recto, →
PSI XII 1241	Alexandria	159 AD	29.5	9.5	0.3	recto, →
P.Petaus 17	Psinaryo (Arsinoite nome)	184 AD	22.3	20.9	0.9	recto, →
P.Petaus 14	Syron Kome (Arsinoite nome)	184/185 AD	22.5	9.4	0.4	recto, →
P.Petaus 19	Ptolemais Hormu (Arsinoite nome)	185 AD	22.5	25.2 (wide column)	1.1	recto, →
P.Petaus 52	Ptolemais Hormu (Arsinoite nome)	185/186 AD	22	12	0.5	recto, →
BGU II 423	Misenum (?) (Italien)	2nd c. AD	22.5	14	0.6	recto, →
BGU II 601	Arsinoite nome	2nd c. AD	22.5	9.5	0.4	recto, →
BGU II 602	Arsinoite nome	2nd c. AD	22.5	9.5	0.4	recto, →
P.Mich. III 206	unknown	2nd c. AD	22.5	11.8	0.5	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 490	Portus (Ostia)	2nd c. AD	22	18	0.8	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 491	Rome	2nd c. AD	22	15.5	0.7	recto, →
P.Mil. Vogl. II 76	Tebtynis (Arsinoite nome)	2nd c. AD	31	12.5	0.4	recto, →
P.Oslo II 60	unknown	2nd c. AD	19	15.7	0.8	recto, →
P.Oslo III 156	Arsinoite nome	2nd c. AD	11.3	7.4	0.7	recto, →
P.Oxy. III 531	Oxyrhynchos	2nd c. AD	21.5	11.7	0.5	recto, →

Publication	Provenance (*HGV*)	Dating (*HGV*)	Height	Width	Width : Height	fibres direction
P.Oxy. III 532	Oxyrhynchos	2nd c. AD	21.5	10	0.5	recto, →
P.Oxy. XXXI 2559	Oxyrhynchite nome (?)	2nd c. AD	22.8	9.5	0.4	recto, →
P.Oxy. XLI 2981	Oxyrhynchos	2nd c. AD	30	10	0.3	recto, →
P.Oxy. XLVI 3313	Oxyrhynchos	2nd c. AD	31	18	0.6	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 468	Alexandria	early 2nd c. AD	21.8	26.5 (2 columns)	1.2	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 472	Alexandria	early 2nd c. AD	22.5	14	0.6	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 473	Alexandria (?)	early 2nd c. AD	21.9	17.5	0.8	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 476	Alexandria (?)	early 2nd c. AD	22	24	1.1	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 477	Alexandria	early 2nd c. AD	27	17.1	0.6	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 479	Alexandria	early 2nd c. AD	21.4	16.4	0.8	recto, →
P.Oxy. VI 932	Oxyrhynchos	late 2nd c. AD	9.4	12	1.3	recto, →
P.Oxy. I 63	Oxyrhynchos	2nd/3rd c. AD	20.5	12.1	0.6	recto, →
P.Oxy. III 533	Oxyrhynchos	late 2nd/early 3rd c. AD	26	27.5 (wide column)	1.1	recto, →
P.Oxy. XII 1483	Oxyrhynchite nome	late 2nd/early 3rd c. AD	15.8	8	0.5	recto, →
P.Oxy. XLII 3030	Arsinoite nome	207 AD	18	12	0.7	recto, →
P.Oxy. VII 1064	Oxyrhynchos	post 218/219 AD	25.4	9	0.4	recto, →
P.Coll. Youtie II 66	Oxyrhynchos	258 AD	19.2	55.6+ (2 columns)	2.9	recto, →
P.Mich. VIII 514	Alexandria	3rd c. AD	35.5	11.5	0.3	recto, →
P.Oxy. VI 934	Oxyrhynchos	3rd c. AD	14	14.3	1.0	recto, →
P.Oxy. VII 1068	Oxyrhynchos	3rd c. AD	24.1	9.9	0.4	recto, →
P.Oxy. XIV 1671	Oxyrhynchos	3rd c. AD	22.5	8	0.4	recto, →

Publication	Provenance (*HGV*)	Dating (*HGV*)	Height	Width	Width : Height	fibres direction
P.Oxy. XIV 1769	Oxyrhynchos	3rd c. AD	12.3	10.8	0.9	recto, →
P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2862	Oxyrhynchite nome	3rd c. AD	6.8	11.5	1.7	recto, ↓
P.Mich. VIII 511	Memphis or Ptolemais Euergetis (Arsinoite nome)	first half of 3rd c. AD	16.2	9.5	0.6	recto, →
PSI XV 1553	Oxyrhynchite nome	first half of 3rd c. AD	24	14.2	0.6	recto, →
P.Oxy. VIII 1157	Oxyrhynchos	late 3rd c. AD	26.1	8.7	0.3	recto, →
P.Oxy. I 123	Oxyrhynchos	3rd/4th c. AD	24	15	0.6	recto, →
P.Oxy. VIII 1160	Oxyrhynchos	3rd/4th c. AD	17.6	13.9	0.8	recto, →
P.Oxy. XLII 3086	Oxyrhynchos	3rd/4th c. AD	7.6	15.3	2.0	recto, ↓

Appendix III: Letters with Handshifts

This appendix includes examples of letters which have handshifts in the editions as indicated in the *DDBDP*. For the Hellenistic period, I have listed here all letters. For the Roman period, I have included a number of representative examples.[660]

1.1 Hellenistic Times

SB XXVI 16635 (Artemidoros to Zenon, 248 BC)

This letter was cut in three pieces and sold to three different institutions. The three pieces were published separately, as PSI VI 555, P.Col. IV 115p, and P.Mich.Zen. 54, and re-edited jointly by Reekmans (2001, 181–182; SB XXVI 16635). In the separate editions of the letter the beginning of the farewell ἔρρωσο is in the Columbia piece, while its closing with the dating is in the Michigan piece; in none of them is there a handshift, but one was unnecessarily inserted in the joint re-edition of the letter and SB XXVI 16635, (6) ἔ[ρρ]ωσο. (ἔτους) λζ Ἀπελλαίου ιζ Χοιαχ κα̣. As in other letters of the Zenon archive, the farewell is written rapidly, which has resulted in more cursive and smaller letterforms, but this was not a change of hand, as suggested by similarities in the formation of the letters (e.g. α, οι, χ), the frequent joins, the parallelism of the baselines and the density of the ink, which is thicker in descending rightwards strokes.[661]

P.Lond. VII 2008 (Iason to Zenon, 247 BC)

In the edition of this letter in P.Lond. VII there is no handshift. In the DDbDP there is a handshift indicator before the farewell and dating, (52) ἔρρωσο. (ἔτους) λθ, Φαμενὼθ ι. However, both the handwriting and the parallel alignment of the script suggests that there is no change of hand there.[662]

660 There is a very large number of letters from Roman times that contain changes of hands in the farewell greetings, and this list could not include them all. It is only a collection of representative examples, including images only where the necessary publishing rights have been secured.
661 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/sb;26;16635.
662 Photo: Tomsin 1952, 98.

