

TESTI
Antichità, Medioevo e Umanesimo

Latin and Coptic

Languages, Literatures, Cultures in Contact

edited by
Maria Chiara Scappaticcio
and **Alessia Pezzella**

Federico II University Press



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Preface

This volume is the result of a shared reflection during an International Round Table on ‘Latin and Coptic: Languages, Literatures, Cultures in Contact. Experiences from Late Antique Egypt’. The Round Table was held in Naples, at the National Society of Science, Letters and Arts, on 18 September 2019. It was organised within the project PLATINUM (Papyri and Latin Texts: INsights and Updated Methodologies), funded by the European Research Council within the Horizon 2020 Program (ERC-StG 2014 no. 636983). The project PLATINUM is aimed to explore the role Latin played in the least central areas of the Roman Empire through the evidence of the papyrus manuscripts.

The theme of the forms in which the contacts between the Latin language and the language of Christians in late antique Egypt and, thus, between Roman culture and Coptic is both an untapped and a stimulating theme, which can profitably be explored, as the papers gathered here show. A relevant contribution is offered by the renewed interest in multilingual and multicultural late antique Egypt, thanks to considerable current research and work-in-progress, and because of an innovative multi-perspective investigation.

This volume is the first even monographic work on the contacts between Latin and Coptic. But it especially is an occasion of a disciplinary and methodological debate animated by classicists, on one side, and by specialists in the field of Coptic studies, on the other [side], also including disciplines such as papyrology, history, history of law, and history of languages and literatures.

Deep gratitude is due to all the scholars who accepted my invitation and who wanted to experiment with working in such an interstice of research, which is both dusty and promising.

Maria Chiara Scappaticcio
Naples, February 2020

Reflections on the Use of Latin in Late Antique Egypt

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In the present paper I am trying to match the subject of the Round table with my specific research area (Coptic Egypt), therefore I propose some general comments (more detailed analysis will be provided in the other papers of this volume) about the presence of Latin in late antique Egypt, inasmuch as it is part of the mixture and juxtaposition of languages which accompanied the expansion of Christianity, not only in Egypt, but in all the Near East, from the beginning. The historical meaning we may assign to this phenomenon, with regard not only to the religious, but also to the civil and social attitudes, is a relatively new problem in comparison with traditional disciplines like *patristics* or *history of Christian literature* or *history of the Church*. All great founders of the late '800 and early '900 (Adolf von Harnack, Otto Bardenhewer, Rudolf Stählin, Hans Lietzmann, Berthold Altaner, Johannes Quasten; reference to such well-known manuals seems superfluous) note the rise of literatures in the national (as we say today) languages of the Near East, but they do not consider the deep reasons for this phenomenon. In order to understand its meaning it is important to inquire into the relationship between different elements which appear to interact, viz. the expansion of Christian doctrines; the presence of individual ethnic groups inside the Eastern Roman empire; the use of languages for the purpose of conveying information or for various kinds of administration rather than as an expression of ethnic identity. Also, we note that at the time of the great founders their evidence was still too poor for them to raise such a question.

Only in 1948 did the inquiry about the languages of Christianity and their use find acknowledgment in the foundational book of Gustave Bardy, which for some time was scarcely discussed (and remained without the promised second volume)¹. Only Christine Mohrmann resumed the subject²; and to find the problems put in the right perspective we have to wait until the book of Roger S. Bagnall³, the excellent *Handbook* of 2009 edited by Timothy Renner⁴, and the collection of essays edited by Arietta Papaconstantinou⁵, which contains an important contribution of Sofía Torallas Tovar⁶, which offers a sociological study on the use of the ancient languages in Egypt.

It is obvious that the progress from the early studies to the collection of Papaconstantinou has been made possible by the remarkable mass of documents accessible to the scholars in the period after the end of the 19th century, in which, of course, Egypt plays a conspicuous role, because from there come almost all the papyrus manuscripts. In this paper I shall present the most important aspects highlighted in the studies on those documents in the past decades, a work certainly not yet satisfactorily accomplished; and I shall propose some corrections to the representation of the cultural and so-

¹ G. Bardy, *La question des langues dans l'Eglise ancienne*, Paris 1948; Id., *Simples remarques sur les ouvrages et les manuscrits bilingues*, «Vivre et Penser», 3.2 (1943-1944), pp. 242-267.

² C. Mohrmann, *Linguistic Problems in the Early Christian Church*, «Vigiliae Christianae», 11.1 (1957), pp. 11-36.

³ R.S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, Princeton 1993.

⁴ T. Renner, *Papyrology and Ancient Literature*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, cur. R.S. Bagnall, Oxford 2009, pp. 282-302.

⁵ *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, cur. A. Papaconstantinou, Farnham - Burlington (VT) 2010.

⁶ S. Torallas Tovar, *Linguistic Identity in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, in Papaconstantinou, *The Multilingual Experience* cit., pp. 17-43.

cial environment in which those documents have been produced. In this respect two contributions of Paola Buzi⁷ have been essential.

It is difficult to overstate the basic change of perspective determined not only by the availability in quantitative terms of new documentation, but especially of documentation *of a different kind*. It is an obvious, but not enough valued, observation that the research, discovery, and study of written material preserved in more or less intact condition in the Egyptian territory provides direct documentation of the different cultural levels in the country, while before 1870 (just a widely conceived reference point) one could not even imagine it to be available. I refer especially to an evolution in the study of the ancient society in all its aspects.

Previously, scholars were dependent on descriptions and sources of a type that we may classify as literary, indirect, narrative, detached – according to the different situations; I allude, for instance, to patristic texts describing monastic life, which moreover are full of problems of authenticity and textual interventions at various stages (*fluid text!*), preventing a substantial historical evaluation⁸. Now scholars can rely on other sources, which directly come from the very phenomena of daily (and sometimes cultural) life which scholars are investigating, and concern a wide, almost complete range of social actors. We are still in an early period of this change because many of the emerging problems are not sufficiently debated, and often we do not know the circumstances in which the documents have been produced. But at least we are sure of their *objective* genuineness, since they are the direct production of their creators, and not more or less reshaped later copies; and if they were faked (e.g., the false declarations of sacrifice!) they were faked in their time and with a contemporary purpose.

⁷ P. Buzi, *Manoscritti latini nell'Egitto tardo-antico con un censimento dei testi letterari e semiletterari a cura di Simona Cives*, Imola 2005; Ead. below.

⁸ Cfr. Renner, *Papyrology* cit., pp. 284-285.

Especially from this point of view papyrology is in rapid progress today, illustrating the correspondence between the documents which are studied and the social and political situations that they allow us to discover⁹. And inside papyrology a branch, which is not within our scope, but it is useful to bring as an example, is the one studying the philosophical papyri¹⁰, because it is radically changing the perspectives of the function of philosophy in the culture of Late Antiquity, through the *variae lectiones* in the texts of the classical philosophers, and the partial recovery of texts so far unknown. This has generated new evaluations of the different functions of high-level philosophy, like Platonism or Stoicism, in comparison with lower level, more popular philosophy cultivated inside religious groups like Gnostics, Mystics, Zoroastrians, and also very low-level philosophy present in treatises on magic. All this has received new light from the discovery of entire repositories (perhaps small libraries) like the ones so called Bodmer or Nag Hammadi.

It is also notable that in the research about antiquity the focus of historical analysis is shifting from periods previously deemed more important because they were 'better' in their moral and creative aspect, and therefore more worthy of study, to others which were considered periods of decadence. In the process we are discovering that they are equally meaningful because for those historical periods it is possible to obtain much more knowledge of the economic, social, and political aspects, than of the so-called classical period. The daily life, the social attitudes, the cultural preferences of the middle or

⁹ As reference points I will just mention O. Montevecchi, *La papyrologia*, Milano 1988; M. David, B.A. van Groningen, P.W. Pestman, *The New Papyrological Primer*, Leiden 1990⁵; Bagnall, *The Oxford Handbook* cit.; but especially digital tools such as Trismegistos (<https://www.trismegistos.org>) or the Leuven Database (https://www.trismegistos.org/ldab/graphs_help.php).

¹⁰ Cfr. the corpus established by F. Adorno and now lead by F. Declava Caizzi (<http://www.papirifilosofici.it/>).

lower classes of citizens, as well as the upper and cultivated ones, are represented for us in a very detailed way in the documents not only from papyri but also in some literature, like the correspondence of Libanius, John Chrysostom, Jerome, or Augustine.

All this urges new important scientific needs: it is no longer sufficient to ask the same questions investigated until now because such questions were based on what it was possible to know from literary texts (be they of historiographic character) of high cultural level, which described real life through their perspective, privileging high cultural themes but neglecting aspects of daily, living, real life, which are important for us. Today we inquire, and can know, about the governance of small towns and villages, and about the small economic enterprises; therefore, we can better understand individual social and cultural situations. Special attention in this regard should be reserved for the *dossiers* (or archives), to which a recent noteworthy miscellany¹¹ and a study by Willy Clarysse¹² are devoted.

* * *

So far, I have tried to draw an overview of the subject of this conference. Turning now to the initial observations, I think that, after the surprising discoveries of private documents, our task is to consider the cultural significance of the results that research is achieving, e.g., analysing the relationship between languages used in Egypt in different situations, encompassing literature, school, civil functions, and religion, which is of course pre-eminent in this period.

¹¹ *Manuscripts and Archives. Comparative Views on Record-Keeping*, cur. A. Bausi, C. Brockmann, M. Friedrich, S. Kienitz, Berlin 2018.

¹² W. Clarysse, *Bilingual Papyrological Archives*, in Papaconstantinou, *The Multilingual Experience* cit., pp. 47-72.

The conventional doctrine on the usage of languages during the expansion of the Christian Church, elaborated and expressed by the great scholars mentioned above (Harnack etc.), is still prevalent in the manuals of patrology and history of Christianity, and is the predictable one. With regard to the presence of different languages in different geographical areas, and according to different social and cultural groups, also implying religious organisation and proselytism, we note that by means of the then available evidence it was obvious simply to acknowledge the creation in the prevailing regional language of literary compositions, with their religious, catechetical or exhortative, perspective. They were obviously in the language proper to the regions where they originated. The new evidence, analysed without prejudices, provides many unforeseen aspects, both for the existence of works in unexpected languages (e.g., Paul of Tamma with original Coptic in 4-5th century AD¹³; but also the Melitian correspondence)¹⁴, and for the discovery of old, very interesting versions like the *Epistula ad Dracontium* of Athanasius¹⁵ or the codices from Nag Hammadi.

There is now the possibility to investigate the relationship between the choice of a certain language and the character of religious groups inside or outside wide organisations like the so-called Great Church. Assuming Egypt as the privileged country of the documentation, and omitting Egyptian and Greek because obvious for their presence, the main actors in this new perspective are Coptic, Aramaic, Persian / Pahlavi (one is reminded of the flourishing Ju-

¹³ Paolo di Tamma, *Opere. Introduzione, testo, traduzione e concordanze*, ed. T. Orlandi, Roma 1988.

¹⁴ H.I. Bell, *Jews and Christians in Egypt. The Jewish Troubles in Alexandria and the Athanasian Controversy, Illustrated by Texts from Greek Papyri in the British Museum, with Three Coptic Texts edited by W. E. Crum*, London 1924; B. Kramer, J.C. Shelton, G.M. Browne, *Das Archiv des Nephros und Verwandte Texte*, Mainz am Rhein 1987.

¹⁵ S. Torallas Tovar, *Athanasius' Letter to Dracontius: A Fourth-Century Coptic Translation in a Papyrus Roll (P.Monts.Roca inv. 14)*, «Adamantius», 24 (2018), pp. 22-38.

daic communities and the second Persian occupation)¹⁶, Syriac (in this case the Manichaean community of Kellis and the important monastery of the Syrians in Wadi el Natrun)¹⁷; and now Latin can be added, even outside those fields of employments (law, army and administration) which were always considered.

This investigation fits into a more general renovation in the study and assessment of the languages of the Near East, which turn out to be less known and more problematic than previously thought. The structural and lexical connections of the Semitic languages (Aramaic, Chananæan, Hebrew, Phenician, etc.), the connecting media of the Near East, are today considered much more complicated thanks to the epigraphic evidence. We must include here the relationship between written and spoken language, which is now seen as very problematic. And also the function of what remained of the cultural activity of the Mouseion and the Library of Alexandria, which probably survived, among great difficulties, after the two destructive invasions, by Caesar (48 BC) and by Amr ibn al As (AD 645).

* * *

Coming now to our specific subject, Latin in Egypt, if we want to understand its implications fully, we have to be ready to change our concept of language (and consequently of dialect) and resort to sociolinguistics. The communicative tool employed in everyday life may be classified, even if generically and superficially, as one language, which is actually distinguished in many linguistic sys-

¹⁶ D. Weber, *Sassanidische Briefe aus Ägypten*, «Asiatische Studien / Études Asiatiques», 62.3 (2008), pp. 803-826.

¹⁷ *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts and Fragments in the Library of Deir al-Surian, Wadi al-Natrun (Egypt)*, cur. S.P. Brock, L. van Rompay, Leuven - Paris - Walpole (MA) 2014.

tems, each with its own character. The ability itself to use different languages in different situations or conditions should be measured against the part or layer of those languages which is used in socio-logically determined circumstances.

Buzi has important observations¹⁸:

... è evidente che per comprendere appieno il ruolo del latino nell'Egitto tardoantico ogni singola attestazione, ogni singolo ambiente di utilizzo debba essere considerato come un caso a sé, distinguendo gli usi spontanei – praticati da latinofoni di prima o seconda generazione (a cui sono riferibili non solo le attestazioni manoscritte di piena età imperiale, ma probabilmente anche quel che resta di codici di lusso di età tardoantica) – da quelli funzionali – necessari e obbligati, a causa del ruolo ricoperto o della finalità di uno specifico messaggio –, da quelli infine che implicano una scelta culturale, una manifestazione di status, di prestigio.

On this issue two chapters of the above-mentioned *Handbook of Papyrology* are especially illuminating. Eleanor Dickey¹⁹ notes that papyri show us the late evolution of Latin and Greek, therefore allowing the comparison between their daily usage and that present in the normal manuscript tradition, to which we were in a sense slaves. She then explains the special character of the technical languages (for administration etc.); the influence of pronunciation on orthography (especially illuminating is the presence of the *hori*, p. 153, signalling a spirit not pronounced by the hellephone byzantine); the Latin loan-words in Greek (p. 158; cfr. above for Coptic). Other remarks on similar subjects are found in the chapter by Dorothy J. Thompson²⁰: language and its con-

¹⁸ Buzi below.

¹⁹ E. Dickey, *The Greek and Latin Languages in the Papyri*, in Bagnall, *The Oxford Handbook* cit., pp. 149-169.

²⁰ D.J. Thompson, *The Multilingual Environment of Persian and Ptolemaic*

text, techniques and society, literature and spoken literary habits, society and religion.

These are general observations. We pass now to apply them specifically to the Latin language. The book of Buzi and Simona Cives²¹ is dedicated to literary texts, but the introductory observations are widely relevant and should always be kept in mind. I wish to quote those which appear to be the most important:

Nel quadro di una tale ricchezza linguistica [nell'Egitto], sembrerebbe esserci poco spazio per il latino, eppure i numerosi ritrovamenti testuali nella lingua di Roma smentiscono tale considerazione. Il rinvenimento di un consistente gruppo di testimoni letterari, cui vanno aggiunti i numerosissimi testi a carattere documentario, ... lascia intravedere uno scenario degno del più vivo interesse²².

[La documentazione indica] come l'ambiente militare sia uno dei più importanti veicoli di diffusione culturale latina in Oriente²³.

Non va ... dimenticato lo stuolo di funzionari romani che, nominati direttamente da Roma o dal prefetto, ... devono aver continuato a parlare la propria lingua madre²⁴.

A partire dal regno di Diocleziano ... l'amministrazione e l'attività giudiziaria divennero quasi bilingui: i verbali, pur mantenendo il corpo del testo in greco, esprimevano l'indicazione della data, il luogo del dibattito e gli interventi dei magistrati in latino²⁵.

Egypt: Egyptian, Aramaic, and Greek Documentation, in Bagnall, *The Oxford Handbook* cit., pp. 395-417.

²¹ Buzi, *Manoscritti* cit.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 36.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

È ipotizzabile che le classi dirigenti, ... sentissero allora il bisogno (e forse anche la necessità) di apprendere il latino allo scopo di migliorare la propria posizione all'interno della corte imperiale²⁶.

Dai ritrovamenti di manoscritti letterari emerge una duplice realtà sull'uso del latino in Egitto. Da una parte è infatti innegabile che numerosi frammenti tradiscono la loro natura di esercitazione, ... Dall'altra esemplari di estremo lusso, come il frammento di Livio da Deir el-Malak o il pregiato codice delle *Institutiones* di Gaio, rivelano la compresenza di lettori di ben altro livello²⁷.

The presence of Aramaic and Latin, besides Egyptian (so-called Demotic, then Coptic) and Greek, is certain, but because of the different milieus and chronology, with implications in different kinds of usage, the conclusions to be drawn from the evidence are very problematic. We distinguish (a) kinds of Latin found in the existing documents; (b) different circumstances in which it is used, e.g., administration, army, literature, spirituality (Christian Church, monasticism), social groups; (c) type of manuscript transmission. The case where a literary text is copied on the back of a document is of course very different from that of a text copied on a papyrus (or parchment) chosen by purpose, or eventually of what appears as a school exercise. In fact, even those classified as school texts may refer to different kinds of organisation, from personal exercises to those related to classes of pupils to higher level scholars.

The presence of Latin in Egypt is well attested in literary source, like Cassian, Jerome, Athanasius, etc., and also in legal manuscripts. Now there is the possibility to verify at least partially these kinds of sources with what one extracts from direct documentation; that is, the real circumstances to which our sources refer. We note, for the different milieus:

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

- for the army, though it was surely the privileged one in the usage of Latin, unfortunately there is nothing comparable to, for instance, the Vindolanda tablets²⁸, and leaving aside the banalities we cannot say much from the documents which is concrete.
- Administration and judicial context: bilingualism and trilingualism in the record of proceedings are well-known and important, especially in the part devoted to the witnesses, the bureaucratic titles of magistrates, or the expressions for dating. We refer to the study of Michele Pedone in this volume²⁹.
- Monasticism: it is worthy of great attention because devotees from the entire Roman world travelled to Egypt to learn about askesis. The existence of Latin texts in the group of manuscripts called Dishna or Bodmer is due to this phenomenon, and it is revealing what Buzi notes about one of these codices:

Uno dei più importanti testimoni di letteratura cristiana egiziana in lingua latina è rappresentato dal cosiddetto Salmo Responsorio, tramandato da sei fogli provenienti da un codice papiraceo miscelaneo, databile alla seconda metà del IV secolo, contenente testi in latino (Catilinarie e Alcesti) e testi in greco (anafora e preghiera)³⁰.

Ma ciò che qui maggiormente interessa è naturalmente il fatto che il testo, da collocarsi in modo inequivocabile nell'ambito dell'ambiente cristiano, si trovi ad essere trascritto di seguito alle Catilinarie³¹.

The 'miscellaneous codex' may be considered as part of a monastic library, in which Latin speakers formed an important component.

²⁸ (<https://digital.humanities.ox.ac.uk/project/vindolanda-tablets-online>).

²⁹ Pedone below.