10.1515/9783110426953-008,

P.Eleph. 13 (Andron to Milon, 222 BC)
In the ed.pr. there is a handshift before the farewell and date, (9) ἔρρωσο (ἔτους) κε Μεσορεὶ ιη. However, the handwriting and the alignment suggest that there is no change of hand.[663]

P.Petr. II 38 (b) (Harmais to Horos, 217 BC)
In the ed.pr., P.Petr. II 38 (b) (p. 122), there was no handshift. A handshift indicator was silently inserted before the farewell greeting and date (9) in the re-edition of the letter as Chrest.Wilck. 300. The handwriting and the parallel alignment suggest that there is no change of hand.[664]

P.Strasb. II 111 (N.N. to Harmachis, 215/214 BC)
In the ed.pr., P.Strasb. II 111, there was a handshift indicator before the farewell greeting, then read as (24) ε̣ὐ̣τ̣ύχ̣ε̣ι, but in the re-edition of the letter it was corrected to (24) [ἔρ]ρ[ω]σο (ἔτους) η [. . . . . .]δ, and the handshift was removed (Clarysse 1976, 200–201).[665]

P.Yale I 50 (N.N. to N.N., early 2nd c. BC)
The farewell greeting of the letter, which is partly preserved, is preceded by a handshift in the edition, (8) ἔ̣ρρ[ωσο]. However, the formation of letters (see e.g. the tiny rounds of ο and ρ in both the body of the letter and the farewell greeting, and the serifs at the feet of descending strokes, e.g. φ and ρ in 3 μισθοφόρους and ρρ in 8 ἔρρωσο), the parallelism of the lines, and the density of the ink suggest that there is no change of hand there.[666]

P.Col. VIII 208 (N.N. to N.N., 187 BC)
This papyrus contains two letters, both written by the same professional hand—the second letter is an appended copy (ἀντίγραφον). The farewell and dating clause of the first letter are preceded by a handshift indicator in the edition, (6) ἔρρωσο. (ἔτους) ιη, Μ[εχεὶρ -1-2-]. However, the alignment and the handwriting suggest that there is no change of hand: the baselines are exactly parallel (though not perfectly clear in the image, due to the break of the papyrus), the inclination of the script remains the

663 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.eleph;;13.
664 Photo: P.Petr. II plate XII.
665 Photo: Clarysse 1976, pl. IV
666 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.yale;1;50.

same, the relative difference in size of smallish rounds (e.g. ο, ρ) and long descending uprights (e.g. ρ, φ) with serifs at the feet remain unchanged.[667]

P.Freib. III 38 (Nikomachos to Daippos, 181 BC)

The ed.pr. of this letter had been prepared by Partsch, but it was published after his death by Wilcken, who published both the version of Partsch and his own version separately. In Partsch's version (P.Freib. III pp. 45–46) there is no handshift, but a handshift was inserted before the farewell greeting in the version of Wilcken (P.Freib. III p. 101). I have not been able to consult an image of this letter, but judging from comparable cases, where Wilcken has silently inserted handshifts before the farewell greetings, it seems likely that in this case too this handshift was inserted unnecessarily.

UPZ I 59 (Isias to Hephaistion, 179 or 168 BC)

In P.Lond. I 42, the ed.pr. of this letter, and its re-editions as Witkowski 1911, no 35 and Sel.Pap. I 97, there are no handshifts. A handshift was inserted in Wilcken's re-edition as UPZ I 59, indicating a change of hand at the farewell greeting but not the dating, (32) (hand 2) ἔρρωσο. (hand 1) ἔτους β Ἐπεὶφ λ. Bagnall/Cribiore (2006, 111–112) noted that UPZ I 59 is written in the same hand as UPZ I 60, another letter sent to Hephaistion from his brother Dionysios, adding that the "farewell" should be in Isias's hand. However, although the handwriting suggests that the same hand, perhaps Dionysios's, wrote both UPZ I 59 and UPZ I 60, Isias did not write the farewell greeting in UPZ I 59.

In UPZ I 59, the farewell ἔρρωσο and the date are squeezed to fit, which has resulted in a reduction in the size of the letters. However, the personal characteristics of the hand remain unchanged; for example the caps of ε and σ are formed by a strong, separate, straight stroke; similarly the "head" of the ρ in ἔρρωσο is formed by a strong, straight stroke (cf. the same form of ρ in 10 εὐχαρίστουν); also the σ has a rounded back and base formed in one movement. The base line of the farewell greeting and dating remains parallel to the baselines of the body of the letter.[668]

In UPZ I 60 there is no handshift before the farewell greeting and dating, but it is worth comparing its farewell greeting with the one in UPZ I 59. The only difference in the two farewell greetings is that in UPZ I 60 there is much space and the farewell greeting is not squeezed in, and so the initial ε in UPZ I 59 is enlarged and its back is rounded. However, the other letters of the ἔρρωσο have exactly the same characteristics: more specifically the "head" of the ρ is formed by a strong, straight stroke, the

667 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.col;8;208.
668 Photo: Bagnall/Cribiore 2008, no 14; P.Lond. I, facs. 17.

ω has an almost straight line for the right belly, and the σ has a straight cap formed separately from its rounded back and base.[669]

UPZ I 62 (Dionysios to Ptolemaios, before 160 BC)
In P.Paris 49, the ed.pr. of this letter, and in its re-edition as Witkowski 1911, no 38, there are not handshifts before the farewell greeting ὑγίαινε. In the re-edition of the letter as Sel.Pap. I 98, after the farewell ὑγίαινε there is the supplement [δὲ - - -] without a handshift, while in the re-edition of the letter as UPZ I 62 after ὑγίαινε there is the supplement [δὲ]| (hand 2) [ἔρρωσο. -ca.?-] inserting a handshift. However, neither the supplement nor the handshift are necessary there. The letter closed with the farewell ὑγίαινε, which was a more elegant alternative to the common farewell ἔρρωσο.[670]

UPZ I 71 (Apollonios to Ptolemaios, 152 BC)
In P.Paris 46, the ed.pr. of this letter, and its re-edition as Witkowski 1911, no 47 there is no handshift. A handshift was inserted before the farewell greeting and the date in the re-edition of the letter as UPZ I 71, (23) ἔρρ[ωσο]. (ἔτους) κθ Μεσορὴ κς. However, the handwriting suggests that there is no change of hand there: The alignment is exactly parallel and the formation of the letters has no differences: e.g. ε has a round back and separately formed cross stroke; κ is sometimes tall with a serif at its top end and descending strokes (e.g. ρ) end with a serif.[671]

P.Bad. IV 48 (Dionysias to Theon, 127 BC)
In the ed.pr. there is a handshift in line 13, indicating that both the postscript and the farewell greeting were written by a second hand (13–17). However, as discussed above, the handwriting suggests that there is no change of hand there and that the postscript was added by the same hand at a later time.[672]

P.Münch. III 58 (N.N. to N.N., 2nd c. BC)
A handshift has been indicated in the ed.pr. before the farewell and the date, 9 (hand 2) vac. ? ἔρρωσο. Παῦνι ̣[-ca.?-]. However, there is no change of hand as suggested by the alignment of the farewell greeting, which remains exactly parallel to the body

669 I have consulted a photo of the papyrus held in the photographic archive of the Institute for Papyrology of the University of Heidelberg.
670 Photo: P.Paris, pl. XXXIV.
671 Photo: P.Paris, pl. XXXIV.
672 See the relevant discussion about the personal characteristics of this hand above, p. 165 with fig. 42.

of the letter. The inclination of the script and the thickness of the ink are exactly the same, too. Also the formation of the letters and the overall look of the script show no difference: e.g. ε has a rounded back and detached cross stroke; ρ is formed in two movements with a short leg and a large semi-circle for the head; the script is short, with short descenders and lateral expansion. The letters occasionally touch, but ligatures are generally avoided.[673]