³⁰ Buzi, *Manoscritti* cit., p. 84.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

- Generic ecclesiastic or secular context: again, we refer to what Buzi observes:

La produzione letteraria cristiana d'Egitto non si esaurisce tuttavia con le opere tramandate in lingua greca e copta, ma sorprendentemente si compone anche di un quantitativamente modesto, ma contenutisticamente notevole gruppo di testi in lingua latina, segno che anche la comunità romana, o di cultura latina, sentiva la necessità di raccogliere nelle proprie biblioteche i testi sacri della nuova fede³².

- Interest for Latin is also present in the manuscripts recently found at Kellis, site of a Manichaean community (cfr. the series of volumes *Dakhleh Oasis Project Monographs*, started in 1997).
- Maria Chiara Scappaticcio and Buzi in this volume both deal with the school context³³.

As a result of analysing the situation represented above, we come to the conclusion that, as often happens in comparable fields (e.g., textual linguistics), we should not assume the existence of one specific language classifiable as Latin, as also of Greek etc. They are rather abstractions, and what really existed are different languages derived from the same substrate. A language lives in its concrete, spoken or written, manifestations, and grammar, syntax, and vocabulary are only convenient abstractions, unsuitable for governing accurate historical investigations.

Another fundamental point in this regard is that of the Latin words which may enter as part of the Coptic elocution. Of course, it is tightly bound to the problem of the treatment of Greek words in Coptic: they are almost always wrongly considered as loanwords. Coptic was born as essentially different from spoken Egyptian of the first Christian period (improperly called Demotic, which is the name of the writing system) because it was an intimate mixture of

³² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

³³ Scappaticcio below; Buzi below.

late Egyptian and Greek, and from Greek vocabulary, of course limited to its components which were used in the life and ecclesiastical literature of that period, an author could choose any word without distinction from the Egyptian vocabulary.

The question of whether Latin words entered the Greek vocabulary of specialised use before passing into Coptic is not liable to a solution, because no Coptic author will tell us what he had in mind when he used them. In any case, it is debated in a rather superficial way. Starting from an identification which is not quite justified theoretically, that of the Latin language *for us, according to our general model*, we assign to its vocabulary this or that word found in a Coptic text. Then we ask whether *in the mind of the Coptic author* they were considered as part of Latin or of the Greek vocabulary; and finally, whether a native Greek-speaker from Egypt would recognise it as definitely included or a simple loanword.

This analysis in turn produces a series of specifications and conditions which I believe will never allow clear general statements on the subject, as we would like to make. But if we consider them as *possibilities*, we shall be able to obtain a much more realistic conception of what we can obtain from the documents. With these premises in mind, it is interesting to present a list, albeit suggestive and not exhaustive, of the Latin words extracted from a quick review of Coptic literary texts³⁴: *annona* (administrative word), *veredarius* (government officer), *victoria* (victory in battlefields), *castrum* (from the army), *comes* (officer of the palace), *centenarium* (money), *comitatus* (officer of the palace), *lumen* («portrait»; this term is particularly interesting)³⁵, *magistrrianus* (government officer), *matrona* (familiar

³⁴ For the sake of brevity, I will limit myself to indicating the Latin form, with some exceptions, since the idiosyncrasies of the Greek / Coptic writing are not relevant here.

³⁵ Cfr. G. Godron, *ΛΙΜΗΝ Image, Portrait*, «Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte», 25 (1983), pp. 1-53.

term), *spatarius* (from the army), *november* (month), *notarius* (government officer), *numerus* (from the army), *ordinon* (from the army), *paganus* (from religion), *pagarchus* (local officer), *palatinus* (officer of the palace), *palatium* (a building), *placitum* (bureaucratic word), *flagellare* (φραγελλοῦ, punishment).

As for the *mention* of Latin language in Coptic literary texts, the situation is somewhat contradictory, because although the Copts were well aware of the existence of Latin, they very rarely mention it. The name was ⲙⲏⲧⲣⲱⲙⲁⲓⲟⲥ, and an example is the panegyric of Raphael archangel attributed to Cyril of Alexandria (CC0397, ed. Orlandi 2011) ⲁⲓⲟϥⲱⲃⲥ ⲉϥϭⲱ ⲙⲓⲟⲥ ⲙⲡⲓⲣⲟ ⲙⲏⲧⲣⲱⲙⲉⲕⲱⲥ.

Finally, I mention the rather numerous extraordinary documents; for instance, the Gothic-Latin fragment (cfr. Buzi below). It is always risky to draw general inferences, but they show how unpredictable documents really should be expected. As for the magical manuscripts, they are very numerous, but their language has features outside what we call a normal usage.

* * *

Among the extraordinary documents are the three-column glossaries, like the so-called Coptic Homer – Oxford, Sackler Library, P.Oxy. 5414 (P.Oxy. LXXXIV 5414): original text, paraphrase, Coptic version – or the Berlin manual – Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, Papyrussammlung, P. 10582 (P.Berol. inv. 10582). They are examples of a strictly linguistic activity, which accompanied that of translation, here too on different levels of origin and destination. I wish to include the entire preserved part of the Berlin manual, also called *conversation manual* in a layout apt to demonstrate its textual development. In fact, I think that the suggestion of Walter Crum³⁶, that it

³⁶ H.I. Bell, W.E. Crum, *A Greek-Coptic Glossary*, «Aegyptus», 6 (1925), pp. 177-226.

comes from the archive of Dioscorus³⁷, should be taken seriously: Dioscorus would have added a Coptic column to a bilingual manual originally only Greek-Latin, conceived for students speaking Latin.

The *editio princeps* was published by Wilhelm Schubart³⁸ with the help of Georg Möller for Coptic. A new edition by Johannes Kramer had the help of M. Weber for Coptic³⁹. Gustav Esau remarked the affinities with the so-called *Colloquium Montepessulanum* (93-107 Dickey = *CgL* III 654-659)⁴⁰. Robert Cavenaile⁴¹ (only the Latin text) and André Bataille⁴² included the *manual* in their respective *Corpora* without annotations of interest. A photograph of the papyrus is available on the web site of the Berlin papyrological collection (<https://berlpap.smb.museum/dreisprachiges-gespraechsbuch/?lang=en>), thanks to the exemplary attitude of the authorities of the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung in this matter.

On the basis of the current layout of the manuscript, I have reconstructed the mutually connected sentences according to a personal interpretation, which is presented in the parallel lines. This does not imply that the original model (in my opinion Greek-Latin, without Coptic) was not conceived according to the usual method of the *verticalization*: that is, the text was first written in one column of one word per line, and then the corresponding words in the other language were written in a parallel column. This was, as far as I can see,

³⁷ J.-L. Fournet, *Hellénisme dans l'Égypte du VI^e siècle. La bibliothèque et l'oeuvre de Dioscore d'Aphrodité*, Le Caire 1999.

³⁸ W. Schubart, *Ein lateinisch-griechisch-koptisches Gesprächsbuch*, «Klio», 13 (1913), pp. 27-38.

³⁹ *C.Gloss.Biling.* I 15, pp. 97-108.

⁴⁰ G. Esau, *Zu dem lateinisch-griechisch-koptischen Gesprächsbuch*, «Philologus», 73 (1914-1916), pp. 157-158.

⁴¹ *CPL* 281.

⁴² A. Bataille, *Glossaires greco-latins sur papyrus*, «Recherches de Papyrologie», 4 (1967), pp. 161-169.

the normal method for translations⁴³. My layout (parallel sentences) should make the mind of the compiler / redactor clearer for us.

The page was divided into two columns, with each line comprising one correspondence Latin-Greek-Coptic. An interesting peculiarity in the organisation of the columns is that in some places, where the single (verticalized) words are very long, the line comprising the equivalent Latin, Greek, Coptic occupies much of the space reserved in principle for the right column. On the contrary, in other places the Coptic word shifts to the next line. The reason for this is obscure, and perhaps it is only a casual phenomenon; but I suggest that it is connected to the personal character of the codex or group of papyrus sheets to which our manuscript belonged.

An annoying problem is the fact that the papyrus is poorly readable and sometimes completely illegible. Due to the limited goal of my presentation, I have confined myself to what I can see in the digital photo (cfr. above) and on the transcriptions of Schubart and Kramer, because after them the readability can only be worsened. I think that the most reliable transcript is that of Schubart(-Möller), even with its uncertainties. I have used Coptic characters also for the Greek words because they are more in line with the original⁴⁴, but the normal Latin characters for Latin words, which are also normalised in their orthography. The treatment of the orthography of Latin words in the manuscript by means of characters which may be defined as Greek majuscules of Coptic type would deserve a special analysis. In general, about the content, I note (cfr. especially #122 and #127) that while Greek and Latin may rather easily comply to each other, Coptic is much less flexible. This shows something of the scope for its presence. I suggest that, if the manuscript really

⁴³ Cfr. T. Orlandi, *La traduzione copta di Eusebio di Cesarea*, HE, «Rendiconti della Classe di Scienze Morali, Storiche e Filologiche», 9.5 (1994), pp. 399-456.

⁴⁴ Cfr. the observations of J. Kramer (*C.Gloss.Biling.* I 15) on the text.

comes from Dioscorus' archive, he wanted to extend a school text which originated in a Graeco-Latin environment to the Coptic linguistic use (but cfr. above on the ambiguous meaning of the term school), acting for a kind of personal cultural improvement.

I distinguished the paragraphs, according to the completed sentences, and I attributed a numbering starting from 100 because there were one or more previous sheets, part of which could emerge in the future. Some annotations are given in the footnotes. The brackets [] indicate lacunas, whereas the brackets { } indicate corrections.

Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, Papyrussammlung, P. 10582⁴⁵

0100

omnibus accumbentibus

ΠΑCIN TOIC ΔΗΔΚΕΙΜΕΝΟΙC

ΟΥΟΝ ΝΙΜ ΕΦΝ{Η}Χ ΕΒΟΛ

0101

si omnes biberint terge mensam

ΕΙ ΠΑΝΤΕC ΕΠΙΔΝ ΚΑΤΑΜΑΖΟΝ ΤΗΝ ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑΝ

ΕΦ[ΧΕ] ΝΤΟΟΥ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΔΥCΩ ΒΩΤΙ⁴⁶

0102

adponite in medium candelabras

ΘΕΤΕ ΕΙC ΤΟ [ΜΕCΟΝ] Τ[ΔC ΛΥΚΝΙ]ΔC

ΟΥΩΞ⁴⁷ ΝΗΚΑΝΤΗΛΑΙ⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Possibly horizontal interlinear lines mark the different conversational situations and also a place for a title. The remaining sheet opens in the situation of a night banquet.

⁴⁶ The form ΝΤΕΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ is missing, perhaps because in Coptic was used the same word; cfr. 118, 130, 139, 138, 147.

⁴⁷ For this word there is no correspondence (e.g., ΕΤΗΗΤΕ).

⁴⁸ The word overruns the second column; it is not the usual term

0103

et accendite lucernas

κ[αι ἀναψ]ατε λογ[κερνα]ς

αγω ἄπο νῆμβ

0104

diluce

φωθισον

[ἀρι ογ]οει[ιν

0105

date nobis bellaria unguentum

δο[τε ἡμιν] τραγεματα μυρον

[. . .] στοι

0106

dicite omnes: feliciter

ειπατε παντες ευτυχως

χοος ετηρτη [

0107

bene nos accepisti et regaliter

καλωσ ἡμα[ς] εδ[εξω] και β[ασιλικω]ς

lacuna

0108

ut tibi decet

ως σοι αρесκει

νη[ε ετρ ωδ]γ νακ

0109

nequid vultis hic dormire

ΜΗΤΙ ΒΟΥΛΕΣΘΕ ΕΝΤΑΥΘΑ ΚΟΙΜΗΘΕΝΑΙ

ΜΗΠΩΣ ΝΤΕΤΝΟΥΩΩ ΕΝΚΟΤΚ ΜΠΙΜΑ

0110

quod sero est

ΟΤΙ ΟΨΕ ΕΣΤΙΝ

ΧΕ ΡΟΥΖΕ ΠΕ

0111

e[s]t in hoc gratias habemus

ΚΑΙ ΕΝ ΤΟΥΤΩΙ ΧΑΡΙΤΑΣ ΕΧΟΜΕΝ

ΔΥΩ ΖΗ ΠΑΙ ΤΩ[Π] ΕΝΘ[Δ]ΤΗ ΖΗΟΤ [ΖΗ]ΟΤ

0112

ut iussisti

ΩΣ Κ[ΕΚΕΛΕ]ΥΚΑΣ

lacuna

0113

quod vos vultis

Ο ΥΜΕΙΣ ΒΟΥΛΕΣΘΕ

[. . .] ΤΩ [. . .]

0114

ego meum feci

ΕΓΩ ΤΟ ΕΜΟΝ ΕΠΟΙΗΣΑ

ΔΝΟΚ ΠΕΤΕ ΠΩΙ [. . .]

0115

accendite lucer(n)as

ΑΝΑΨΑΤΑΙ ΤΟΥΣ ΛΥΧΝΟΥ[Σ]

Χ{Ε}ΡΟ ΝΖΗΒΣ

0116

et prosequamini omnes

και προπεμψαται παντες

αγω αρι ωρη ηχοου τηρου⁴⁹

Familiar conversation

0117

sermo co(tidia)nus

οη[ι]λια καθημερινη

ηφραξε τηρου η[. .] μηννε⁵⁰

0118

quid facimus frater

τι ποιουμεν αδελφε

τηναρ ου⁵¹0119⁵²

[li]be[n]te[r] te : ηδεως σε : †ναυ φαι

φαιπο[?] εναυ εροκ : πο[?] εροκ

video : ορω :

0120

et ego te domine

καγω σε δεσποτα

αγω ανοκ {η}τοκ ηχοεις

⁴⁹ Line below.⁵⁰ Line below; after this unit there is a mark emphasising a change of subject.⁵¹ The Coptic term is omitted.⁵² I reproduce the layout of the manuscript where there appear to be two options for the Coptic, which is therefore not aligned; the alternative is added on the right.

0121

et nos vos

ΚΑΙ ΗΜΕΙΣ ΗΜΑΣ

ΔΥΩ ΔΝΟΝ [.]ΝΔΝ

0122

nescio quis osti{s}um pulsat

ΟΥΚ ΟΙΔΑ ΤΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΘΥΡΑΝ ΚΡΟΥΕΙ

ΝΤΙΣΟΟΥΝ ΔΝ [ΧΕ is wanting] ΝΙΜ ΜΠΡΟ ΠΕ ΦΧ[= Κ]ΩΛΞ⁵³

0123

exito cito foras

ΕΞΕΛΘΕ ΤΑΧΕΩΣ ΕΞΩ

ΔΜΟΥ {Ε}ΒΟΛ {Ν}ΘΗΠΗ ΚΩ {Ε}ΒΟΛ {Ν}ΘΗΠΗ⁵⁴

0124

et disce quis est

ΚΑΙ ΜΑΘΕ ΤΙΣ ΕΣΤΙΝ

ΔΥΩ ΕΙΜΕ⁵⁵ ΝΙΜ ΠΕ

0125

aut que[m...]

...] Η ΤΙΝΑ ...

Η ΦΚΩΤΗ [= Ε] ΝΣΑ ΝΙΜ [. . .]ΤΕΙ

0126

[a]b Aurelio venit

ΑΠ[ΔΥΡ]ΗΛΙΟΥ ΗΛΘΕΝ

ΔΦΕΙ⁵⁶

⁵³ Correct construction: ΝΙΜ ΠΕ ΕΦΚΩΛΞ ΜΠΡΟ.

⁵⁴ Two possibilities of equivalence?

⁵⁵ Again, ΧΕ is missing.

⁵⁶ The name was skipped.

0127

[nunti]um [tulit]

ΦΑCIN ΗΝΕΓΚΕΝ

ΟΥΟΥΩ ΔΗΕΙΝΗ [= Ε]⁵⁷

0128

c[la]ma illum hic

ΚΑΛΕCΟΝ ΔΥΤΟΝ ΕΝΤΑΥΘΑ

ΜΟΥΤΕ {Ε}ΡΟΥ ΕΠΙΜΑ

0129

quid est puer

ΤΙ ΕCΤΙΝ ΠΑΙ

ΟΥΟΥ ΠΕ ΠΚΟΥΙ

0130

quid nuntias

ΤΙ ΑΝΑΓΓΕΛΛΕΙC

ΝΙΜ⁵⁸

0131

omnia bene

ΠΑΝΤΑ ΚΑΛΩC⁵⁹

0132

Maximus te vul{t} salutare

ΜΑΞΙΜΟC CΕ [ΒΟ]ΥΛΕΤΑΙ ΔCΠΑCΑCΘΑΙ⁶⁰ΦΟΥΟΥΚ Ω[ΙΝΕ]⁶¹⁵⁷ Regular construction: ΔΗΕΙΝΕ ΝΟΥΟΥΩ.⁵⁸ It should be ΟΥ; ΔΓΓΕΛΛΕ is neglected.⁵⁹ Coptic is omitted.⁶⁰ The name is neglected.⁶¹ It occupies the right column.

0133

ubi est

ΠΟΥ ΕΣΤΙΝ

ϣΤ[ΩΝ]

0134

foras stat

ΕΞΩ ΙΣΤΑΤΑΙ

{ε}ΒΟΛ ϣΔΞΕΡΑΤϣ

0135

veniat intro

ΕΛΘΑΤΩ ΕΝΔΟΝ

ΜΑΡΕϣΕΙ ΖΙ{ε}ΟΥΝ

0136

bene venistis

ΚΑΛΩΣ ΗΛΘΑΣ

ΕϣΕΡΩΔΥ⁶² ΑΚΕΙ

0137

salutant te infantes et parentes istorum

ΑΣΠΑΖΟΝΤΑΙ ΣΕ ΣΕ ΤΑ ΒΡΕΦΗ ΚΑΙ ΟΙ ΓΟΝΕΙΣ ΔΥΤΩΝ

ΣΟΥ⁶³ ΑΣΠΑΣΕ ΜΜΟΚ ΝΚΕΚΕ⁶⁴ ΜΝ ΝΕΙΟΤΕ ΝΩΟΥ

0138

miserunt tibi autem {h}anc epistulam per puerum signatam

ΕΠΕΜΨΑΝ ΣΟΙ ΔΕ ΤΑΥΤΗΝ ΤΗΝ [ΕΠΙ]ΣΤΟΛΗΝ [ΔΙ]Δ ΠΑΙΔΟΣ

Ε[ΣΦΡΑΓΙΣΜΕΝΗΝ]

⁶² This is bizarre.

⁶³ Regular form: σε.

⁶⁴ On the line below.

αχχοογκ δε⁶⁵ ται ζιτν πκογι [. . .]

0139

et valde consternatus sum frater quod multo tempore litteras
a te non accepi

[κ]αι πανυ ελγπηθεν αδελφε οτι πολλω τω χρονω γραμματα
απο σογ ογκ ελαβον

αχω . . . ν . [. . .] αφρ χολη πcon [. . .] ζν ζαζ νογ{οε}ιω ζιτοοτκ
μπιχι⁶⁶

0140

post multum mecum ergo tempus mitte [epistula]m ut hilaris
fiam

μετα πολυν τοιγαρτοι [χρον]ον [αποσ]τειλον μοι επιστολην
ινα ιλαρος [γ]ενηθω

μνnc{α} ζαζ [. . . .] υ και [. . .] ογροτ τναωωπε⁶⁷

0141

[. . .] omnes tuos

ασπασαι παντας τογς σογς

ωινε νετε ν{μ}μακ τηρογ

New subject -- horizontal line

0142

veniat intro

ελθατω ενδον

μαρεχει ζιζογν

⁶⁵ επιστολε is neglected.

⁶⁶ There is something missing for the form γραμματα, which is unusual in Coptic.

⁶⁷ Hardly legible.

0142a bon ... omn ... et ...

...

...

0143

[. . .] sicut peregrini

[. . .] καθως οι ξενοι

νωη [=η]μο⁶⁸

0144

cur mane vigilas

τι ημερας αγρυπνεις

[α]ρροκ δε [=ι?]ν εξτοου{ε} κρη [=οει]ς

0145

necessitas fecit me vigilare

η αναγκη εποιησεν με αγρυπνησαι

[. . .] ασαατ ετραρη [= οει]ς

0146

prodeamus in lumen

προηλθωμεν εις υπ[αιθ]ρον

μαρ[ε]νπρο]ελθε [. . .]

0147

curre in domum

δραμε εις την οικιαν

πωτ [

⁶⁸ In this specific case, probably the Greek was enough.

ΜΥΤΩΡΩΜΑΙΟC: Reflections on the Forms of Use
of the 'Language of the Romans' in Late Antique Egypt.
Textual, Archaeological and Epigraphic Sources*

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After the renowned article of Robert Cavenaile, *Le latin dans les milieux chrétiens d'Égypte* (1987)¹, the role of Latin in late antique Egypt has not ceased to be investigated from the most varied perspectives², also due to the numerous new editions of texts, mainly literary³, which have enriched the corpus of attestations or contrib-

* I sincerely thank G. Agosti, A. Bausi, A. Camplani and T. Orlandi for re-reading my article, providing me, as usual, with many valuable suggestions.

¹ R. Cavenaile, *Le latin dans les milieux chrétiens d'Égypte*, in *Miscel·lània Papiro·lògica* R. Roca-Puig, cur. S. Janeras, Barcelona 1987, pp. 103-110. Less efficacious is J. Kaimio, *Latin in Roman Egypt*, in *Actes du XV^e Congrès International de Papyrologie*, cur. G. Bingen, G. Nachtergaele, III, Bruxelles 1978, pp. 27-33. See also J.N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language*, Cambridge 2003, pp. 527-640.

² B. Rochette, *Le latin dans le monde grec. Recherches sur la diffusion de la langue et des lettres latines dans les provinces bellérophones de l'Empire*, Bruxelles 1997, pp. 118-139; R. Cribiore, *Latin Literacy in Egypt*, «KODAI, Journal of Ancient History», 13-14 (2003-2004), pp. 111-118; Ead., *Higher Education in Early Byzantine Egypt: Rhetoric, Latin, and the Law*, in *Egypt in the Byzantine World* (300-700), cur. R.S. Bagnall, Cambridge 2007, pp. 47-66.

³ Among these deserve to be mentioned at least: *Alcestis Barcinonensis. Text and Commentary*, ed. M. Marcovich, Leiden 1988; Anonimo. *L'Alceste di Barcellona. Introduzione, testo, traduzione e commento*, ed. L. Nosarti, Bologna 1992; Hadrianus. *P.Monts.Roca III*, edd. J. Gil, S. Torallas Tovar, Barcelona

uted to its better understanding. However, it is only recently⁴, also thanks to the conference of which this volume is the direct result⁵, that a systematic revision of the totality of available data has been attempted, through an effective dialogue between classicists and specialists of the Coptic tradition⁶.

Despite such a fervour of studies, however, it is evident that defining the relationship of Latin with Greek and Egyptian – whether the latter is to be understood, in a first phase, as what remained of Demotic, or, later on, with Coptic, which progressively transformed from a literary, and in some way artificial, language into a spoken language – remains an ‘awkward question’, and certainly far from being completely resolved.

2010; *L'Alceste de Barcelone* (P.Monts.Roca inv. 158-161). *Édition, traduction et analyse contextuelle d'un poème latin conservé sur papyrus*, ed. G. Nocchi Macedo, Liège 2014; *L'Hadrianus de Montserrat* (P.Monts.Roca III, inv. 162-165). *Édition, traduction et analyse contextuelle d'un récit latin conservé sur papyrus*, ed. T. Berg, Liège 2018.

⁴ J.-L. Fournet, *La pratique du latin dans l'Égypte de l'Antiquité tardive*, in *Latin in Byzantium I. Late Antiquity and Beyond*, cur. A. Garcea, M. Rosellini, L. Silvano, Turnhout 2019, pp. 73-91. See also Id., *The Multilingual Environment of Late Antique Egypt: Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Persian Documentation*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, cur. R.S. Bagnall, Oxford 2009, pp. 418-451; C. Rapp, *The Use of Latin in the Context of Multilingual Monastic Communities in the East*, in Garcea, Rosellini, Silvano, *Latin cit.*, pp. 93-107.

⁵ Important, of course, will be the results of the systematic survey of Latin papyri carried out by the ERC granted Consolidator project 'PLATINUM', directed by M.C. Scappaticcio and hosted by the University of Naples 'Federico II'.

⁶ See above all the articles of Orlandi above, Scappaticcio below, and Torallas Tovar below. It should be noticed that, up to now, archaeological sources and material culture have been neglected. Although their contribution is often limited, they should not be overlooked.

The use – or rather of the uses – of Latin in Egypt between the 4th and 6th / 7th centuries is in fact an extremely complex phenomenon since the use of the ‘language of the Romans’ encompasses both the role of the language of the elite – or of those who aspired to be assimilated to it – and that of the language of a minority. Thus it was a powerful and unavoidable tool for certain socio-political environments, but at the same time characterised by limited opportunities of use.

There are certainly some fixed points – on which, therefore, there is no need to go back –, because it is very clear to everyone the place that Latin holds in Egypt in the field of administration, of legal practices (including the act of making a will)⁷ and of military management⁸; circuits that certainly involve, at least in an initial phase, even native speakers⁹.

⁷ Rochette, *Le latin* cit., p. 120 observes, however, that from AD 530 legal documents (minutes, procedural documents, wills) with Latin formulas are no longer attested. Unfortunately, most of the extant manuscripts of legal content – among which the work of Ulpianus stands out for the numerous attestations – are not of proved provenance. Not surprisingly, Oxyrhynchus, the *komai* of the Fayyum and Hermopolis are the most attested locations in the cases where the place of discovery is known.

⁸ On the military organisation in Egypt, but only until Diocletian, see R. Alston, *Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt. A Social History*, London 1995.

⁹ Cavenaile, *Le latin* cit., pp. 104-105: «Il est assuré que le IV^e s. a été l'époque où le latin a connu sa plus grande expansion dans tout l'Orient grec et in particulier en Egypte, sans qu'on puisse toutefois préciser le degré de pénétration. On sait que le latin qui était déjà la langue officielle de l'armée, devint sous Dioclétien la langue exclusive de l'administration. Il était aussi la langue du droit. Enfin, avec l'extension de la *civitas Romana*, l'intérêt pour le latin, langue des maîtres, ne pouvait pas ne pas s'accroître et les papyrus latins relatifs à l'enseignement sont presque tous conçus en vue de la formation de personnes de langue grecque». Fournet, *La pratique*

Equally well established is the sporadic presence of Latin speakers gravitating around some monasteries, especially in Lower Egypt¹⁰. However, the question becomes much more complex after Diocletian, when pockets of resistance of *Latinitas* are attested in sites that are far from the centres of power and, paradoxically, the number of literary and semi-literary texts seems to increase, and mostly outside of the contexts and milieus described above¹¹.

How is one to evaluate the surprising presence of the *Catilinae* in a library, already problematic in itself¹², whose origin is strongly

cit., p. 74: «Dans ces conditions, le latin papyrologique se circonscrit à trois domaines bien délimités: (a) les textes émanant du pouvoir impérial; (b) beaucoup plus nombreux, les documents latins émanant de l'armée ou concernant des militaires; (c) les actes liés à la citoyenneté romain». *Ibid.*, p. 75 footnote 5 mentions an 'artificial' case of Latin surviving in the military administration. We do not deal in this article with the role of Latin in the Greek poets of Egyptian origin, the so-called 'wandering-poets', among which the Alexandrian Claudianus, hellenophone but well-known author of refined Latin poems, stands out for his quality, since it represents a different phenomenon compared to what is analysed here. On Claudianus, however, see P.G. Christiansen, *Claudian: A Greek or a Latin?*, «Scholia», 6 (1997), pp. 79-95; B. Mulligan, *The Poet from Egypt? Reconsidering Claudian's Eastern Origin*, «Philologus», 151.2 (2007), pp. 285-310; M.-F. Guipponi-Gineste, *Claudian: poète du monde à la cour d'Occident*, Paris 2010; C. Ware, *Claudian and the Roman Epic Tradition*, Cambridge 2012; A. Cameron, *Wandering Poets and Other Essays on Late Greek Literature and Philosophy*, Oxford 2015, pp. 113-146 (chapters 5 and 6: *Claudian and Claudian Revisited*).

¹⁰ See, once more, the article of Torallas Tovar below, and Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., both with bibliography illustrating the previous studies on this theme. On the monks who speak Latin see also Fournet, *The Multilingual Environment* cit., pp. 428-429.

¹¹ It should not be forgotten, of course, that the whims of fate play a role in the archaeological and textual findings.

¹² J.-L. Fournet, *Anatomie d'une bibliothèque de l'Antiquité tardive: l'inven-*

debated, but which certainly – at least at a certain moment of its existence – has seen the coexistence of works in Greek, Latin and Coptic, united by the glue of an evolving Christianity¹³? How do we explain the original creation, in the same library, located very far from Alexandria and ‘Romanized’ areas (the Delta, the Fayyum, Oxyrhynchus to give some examples), of works that, although linguistically and metrically rough, are the result of an original creative action and therefore the inheritance of classical *paideia*? In what circumstances and when exactly did juridical codices of high quality such as the Latin-Coptic palimpsest London, British Library, Oriental 4717 (5)¹⁴ lose their authority, both institutional and cultural, to become little more than wastepaper? What place does the unusual trilingual ‘conversation manual’ – as it has sometimes been called, whose purpose is still far from being fully understood – have in this context¹⁵? It is a fact that many of these issues remain largely unsolved¹⁶.

taire, la faciès et la provenance de la 'Bibliothèque Bodmer', «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 8-40.

¹³ For the codicological aspects of the ‘Bodmer Papyri’ and their nature as an evolving library see P. Buzi, *Qualche riflessione sugli aspetti codicologici e titologici dei papiri Bodmer con particolare riguardo ai codici copti*, «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 47-59.

¹⁴ S. Ammirati, *Frammenti inediti di giurisprudenza latina da un palinsesto copto. Per un'edizione delle scripturae inferiores del ms. London, British Library, Oriental 4717 (5)*, «Athenaeum», 105 (2017), pp. 736-741.

¹⁵ Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, Papyrussammlung, P. 10582 (P.Berol. inv. 10582). W. Schubart, *Ein lateinisch-griechisch-koptisches Gesprächsbuch*, «Klio», 13 (1913), pp. 27-38; J. Kramer in *C.Gloss.Biling.* I 15. Despite admirable efforts the interpretation of E. Dickey, *How Coptic Speakers Learned Latin? A Reconsideration of P.Berol. Inv. 10582*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 193 (2015), pp. 65-77 is not convincing.

¹⁶ Among the textual sources still to be explored and potentially useful for the definition of a more complete framework of the role of Latin

In these pages we certainly do not pretend to find all the answers that are missing, but we intend to propose a change of perspective: we should not look at the attestations of the role of Latin in late antique – but also late Roman – Egypt as a homogeneous phenomenon, but it is necessary to distinguish, clearly and sharply, between different levels of use, diffusion and reception, which are affected both by the chronological dimension – which is all too obvious – and by the socio-environmental one.

In short, those who produced or used the *Codex Miscellaneus Barcinonensis*¹⁷ – and it seems very likely that they were exponents of two contiguous worlds, given that in terms of the quality of its production the book collection is not high quality and clearly ‘domestic’ – while still having a good classical culture, handled Latin in a different way from the readers of the Livius of Naqlun (*Ab urbe condita* 11). This fragment, although small, shows another level of literary and manufacturing care, as confirmed by the writing support that is of remarkable quality¹⁸.

in late antique Egypt is the *Martyrdom of Pansophius* – unfortunately not preserved in Coptic – where Vergil is mentioned. P. Canart, R. Pinatudi, *Le palimpseste hagiographique grec du Laurentianus 74, 17 et la Passion de s. Pansophius d’Alexandrie*, «Analecta Bollandiana», 104 (1986), pp. 5-16; Idd., *Il martirio di san Pansofio*, «Analecta Papyrologica», 16-17 (2004-2005), pp. 189-245. I owe this information to G. Agosti.

¹⁷ Durham (NC), Duke University, P. 798 + Montserrat, Abadia, Roca 126-178 + Roca 292 + Roca 338 (P.Duke inv. 798 + P.Monts.Roca inv. 129-149); TM 59453.

¹⁸ Cairo, Coptic Museum, 15/86 (P.Naqlun inv. 15/86); TM 61431. B. Bravo, M.T. Griffin, *Un frammento del libro XI di Livio?*, «Athenaeum», 66 (1988), pp. 447-521; R.E.A. Palmer, *A New Fragment of Livy throws Light on the Roman Postumii and Latin Gabii*, «Athenaeum», 68 (1990), pp. 5-18; G. Liberman, *À propos d’un fragment présumé de Tite-Live*, «Athenaeum», 80 (1992), pp. 192-193; M. Gigante, *Sul nuovo testo attribuito a Livio*, «Athenaeum», 81 (1993), p. 263.

Still different is the Latin of a second-generation Roman, such as the 'Arsinoitic' Claudius Terentianus (mid-2nd century AD), son of a veteran who had put down roots in the Fayyum and who very likely had the opportunity to speak the native language only in his own family context. A parallel would be a modern 'Italian', born abroad, whose parents have expatriated overseas a long time ago and who has the sporadic occasion to return to Italy only for a vacation.

In sum, it is not the role of Latin that must be investigated, but rather that of its different forms, which appear to change according to the time, place, and environment of use and which are fully understandable only if analysed in their specific context.

1. *The Passive Assimilation of Latin in Late Antique Coptophone Egypt*

For the purposes of a better understanding of the ways and places in which Latin was practiced in late antique Egypt, Coptic literature – it should be immediately clarified – is not of much help. With the exception of the well-known and often quoted passages of the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, of the *Life of Pachomius* and some other brief references¹⁹, not devoid of ideological motifs, we can gain very little from the Coptic encomiastic, homiletic and hagiographic works, whether they are original or translated from Greek.

It is certainly evident that in the centuries of military control and juridical-administrative management, first Roman and then Byzantine, of the province of Egypt, numerous terms pertaining to the military and juridical spheres have not only circulated in their respective fields, but must have become familiar, even indirectly, to everyone who had had contact with the country's political management system²⁰.

¹⁹ See above pp. 37-38 footnote 9.

²⁰ Already in 1938 C.R.C. Allberry, *Greek and Latin Words in the Coptic Manichaean Papyri*, in *Actes du V^e Congrès International de Papyrologie*, Oxford,

In her article in this volume Sofia Torallas Tovar discusses and clarifies efficaciously how it happened that terms like **ΤΙΡΩΝ** / **†ΤΙΡΩΝ** (*tiro* «recruit»)²¹, **ΔΥΓΟΥΣΤΑΛΙΟΣ** (*augustalis*, here used to mean «governor», and not any longer a member of the famous priesthood established by Tiberius)²², **ΜΙΛΙΟΝ** (Roman mile)²³, **ΤΡΙΒΟΥΝΟΣ** (*tribunus*)²⁴, or **ΠΡΙΜΙΚΕΡΙΟΣ** (*primicerius* «commander»)²⁵ have entered into the Egyptian monastic literature. It is clearly the official and procedural documents that acted as intermediary. A similar survey had already been conducted by Jürgen Horn²⁶, mainly in the wake of similar investigations applied by Henrik Zilliacus²⁷ and Michael McCormick²⁸ to Greek hagiography. Scarcely, however, must an Egyptian of Late Antiquity have asked himself what the origin of

30 août - 3 septembre 1937, cur. M. Hombert, Brussels 1938, p. 20 wrote: «Coptic literature contains a large number of Greek and Latin words which have never been collected and investigated».

²¹ *Life of Pachomius*, Sahidic version 212, 9; 212, 27; 104, 35 Lefort.

²² *Life of Pachomius*, Sahidic version 350, 10 Lefort.

²³ *Life of Pachomius*, Sahidic version 74, 2; 139, 25; 222, 16 Lefort. *Le manuscrit de la version copte en dialecte sahidique des Apophthegmata Patrum*, ed. M. Chaîne, Le Caire 1960.

²⁴ 33, 6 (*De sapientia magistratum*) Wiesmann.

²⁵ *S. Pachomii vita Sahidice scriptae*, ed. L.-T. Lefort, Parisii 1933-1934, pp. 11-22.

²⁶ J. Horn, *Latino-Coptica. Erwünungen zu den lateinischen Lehnwörtern des koptischen Wortschatzes*, in *Atti del XVII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia (Napoli, 19—26 maggio 1983)*, Napoli 1984, pp. 1361-1376.

²⁷ H. Zilliacus, *Das lateinische Lehnwort in der griechischen Hagiographie. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der klassizistischen Bestrebungen im X. Jahrhundert*, «Byzantinische Zeitschrift», 37 (1937), pp. 302-344.

²⁸ M. McCormick, *Greek Hagiography and Popular Latin in Late Antiquity: The Case of *biberaticum – βιβρατικόν*, «The American Journal of Philology», 102 (1981), pp. 154-163.

these terms was, instead merely accepting them as a result of the new political management.

In a similar way, we can explain the numerous words of Latin origin that appear in the hagiographic tradition, especially the one that Coptic literature has translated from Greek, sometimes reworking and integrating it at a later time. Among the texts useful for tracing such a phenomenon is the *Martyrdom of Jiane* (CC 0517)²⁹, preserved only by one manuscript consisting of two palimpsest and fragmentary parchment leaves³⁰. Even in its late re-elaboration of earlier literary material (7th / 8th century), the text preserves elements which can only originate from procedural documents. To this sphere, in particular, belongs the **ΝΑΚΕΣΤΩΝΑΡΙΟΣ** (for **ΝΗΚΕΣΤΩΝΑΡΙΟΣ**); that is, the *quaestionarii*, the quaestors, the inquisitors who put the **ΚΩΛΛΑΡΙΟΝ**, or *collarium*, to the Christian prisoners, among whom is Jiane.

It should be noted that the *Martyrdom of Jiane* represents the *scriptio superior* of a codex obtained by the combination of two codicological units, the first of which, very likely from the Fayyum, contained the *Gospel of Mark*, in Greek and Coptic (although only Coptic is partially readable)³¹, while the second bears the *Gospel of*

²⁹ CC is the abbreviation for *Clavis Coptica* or *Clavis Patrum Copticorum*, attributed to the literary works by the *Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari* project directed by T. Orlandi.