SB I 5216 (doctor Athenagoras to the priests of Labyrinthos, 101, 68 or 39 BC)
In the ed.pr. of this letter (Lefebvre 1912, 194–196) and the re-editions in Sel.Pap. I 104 and White 1986, 61 there is no handshift indicator. A handshift was inserted in the re-edition as SB I 5216 before the farewell greeting and dating formula, (13) ἔρρωσ(θε). (ἔτους) ιδ, Ἀθὺρ κε. There is no change of hand, as suggested by the baseline of the farewell and the dating, which is parallel to the body of the letter, and by the letter formations, which remain the same (e.g. ρ with a tiny head and a long-descending leg curving at its end; α with left its leg and crossbar joining in a pointy wedge).[674]

BGU VIII 1788 (Heliodoros to Paniskos, ca. 61/60 BC?)
In the edition of the letter there is a handshift correctly indicated before the docket, which was written in the front top margin after receipt of the letter. Another handshift has been indicated before the partly broken farewell greeting, (13) ἔρρω[. The ink of the farewell is faded, but this need not imply that there is a different hand, since in other parts of the letter (see e.g. l. 12 before ἐπιμελοῦ) the ink is faded too. Comparison of the handwriting of the farewell greeting with the body of the letter suggests that there is no change of hand there. The alignment of ἔρρωσο is exactly parallel to the lines of the letter above, and the interlinear spaces above and below the farewell and the postscript remain unchanged. Also, the formation of the letters is unaltered: e.g. the formation of ε resembles the ε in (5) προσπεφωνηκέναι, the long descending stroke of ρ with leftward curve at the end matches the curves at the feet of other descending letters and of ρ in (2) Ἡλιόδωρος. The size and spacing between the letters remains the same too.

673 Photo: P.Münch. III, Abb. 9.
674 Photo: Lefebvre 1912, pl. X.

Fig. 56: BGU VIII 1788, letter from Heliodoros to Paniskos, ca. 61/60 BC? © Ägyptisches Museum , P. 13725, Berlin.

1.2 Roman Times

P.Mich. VIII 472 (Terentianus to Tiberianus, First Quarter of the 2nd c. AD)
Among the published letters of the archive of Tiberianus, ten, five in Greek and five in Latin, were sent to Tiberianus by Terentianus. Terentianus addressed Tiberianus as father and lord in his letters. Although it is not clear if this should be taken as an indication of a blood relationship or if it was simply an address of respect, it is clear from the address and the familiar tone in the letters that the relationship between the two men was certainly close.[675] The letters have no changes of hands in the farewell greetings—they may have been written by the sender himself.[676] An opposite case in the same archive is a letter addressed from Tiberianus to a certain L. Priscus, which, as correctly indicated in the edition and Strassi (2008, 35), has a change of hand before the farewell greeting.[677] The relationship between Tiberianus and L. Priscus is not clear, but the appellation (1–2) domin[o] et regi suo ("his lord and patron") in the opening address suggests a respectful relationship, albeit not as close as that with Terentianus, who called Tiberianus "father".[678]

P.Bad. II 41 (Prefect Sulpicius Similis to the Strategos Herakleides, AD 108)
This is a letter from the prefect Sulpicius Similis to the strategos Herakleides, informing him that he has sent to him an "ἀναφόριον" with his subscription, which instructs him how to deal with a specific case. The letter looks informal, which would be unexpected for a prefectorial letter (cf. SB I 4639). In the ed.pr. there is a handshift before the farewell greeting and the dating, (15) (with BL VIII 15) ἐ̣ρρῶ̣[σθ]α̣ί σε θέλω and the date (16–17) (ἔτους) ια Τραιανοῦ τοῦ κυρίου,| Ἐπεὶφ η. The hand in the farewell greeting and the dating is more rapid than in the body of the letter above, and thus smaller and more cursive. However, a significant personal characteristic which suggests that there is no change of hand is the alignment: the hand has consistently an upward move as it runs along each line, which remains parallel both in the body of the letter and in the farewell greeting and dating. Also, the interlinear spaces remain unaltered. Thus, this letter was probably not an original prefectorial letter verified by the prefect's handwriting, but an informally written copy.[679]

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675 For the archive of Tiberianus see Strassi 2008 and Geens, *Trismegistos* ArchID 54. v.1 2011, with bibliography listed there.
676 The handwriting, position and alignment of the farewell greeting suggest that there is no change of hand, as correctly indicated in the editions, with the exception of P.Mich. VIII 479, which in both the ed.pr. and Strassi (2008, 58) has a handshift indicator before the partly preserved farewell greeting. In P.Mich. VIII 478 and 481 the farewell greetings are not preserved.
677 It is not clear if the letter was sent or if it is a copy. The external address on the back may support the idea that it was sent off, but one wonders then how the letter ended up in the sender's archive.
678 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.mich;8;479. See also above p. 158 Fig. 35.
679 This accords with Haensch 2000, 261–261, who mentioned that SB I 4639 is the only surviving

P.Alex. Giss. 40 (N.N. to N.N., AD 113–120)

This is a private letter. As indicated in the edition the letter was written by a secretary and the farewell greeting, which is in a different and cursive hand, was written by the author, (15–18) ἐρρ[ῶσθ]αί| σε εὔχομαι φ[ίλτατε μετὰ τῶν]| ἀβ̣ᾳ̣σ̣κ̣ά̣ν̣τ̣ω̣ν̣ [- - -].[680]

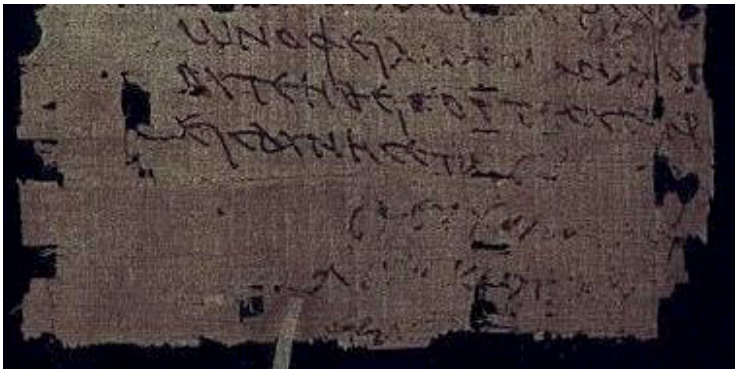

Fig. 57: P.Alex. Giss. 40, letter from N.N. to N.N., lines 13–18, AD 113–120 © Universitätsbibliothek, Gießen.

P.Giss. Apoll. 40 (Harpokration to Apollonios Strategos, AD 113–120)

This is a letter of recommendation from Harpokration to the strategos Apollonios. The letter has elegant handwriting and layout, and it has two farewell greetings, one by the author in 9–10 πρὸ πάντων ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔ(χομαι)| τιμιώτατε πανοικεί ("before all, I pray for your health, most honourable, with all your household") written in a cursive style with many ligatures, and the other (ἔρρωσο) in line 11 at the bottom of the sheet by the writer in a small cursive script. The position of the first farewell looks unusual, but it may be explained by the fact that this is a letter of recommendation. In these letters what mattered most was the status of the author and his relationship with the addressee, while the content was less important (often being of a standard type).[681]

original prefectorial letter before Diocletian. I thank A. Jördens for the reference. Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.bad;2;41.

680 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.alex.giss;;40.

681 For the structure of letters of recommendation see Kim 1972. Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.giss.apoll;40.

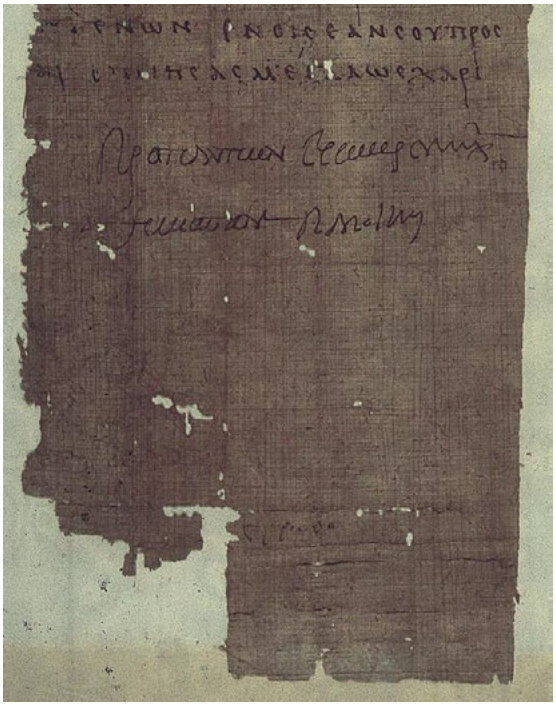

Fig. 58: P.Giss. Apoll. 40, Harpokration to Apollonios strategos, lines 6–11, AD 113–120 © Universitätsbibliothek, Gießen.

P.Giss. Apoll. 25 (Apollonios to Herakleios, AD 115–117?)

This is a private letter about business matters, with a request to the steward of the strategos Herakleios. As shown in the edition, the letter was written by a writer and the author wrote the farewell greeting, (18–19) [ἐρρῶ]ṣθαί σε εὔχο|[μ]ạ̣ι, φίλτατε Ἡ̣ρ̣άκλειε (I wish you good health my dearest Herakleios).[682]

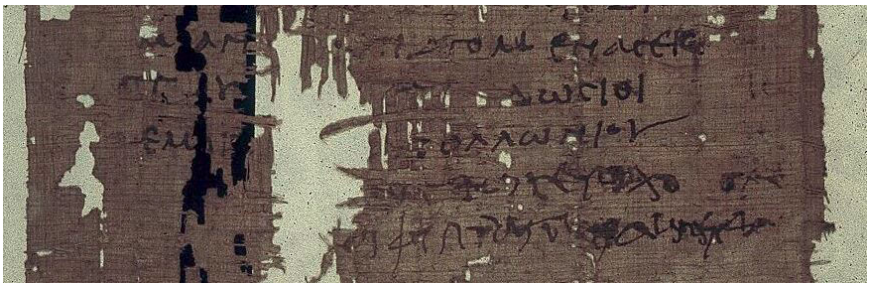

Fig. 59: P.Giss. Apoll. 25, letter from Apollonios to Herakleios, lines 15–20, 115–117? AD © Universitätsbibliothek, Gießen.

682 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.giss.apoll;;25.

P.Brem. 6 (Flavius Philoxenos to Apollonios Strategos, AD 117–119?)

This is a letter of recommendation from the epistrategos Flavius Philoxenos to the strategos Apollonios (of the homonymous archive). The letter was written by a secretary and the author wrote the farewell greeting, ἐρρῶσθαί σε βούλομαι. On the back there is an elaborated address, preceded in the edition by an unnecessary handshift marker indicating a third hand. In fact, the address on the back was penned by the first hand, writing the name of the recipient in large elaborated letters and the sender's details in a smaller and more cursive style.[683]

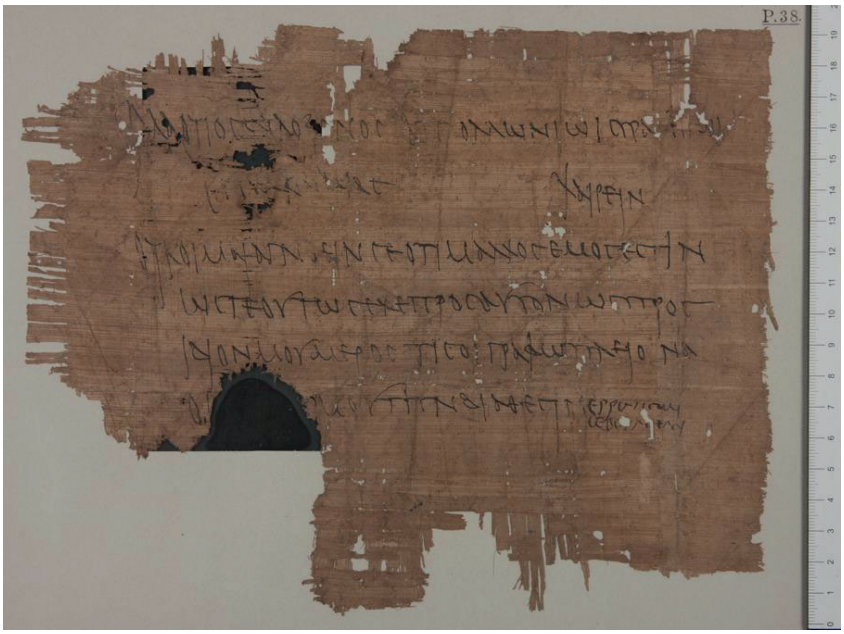

Fig. 60: P.Brem. 6, letter from the epistrategos Flavius Philoxenos to Apollonios strategos, AD 117–119? © Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Bremen.

P.Giss. Apoll. 33 (Longos to Apollonios Strategos, AD 113–120)

This is a private letter about business matters, informing the addressee of his receipt of the monthly allowance. Both the long farewell (8) ἔρρωσ<ό> μοι φίλτατε ("farewell, my dearest"), and the small ἔρρωσο̣ (9) are written by the first hand. The ἔρρωσ<ό> μοι φίλτατε would be expected to have been written by the author, however the handwriting characteristics suggest that there is no change of hand there and that the secretary wrote both farewell greetings.[684]

683 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.brem;;6.

684 See also the relevant discussion above p. 187 with fig. 53.

P.Brem. 50 (Aelius Phanias, AD 117–120)

The letter reports the sending of certain letters and other information and wishes. It contains personally written greetings by Aelius Phanias, (ll. 8–9) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι, κύριέ μου ("I pray for your health, my lord") and below (l. 10) a small cursive ἔρρωσο by the secretary.

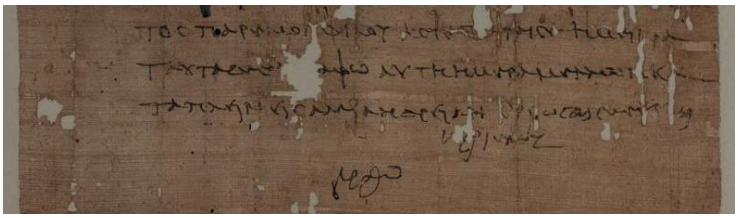

Fig. 61: P.Brem. 50, letter from Aelius Phanias to Aelius Apollonios, lines 6–10, AD 117–120 © Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Bremen.