³⁰ CLM 743 = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 129¹⁶ f. 94 *sup.* + Cairo, Coptic Museum, 3890 *sup.* (inv. JdE 44835, CGC 9239). Munnier, *Catalogue*, p. 44 n. 9239 (<https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/743>). The siglum CLM stands for Coptic Literary Manuscript, *unique identifier* attributed by the ERC Advanced 'PAThs', coordinated by the author of these pages, to each Coptic literary codicological unit ([paths.uniroma1.it](https://atlas.paths-erc.eu); <https://atlas.paths-erc.eu>).

³¹ CLM 6609 = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 129¹⁶ f. 94 *inf.* (<https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/6609>).

*John*³². It cannot be excluded that the Fayyumic origin of one of the original manuscripts played a role in accessing certain types of documents (judgments, procedural acts, etc.).

Other examples of terms borrowed from Latin, comparable with what has just been described, are the **ΒΕΡΕΤΑΡΙΟΣ** (*veredarius* «imperial courier») which appears several times on the scene of the *Martyrdom of Psote* (CC 0433)³³, the great pit full of fire (**ΝΟΣ ΜΦΟCΣΑ ΝΚΩΞΤ**, *fossa* «pit») into which the martyr Shenoufe is thrown³⁴, in whose hands are held incandescent spheres (**ΣΦΕΡΑ ΝΚΩΞΤ**, *sphaera*) – although these last are terms evidently passed to Coptic through Greek – or the screen (**ΠΟΥΗΛΟΝ**, *velum* «curtain»)³⁵ which the magistrate, who is going to sign the death sentence of Publius and Leontius, pulls in front of him to escape the glances of the angry crowd³⁶.

³² CLM 3873 = Cairo, Coptic Museum, 3890 *inf.* (JdE 44835, CGC 9239) + London, British Library, Or. 5797 *inf.* (<https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/3873>).

³³ CLM 241 = New-York (NY), Pierpont Morgan Library and Museum, M583 = CMCL MONB.BP (<https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/241>). *Il dossier copto del martire Psote: testi copti con introduzione e traduzione*, ed. T. Orlandi, Milano 1978. This is the case also for terms like *tiro*, *primicerius*, *domesticus*, *signa* attested in the hexametric poem known as *Visio Dorothei*. I owe this information to Agosti.

³⁴ H. Munier, *Fragments des actes du martyre de l'apa Chnoube*, «Annales du Service des Antiquités d'Égypte», 17 (1917), pp. 145-159; *Four Martyrdoms from the Pierpont Morgan Coptic Codices*, edd. E.A.E. Reymond, J.W.B. Barns, Oxford 1973.

³⁵ For the presence of the same term in a Coptic-Syriac lexicon which contains *lemmata* to be referred to the cosmological sphere (*P.Kell. Syr.-Copt.* I 2) see *Artes grammaticae in frammenti: i testi grammaticali latini e bilingui greco-latini su papiro. Edizione commentata*, ed. M.C. Scappaticcio, Berlin 2015, p. 24.

³⁶ Severus of Antioch, *Homilia cathedralis* 027: *In Leontium* (CC 0344; CPG 7035.027). CLM 238 = New York, Pierpont Morgan Library and

It is not surprising that these are terms and expressions which, for context and use, are very similar, when not totally coincident, with those that appear in the bilingual (Greek-Latin) lexicon – in which Latin is transliterated into Greek – preserved in manuscript Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale, Gr. 1173 (P.Strasb. inv. Gr. 1173), datable to the 3rd / 4th century AD: *τριβουνους μελιτουμ, καστρα, ταβερνακουλα*, etc.³⁷.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that at the beginning of the *Martyrdom of Shenoufe* a list of prefects is incorporated³⁸, which shows, once more, how the composition of *martyrologia* gained advantage from the consultation of official political-administrative and annalistic documents.

It is clear, however, that all these examples cannot be used to reconstruct the milieus in which Latin was still actively and consciously practiced in late antique Egypt, being technical terms absorbed unconsciously and passively³⁹, mainly through Greek, and not in use any more in oral and vernacular communication.

More interesting, also due to the late dating (10th century) attributed by the editor to the manuscript found in Antinoupolis that

Museum, M585 = CMCL MICH.BM. G. Garitte, *Textes hagiographiques orientaux relatifs à Saint Léonce de Tripoli, II: L'homélie copte de Sévère d'Antioche*, «Le Muséon», 79 (1966), pp. 335-386, esp. 362.

³⁷ Kramer in *C.Gloss.Biling.* II 6. On this papyrus see the recent E. Dickey, *Teaching Latin to Greek Speakers in Antiquity*, in *Learning Latin and Greek from Antiquity to Present*, cur. E.P. Archibald, W. Brockliss, J. Gnoza, Cambridge 2015, pp. 30-51, esp. 32.

³⁸ CLM 241 = New York (NY), Pierpont Morgan Library and Museum, M583, f. 103 r = MICH.BP (<https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/241>). Later, when the scene moves to the Fayyum, a list of the local magistrates is also provided, which is further evidence of the use of official sources.

³⁹ On this aspect see also the position of Horn, *Latino-Coptica* cit., pp. 1361-1376.

bears them, are the terms related to daily life **ⲙⲙⲁⲛⲧⲏⲗ**[ⲁ] «towel» and **ⲁⲛⲡⲟⲩⲗ**ⲓⲗⲉ «ampoule», which appear on an account written on a little strip of re-used parchment, probably to be referred to a monastic community⁴⁰.

2. *The Tenuous (But Not Useless) Archaeological Traces*

The modest contribution of Coptic literature, therefore, on the one side illustrates the limited use of Latin in some monastic milieus, although never after the first decades of the 5th century AD – a fact that is meaningful in itself – while on the other side it retains fossils of terms or expressions derived from the Roman legal-political-administrative world, which act as a narrative artifice and, at the same time, constitute an involuntary but very useful historical source for the forms of power management applied by Rome.

Not much more efficacious, at least at a first look, on the other side, are the archaeological sources, even if sometimes an absence may be more important than a presence.

It is well known that the *komai* of the Fayyum were chosen by several veterans to spend the rest of their existence, once they had withdrawn from active service⁴¹. In fact, the Arsinoite *nomos* has been generous in providing documentary and literary texts that are certainly ascribable to groups that not only spoke and wrote Latin,

⁴⁰ PSI inv. Ant. s.n. r/v. A. Delattre, *Compte copte tardif et exercices d'écriture en copte et en arabe sur parchemin*, in *Antinoupolis III*, cur. R. Pintaudi, Firenze 2017, pp. 657-663, esp. 660-661.

⁴¹ Alston, *Soldier* cit., p. 123: «Approximately 14 per cent of the population of Karanis in the tax lists of 171-174 had Roman name but not all were veterans... The actual veteran element of the population is impossible to quantify». The most recent attestations of veteran soldiers date back to the 4th century AD.

but that certainly also appreciated the ownership of a luxury book. The literary attestations, however, fade from the 3rd century AD, with few exceptions, among which deserves to be remembered the aforementioned parchment fragment that contains a passage of the eleventh book of Livius, datable to the 5th century AD, but reused as cartonnage of a late antique or mediaeval Christian codex at Deir el-Naqlun. It is reasonable to think that the person who re-used it got it in the same region.

These groups, however, left very few and tenuous traces on the field. Even the well-known house of Karanis ('House C / B167'), in the north-eastern Fayyum, under the staircase of which was found the archive of the former speculator Claudius Tiberianus and of his son, Claudius Terentianus whom I have mentioned previously⁴², mainly consisting of letters, in Greek and Latin, exchanged by them between Alexandria and the Fayyumic village, did not give back any artifacts that can be referred to a distinctly 'Roman' culture, if we

⁴² P.Mich. VIII 467-481; 510. A. Calderini, *La corrispondenza greco-latina del soldato Claudio Tiberiano e altre lettere del II sec. d.Cr. nel recente vol. VIII dei papiri del Michigan*, «Rendiconti dell'Istituto Lombardo», 15 (1951), pp. 155-166; G.B. Pighi, *Lettere latine d'un soldato di Traiano* (PMich 467-472), Bologna 1964; J.N. Adams, *The Vulgar Latin of the Letters of Claudius Terentianus*, Manchester 1977; S. Strassi, *In margine all'archivio di Tiberianus e Terentianus: P.Mich. VIII 510*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 148 (2004), pp. 225-234; *L'archivio di Claudius Tiberianus da Karanis*, ed. S. Strassi, Berlin 2008. The identification of unpublished papyri, both in the Michigan Library and the library of Heidelberg, as attributable to the same archive is owed to S. Strassi. For the archaeological aspects see R.P. Stephan, A. Verhooft, *Text and Context in the Archive of Tiberianus*, «Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists», 42 (2005), pp. 189-201, esp. 195: «House C / B167 was eventually abandoned and covered with debris, and none of the original walls are reused in the A-level»; «We may suggest that in 1928, the Michigan team excavated House 167 as a single stratum». The house to which the archive belongs corresponds to the so-called 'level C'.

exclude the texts themselves. Nor is there a single graffito or an object used in everyday life that speaks the language of Rome, even if only iconographically. The same considerations apply to the second phase of use of the same dwelling (the so-called 'level B', dated by the archaeologists of the University of Michigan to AD 180-325), which would have been much more useful for the purposes of what is of interest here.

It is worth mentioning the reflections of Richard Alston concerning the veterans of Karanis:

Legally defined, the soldiers and veterans were Roman, but what about their culture? The vast majority of documents concerning or written by veterans from Karanis are in Greek, though two or three archives contain texts in Latin ... Army officers needed to know some Latin but it is not necessarily the case that the orders were transmitted to the troops in Latin or that the army in Egypt was a predominantly Latin-speaking institution. Apart from these letters in Latin, there is very little other evidence that connects the village with any aspect of specifically Roman culture⁴³.

It would be of great help to have archaeological data concerning the finding of the other important bilingual archive from the Fayyum, that of the *praefectus alae* Flavius Abinnaeus, stationed in the *castrum* of Dionysias, in the north-western Fayyum, although there are only two Latin texts, one of which is a petition to Constantians and Constantius to be confirmed as *praefectus alae Quintae Praelectorum*. Abinnaeus, who was responsible for the western frontier from AD 342 to 351, once he retired to private life, moved to the eastern area of the region, to Philadelphia, where his documents are said have been found. They were purchased, however, on the antiquities market, in Medinet el Fayyum, in 1893, and later

⁴³ Alston, *Soldier* cit., p. 123. On the Latin documents from Karanis and reflections on the Latin speakers and Hellenophones who knew Latin, see Scappaticcio, *Artes grammaticae* cit., pp. 30-31.

divided mainly between the British Library and the University Library of Geneva⁴⁴.

In brief, even a region characterised by a certain presence of Latin speakers, mainly belonging to the military milieu, and for a prolonged period, that goes from the Roman age to the late antique period, did not leave architectonically and artistically tangible evidence, not even referable to an early period, when one would expect that the 'Roman' identity was more marked.

Even in Oxyrhynchus, another place where the presence of Romans must have been important, the tangible evidence of *Latinitas* is labile, if one exclude remains of manuscripts. Among these deserves to be mentioned London, British Library, Pap. 2052 (*P.Oxy.* VIII 1073), a parchment fragment dated from the end of the 5th century AD that bears *Genesis* 5:4-13, 29-31, 6:1-2⁴⁵. It was found in 1914 but the precise location of its discovery is, however, unknown. Also very well-known are the letters attributable to Theon, perhaps the homonymous anchorite «trained in three languages» mentioned by the *Historia monachorum* – originally dated to the 5th / 6th century AD, but more likely to belong to the 4th / 5th century AD – that, although in Greek, include some Latin formulas and show that the person who composed them (a professional scribe hired by Theon?) had a solid competence in both the writing systems and the linguis-

⁴⁴ T.D. Barnes, *The Career of Abinnaeus*, «Phoenix», 39 (1985), pp. 368-374. *The Abinnaeus Archive. Papers of a Roman Officer in the Reign of Constantius II*, edd. H.I. Bell, V. Martin, E.G. Turner, D. van Berchem, Oxford 1962. See also T.M. Teeter, *Papyri, Archives, and Patronage*, «The Classical Bulletin», 80 (2004), pp. 27-34. C. Gallazzi, *Dove è stato ritrovato l'archivio di Abinneo?*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 61 (2015), pp. 170-179 reasonably supposes that the provenance of the archive should be identified in Dionysias and not in Philadelphia.

⁴⁵ LDAB 3202. See also the description of the manuscript on the British Library site (http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Papyrus_2052).

tic registers; a competence which must have belonged also to the customer, that is Theon himself⁴⁶.

Paradoxically, for the purpose of reconstructing the 'Roman' culture of late antique Egypt, the archive of the Apiones⁴⁷ proves to be precious. It was found in 1897 by Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt and is datable between the 6th and 7th centuries. Although entirely in Greek, it illustrates in great detail the *modus vivendi* of a high-ranking family, which was influenced by the 'international' fashion, even in the sphere of architecture and plan-building. The rich collection of documents referable to the archive in question

⁴⁶ *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193; *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 and *P.Köln* IV 200. For the Latin formulas see P.J. Sijpesteijn, *Apphus and Pascentius: servo dei tempore*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 40.1 (1994), pp. 69-70; J. O'Callaghan, *Nota sobre 'servus Dei' en los papiros*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 106 (1995), pp. 201-202; L.H. Blumell, *A Potential Source for the Latin Preface in P.Oxy. XVIII 2194*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 183 (2012), pp. 72-74. More generally on the dossier of Theon: Id., *Reconsidering the Dates of Three Christian Letters: P. Oxy. XVIII 2193, 2194, P. Köln IV 200 and a Reference in the Historia monachorum in Aegypto*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 54 (2008), pp. 219-223; M. Choat, *Monastic Letters on Papyrus from Late Antique Egypt*, in *Writing and Communication in Early Egyptian Monasticism*, cur. Id., M.C. Giorda, Leiden 2017, pp. 17-72, esp. 40, with bibliography concerning the interpretation of the Latin passages included in the letters. See now Pezzella below, in which the author also dwells on the change in writing as the language changes.

⁴⁷ TM Arch ID 15 (https://www.trismegistos.org/arch/detail.php?arch_id=15). R. Mazza, *L'archivio degli Apioni. Terra, lavoro e proprietà senatoria dell'Egitto tardoantico*, Bari 2001; G. Azzarello, *Neue Papyruszeugnisse zur Apionenfamilie*, in *Von Noricum nach Ägypten: Eine Reise durch die Welt der Antike*, cur. K. Strobel, R. Lafer, Klagenfurt 2007, pp. 251-261; Ead., *Vecchi e nuovi personaggi della famiglia degli Apioni nei documenti papiracei*, in *Proceedings of the 25th International Congress of Papyrology*, cur. T. Gagos, Ann Arbor 2010, pp. 33-46.

allows us not only to trace the economic life of this illustrious senatorial family of Egyptian origin, though resident in Constantinople, but also to reconstruct the appearance of its suburban Oxyrhynchite villa, which has been compared, not inappropriately, to the Villa del Casale, in Piazza Armerina (Sicily)⁴⁸.

Clearly the Apiones, although they cannot be defined properly as Roman, at least in the strict sense, had the lifestyle of the Latin-Roman world; we would say an 'imperial' lifestyle. Private baths, manned by a doorman, and a triclinium, appear in the documents as prominent elements of their house. The Apiones did not limit themselves to owning only the villa of Oxyrhynchus but had large funds in the Oxyrhynchite and Arsinoite *nomoi* and dealt with numerous ecclesiastical and monastic institutions (of various kinds) – the names of religious people with whom they were in correspondence and business contact are numerous – and had founded baths in the village of Takona. It is highly unlikely that the Apiones did not know any Latin, but apparently they did not use it, at least as far as we know. In short, it was not only through the use of Latin that 'Roman culture' manifested itself.

On the other hand, remaining in Oxyrhynchus, the discovery by the Catalan mission active in the site of the stela of a freedman written in Latin is an interesting fact⁴⁹. Re-used in the 'upper necropolis' in a building that was certainly Christian, it concretely confirms the presence of Latin speakers in the town, at least until the end of the imperial period. No less useful is the fragmentary mummy label, in Latin – as *unicum* as far as I know – kept in the Metropolitan Museum⁵⁰ and unearthed by Grenfell and Hunt during the exca-

⁴⁸ R. Alston, *The City in Roman and Byzantine Egypt*, London 2002, pp. 313–316.

⁴⁹ The exact dating of the stela is not known to me.

⁵⁰ New York (NY), Metropolitan Museum of Art, 06.4.188. I owe the information on the stela of the freedman and of the mummy label to

vation campaign of 1904-1905, which suggests that Latin, even in the Roman period, was not necessarily a linguistic tool of a given ethnic group, but rather a mean to attest one's own *status*, one's own socio-cultural prestige. It was uncommon for a Roman to decide to be embalmed, as also anthropological analysis of the mummies with Fayyum portraits also demonstrated. For the most part, they were revealed to belong to autochthonous people who decided to be portrayed as 'Romans'.

Going more southern, a recent interesting study of the Greek and Latin inscriptions written by pilgrims on the Colossi of Memnon⁵¹, that were notoriously objects of cult and a must-see of the touristic-religious *grand tour* that pushed pilgrims from different ethnic, cultural and social extraction to Thebes and beyond, shows that the Latin graffiti stop in the 3rd century AD⁵².

To the category of pilgrims – maybe of soldiers-pilgrims – is probably also to be ascribed the case of Hermas (2nd century AD?), who on the rocks of the Theban Mountain – and more precisely in the Valley of the Rope, sub-sector of the Valley of the Queens – inscribed various graffiti, proofs of his passage, using both Greek and Latin characters, demonstrating at least a basic digraphia⁵³. More

L. Mascia, who is carrying out, at Hamburg University, the PhD project *The transition from traditional cults to the affirmation of Christian beliefs in the city of Oxyrhynchus* under the supervision of A. Bausi and the author of these pages. As for the mummy label, although it has not yet been dated with precision, the presence of the *praenomen* Aurelius suggests that it is later than the institution of the *Constitutio Antoniniana*.

⁵¹ P.A. Rosenmeyer, *The Language of Ruins: Greek and Latin Inscriptions on the Memnon Colossus*, New York - Oxford 2018.

⁵² For other inscriptions in Latin from Upper Egypt, cfr. J. Bingen, *Épigraphie grecque et latine: d'Antinoé à Edfou*, «Chronique d'Égypte», 59 (1984), pp. 359-370.

⁵³ A. Delattre, *Le dossier bilingue d'Hermas: Graffites grecs et latins de la montagne thébaine*, «Latomus», 67.3 (2008), pp. 714-720, with bibliography.

difficult to evaluate is the graffito, in Greek, of a certain «Latina from Rome», referring to a woman who is said to be originally from Rome, which appears below one of the many attestations of the name of Hermas⁵⁴.

Yet, crossing the Nile and reaching the eastern bank of Thebes, what remains of the paintings of the chapel dedicated to the imperial cult in the temple of Amun, in Luxor, reminds us that from the reign of Diocletian the Thebaid became an autonomous province, garrisoned, at least for a certain period, by two legions. Military *fulcrum* of this province was the temple of Luxor, which was transformed into a *castrum* (where the *legio III Diocletiana* was perhaps stationed), whose walls and doors are still partially legible on the ground, and which remained in use at least until the threshold of the 6th century AD⁵⁵. There must therefore have been a good number of Romans – or Romanized people – in Thebes. Once again, however, the material culture does not help to trace their physical location, since there is only one extant official inscription, datable to AD 308-309⁵⁶.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 720.