P.Oxy. XVIII 2191 (Antonius to Dionysios and N.N., 2nd c. AD)

This is a private letter in which Antonius informs the addressee about his and his family's safe arrival by ship at Puteoli in Italy. The letter was perhaps written by someone else, and Antonius added personally the farewell greeting (16–18) in his own untidy and cursive (partly undecipherable) hand. The two lines at the bottom of the sheet contain the place and date (19–20) and have been written by the first hand.[685]

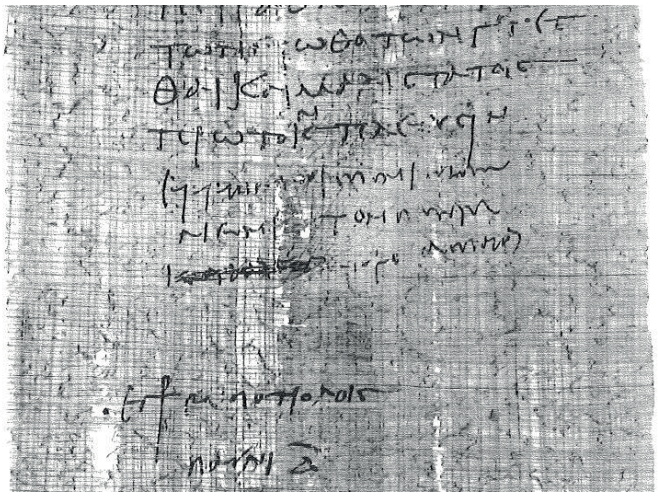

Fig. 62: P.Oxy. XVIII 2191, letter from Antonius to Dionysios and N.N., lines 13–20, 2nd c. AD © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

685 Photo: P.Oxy. XVIII, plate XIV.

P.Oxy. LXXIII 4959 (Ammonios to Demetria and Dios, 2nd c. AD)

This letter is addressed from the (ex-)gymnasiarch Ammonios to Demetria and Dios, who are called mother and father. It is not clear if the opening address denotes blood relationships or simply a respectful tone, however the content of the letter, which reassured the addressees about the recovery and good health of Ammonios' brother suggests that there were family ties. Both the language and the appearance of the letter are elegant. The hand has affinities to the so-called chancery style, and it may have been a secretarial hand; at the end a second hand wrote a long and eloquent farewell, suggesting that the author had a relatively good educational level (20–24) ἐρ̣ρ̣ῶ̣σ̣θ̣αι ὑμᾶς εὔχομαι,| [τ]ι̣μι̣ώ̣τα̣τ̣οι, παν[ο]ικησίᾳ εὐτυχοῦντας| κ̣. . . . . ἐ̣π̣όμνυμαι ὅτι καλῶς π̣ά̣νυ| ἔχει <ὁ> ἀδελφὸς Θέων καὶ τὰ συνήθη π̣ράσ|σει. ("I wish you good health, my most honoured (parents?), and good fortune to the entire household . . . I swear that my brother Theon is very well and doing his usual activities"). The whole letter has been heavily corrected by the second hand, and it also has cancellation cross-strokes, so it remains uncertain if it was finally dispatched or if it remained a draft. The external address and the creases from foldings would suggest that the letter was sent off, so the case remains uncertain.

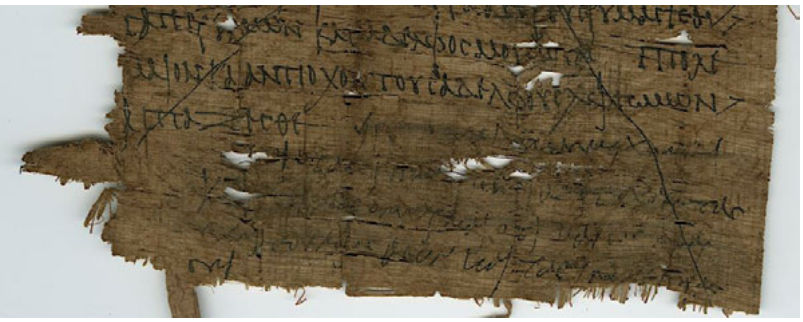

Fig. 63: P.Oxy. LXXIII 4959, letter from Ammonios to his parents Demetria und Dios, lines 18–24, 2nd c. AD © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

SB XVIII 14057 (Claudius Macareus Superintendant (ἐπίτροπος) of Calpurnius Reginnianus Consularis to Reginnianus πραγματευτής of the Same Consularis, Second Half of the 2nd c. AD)

This is a private letter about business matters related to a private plot of cultivated land; the letter was sent from Claudius Macareus superintendant (ἐπίτροπος) of Calpurnius Reginnianus consularis to Reginnianus πραγματευτής of the same consularis. The body of the letter is in an elegant chancery script without any grammatical errors, apparently written by a well-trained professional. The farewell greeting, (9–11) ἐρρῶσθαί σε| εὔχομε (εὔχομαι) τι|μωιταται (l. τιμιώτατε), which was written by the

author's slower hand, has spelling errors. At the bottom of the sheet, the date with year and month (12) was written by the first hand.[686]

BGU IV 1031 (Herakleides to Herakleides, 2nd c. AD)

This is a private letter about business matters. It contains instructions, including a request to prepare bricks (πλίνθους), and closes with the farewell greeting and date written by the author,[687] (15–16) ἐρρῶσθαί σε| εὔχομαι φίλτατε ("I wish you good health, my dearest") and the date Χοιὰκ ε¯(Choiak 5).[688]

P.Oxy. XLII 3067 (Achillion strategos of Marmarike to Hierakapollon, 3rd c. AD)

This is a private letter between social acquaintances, containing "exchanges of civil nothings which spread during the third and fourth centuries" as the editor comments in the introduction to the text. The letter is elegantly written, with affinities to the so-called chancery style, by a competent secretary, and the farewell greeting was added by the author, (14) ἐρρῶσθαί [σ]ε εὔχομαι. The papyrus is broken below the farewell, so it is not certain if the preserved farewell greeting is complete or if its end is missing.[689]

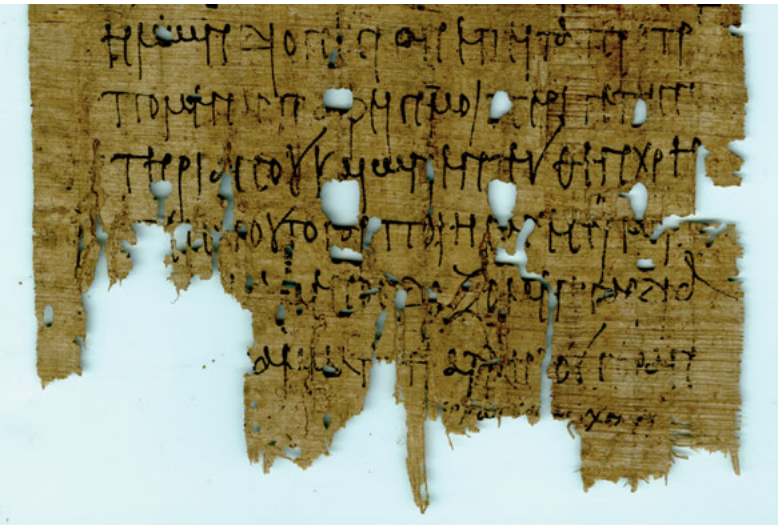

Fig. 64: P.Oxy. XLII 3067, letter from Achillion strategos of Marmarike to Hierakapollon, lines 7–14, 3rd c. AD © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

686 Photos: Van Minnen 1987, Taf. IV b; http://papyri.info/ddbdp/sb;18;14057.
687 This is suggested from the different alignment, but also from the formation of individual letters, such as φ which in the farewell is formed very differently from the φ in e.g. lines 2, 5, 6, 7, 14.
688 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/bgu;4;1031.
689 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;42;3067.