⁵⁵ R.S. Bagnall, *Egypt from Alexander the Great to Early Christians*, Los Angeles 2004, pp.188-192; M. El-Saghir, J.-C. Golvin, M. Reddé, el-S. Hegazy, G. Wagner, R. Migalla, L. Gabolde, J. Leclant, *Le camp romain de Luqsor, avec une étude des graffites gréco-romain du temple d'Amon*, Le Caire 1986; K. Vandorpe, *City of Many a Gate, Harbour for Many a Rebel. A Historical and Topographical Outline of Greco-Roman Thebes*, in *Hundred-Gates Thebes. Acts of a Colloquium on Thebes and the Theban Area in the Graeco-Roman Period*, cur. S.P. Vleeming, Leiden 1995, pp. 203-239.

⁵⁶ *I.Camp Louqsor*, p. 122 n. 2: *Iuuentutis auctorem et pacis | aeternae conservatorem | d(ominum) n(ostrum) Fl(avium) Val(erium) Constantinum nob(ilissimum) | Caesarem Aur(elius) Maximinu[s] | v(ir) p(erfectissimus) dux Aeg(ypti) et Theb(aidos) utrarum[q(ue)] | Libb(yarum) devotus n(umini) m(aiestati)q(ue) eorum*. LSA (Last Statues of Antiquity) 2623; TM 220341. To the influence of the Roman military world is to be attributed a peculiar object, unfortunately

Remaining in the military context, it is well known that in the 4th century AD Kharga Oasis was dotted with a series of forts (Umm el Dabadib, el-Deir, Qasr el Sumayra, Qasr el-Gib, etc.)⁵⁷, apparently

decontextualised, but certainly from Edfu, consisting of a relief depicting Horus who, riding a horse and dressed in Roman armor, pierces Seth, in the form of a crocodile, with a long spear. A frequently recurring iconographic motif, but which, on closer inspection, has something exceptional in this artefact – datable to the 4th century AD and probably part of the screen of the window of a temple – since everything – the posture, the attributes, the armor, the pose of the horse – recalls the iconographies of the holy knights, St George *in primis*, who had so much success in the hagiographic cycles which (also) Coptic literature inherited from the Christian tradition of the Greek language. As is known, there are no knight gods in the Egyptian *pantheon* but, in an age of mutual contamination and flourishing iconographic osmosis, everything becomes possible. It is evident that the Horus knight of the Louvre is the product of a syncretic artistic language, which links the Egyptian religious tradition, to which this relief was destined, with the Roman-Latin military one, both profane and Christian. M.-H. Rutschowskaya, *La sculpture copte*, Paris 1990, p. 5; A. Brahim, J.-P. Digard, *Chevaux et cavaliers arabes dans les arts d'Orient et d'Occident*, Paris 2002, p. 20; D. Bénazeth, *La sculpture copte*, «Dossiers d'archéologie», 226 (1997), pp. 28-29.

⁵⁷ C. Rossi, *Umm el-Dabadib, Roman Settlement in the Kharga Oasis: Description of the Visible Remains. With a Note on 'Ayn Amur*, «Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archaeologischen Instituts», 56 (2000), pp. 235-352; S. Brones, C. Duvette, *Le fort d'El-Deir, oasis de Kharga: 'État des lieux' architectural et archéologique*, «Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale», 107 (2008), pp. 5-41; C. Rossi, *Controlling the Borders of the Empire: The Distribution of Late-Roman 'Forts' in the Kharga Oasis*, in *The Oasis Papers 6. Proceedings of the Sixth Conference of the Dakhla Oasis Project*, cur. R.S. Bagnall, P. Davoli, C.A. Hope, Oxford 2013, pp. 331-336; G. Tallet, J.-P. Bravard, R. Garcier, *Leau perdue d'une micro-oasis. Premiers résultats d'une prospection archéologique et géoarchéologique du système d'irrigation d'El-Deir, oasis de Kharga (Égypte)*, in *Les Réseaux d'eau courante dans l'Antiquité Réparations, modifications, réutilisations, abandon, récupération*, cur. C. Abadie-Reynal, S. Provost, P.

built for the defence of the western border and for the protection of the local, probably very profitable, productive activities. If, however, there cannot be any doubt about the Roman imprint of the defensive building strategy and the centralised management of the occupation of the territory, the presence of Latin speakers is still to be proven. A fragmentary scratch inscription found in 'Ayn Gib, of which only the word *ALAE* remained at the time of discovery, is in fact all that has so far been found in Latin⁵⁸. On the contrary, the funerary practices, the material culture and even the linear units of measurement used in construction are local, fully Egyptian⁵⁹.

Vipard, Rennes 2011, pp. 173-188; G. Tallet, C. Gradel, S. Guéron, *Le site d'El-Deir, à la croisée des routes du désert occidental: nouvelles perspectives sur l'implantation de l'armée romaine dans le désert égyptien*, in *Grecs et Romains en Égypte. Territoires, espaces de la vie et de la mort, objets de prestige et du quotidien*. Actes du Colloque International de la SFAC, Paris, 15 novembre 2007, cur. P. Ballet, Le Caire 2012, pp. 75-92; C. Rossi, G. Magli, *Wind, Sand and Water. The Orientation of the Late Roman Forts in the Kharga Oasis (Egyptian Western Desert)*, in *Archaeoastronomy in the Roman World*, cur. G. Magli, A.C. González-García, J. Belomonte Aviles, E. Antonello, Cham 2019, pp. 156-166; C. Rossi, G.B. Chirico, A. Migliozi, S. Mazzoleni, *Greening the Desert at the Southern Edge of the Empire: The Irrigation System of the Late Roman Site of Umm al-Dabadib (Kharga Oasis, Egypt)*, in *Proceedings of the Mediterranean Forum on Water Sources, Matera, October 18-22, 2015* (forthcoming) N. De Troia, *On the Edge of the Empire at the End of the Late Roman Period: The Kharga Oasis Sites as a Case Study*, in *Living the End of Antiquity: Individual History from Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, cur. S.R. Huebner, E. Garosi, I. Marthot-Santaniello, M. Müller, S. Schmidt, M. Stern, Berlin 2020, pp. 163-179.

⁵⁸ C. Rossi, S. Ikram, *North Kharga Oasis Survey: Explorations in Egypt's Western Desert*, Leuven 2018, fig. 17. I am grateful to C. Rossi for the very useful discussion that I had with her on the identity of the groups who managed the forts of Kharga and on the settlement strategies applied in that area.

⁵⁹ F. Fiorillo, C. Rossi, *Metric Analysis and Interpretation of the Unit of Measurement in the Late Roman Fort of Umm al-Dabadib (Egypt)*, in IMEKO,

Being a Roman or representing Rome – as is the case for the soldiers stationed in the various *castra* or in the various settlements connected to fortifications (Dionysias, Luxor, the just mentioned forts of Kharga), on whose consistency and location we are also informed from the *Notitia Dignitatum* – did not necessarily mean making use of Latin or leaving visible traces of one's own identity.

Despite its well-known role in rhetorical training in Greek and Latin, at least until the 5th century AD⁶⁰, even at Alexandria the late antique *Latinitas* left very tenuous traces, including at a governmental level, if we consider that the latest inscription – and datable with certainty (AD 384-389) – that has been found is the dedication to the praetorian prefect Cynegius Maternus, dating back to the age of Arcadius⁶¹. After all, as Raffaella Cribiore observes, «it is very difficult

International Conference on Metrology for Archaeology and Cultural Heritage, Lecce, Italy, October 23-25, 2017 (<http://hdl.handle.net/11311/1045444>); C. Rossi, F. Fiorillo, *A Metrological Study of the Late Roman Fort of Umm al-Dabadib, Kharga Oasis (Egypt)*, «Nexus Network Journal. Architecture and Mathematics», 20 (2018), pp. 373-391.

⁶⁰ On the privileged role of Alexandria in the school formation in rhetoric, grammar and philosophy, see Cavenaile, *Le latin* cit., p. 105; Cribiore, *Higher education* cit., pp. 47; 51-52; 56. For poetry and the *belles lettres*, see J.-L. Fournet, *L'enseignement des belles-lettres dans l'Alexandrie antique tardive*, in *Alexandria Auditoria at Kôm el-Dikka and Late Antique Education*, cur. T. Derda, T. Markiewicz, E. Wipszycka, Warsaw 2007, pp. 97-112; G. Agosti, *Greek Poetry in Late Antique Alexandria: Between Culture and Religion*, in *The Alexandrian Tradition Interactions between Science, Religion, and Literature*, cur. L.A. Guichard, M. Paz de Hoz, Bern 2014, pp. 287-312.

⁶¹ LSA 0872 (<http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/database/detail-base.php?record=LSA-872>); TM 106277; *CIL* III 19; *CIL* III Suppl. I,1, 6587. *Domini nostri, invictissimi et venerabiles | ac perpetui Augusti, Theodosius et | Arcadius, toto orbe victores, | Materno Cynegio, omnium virtutum viro et ad | insignem laudem gloriamque progenito, per | omnes honorum gradus meritorum con-|templatione provecto, praefecto | praetorio per orientem, statuam | civili habitu,*

to reconstruct the story of the law school of Alexandria, because the only evidence dates to 533, when the school was eliminated»⁶².

Certainly, there can be no doubt that the so-called 'Villa of the birds', found in the north-eastern area of Kom el Dikka, with its very classic layout that is typical of a *domus* of the imperial age (1st / 3rd century AD), belonged to a Roman⁶³. However, it is much less easy to define the culture of those who occupied the late antique phase of the same building (5th century AD)⁶⁴, which benefitted from the proximity of the huge late antique baths, still in the course of excavation⁶⁵, and the presence of the now famous *odeia*⁶⁶.

This brief and non-exhaustive excursus in some Egyptian areas, where the presence of Rome and the 'Romans' was stronger in the late antique period, with some digressions in the centuries of the full

ad petitem primorum nobilissime (sic!) | Alexandrinae urbis, in eadem splendida | urbe, ad perpetuitatis famam, loco cele-/berrimo constitui collocarique inusserunt, | per clarissimos Alexandrinae civitatis. An exceptional case is the graffito, datable between the 3rd and 4th century AD, discovered in 1822 by L. de Bellefonds near the temple of Musawwarat el-Sofra, located about 120 km north of Khartoum (*AE* 2006, 1636). Dedicated to *Fortuna*, it is the legacy of a pilgrim about whom we do not have any other information, since we do not know the reasons that drove him so south: *Bona Fortun[a] dominae | reginae in multos an-|nos feliciter venit | (a)b Urbe mense Apr(ili) | die XV [et(?)et]idit Acu-|tus.* TM 106297. Cfr. A. Łajtar, J. van der Vliet, *Rome – Meroe – Berlin. The Southernmost Latin Inscription Rediscovered* (CIL III 83), «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 157 (2006), pp. 193-198.

⁶² Criatore, *Higher education* cit., p. 57.

⁶³ W. Kolataj, G. Majcherek, E. Parandowska, *Villa of the Birds. The Excavation and Presentation of Kom el-Dikka Mosaics*, Cairo - New York 2007.

⁶⁴ M. Rodziewicz, *Alexandrie III, Les habitations romaines tardives d'Alexandrie à la lumière des fouilles polonaise à Kom el-Dikka*, Varsovie 1984.

⁶⁵ W. Kołataj, *Alexandrie VI, Imperial Baths at Kom el-Dikka*, Varsovie 1992.

⁶⁶ Derda, Markiewicz, Wipszycka, *Alexandria Auditoria* cit.

Imperial age, suggests that, even when in Egypt the number of Latin speakers – if not exactly Romans – must have been more consistent. It is not necessarily the case that they left visible traces of their presence and, above all, it is not necessarily true that they made use of Latin; rather, they reserved the revelation of their identity essentially to the funerary inscriptions, in this case really in Latin⁶⁷.

Paradoxically, it is precisely the non-Romans who have left the most notable evidence of the use of Latin in late antique Egypt and not because of a practical need or a natural linguistic education, but by choice. It is this Latin which, in relation to Greek and Coptic, is most worth investigating, at least from the Coptological point of view.

3. *Latin as a Language of Status and its Range of Use*

In the karstic appearing and disappearing of Latin, in different moments and in different socio-cultural contexts, thanks to the testimony of manuscripts, which remain our most important source, it is quite clear that those who used it, especially from the end of the 4th century AD, were not naturally Latin speaking. These people therefore had to face all the difficulties that handling a foreign language entails, starting from the need to have useful tools for its learning, such as lexicons and grammars⁶⁸. It is to this context that

⁶⁷ It is the case of the re-used stela of the freedman found in Oxyrhynchus mentioned above, and also of the stela of C. Iulius Valerius who, although he died at the age of three, is called *miles* of the *Legio II Traiana*. This limestone stela, of uncertain provenance (Terenouthis?), dates back to the 3rd century AD and is kept in the Brooklyn Museum (<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/9362>, l.a. 16/01/2021).

⁶⁸ Scappaticcio, *Artes grammaticae* cit. See the interesting case dealt with by W. Clarysse, B. Rochette, *Un alphabet grec en caractères latins*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 51.1 (2005), pp. 67-75; D. Feissel, *Deux modèles de cursive latine dans l'ordre alphabétique grec*, in *Sixty-Five*

the following manuscripts should be referred: Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, PSI 848 (PSI VII 848), papyrus codex from the Arsinoite *nomos* containing *Aesopica*, with Latin translation⁶⁹, or the fragment of 4th-century AD papyrus codex, from Hermopolis, containing Isocrates, *Ad Nicoclem* 7-8; *Ad Demonium* 47-48⁷⁰, or the slightly earlier manuscript that bears Babrius' fables⁷¹.

Cribiore reminds us that:

It was argued recently that there was no official policy at the time of Diocletian to raise the status of Latin, and this is probably true. Yet one cannot underestimate the fact that most of the Latin and bilingual papyri preserved (documents along with literary and semi-literary texts) date from the period after Diocletian. It is commonly maintained that in that period someone aspiring to enter the public administration needed to learn Latin and went through a school called σχολή τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν⁷².

Likewise, according to Jean-Luc Fournet:

Papyrological Texts. Presented to Klaas A. Worp on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday (P.L.Bat. 33), cur. F.A.J. Hoogendijk, B.P. Muhs, Leiden - Boston 2008, pp. 53-64 (rist. in Id., *Documents, droit, diplomatique*, Paris 2010, pp. 541-551).

⁶⁹ See the description of the manuscript on PSI online (<http://www.psi-online.it/documents/psi;7;848>).

⁷⁰ Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, Papyrussammlung, P. 21245 (BKT IX 149; TM 61384), classified as school exercise, although it should be referred to a very high level.

⁷¹ New York (NY), Pierpont Morgan Library, Amherst Gr. 26 (P.Amh. II 26; TM 59335). B. Rochette, *Papyrologica bilingua Graeco-Latina*, «Aegyptus», 76 (1996), pp. 57-79, esp. 62 writes that: «autochtones semblent être parvenus à une bonne maîtrise du latin. Une belle illustration du caractère fragmentaire des connaissances latines des hellénophones d'Égypte est donnée par la traduction latine de trois fables de Babrios (11, 16 et 17), due à un hellénophon».

⁷² Cribiore, *Higher education* cit., p. 58.

In the name of a very Roman type of pragmatism, the new power did not attempt to break with the previous linguistic tradition; rather, by availing itself of existing structures, it accepted that the administration continued using Greek while introducing Latin into it under certain circumstances (some documents originating in the army or concerning it, as well as those related to Roman citizenship)⁷³.

This is certainly true, as we have already pointed out, but it is a fact that most of the post-Diocletian attestations of Latin seem to have nothing to do with administration or law. The Latin of late antique Egypt is not only a functional language, but also and mainly the manifestation of cultural choice. To quote again Cribiore:

The fact that seven of the glossaries assembled by Kramer are dated after the fourth century (in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries) is a significant testimony that the need to learn Latin continued. ... The majority of the glossaries show a peculiar feature: they are written throughout in Greek, with Latin words transliterated⁷⁴.

It is therefore essentially Hellenophones (or Coptophones) who engaged at various levels with Latin.

⁷³ J.-L. Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic: Egyptian versus Greek in Late Antiquity*, Princeton - Oxford 2020, p. 3.

⁷⁴ Cribiore, *Higher education* cit., p. 59. The same observation is formulated by Rochette – who bases his reflections also on the fact that Latin orthography follows the pronunciation – and even before by A. Bataille, *Glossaires greco-latins sur papyrus*, «Recherches de Papyrologie», 4 (1967), pp. 161-169. See Rochette, *Papyrologica bilingua* cit., pp. 63; 70-74. On the absence of proper exercises in Latin, Cribiore, *Higher education* cit., p. 62 observes: «I suggest, therefore, that students did a very limited amount of written work, because they aimed at acquiring only reading literacy. If we consider once again the reasons why people needed to learn Latin, that is to enter the administration and to learn Roman law, we see that insisting on writing skills was superfluous». See also Cribiore, *Latin Literacy* cit.

Of all the cases of 're-emergence' of Latin in 'Coptic' Egypt, certainly one of the most significant is that of the 'library' consisting of the so-called 'Bodmer Papyri' or 'Dishna Papers', an expression by which this ancient and problematic late antique book collection is increasingly frequently referred.

The introduction to the proceedings of the conference held in Rome, in February 2014, effectively summarises the main problematic aspects relating to the constitution and composition of this set of books:

Biblical texts in Greek and Coptic, among the oldest and most important for both the Old and the New Testament studies; classical comedies considered to be lost, as Menander's *Dyskolos*; collections of classicizing poems such as those preserved in the *Codex of Visions*, where poets of the 4th century describe their religious experiences or express in their own way the biblical traditions; Coptic texts of Biblical character or of homiletic content; the *Homily on the Passover* by Melito of Sardis and the *Acts* of the martyr bishop Phileas of Thmuis, illustrious victim of the Diocletian's persecution (303-305); poetry and liturgical hymns and prayers in Greek and Latin. Exploring this set of codices means to reconstruct a significant phase of the religious and cultural transformation of the Egyptian society and the Mediterranean world between the 3rd and the 4th century. The 'Bodmer library' is to be set within a cultural environment deeply attracted by classical *paideia*, but also open to new religious phenomena, whose impact the 'community' (in the broader sense of the term) tried to express according to its traditional forms of expression. While recognizing the importance of the Greek and Latin literary traditions, people somehow involved in the library favored the growing of Coptic, the new literary language of the most advanced classes of Hellenized Egyptians; while living in a world of social and religious tensions, such as the last persecution or the beginning of Constantinian era, they paid attention to the affirmation of the institutional Church and the birth of monasticism⁷⁵.

⁷⁵ G. Agosti, P. Buzi, A. Camplani, *Bodmer Papyri. Libraries, Ascetic Congregations, and Literary Culture, in Greek, Coptic, and Latin, Within Late-*

Much has been said about the owners of this ancient library and, although I am personally inclined to believe that, at least initially, it did not belong to a monastic community – and certainly not to an organised one –, what matters here are the codicological, palaeographic and linguistic aspects. These define it as a set of books that reflect the needs of owners, who not only were strongly linked to classical culture, to the point of composing original works inspired by it, but were capable of materially producing, inside their own environment, the codices in question.