PSI XII 1247 (Ammonous to Apollonianos and Spartiates, ca. AD 235–238)

This is a private letter that sends greetings and encourages the addressees to respond often. The exact relationship between the correspondents is not clear; Ammonous called them father and brother respectively, but it is not clear if the terms were literally used. The letter is written in a rapid hand. Ammonous wrote herself the closing greeting with the farewell and the postscript (13–18). In the postscript she mentioned some personal troubles that she had with a soldier, without explaining the situation in detail, (13–18) καὶ τὰ τέκνα| αὐτῆς. ἐρρῶσθαι ὑμᾶς [εὔχομ]αι| εὐτυχοῦντας διὰ βίου ἀ̣ε̣ί,| πάλαι ὁ̣ ς̣τ̣ρατιώτης ἡμῖν ἐνοχλ<ε>ῖ ὡς| χάριν . . γο . . . ου αὐτῷ ἐνετ<ε>ίλω. ἐρ<ε>ῖ| οὖν σοι τὸ πρᾶγμα Διογένης (and her children. I pray that you may be well and fortunate throughout your life. The soldier bothered us earlier because of . . . you instructed him. Diogenes will tell you about the affair)."[690]

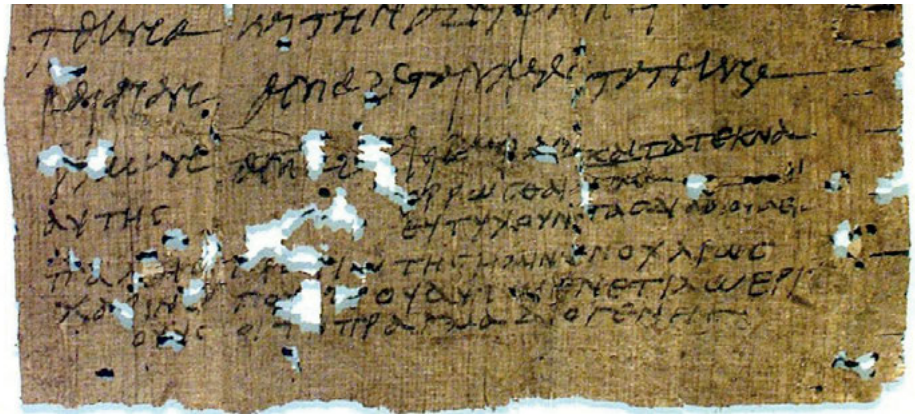

Fig. 65: PSI XII 1247, letter from Ammonous to Apollonianos and Spartiates, lines 11–18, ca. AD 235–238 © Universitätsbibliothek, Gießen.

P.Iand. VI 116 (N.N. to the Former Gymnasiarch and Strategos Apollonianos, 3rd c. AD)

P.Iand. VI 116 is partly broken, but the surviving part suggests that it was a reply to a friendly letter of Apollonianos, containing greetings.[691] The author wrote personally

690 In the ed.pr. it is indicated that the second hand started writing from l. 14 ἀσπάζου, however it seems to me that it started writing l. 14 καὶ τὰ τέκνα. The identity of Diogenes, who is mentioned in the author's farewell, is unknown; he might have been the carrier of the letter. Transl. Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 393. Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/psi;12;1247; Bagnall/Cribiore 2006, 394; Bagnall/Cribiore 2008, B12.7, no 284.

691 The expression (3) τῶν φίλων ς̣ῶ̣ν in the letter suggests that the correspondents were friends or social acquaintances.

the farewell (12–14) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομ̣(αι) εὐδοξοῦντα κ[αὶ] ὁλοκληρ[οῦ]ντα ("I wish you good health, to be honoured and of healthy and sound body").

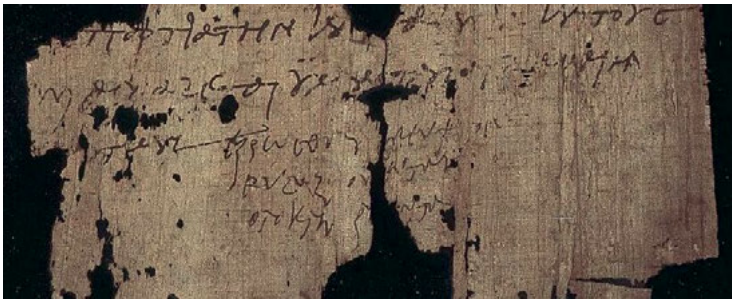

Fig. 66: P.Iand. VI 116, letter from N.N. to Apollonios strategos, lines 9–14, 3rd c. AD © Universitätsbibliothek, Gießen.

SB XXII 15757 (N.N. to N.N., 3rd c. AD)

This is a private letter, written in an elegant linguistic style. The letter closes with the author's farewell greeting in his own hand, (17–19) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι| πανοικησίαι θ̣ε̣οῖς| πᾶσιν εὔχομαι ("I pray to all the gods for your good health for your whole household").

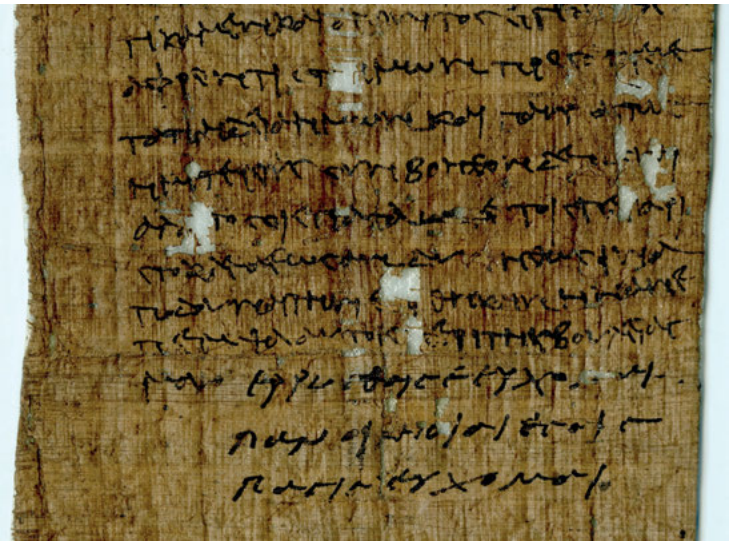

Fig. 67: SB XXII 15757, letter from N.N. to N.N., lines 10–19, 3rd c. AD © Istituto Papirologico "G. Vitelli", Firenze.

P.Oxy. XLIV 3182 (N.N. to a Gymnasiarch, AD 257)

This is an official letter from an unknown sender to a gymnasiarch. In the edition, three hands have been correctly indicated: the hand of a secretary who wrote the body of the letter (1–10) and (in a more cursive style) the date (11–16); the author's hand in the farewell greeting, (10) ἐῤῥῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι, φίλ(τατε) ("I wish you good health, dearest"), and a third hand in the docket at the bottom of the sheet, recording the date of delivery of the letter and the name of the assistant (17–18) ἐπήνεγκα ("I delivered").[692]