It is more and more evident, in fact, that some of the manuscripts attributable to the ‘Dishna Papers’ are actually more notebooks than real books. Such a state of affairs is suggested by their manufacture (often these are single quire or unbound codices and small in size), but also by the *mise en page* (the relationship between the written and unwritten area on the page) and *mise en texte* (the devices for the presentation and articulation of the text) aspects.

Notebooks are certainly Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1499 (P.Chester Beatty inv. Ac. 1499), which contains a Greek-Latin lexicon based on the Pauline Epistles, as well as conjugations in Greek⁷⁶, and Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1390 (P.Chester

Antique Egypt, «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 6-7. For a ‘census’ of the manuscripts belonging to this library, see Fournet, *Anatomie* cit.

⁷⁶ TM 61873. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1499 (P.Chester Beatty inv. Ac. 1499), even if it is not an unbound quire, like Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1390 (P.Chester Beatty inv. Ac. 1390), was originally a blank manuscript, sold for the purpose of receiving notes, to the point that only part of the sheets are actually written. B. van Regemorter, *Le papetier-libraire en Égypte*, «Chronique d’Égypte», 35 (1960), p. 280. A.P. Wouters, *The Chester Beatty Codex AC 1499: A Graeco-Latin Lexicon on the Pauline Epistles and a Greek Grammar*, Leuven 1988. Cribiore, *Higher education* cit., p. 49 defines Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1499 (P.Chester Beatty inv. Ac. 1499) as a learning tool: «Chester Beatty

Beatty inv. Ac. 1390), in which some accounts coexist with a passage from the *Gospel of John*.

Also the famous *Codex Miscellaneus Barcinonensis* – in which Cicero (*Catilinariae* 1-2, in Latin)⁷⁷, an acrostic hymn on the Virgin (in Latin)⁷⁸, an acrostic hymn on the sacrifice of Isaac (in Greek), an hexametric poem on Alcestis (in Latin)⁷⁹, four prayers (in Greek), a fable on emperor Hadrian (in Latin)⁸⁰, and a stenographic *commentarium*⁸¹, as well as a mythological drawing are assembled⁸² – although in terms of content and material aspect it is more complex than the two examples already examined, in the layout it betrays its private aspect, that of a sort of notebook on which to transcribe texts of immediate interest and usefulness. As a book, it is not a high-quality product but as a personal item, it is good.

Such a state of affairs, on the other hand, is confirmed by the recent multi-disciplinary investigations carried out by Sofia Torallas

Codex AC 1499, for example, combined extensive grammatical tables and a Greek-Latin glossary of the Pauline epistles».

⁷⁷ Ciceró. *Catilinàries*, ed. R. Roca-Puig, Barcelona 1977; G. Nocchi Macedo, *Bilinguisme, digraphisme et multiculturalisme dans le codex miscellaneus de Montserrat*, in *Bilinguisme et digraphisme dans le monde grégoromain: l'apport des papyrus latins*. Actes de la Table Ronde internationale (Liège, 12-13 mai 2011), cur. M.-H. Marganne, B. Rochette, Liège 2013, pp. 139-168, esp. 144.

⁷⁸ For a list of the prayers see Gabriel Nocchi Macedo, *Bilinguisme, digraphisme* cit., p. 148; Marcovich, *Alcestis* cit.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ Gil, Torallas Tovar, *Hadrianus* cit.

⁸¹ *To the Origins of Greek Stenography*. P.Monts.Roca. I, edd. S. Torallas Tovar, K.A. Worp, Barcelona 2006, pp. 15-24.

⁸² For an interpretation of the drawing as Hercules see R. Roca-Puig, *Quatre papiers inédits*, in R. Roca - Puig *i la ciència dels papiers*, Algerri 1989, pp. 139-169. According to G. Nocchi Macedo the sketch would rather represent Perseus saving Andromeda.

Tovar and Tea Ghigo, who have analysed its inks in combination with the palaeographic⁸³ and codicological aspects:

Previous palaeographic analysis identified only one hand as responsible for the composition of the codex, both in its Greek and Latin texts. The variation in language, page set-up and contents suggested that the book was not conceived as a single product, but was probably produced in successive phases according to the needs of the scribe. Now, elemental analysis on some of the leaves has revealed and confirmed that it was written in consecutive phases. We observed that there was a difference in the composition of the inks from the several sections, and in some cases, even within the same section, thus further indicating that the production did not happen in one instance, but rather the scribe stopped, maybe produced or procured new ink, and then continued writing at a later moment. In addition, both archaeometric and textual analysis suggest that the last section, the list of Greek words connected to stenography, was written in a different environment than the other sections. Further research on samples of papyrus and parchment manuscripts has pointed out the split that remained for a few centuries in the literary and documentary use in some areas of Egypt: iron-gall inks used mostly for the former vs. carbon inks extensively used for the latter. We imagine that such traditions and customs weighed heavily in the production of ink in the scriptoria or offices where documents were produced. In conclusion, we can assume that this small codex belonged to one single person who composed it in different moments. ... The owner of the codex used iron-gall ink in the composition of the literary texts, but when he copied the words list ... – the only text in the codex which is not literary –, he used a different kind of ink, perhaps because he was at that point working in a scriptorium or office devoted to the production of documents⁸⁴.

⁸³ The writing of *Codex Barcinonensis* was already associated by Lowe to that of Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1499 (P.Chester Beatty inv. Ac. 1499). Cfr. Elias A. Lowe in *CLA Suppl.* 1772.

⁸⁴ T. Ghigo, S. Torallas Tovar, *Between Literary and Documentary Practices: The Montserrat Codex Miscellaneus (Inv. Nos. 126-178, 292, 338) and the Material*

The interest of the *Codex Miscellaneus* is further increased by the presence of the colophon-dedication, inserted in a *tabula ansata*, addressed to a certain Dorotheus, son of Quintus, for whom evidently – whether or not it is the same Dorotheus of the ‘Codex of Visions’ – the work had been copied. This fact that reveals, at least in this specific case, a direct relationship between scribe and client⁸⁵.

Recently Ágnes T. Mihálykó⁸⁶ has also dealt with the *Codex Miscellaneus* and its purpose. She confirms what Gabriel Nocchi Macedo⁸⁷ had already observed, namely that the copyist who wrote it proves to be much more at ease with Greek than with Latin, and relates it to «some sort to educational context»⁸⁸. Moreover, the scholar refutes the opinion of Alberto Camplani, according to whom the purpose of this set of texts would have been, as in the case of the ‘Codex of Visions’ and *P.Crosby Schøyen*, to stimulate

Investigation of Its Inks, in *Coptic Literature in Context (4th-13th cent.): Cultural Landscape, Literary Production and Manuscript Archaeology*. Proceedings of the Third Conference of the ERC project ‘Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature. Literary Texts in their Geographical Context’ (‘PATHs’), cur. P. Buzi, Roma 2020, pp. 99-112, esp. 108-109.

⁸⁵ Fournet, *Anatomie* cit., p. 13: «Faut-il en fin de compte mettre l’usage du latin en rapport avec la personnalité de Dorôthéos, dont le père s’appelait Quintus, nom rarissime en Égypte et qui trahit peut-être des origines latines?».

⁸⁶ Á.T. Mihálykó, *The Christian Liturgical Papyri: An Introduction*, Tübingen 2019, pp. 113-114; 206-209; 258-259.

⁸⁷ Nocchi Macedo, *Bilinguisme, digraphisme* cit., p. 162.

⁸⁸ Mihálykó, *Liturgical Papyri* cit., p. 207. On the other hand, G. Ammannati, *L’Hadrianus del P.Monts.Roca III*, «Materiali e Discussioni», 81 (2018), pp. 221-240 has argued that the antigraph of the *Hadrianus* was written in new cursive, a writing that would have required advanced deciphering skills.

reflection on baptism⁸⁹; more reasonably Mihálykó proposes that the textual collection was aimed at mnemonic learning, thus confirming the private and ‘formative’ character of the book collection, or at least of part of it, even if, with a logical passage perhaps a little too fast, she assumes a role of priest for Dorotheus:

However, the presence of Cicero and tachygraphy in P.Monts. Roca sits uncomfortably with Camplani’s hypothesis. Thus another proposal may be advanced concerning the use of this codex: one thing some of these texts have in common is the fact that they are to be memorized. Learning a language in antiquity involved committing texts to memory, and the *Contra Catilinam* lends itself particularly well to this purpose; perhaps the acrostic hymn was also chosen because acrostics are a good mnemotechnical device. The prayers, if they were not to be read aloud from the book, could be performed by memory. Thus perhaps the scribe presented Dorotheus with a selection of texts that could learn by heart, including a selection of prayers. If this hypothesis is tenable, the Eucharist was meant to be performed by Dorotheus. This would suggest that Dorotheus served as a priest, and the scribe included the prayer texts as proposals for his liturgical office⁹⁰.

⁸⁹ A. Camplani, *Per un profilo storico-religioso degli ambienti di produzione e fruizione dei Papiri Bodmer: contaminazione dei linguaggi e dialettica delle idee nel contesto del dibattito su dualismo e origenismo*, «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 98-135.

⁹⁰ Mihálykó, *Liturgical Papyri* cit., pp. 208-209. Later, however (p. 258), the author affirms: «The Latin hymn (foll. 149b-153b) presents the title *Psalmus responsorius* and a four-verse strophe at the beginning, probably a refrain. This suggests actual performance of the hymn, but perhaps not in the circles where the manuscript was copied; Dorotheus, to whom the codex was dedicated, more likely used the hymn for learning Latin along with other Latin texts in the codex». Mihálykó also mentions Manchester, John Rylands Library, Gr. 472 (P.Ry)/ III 472, 3rd-4th century AD) as an example of a liturgical text of private use by a Latin-speaking family.

If Mihálykó's opinion about the circumscribed, private, and 'formative' use of the *Miscellaneus* is reasonable, this does not mean that all the texts selected for it must necessarily have a liturgical purpose. In any case, the Latin of the 'Dishna Papers', although largely limited compared to Coptic and Greek⁹¹, is certainly crucial to outline the personality of the owners of the library: the 'language of the Romans' is handled with awareness, but little dexterity, both graphic and linguistic⁹², and by no means represents a practical necessity, but a choice that corresponds to an intercultural formation based also on the classical *paideia* – evidently absorbed in some urban centre of the area (Panopolis?)⁹³ – and to the strong will to manifest it.

⁹¹ For the proportions between the two languages see R. Kasser, *Introduction*, in *Bibliotheca Bodmeriana. La collection des Papyrus Bodmer. Manuscrits de textes grecs classiques, grecs et coptes bibliques et de littérature chrétienne, du 2^e au 9^e siècle; édition complète d'un des plus importants fonds de textes antiques et bibliques*, Munich 2000, p. xxiv. The parchment codices are at least five, all in Coptic. Among the papyrus codices – six of which are single-quire codices – two are in Latin (and partly in Greek), at least nine in Coptic, and at least six in Greek. Buzi, *Qualche riflessione* cit., p. 49.

⁹² I agree with Fournet, *Anatomie* cit., p. 13 when he affirms: «On a relevé que les textes latins du Codex de Montserrat ou du *P. Chester Beatty* Ac. 1499 trahissaient un manque de familiarité avec les usages de l'écriture latine et une moindre aisance en latin qu'en grec. On a donc affaire à des textes écrits par ou pour des Grécoégyptiens apprenant le latin comme on en a beaucoup d'autres pour cette période où le besoin se faisait sentir d'accéder à la connaissance d'une langue indispensable pour une carrière dans la haute fonction publique. Mais la composante majoritairement religieuse de la bibliothèque n'oriente pas nécessairement vers un tel profil – encore qu'il ne soit pas incompatible avec celui-ci».

⁹³ The role of poetry in this library is noteworthy, also in its liturgical dimension; see G. Agosti, *La poesia greca nella Biblioteca Bodmer: aspetti letterari e socioculturali*, «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 86-97, esp. 86-87: «Né è assente la poesia liturgica sia greca che latina, rappresentata dall'inno ritmico sul sacrificio di Isacco (P.Monts.Roca inv. 157ab), e dal *Psalmus*

It is precisely this kind of production that explains and justifies the proliferation of lexicons and other tools useful for learning⁹⁴.

Changing region, the Manichean community of Kellis, and in particular the famous *P. Kellis* V 20 ll. 24-26, found in secondary deposition in 'House 3' together with other manuscripts, which mentions the way in which a certain Piene⁹⁵ will learn the 'language of the Romans', represent a completely different case, as the study of Latin appears functional to a travel. It does not seem to be something that could be learned in Kellis: «the great teacher let him (*referring to Piene*) travel with him, so that he might learn Latin (ΜΝΤΡΩΜΑΙΟΣ, *sic!*). He teaches him well».

On the other hand, as has already been noted, in Kharga there is only one epigraphic attestation in Latin, which is strictly connected to the military environment and probably not even of an official nature. Not dissimilar is the case of the 'internal oasis', Dakhla, where there is certainly no lack of evidence of classical cultural practices – it is enough to mention here the house of Serenos and the school connected to it, decorated with paintings of classical subjects – but which did not return any text in Latin or any other artefact attributable to the *Latinitas* or the *Romanitas*, even in a very vague sense⁹⁶.

responsorius (P.Monts.Roca inv. 149b-153). Entrambi provengono dal medesimo codice pluritestuale greco-latino, a fascicolo unico e composto da 28 bifogli, della metà del IV secolo, che ha restituito oltre Alcesti anche Cicerone, preghiere in greco, un commentario tachigrafico e una composizione sull'imperatore Adriano».

⁹⁴ Kramer in *C.Gloss.Biling.* I; *C.Gloss.Biling.* II.

⁹⁵ *P.Kellis* XX 28-39. On the role of Latin in Kellis see also *P.Kellis* I 77; 30. *P.Kellis* I, pp. 75-76; 167.

⁹⁶ On the *status quaestionis* concerning the research carried out in the 'great oasis', by which I mean the whole of Kharga and Dakhla, related to all the historical periods, see *The Oasis Papers 9: A Tribute to Anthony J. Mills after Forty Years in Dakhle Oasis*, cur. G.E. Bowen, C.A. Hope, Oxford 2019. On Ahmeida in particular see *An Oasis City*, cur. R.S. Bagnall, N.

As for the very few terms of Latin origin which appear in the manuscripts of the other important Manichaean finding in Egypt, that of Medinet Madi – whose exact archaeological context, however, is unknown, as it was the result of a non-authorised excavation carried out in 1929 or slightly before⁹⁷ – their contribution is reduced to what has already been observed in general on the lexical ‘fossils’ incorporated by Coptic literature⁹⁸. Terms like **σκορδικκος**, *scordiscus* «saddle», clearly do not contribute, even minimally, to the comprehension of the uses of Latin in late antique Egypt.

One discovery deserves a final mention. It is completely eccentric with respect to what has been exposed so far – and therefore to be analysed with due caution – but I believe it has not received enough attention and it could hide more than what is apparent at first glance. It is what remains of a luxury multiple-text codex that bears various works of Augustine (among which is *De sermone Domini in monte*, *Contra Arrianos*, *Sermo* 118). Datable to the 6th century

Aravecchia, R. Cribiore, P. Davoli, O.E. Kaper, S. McFadden, New York 2015. Lastly, on the house of Serenos: P. Davoli, R. Cribiore, *Una scuola di greco del IV secolo d.C. a Trimithis (Oasi di Dakhla)*, in *Leggere greco e latino fuori dai confini del mondo antico*. Atti del I Congresso Nazionale dell'Associazione Italiana di Cultura Classica, Lecce, 10-11 maggio 2008, cur. M. Capasso, Lecce 2010, pp. 73-83; R. Cribiore, P. Davoli, *New Literary Texts from Amheida, Ancient Trimithis (Dakla Oasis, Egypt)*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 187 (2013), pp. 1-14.

⁹⁷ C. Schmidt, *Neue Originalquellen des Manichäismus aus Ägypten*, Stuttgart 1933, pp. 16-20; J.M. Robinson, *The Fate of the Manichaean Codices of Medinet Madi 1929-1989*, in *Studia Manichaica II*. Internationaler Kongress zum Manichäismus, 6.-10. August 1989 St. Augustin - Bonn, cur. G. Wiessner, H.-J. Klimkeit, Wiesbaden 1992, pp. 19-62; Id., *The Manichaean Codices of Medinat Madi (Terenouthis)*, in *XVIII International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Moscow, 8-15 August 1992*, Amsterdam 1993, pp. 950-951; Id., *The Manichaean Codices of Medinet Madi*, Cambridge 2010.

⁹⁸ Allberry, *Greek and Latin* cit., p. 20.

AD, its fragments (of which there are more than fifty both big and small) were found at the end of the 19th century in the Cairo *genizah*. The codex in question, which was very likely imported from Italy, as its palaeographic features suggest, was re-used four centuries later, rotated 90 degrees, to transcribe a Masoretic text⁹⁹. It is of course possible that the codex was brought to Egypt just before the genesis of its second life¹⁰⁰, but we cannot exclude that it remained in Egypt a long time before being re-used. If, on the one hand, it is true that Fustat¹⁰¹, the settlement from which Cairo would have devel-

⁹⁹ TM 59328; LDAB 426. Cambridge, University Library, MS Add. 4320 a-c. H.A.G. Houghton, *New Identifications Among the Sixth-Century Fragments of Augustine in Cambridge University Library*, «Sacris Erudiri», 58 (2019), pp. 171-179, esp. 171: «The ‘Cambridge Fragments’ have been known since 1916, when details of the three largest pieces were published by Francis Crawford Burkitt. 1 These were found in the Cairo Genizah at the end of the nineteenth century and acquired by Cambridge University Library in 1899. The Augustine texts, written on parchment in a fine Italian uncial hand of the sixth century, had been palimpsested in the ninth or tenth century with a set of Hebrew masoretic lists on books including Joshua, 1 Samuel and Isaiah. Pages of the original manuscript were simply folded in half to create the new document and some of the undertext remains relatively legible to the naked eye, although it is often obscured by the overwriting and there is extensive decay to the parchment». See also F.C. Burkitt, *Augustine-Fragments from the Cairo Genizah*, «The Journal of Theological Studies», 17 (1916), pp. 137-138.

¹⁰⁰ It is not useless to recall that the most ancient texts found in the Cairo *genizah* date back exactly to the 10th century.

¹⁰¹ P. Casanova, *Essai de reconstitution topographique de la ville d'al Fostat ou Miṣr*, Le Caire 1913; G.T. Scanlon, *Preliminary Report: Excavations at Fustat, 1964*, «Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt», 4 (1965), pp. 6-30; Id., *Preliminary Report: Excavations at Fustat, 1965. Part I*, «Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt», 5 (1966), pp. 83-112; Id., *Preliminary Report: Excavations at Fustat, 1965. Part II*, «Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt», 6 (1967), pp. 65-86; Id., *Prelimina-*

oped, had not yet been funded in the 6th century AD¹⁰², on the other hand, it is worth recalling that it was created close to the fortress of Babylon¹⁰³ (ΒΑΒΥΛΩΝ ΝΧΗΜΗ «Babylon of Egypt» or ΒΑΒΥΛΩΝ

ry Report: Excavations at Fustat, 1966, «Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt», 10 (1973), pp. 11-25; Id., *Preliminary Report: Excavations at Fustat, 1968. Part I*, «Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt», 11 (1974), pp. 81-91; Id., *Preliminary Report: Excavations at Fustat, 1968. Part II*, «Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt», 13 (1976), pp. 69-89; Id., *Preliminary Report: Excavations at Fustat, 1972. Part II*, «Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt», 19 (1982), pp. 119-129; Id., *Preliminary Report: Excavations at Fustat, 1978*, «Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt», 21 (1984), pp. 1-38; R.-P. Gayraud, S. Björnesjö, S. Denoix, *Istabl 'Antar (Fostat) 1985. Rapport de fouilles [avec 12 planches]*, «Annales Islamologiques», 22 (1986), pp. 1-26; R.-P. Gayraud, S. Björnesjö, S. Denoix, M. Tuchscherer, *Istabl 'Antar (Fostat) 1986. Rapport de fouilles [avec 16 planches]*, «Annales Islamologiques», 23 (1987), pp. 55-71; R.-P. Gayraud, S. Björnesjö, J.-M. Muller-Woulkoff, V. Miguët, V. Roche, M. Saillard, *Istabl 'Antar (Fostat), 1987-1989. Rapport de fouilles [avec 15 planches]*, «Annales Islamologiques», 25 (1991), pp. 57-87; R.-P. Gayraud, X. Peixoto, *Istabl 'Antar (Fostat) 1990. Rapport de fouilles*, «Annales Islamologiques», 27 (1993), pp. 225-232; R.-P. Gayraud, S. Björnesjö, P. Speiser, *Istabl 'Antar (Fostat) 1992. Rapport de fouilles*, «Annales Islamologiques», 28 (1994), pp. 1-27; R.-P. Gayraud, S. Björnesjö, P. Gallo, J.-M. Mouton, F. Paris, *Istabl 'Antar (Fostat) 1994. Rapport de fouilles*, «Annales Islamologiques», 29 (1995), pp. 1-24; W.B. Kubiak, *Al-Fustat: Its Foundation and Early Urban Development*, Le Caire 1987; A.F. Saiyid, *La capitale de l'Égypte jusqu'à l'époque fatimide, al-Qahira et al-Fustat. Essai de reconstitution topographique*, Beirut - Stuttgart 1998; *The History and Religious Heritage of Old Cairo: Its Fortress, Churches, Synagogue and Mosque*, cur. C. Ludwig, M. Jackson, Le Caire 2013.

¹⁰² Traditionally, the foundation of Fustat is dated to 641 / 642, but clearly the settlement at the beginning must have been little more than a military camp.

¹⁰³ P.J. Sheenan, *Babylon of Egypt: The Archaeology of Old Cairo and the Origins of the City*, Le Caire 2010.

ΦΟΣΤΑΤΩΝ «Babylon (of) *fossatum*»¹⁰⁴ which had been representing for centuries, since the Trajan's reign to be more precise, an important Roman – later, Byzantine – outpost. In addition to including a residential district, which is a feature common to all Roman fortifications, and which certainly also saw the presence of high-ranking soldiers, at least from the 5th century AD, Babylon was also an episcopal see¹⁰⁵, since the presence of a bishop from this centre is attested in the Council of Ephesus (AD 431). Furthermore, the first church in the area was built not far from the fortress, already in the seventies of the 7th century¹⁰⁶.

It does not seem to me that the hypothesis that this codex might originate from the environment of the fortress and its residential district and bishopric, later physically incorporated in Fustat, has ever been advanced; it is a hypothesis which, although not verifiable, cannot be excluded *a priori*.

From Fustat (or from Babylon? – the confusion between the two contiguous archaeological sites is very easy), on the other hand, seems

¹⁰⁴ É. Amélineau, *Géographie de l'Égypte à l'époque copte*, Paris 1893, p. 224.

¹⁰⁵ I sincerely thank A. Camplani for informing me that Eulogius, Melkite patriarch of Alexandria, was a friend of Gregory the Great and certainly handled the works of Augustine. Before him, Liberatus consulted the archives of the diocese around AD 530. This is of course only a hypothesis, at least for the moment.

¹⁰⁶ A. Dridi, *Christians of Fustat in the First Three Centuries of Islam: The Making of a New Society*, in *A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Old Cairo*, cur. T. Vorderstrasse, T. Treptow, Chicago 2015, pp. 33-40, esp. 33: «...a native Christian population numerous enough to need a church was living in the city. These Christians are among the first in Egypt to have had – in a likely situation of numerical minority – interreligious and intercultural contacts with Muslims. The majority of these Christians must have lived in the pre-Islamic city of Babylon – widely mentioned in papyri before and after the Islamic conquest – located in the immediate vicinity of the new capital».

to come a peculiar amulet in Latin, also dated to the 6th century AD, which contains quotations from Psalms 15 and 20 and appeals to Christ as *medicus caelestis*¹⁰⁷. This is a document which, among the other values, has that of documenting the pronunciation of Latin in Late Antiquity¹⁰⁸. It is interesting to stress that the editors comment:

it is clear that the papyrus reflects the north Italian-African tradition ... one cannot rule out, for example, that a traveller from northern Italy left this amulet in the sands of Egypt¹⁰⁹.

This is a track, that of the importation from Italy toward Fustat / Babylon – even if the editors never use this term – which would be worth following for both cases just described.

In the light of what has been exposed, it is clear that to understand fully the role of Latin in late antique Egypt, every single attestation and each individual environment of use must be considered as a case in itself. It is necessary to distinguish the spontaneous uses – practiced by first- or second-generation Latin-speakers (to which not only the handwritten attestations of imperial age can be referred, but probably also what remains of late antique luxury codices) – from the functional ones – necessary and obligatory, due to the role covered or the purpose of a specific message. And, finally,

¹⁰⁷ The text of the papyrus fragment, which was lost during the second world war, survives in the transcription of K. Preisdanz thanks to edition of R.W. Daniel, F. Maltomini, *From the African Psalter and Liturgy*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 74 (1988), pp. 253-265. See also T.S. de Bruyn, J.H.F. Dijkstra, *Greek Amulets and Formularies from Egypt Containing Christian Elements: A Checklist of Papyri, Parchments, Ostraka, and Tablets*, «Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists», 48 (2011), pp. 163-216, esp. 175.

¹⁰⁸ J. Kramer, *A Linguistic Commentary on Heidelberg's Latin Papyrus Amulet*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 74 (1988), pp. 267-272.

¹⁰⁹ Daniel, Maltomini, *From the African Psalter* cit., p. 259.

from those that imply a cultural choice, a manifestation of status, of prestige, which are the most interesting¹¹⁰.

It is also clear that, while the transition from Greek to Coptic (and vice versa) seems to correspond to a rather widespread linguistic fluidity and therefore becomes somehow natural, this is not the case for the transition from Greek to Latin and even less, obviously, for that from Coptic to Latin. The 'language of the Romans' required a much greater learning effort than that demanded of an Egyptian who wanted to express himself in Greek, even in written form. The attestations of the use of Latin in Egyptian Late Antiquity, consequently, reflect a very clear choice: the desire to communicate one's own status, one's own belonging to a social and cultural upper class.

Lastly, it is necessary to keep always in mind the difference that exists between those who were actually Roman – therefore Latin-speaking by birth or by induced culture (this is certainly the case of the Apiones) –, those who were Romanized by frequenting environments that could not fail to involve Roman-Latin linguistic-cultural assimilation – the military, above all of medium-high rank, and the jurists –, and finally those who, Egyptian by birth and naturally bilingual, while handling Greek and Coptic (at different levels of dexterity), made use of Latin and participated of *Latinitas* by choice, thus determining the formation of those cultural circles, sometimes with tenuous outlines, for which the 'language of the Romans' is above all a manifestation of prestige.

¹¹⁰ Concerning the use of Latin, I do not completely agree with Mihálykó, *Liturgical Papyri* cit., p. 255 when she affirms that: «in Christian milieus of the fourth and fifth centuries, Latin was needed to maintain contacts with the Western pilgrims attracted to the fame of Egyptian ascetics». There is much more than a necessity in the choice of using Latin in late antique Egypt.

Notes on the Circulation of Latin Language and Literature in Coptic Contexts*

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While in a monastery in Bethlehem, John Cassian met Abba Panoph and this meeting was determinant for both his and his friend Germanus' decision to leave for Egypt, which was the heart of the ascetic movement¹. John Cassian stayed in Egypt for fifteen years. It was the end of the 4th century AD. There is an episode attributed by Cassian to his stay in a village of Lower Egypt called Diolcus, and this episode is narrated in the fifth book on avidity (*de spiritu gastrimargiae*) of Cassian's *Institutes of the Coenobia* (*De institutis coenobiorum et de octo principalium vitiorum remediis*). The episode runs as follows: while Cassian was in Diolcus, a certain Simeon arrived from Italy and he was totally ignorant of the Greek language, which made him inappropriate for several tasks proper to monks living in that place; thus Simeon was given the role of scribe, and precisely that of scribe of Latin books, although very few people in that

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¹ Cassian. *inst.* 4, 21-32; *conl.* 17; on John Cassian – whose origins are debated between Scythia Minor and Gallia – see R.J. Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian. Aristocrats, Ascetism, and Reformation in Fifth-Century Gaul*, Oxford 2007 and R. Alciati, *Monaci d'Occidente. Secoli IV-IX*, Roma 2018, pp. 41-61, with bibliography.

Egyptian area would have read a book in Latin². Both the lack of use for scribes who could write codices in Latin and the complete ignorance of this language by all the monks of Diolcus (according to Cassian) are contradicted by what we know of the circulation of Latin. Our evidence comes from the *History of the Monks in Egypt*, from the *Apophthegmata Patrum* and from other brief and indirect references. One finds such references in a literary production linked to Christian milieux, from Latin 'books' having circulated in monastic environments and, more in general, from late antique Egypt³. This

² Cassian. *inst.* 5, 39, 1-2: «*cum frater nobis optime carus nomine Symeon, penitus Graeci sermonis ignarus, e partibus Italiae commeasset, quidam seniorum, erga eum utpote peregrinum caritatis opus quodam redhibitionis colore cupiens exhibere, inquit ab eo cur otiosus sederet in cella, per hoc coniciens eum tam otii pervagatione quam penuria necessariorum rerum diutius in ea durare non posse, certus neminem posse in pugnationes solitudinis tolerare nisi eum, qui propriis manibus victum sibimet fuerit parare contentus. Quo respondente nihil se nec nosse nec praevalere ex his quae illic exercebantur a fratribus operari praeter librariam manum, si tamen ullus in Aegypti regione Latinum codicem usui esset habiturus, tum ille tandem nactus occasionem, qua posset desideratum pietatis opus velut debiti colore mercari, ex deo haec inventa est, inquit, occasio: nam olim quaerebam qui apostolum Latinum hac mihi manu perscriberet. Etenim habeo fratrem militiae laqueis obligatum et adprime Latinis instructum, cui de scripturis sanctis aliquid ad legendum aedificationis eius obtentu transmittere cupio*»; see also 5, 39, 3: «*universis in illa regione (scil. Aegypto) notitia linguae huius (scil. Symeonis) penitus ignaris*». Unlike Simeon, John Cassian himself had to be well integrated into the monastic community of Diolcus, which would imply that he was also linguistically integrated and will have known Greek, besides Latin. As for the *oppidum* of Diolcus, in Egypt, see P.M. Fraser, *The ΔΙΟΛΚΟΣ of Alexandria*, «The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology», 47 (1961), pp. 134-138.

³ An overview on the impact of Christianisation on the multilingualism of Egypt is found in both the pioneering G. Bardy, *La question des langues dans l'Eglise ancienne*, Paris 1948, and especially in A. Martin, *Athanase d'Alexandrie et l'Eglise d'Egypte au IV^e siècle (328-373)*, Roma 1996, pp. 662-670. C. Rapp, *The Use of Latin in the Context of Multilingual Monastic Communities in the East*, in *Latin in Byzantium I. Late Antiquity and Beyond*,

is a thin and subtle cross section, and especially an untapped cross section⁴.

1. *The History of the Monks in Egypt, with a Diversion on Palestine*

The ‘travel journal’ of seven monks moving from Palestine to Egypt at the end of the 4th century AD, passing across the main monastic communities where they met important personalities, undoubtedly is the point of departure for a reflection on the circulation of Latin within the cultural environments where Coptic literature circulated⁵. The monks animating the itinerary of the *History of the Monks in Egypt* did not have to be familiar with the Egyptian language, which occasioned them to see, at the offer of Abba Apollonios, as guides some brothers who would have had a deep knowledge of Greek, of Latin and of the local language(s)⁶.

cur. A. Garcea, M. Rosellini, L. Silvano, Turnhout 2019, pp. 93-107 is focused on Latin. In these aforementioned studies, the analysis is based upon indirect witnesses of the role of Latin, and a quick reference to some glossaries on papyrus can be found only *Ibid.*, p. 102.

⁴ See A. Papaconstantinou, *Introduction*, in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, cur. Ead., Farnham - Burlington (VT) 2010, pp. 1-16, esp. 5: «its (*scil.* of the rise of Coptic) concomitance with a reinforced use of Latin has never been investigated, and this would no doubt hold interesting results».

⁵ On the *History of the Monks in Egypt* see the introduction by E. Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (IV^e-VIII^e siècles)*, Warsaw 2009, pp. 12-15 and the more recent volume by A. Cain, *The Greek Historia monachorum in Aegypto. Monastic Hagiography in the Late Fourth Century*, Oxford 2016.

⁶ *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* 7, 62 (Festugière): «ὁ δὲ ἅγιος Ἀπολλῶ τρεῖς ἐπιλεξάμενος ἄνδρας ἱκανοὺς ἐν λόγῳ καὶ ἐν πολιτείᾳ καὶ ἐμπείρους ὄντας τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς διαλέκτου καὶ Ῥωμαϊκῆς καὶ Αἰγυπτιακῆς

In late antique Palestine, linguistic interaction was certainly alimented by (wealthy) pilgrims coming from the Latin-speaking West or by a few (and unavoidably wealthy) educated monks who used to learn Latin together with the local language and Greek⁷. The *Pilgrimage* (*Peregrinatio*) of the Gallic (or Hispanic) Etheria / Egeria is a precious witness describing a multilingual Jerusalem where Syr-

καὶ συμπροπέμπων ἡμῖν αὐτοὺς ἐνετέλλετο μὴ πρότερον ἀφιέναι ἡμᾶς, πρὶν ἂν ἱκανῶς ἔχοιμεν τοὺς πατέρας ὅλους θεωρήσαντες πληροφορηθῆναι» ~ Rufin. *hist. monac.* 7, 16, 3 (Schulz-Flügel): «*et cum paene omnes promptissime semetipsos obtulissent et progredi nobiscum vellent, ipse sanctus pater elegit ex omnibus tres, qui et Graecam linguam et Aegyptiam bene nossent, ut sicubi necessarium fuisset interpretarentur nobis, quique et in adlocutionibus suis aedificare nos possent*». On this passage see Cain, *The Greek* *Historia* cit., p. 34; Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., where this phenomenon is interpreted in a social perspective, with Latin being like a ‘social status-marker’. The Latin version of the text clearly describes a situation of Greek-Coptic bilingualism, while the Greek one puts the knowledge of Greek on the same level as that of Latin and Coptic.

⁷ The contribution by Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit. – where an exhaustive and updated bibliography can be found – is based on the interesting assumption that ecclesiastical councils, on one side, and pilgrims, on the other side, must be considered among the main engines of the circulation of Latin within the monastic communities. In fact, many pilgrims moved from the Western empire to the Holy Land and they often decided to spend several years of their lives there. Cases of local monks from the Judaic-Palestinian area who knew Latin are rare, as a certain *Gabrielios* known thanks to the *Vita Euthymii* of Cyril of Scythopolis (38). On this *Gabrielios* see *Égérie. Journal de voyage (Itinéraire) et lettre sur la B^e Égérie*, ed. P. Maraval, Paris 1982, p. 316; Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 101. On the circulation and presence of Latin in Palestine, from the 1st century AD to Late Antiquity, see J. Geiger, *How Much Latin in Greek Palestine?*, in *Aspects of Latin. Papers from the Seventh International Colloquium on Latin Linguistics (Jerusalem, April 1993)*, cur. H. Rosén, Innsbruck 1996, pp. 39-57, where literary sources are explored together with direct evidence mainly of archaeological provenance.

iac, Greek and Latin coexisted, with many being the *Graecolatini*⁸. Jerome of Stridon benefitted from the support of the rich Roman Paula to spend thirty-four years of his life in the vicinity of Jerusalem, where he devoted himself to the crucial challenge of translating into Latin the Bible and also, among others, three fundamental texts of monastic rule, namely the precepts of Pachomius, Theodore and Horsiesius, all made available to Jerome via a Greek translation from the original⁹. The nuns of the nunnery founded by Paula in Bethlehem were multilingual, as was the Roman benefactress herself, and they certainly mastered Greek and Latin, together with Aramaic¹⁰. Between the end of the 4th and the beginnings of the 5th century AD, another wealthy Roman, Melania the Elder, made it possible for Rufinus of Aquileia to stay at the monastery of the

⁸ *Peregr. Aeth.* 47, 3-4: «et quoniam in ea provincia pars populi et Grece et Siriste novit, pars etiam alia per se Grece, aliqua etiam pars tantum Siriste, itaque quoniam episcopus, licet Siriste noverit, tamen semper Greco loquitur et numquam Siriste: itaque ergo stat semper presbyter, qui, episcopo Greco dicente, Siriste interpretatur, ut omnes audiant, quae exponuntur. Lectiones etiam, quaecumque in ecclesia leguntur, quia necesse est Grece legi, semper stat, qui Siriste interpretatur propter populum, ut semper discant. Sane quicumque hic Latini sunt, id est qui nec Siriste nec Grece noverunt, ne contristentur, et ipsis exponitur eis, quia sunt alii fratres et sorores Grecolatini, qui Latine exponunt eis», on which see Maraval, *Égérie* cit., pp. 315-316; Papaconstantinou, *Introduction* cit., pp. 15-16; Egeria, *Itinerarium*, ed. G. Röwekamp, Freiburg im Breisgau 2017, p. 276; Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., pp. 95-96.

⁹ Jerome's *Rules of Pachomius* – collected in *Pachomiana Latina: règle et épîtres de saint Pachôme, épître de saint Théodore et Liber de saint Orsiesius, texte latin de saint Jérôme*, ed. A. Boon, Louvain 1932 – can thus be interpreted as a 'second degree' translation; that is, as a translation of a translation. Jerome's Latin version of the *Rules of Pachomius* is the only extant one, and this issue will be further discussed below. See Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 96.

¹⁰ Hier. *epist.* 108, 29, on which see *Ibid.*, p. 97.

Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Before arriving in Palestine, Rufinus spent eight years in Egypt and he played a decisive role in transmitting the Eastern monastic rule to the Latin-speaking West¹¹. A Latin translation of the *History of the Monks in Egypt* by Rufinus is known, and the name of Rufinus is also linked to what is known on monasticism in Egypt from Sozomen's *Church History* (in Greek), later translated by Cassiodorus in the *Tripertita*¹².

What is known of Egypt is partly different from Palestine, and the circulation of Latin in its Christian milieux can be better understood within a more general reflection on the role this language had in Late Antiquity, in such a province where multilingualism meant multiculturalism¹³. There are evanescent traces of Latin-speaking 'islands'

¹¹ See *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

¹² The links between these three works are repeatedly emphasised in Cain, *The Greek Historia* cit., with bibliography. The discussion of the relationship between these works is all but closed, and the priority of Latin to Greek (shared by Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit.) or vice versa is a debated topic.