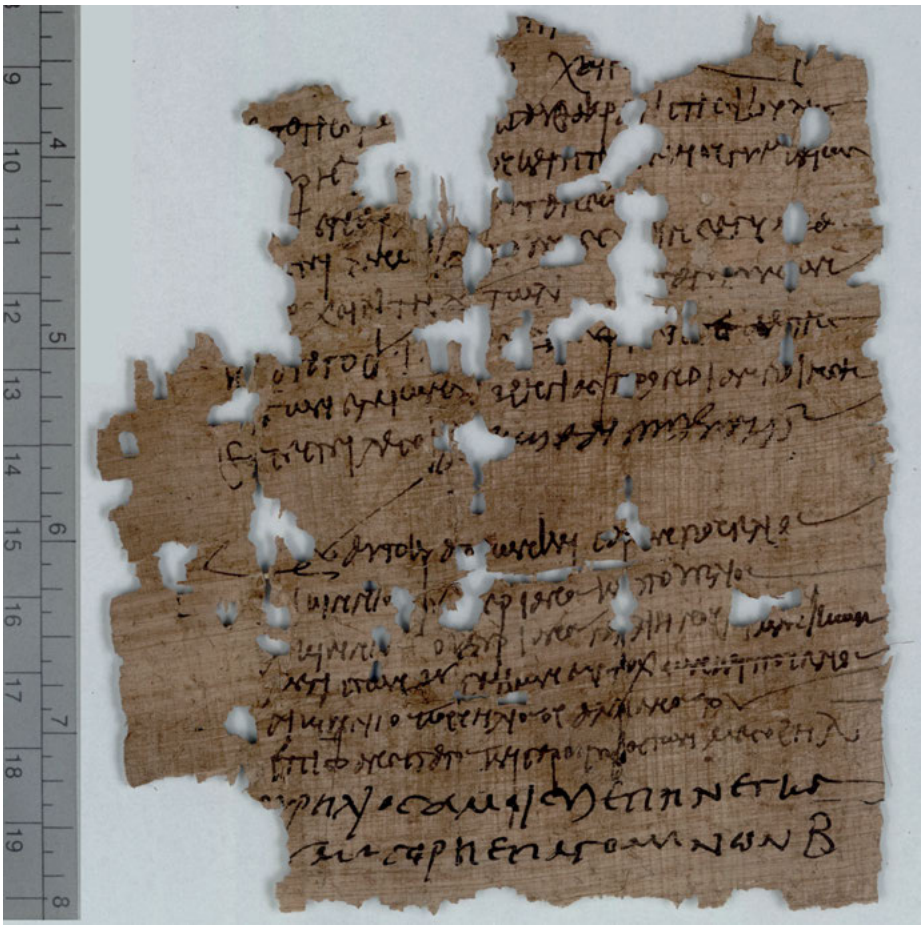

Fig. 68: P.Oxy. XLIV 3182, letter from N.N. to N.N. a gymnasiarch, AD 257 © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

692 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;44;3182.

P.Oxy. L 3569 (Aurelius Horion to the Epistrategos Septimius(?) Diodoros, AD 282)
This is an official letter from Aurelius Horion to the epistrategos Septimius(?) Diodoros. As indicated in the ed.pr., the first hand wrote the body of letter and the date—the date is in a more cursive style than the body of the letter—and the author wrote the farewell greeting styled like a signature, (13–14) [ἐρ]ρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι| κύριέ μου ("I pray for your health, my lord").[693]

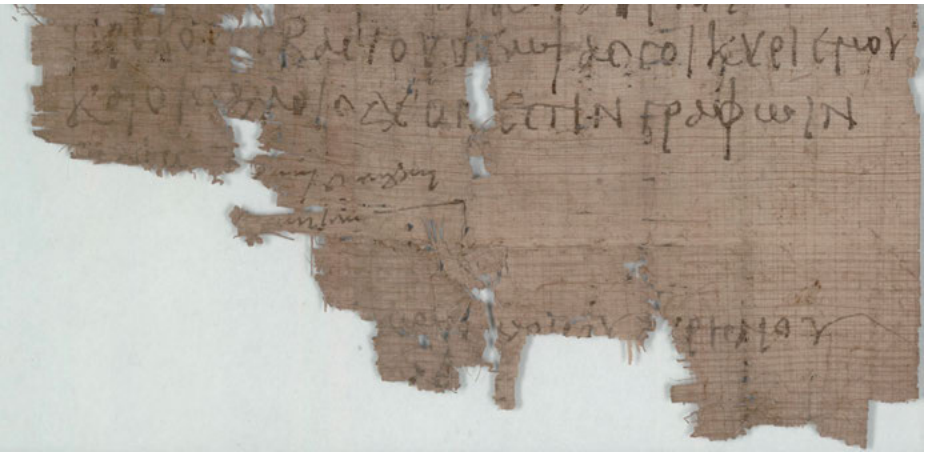

Fig. 69: P.Oxy. L 3569, letter from Aurelius Horion to the epistrategos Septimius(?) Diodoros, lines 10–16, AD 282 © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

P.Oxy. LVIII 3930 (Aurelius Apollonios Strategos to the Heirs of the Exegetes Herakleides Sarapion, AD 290)
This is an official letter from Aurelius Apollonios strategos to the heirs of the exegetes Herakleides Sarapion. The date is in the first hand, in a more cursive style than the body of the letter, while the farewell greeting, (13–14) ἐρρῶσθαι| [ὑμᾶς εὔ]χ[ο]μαι, φίλτατοι ("I wish you good health, dearests") was written by the author. The person who delivered the letter wrote a docket with the date of delivery at the bottom of the sheet (19–21).[694]

693 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;50;3569.
694 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;58;3930.

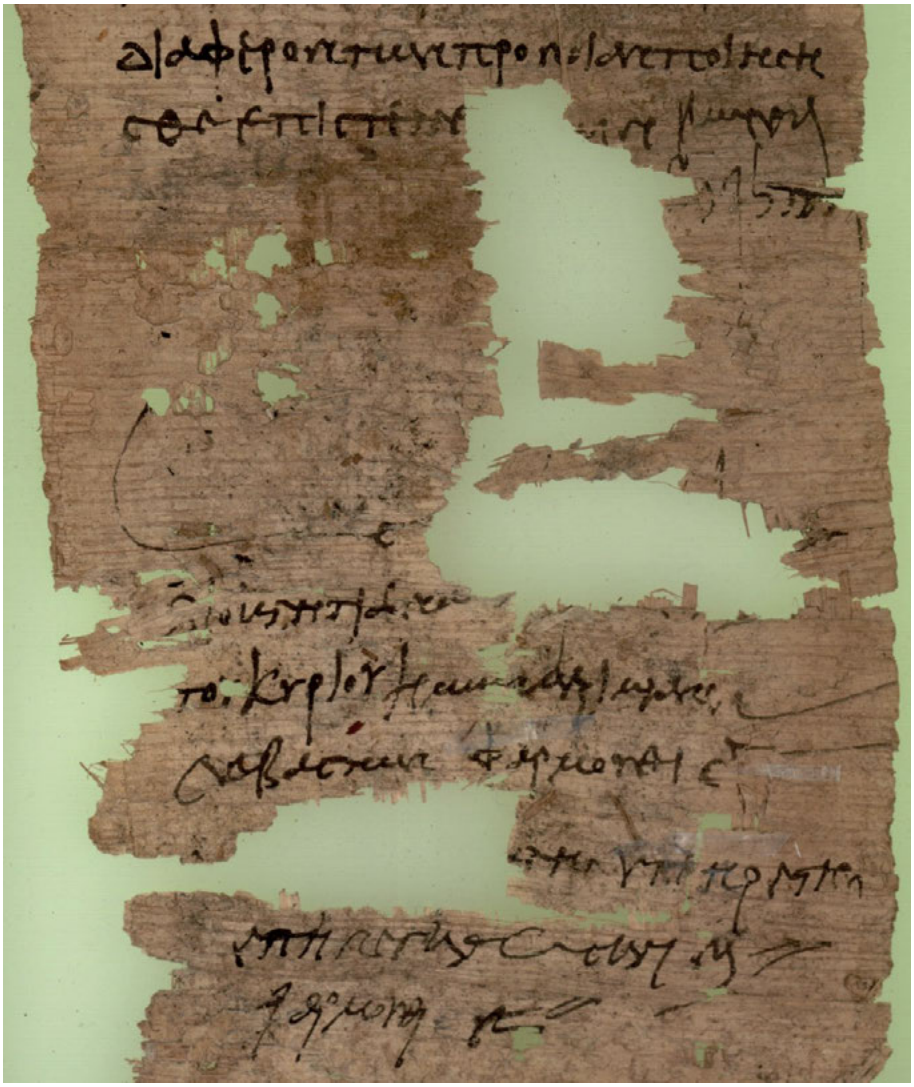

Fig. 70: P.Oxy. LVIII 3930, letter from Aurelius Apollonios strategos to the heirs of the exegetes Herakleides Sarapion, lines 12–21, AD 290 © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

P.Mich. XI 622 (Philadelphos and Dioskoros to Heron strategos, AD 298–300)

P.Mich. XI 622 is a letter about administrative matters, from Philadelphos and Dioskoros to the strategos Heron, dated to AD 298–300. The letter was written by a secretary and closed with the authors' farewell greeting, (15–16) ἐρρῶσθαί σ[ε] ε̣ὐχόμεθα| κύριέ μου ("We pray for your heath, my lord").[695]

695 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.mich;11;622.

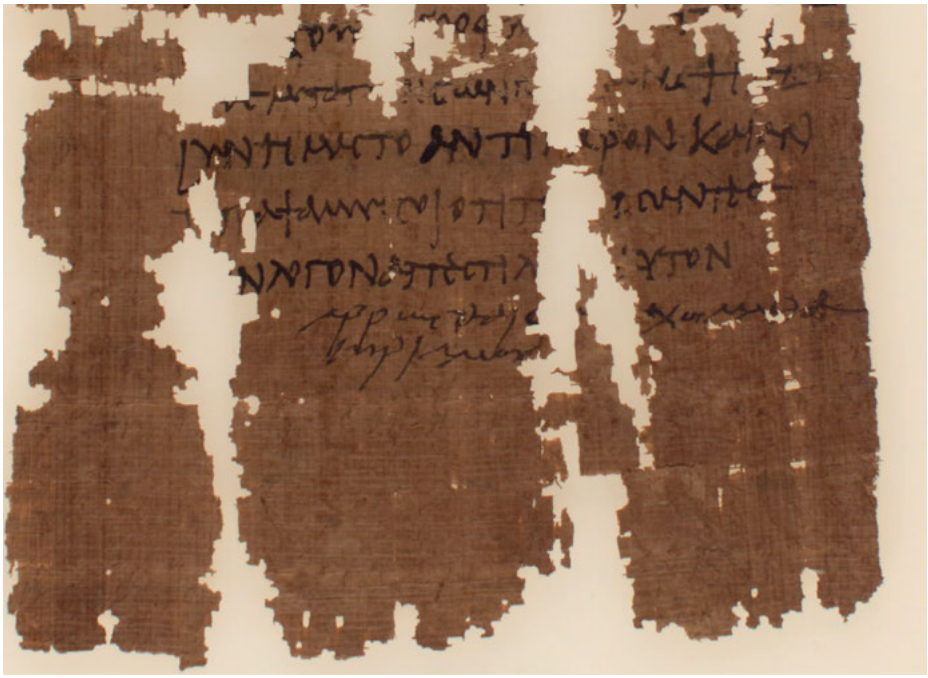

Fig. 71: P.Mich. XI 622, letter from Philadelphos and Dioskoros to Heron strategos, lines 10–16, AD 298–300 © Papyrology Collection, Graduate Library, University of Michigan.

P.Oxy. XVII 2113 and 2114 (AD 316)

P.Oxy. XVII 2113[696] and 2114[697] (AD 316) are two official letters from Aurelius Apollonios strategos to Aurelius Heras praepositus. The letters were written by different professional hands. The farewell greetings in the two letters, (2113.25–6) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι φίλτατε ("I pray for your health, dearest") and (2114.16–17) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι φίλτατε respectively, are written by different hands, by deputies in the strategos's office, who are named in the opening address of each letter, Eulogios in 2113.2 and Plou[...] in 2114.2. The dates at the bottom of each letter were written in a more cursive style by the hands that wrote the bodies of the letters. This is correctly indicated in the ed.pr. of 2114, but not in 2113, where the dating is preceded by an uncertain handshift. At the bottom of the letters there are remnants of the customary dockets, which recorded the delivery of the letters.

696 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;17;2113.
697 Image: http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;17;2114.

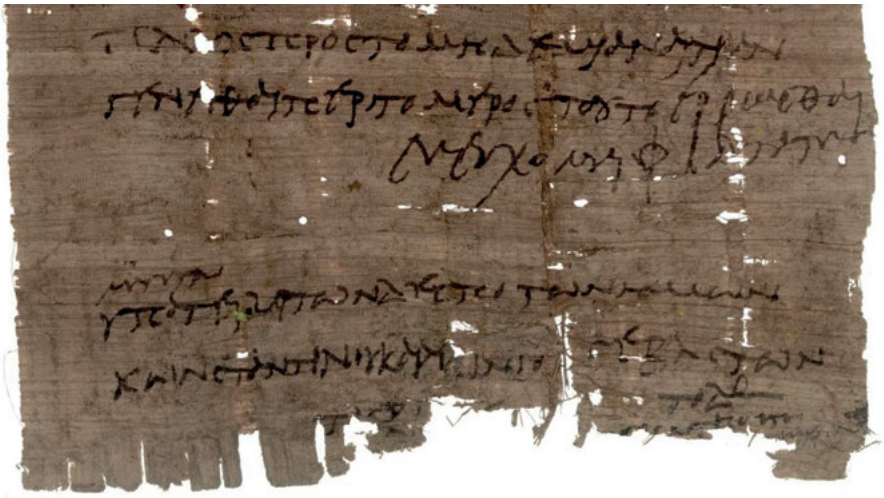

Fig. 72: P.Oxy. XVII 2113, letter from Aurelius Apollonios strategos to Aurelius Heras praepositus, lines 24–31, AD 316 © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

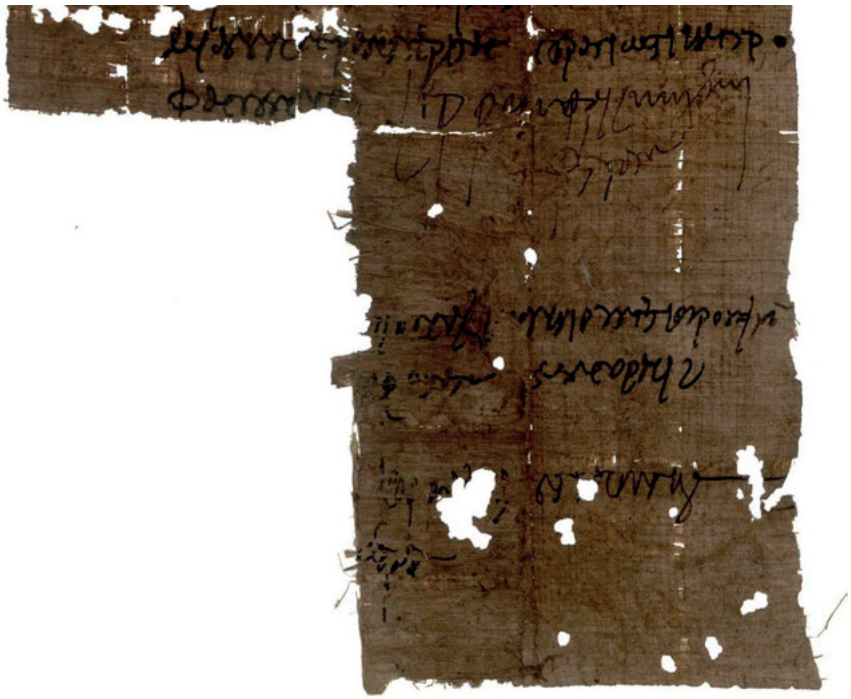

Fig. 73: P.Oxy. XVII 2114, letter from Aurelius Apollonios strategos to Aurelius Heras praepositus, lines 15–21, AD 316 © Egypt Exploration Society, London.

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