¹³ On multilingualism in Egypt see J.-L. Fournet, *The Multilingual Environment of Late Antique Egypt: Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Persian Documentation*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, cur. R.S. Bagnall, Oxford 2009, pp. 418-451 (with bibliography), where on Latin in Christian environments one reads: «the data are scant and difficult to use. Despite everything, Latin remained marginal: Greek was the official language of the church, Coptic its natural language and that more customary in monastic milieus» (p. 429). A new assessment of the role Latin played in Egypt and in the Greek-speaking and multilingual Eastern empire will be possible only by moving to the new *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus* (CLTP), where a higher number of Latin texts on papyrus is collected than in the previous corpora. On Coptic literature in 3rd-4th century AD Egypt see P. Buzi, *Egypt, Crossroad of Translations and Literary Interweavings (3rd-6th Centuries). A Reconsideration of Earlier Coptic Literature*, in *Egitto crocevia di traduzioni*, cur. F. Crevatin, Trieste, 2018 pp. 15-67, with exhaustive bibliographical references.

such as that of the Monastery of the Metanoia, near Alexandria, or that of the house directed by Theodore of Alexandria¹⁴, and Latin native-speakers are rarely met among the characters using Latin in some tales of the *History of the Monks*. The case of Arsenios, if this Arsenios is the same «abba» from Rome one reads about in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* seems to be an isolated one¹⁵. In the *Apophthegmata* one reads that Arsenios was a grammarian at the court of Theodosius I and teacher of Arcadius and Honorius, who decided to leave the Constantinople court to become a hermit in Egypt. The Arsenios of the *Apophthegmata* certainly knew Latin – which might have been his native language – and Greek, but he did not even know the alphabet of the language spoken by an Egyptian farmer who tested him orally¹⁶.

Unlike the monks surrounding Apollonius, the monks of the circle of Copres had to ignore Latin. While visiting the Egyptian hermit, one of the Palestinian brothers, who seemed to have dozed off while all the others were attentively listening to Copres, was blamed by an

¹⁴ See below p. 96.

¹⁵ PG LXV 71-440; see Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., pp. 102-103. Recent studies support the possibility that the *Apophthegmata* – a collection of sayings and episodes highlighting the religious wisdom peculiar to Christian environments in the desert of Egypt – were put together in 5th-century AD Palestine; see Z.B. Smith, *Philosopher-Monks, Episcopal Authority, and the Care of Self. The Apophthegmata Patrum in Fifth-century Palestine*, Turnhout 2017, with an abundant bibliography to understand the state-of-the-art.

¹⁶ PG LXV 89: «Ἀββᾶ Ἀρσένιε, πῶς τοσαύτην παιδευσιν Ῥωμαϊκὴν καὶ Ἑλληνικὴν ἐπιστάμενος, τοῦτον τὸν ἀγροῖκον περὶ τῶν σῶν λογισμῶν ἐρωτᾷς; Ὅτι μὲν Ῥωμαϊκὴν καὶ Ἑλληνικὴν ἐπίσταται παιδευσιν· τὸν ἀλφάβητον τοῦ ἀγροῖκου τούτου οὐπω μεμάθηκα», on which see L.I. Larsen, *Early Monasticism and the Rhetorical Tradition. Sayings and Stories as School Texts*, in *Education and Religion in Late Antique Christianity. Reflections, Social Contexts and Genres*, cur. P. Gemeinhardt, L. Van Hoof, P. Van Nuffelen, London - New York 2016, pp. 13-33, esp. 13-16; Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 103.

older monk. He later awoke (or «got up») and started inexplicably (*secretius*) talking in Latin (*Latino sermone*) to reveal to his travel companions what he saw in his vision of the book with golden letters Copres had in his hands¹⁷. Both the Greek and the Latin version of the *History of Monks* seem to attribute to Latin the same role as an ‘elitist’ language, useful for keeping some interlocutors off.

It was also narrated that the pioneer of cenobitic monasticism, Pachomius, was totally ignorant of both Greek – which actually seems impossible – and Latin. From birth, he only practised Egyptian. But there is an episode showing Pachomius as the most brilliant among the *σχολαστικοί* while speaking both Latin and Greek¹⁸. A Roman

¹⁷ *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* 10, 25 (Festugière): «καὶ ὡς ἦν ἔτι ταῦτα διηγούμενος ἡμῖν Κόπρης ὁ πατήρ, ἀπονυστάξας εἰς ἐξ ἡμῶν ἀδελφὸς ἀπιστία περὶ τῶν λεγομένων φερόμενος ὁρᾷ βιβλίον θαυμαστὸν ἐν ταῖς χερσὶ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐπικείμενον χρυσοῖς γράμμασι γεγραμμένον καὶ ἐφεστῶτα ἄνδρα τινὰ πολὺν μετὰ ἀπειλῆς αὐτῷ λέγοντα· ‘Οὐκ ἀκούεις προσεχῶς τοῦ ἀναγνώσματος, ἀλλὰ νυστάξεις;’ ὁ δὲ παραχθὴς εὐθὺς ἡμῖν ἀκροωμένοις αὐτοῦ τὸ ὁραθὲν Ὁωμαῖστί ἐξέφηνεν» ~ Rufin. *hist. monac.* 9, 7, 2 (Schulz-Flügel): «et cum haec nobis Copres senior enarraret, unus ex fratribus nostris quasi incredulitate eorum quae dicebantur, taediare coepit et prae taedio dormire. Cumque somno fuisset oppressus, vidit per visum librum aureis litteris scriptum in manibus senis Copretis, ex quo narratio eius deduci videbatur, et adsistentem quendam clarissimi aspectus virum canitie venerandum cum comminatione magna sibi dicentem: cur non audis adtente quae recitantur, sed incredulus dormitas? At ille conturbatus evigilat et statim nobis secretius latino sermone quae viderat enarrabat». Notice that the Latin *secretius* does not have an equivalent in the Greek version of the *Historia monachorum in Aegypto*.

¹⁸ *Paralipomena (seu Ascetica) de SS. Pachomio et Theodoro* 27 (154-155 Halkin; the *Paralipomena* are called *Vita Tertia* in this edition). On this episode see S. Torallas Tovar, *Linguistic Identity in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, in Papaconstantinou, *The Multilingual Experience* cit., pp. 17-43, esp. 37-38 and Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 105; in both these studies the passage is quoted according to *Le corpus athénien de Saint Pachôme, avec une traduction française*, ed. F. Halkin, Geneva 1982, p. 89, where the episode Περὶ τοῦ Ὁωμαίου is given according to a different *recensio* transmitting it in a mutilated way.

reached Pachomius to confess, but he did not accept making his confession via a translator. Thus, after having prayed for three hours, a brief letter on papyrus fell upon Pachomius from Heaven. Pachomius attentively read that letter, and he learnt all the languages. So, he approached the Roman and started talking to him, speaking Greek and Latin accurately¹⁹. The miraculous acquisition of all the languages by Pachomius sounds like an anecdote, but some details highlight aspects of the linguistic reality of that time. The Roman would have perfectly understood both Greek and Latin, and the question remains whether speaking other languages than the local Egyptian ones was a necessity within the Eastern monastic environment, if only to indulge the important flow of pilgrims.

2. *The Trilingual Theon*

If compared to the more common Greek-Coptic bilingualism²⁰, trilingualism among monks like a certain – and «holy» –

¹⁹ *Paralipomena (seu Ascetica) de SS. Pachomio et Theodoro* 27 (155, 12-16 Halkin): «ἐπὶ ὥρας τρεῖς προσευχομένου αὐτοῦ καὶ πολλὰ παρακαλοῦντος τὸν Θεὸν περὶ τούτου, ἄφνω ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατεπέμφθη ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ τῇ δεξιᾷ ὡς ἐπιστόλιον χάρτινον γεγραμμένον καὶ ἀναγνούς αὐτὸ ἔμαθεν πασῶν τῶν γλωσσῶν τὰς λαλιάς ... καὶ ἤρξατο αὐτῷ διαλέγεσθαι καὶ Ἑλληνιστὶ καὶ Ῥωμαῖστὶ ἀπταιστώως, ὥστε τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἀκούσαντα λέγειν περὶ τοῦ μεγάλου ὅτι πάντας ὑπερβάλλει τοὺς σχολαστικούς εἰς τὴν διάλεκτον».

²⁰ An exhaustive analysis on Greek-Coptic bilingualism is found in S.J. Clackson, *Coptic or Greek? Bilingualism in the Papyri*, in Papaconstantinou, *The Multilingual Experience* cit., pp. 73-104 and in many contributions collected in Papaconstantinou, *The Multilingual Experience* cit. The theme of Greek-Coptic bilingualism is very fertile and it has been particularly explored in recent years, especially thanks to the acquisitions due to papyrology and to the discovery of several and famous Greek-Coptic archives, such as that linked to the name of Dioscorus of Aphrodito. On

Theon undoubtedly was both exceptional and necessary to assure that pilgrims from the Latin-speaking West (and Latin-speaking themselves) could also be instructed during their itineraries in the East.

There is an epistolary collection, though it is fragmentary, which bears the name of Theon. It comes from late antique Oxyrhynchus. It is possible that Theon, the sender of these three letters, was the famous ἅγιος / *sanctus* Theon of the *History of the Monks*. The famous Theon lived in the vicinity of Oxyrhynchus between the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th century AD; he lived like an anchorite in a small cell and remained silent for thirty years, only using tablets to answer the questions foreign people put to him. If the Theon who sent these letters is the famous Theon, he would have been familiar with Greek, with Latin, and with the Egyptian autochthonous language²¹.

Theon's knowledge of Greek, Latin and Egyptian must have seemed something exceptional to the Palestinian monks, and would likely have been attributed to divine grace. In Rufinus' version of the *History* there is a different relationship among the three languages, with Latin coming up beside Egyptian and Greek and with trilingualism interpreted as a completely human competence²².

the reasons for translating into Coptic see A. Camplani, *Sulla multifunzionalità del tradurre in copto: note sparse su frammenti copti tardoantichi, Cicerone e moderne ipotesi di ricerca*, in Crevatin, *Egitto crocevia* cit., pp. 101-144, with rich bibliography.

²¹ Theon is the subject of the entire sixth chapter of the *History of Monks*. As for the identification of Theon, the sender of the three aforementioned epistles, and the Theon of the *History of Monks*, see L.H. Blumell, *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus*, Leiden 2012, pp. 216-217, with bibliographical references. On Theon's letters see the detailed contribution by Pezzella below.

²² See *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* 6, 3 (Festugière): «πεπαίδευτο δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ τριπλῇ τῶν διαλέξεων χάριτι ἐν τε Ἑλληνικοῖς καὶ Ῥωμαϊκοῖς καὶ

Two of the three of Theon's letters are structured in such a way that the main text in Greek – thus, the main topic discussed in the letter, always supported by scriptural quotes – is put between opening and closing lines in Latin²³. The opening lines consist of an apparently formulaic phrase which is like a maxim on the divine will which lies behind human mortality. The closing lines consist of final greetings (in one case) and of the address, which is also expressed in a very unusual (and otherwise unknown) manner²⁴.

Αἰγυπτιακοῖς ἀναγνώσμασιν, καθὼς καὶ παρὰ πολλῶν καὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐκείνου ἐμάθομεν» ~ Rufin. *hist. monac.* 6, 7 (Schulz-Flügel): «erat autem supradictus vir eruditus non solum Aegyptiorum et Graecorum lingua, sed etiam Latinorum, ut et ab ipso et ab his, qui ei aderant, didicimus». On these lines see also Cain, *The Greek Historia* cit., p. 12; and Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 103.

²³ The following three texts belong to Theon's epistolary: *P.Köln* IV 200 (*C.Epist.Lat.* 244 bis; *ChLA* XLVII 1455; L.H. Blumell, T.A. Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus. Texts, Documents, and Sources*, Waco 2015, pp. 594-596 n. 158); *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 (CPL 270; *C.Epist.Lat.* 243; *ChLA* XLVII 1410; Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., pp. 585-589 n. 156); *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 (CPL 271; *C.Epist.Lat.* 244; *ChLA* XLVII 1411; Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., pp. 589-593 n. 157). Although initially dated between the 5th and the 6th century AD, the dating of the three letters has been more recently fixed to the end of 4th century AD for both palaeographic and strictly textual reasons, but also because of the possible identity of the Theon of these letters and the Theon of the *History of the Monks in Egypt*. See L.H. Blumell, *Reconsidering the Dates of Three Christian Letters: P. Oxy. XVIII 2193, 2194, P. Köln IV 200 and a Reference in the Historia monachorum in Aegypto*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 54 (2008), pp. 219-223, and Id., *Lettered Christians* cit., pp. 212-217, with an analysis of these letters. It is worth underlining that the ductus of the Greek script is very influenced by that of the Latin script, with some peculiar cases of character-switching; see Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 586, with bibliography.

²⁴ *P.Köln* IV 200 l. 10: «vale apud deum»; v: «[r]edde serbo dei te[m]pore Apphuti»; *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 v: «redde Pascenti serbo dei tempore»; XVIII 2194 v: «ser-

Two letters are addressed to the same recipient called Pascentius. In one case the letter asks for justice in favour of one woman and her son who had been victims of an offensive act (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193); in another case the letter defends a veteran called Paul who had been damaged by a ship (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194). These kinds of request would imply that the otherwise unknown Pascentius would have had an administrative or legal authority. In both cases, Theon quotes scriptural passages in Greek – from the Book of Job (36:19a) and from the Ecclesiastes (12:2) – chosen according to the context, and in both cases in order to put some Biblical *exempla* under the eyes of his addressee Pascentius. A quotation from Genesis (48:16a) supports the request addressed to someone whose name is not extant in the third letter but who shows affection towards a certain Aphous, a man who was suffering some difficulties. This Aphous has been identified with one of the bishops of Oxyrhynchus²⁵.

bo dei tempore Pascentio». A different interpretation is found in P.J. Sijpesteijn, *Apphus and Pascentius: servo dei tempore*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 40.1 (1994), pp. 69-70; J. O'Callaghan, *Nota sobre 'servus Dei' en los papiros*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 106 (1995), pp. 201-202 and Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., p. 214. The letter known from *P.Köln* IV 200 is lacking the initial section, which has fallen into the lacuna, and it cannot be stated with certainty whether the same opening lines of the two other letters could have been found here, with an admonition to Pascentius. This letter is addressed to a certain Aphous – a name of Egyptian origin, on which see Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 411 – and it is characterised by an encouraging and affectionate tone. It has even been thought that Theon and Aphous would have been linked by a very strict relationship (*Ibid.*, p. 596). This Aphous cannot be identified with the otherwise unknown Aphous, son of Theon, known from another letter from a Christian milieu of Oxyrhynchus, dating after 16 February AD 295 (*P.Oxy.* I 143 v: *Ibid.*, pp. 408-411 n. 113), and from another Oxyrhynchus document dating to AD 322 (*P.Oxy.* LXI 4125 ll. 5, 14).

²⁵ See Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., p. 217.

The opening is of a formulaic kind, and it is repeated in both a *minor* and in a *maior* version in two of the three letters²⁶. The similarity between what Theon wrote and the answer the Alexandrian Apollonius gave to the governor Perennius (perhaps Tigridius Perennius, praetorian prefect in Rome between AD 180 and 185) – who had ordered his arrest and imposed a court summons – is both flooring and undeniable²⁷. It especially offers clues to the quality of

²⁶ P.Oxy. XVIII 2193 ll. 1-3: «*una mortis condidit | deus lues autem com | m[or]tis fieri*». In the *editio princeps* the possibility was presented that these lines could contain a quote from the *proverbia Salomonis* (2:23-24: «*quoniam Deus creavit hominem inexterminabilem et ad imaginem similitudinis suae fecit illum: invidia autem diaboli mors introivit in illum*»); see P.Oxy. XVIII, p. 154. But it is evident that, although similar in content, Theon's letter does not bear a quotation from the Latin version of the sayings of Salomon (or at least the version known from the *Vetus*). For a different interpretation see L.H. Blumell, *A Potential Source for the Latin Preface in P.Oxy. XVIII 2194*, «*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*», 183 (2012), pp. 72-74 and Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., pp. 587-588. Compare also the expanded version known from P.Oxy. XVIII 2194 ll. 1-5: «*[- - -] [- - -] - -]os et probatos et inperato-|-rum et Senatorum et maximo disserto et pauperos una mortis condidit deus lues autem com mortis fieri*», on which *Ibid.*, pp. 592-593. It has already been observed that the possible Latin opening lines of P.Köln IV 200 are not extant.

²⁷ The analogy with Apollonius' martyrology is observed for the first time in Blumell, *A Potential Source* cit. See *A. Apoll.* 25: «*γινώσκειν δέ σε θέλω, Περέννιε, ὅτι καὶ ἐπὶ βασιλεῖς καὶ ἐπὶ συγκλητικούς καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔχοντας ἐξουσίαν πολλήν καὶ ἐπὶ πλουσίους καὶ πτωχοὺς καὶ ἑλευθέρους καὶ δούλους καὶ μεγάλους καὶ μικροὺς καὶ σοφοὺς καὶ ἰδιώτας ἓνα θάνατον ὥρισεν ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ πάντων καὶ δίκην μετὰ θάνατον ἔσεσθαι ἐπὶ πάντας ἀνθρώπους*». On the *Acta Apollonii* see *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, ed. H.A. Musurillo, Oxford 2000², pp. xxiii-xxv. On differences between the Greek martyrology and the narration of the martyrdom of the senator Apollonius in Rome in Euseb. *hist.* 5, 21, 1-5 see R.M. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, Oxford 1980, pp. 119-121; T.D. Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History*, Tübingen 2010, pp.

Theon's Latin and of his possible composition-strategy. The Latin of Theon is all but perfect, and it clearly emerges from the efforts made by editors to correct the text of his letters²⁸. Apollonius' «ἐνα θάνατον ὥρισεν ὁ θεός» «God determined one death only» becomes Theon's «*una mortis condidit deus*»: the arrangement of words is the same, and *una mortis* might be a clunky translation instead of *unam mortem*²⁹, while *condo* correctly translates ὀρίζω in its meaning of «to

46-47. Most of Eusebius's narration is his own creation with the exception of the names of Apollonius himself and of the judge Perennius. Eusebius' narration is also useful for a dating of the *Acta* to the 2nd century AD (see C. Erbes, *Das Todesjahr des römischen Märtyrers Apollonius*, «Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche», 13 (1912), pp. 269-279), but it is worth underlining that Eusebius' narrations on martyrdoms are based on a previous collection of martyrologies (*hist.* 4, 15, 46, 48) and rich in material from Tertullian (Grant, *Eusebius* cit., pp. 120-121). Eusebius states that he wrote his narration of Apollonius' martyrdom with a report on ancient martyrdoms as a model (*hist.* 5, 21, 5). Such a report is unknown to us, and it might be either linked to the *Acta* of which only an Armenian *recensio* (usually likened to Eusebius' narration) and a Greek one are known, or to one of their sources. On the composition-technique of Eusebius and on his work see M. Verdoner, *Narrated Reality. The Historia Ecclesiastica of Eusebius of Caesarea*, Frankfurt am Main 2011 and S. Morlet, L. Perrone, *Histoire Ecclésiastique. Commentaire - Tome I*, Paris 2012, with an in-depth analysis of the textual tradition of all the extant versions, including the Latin one by Rufinus; see *Ibid.*, pp. 243-266.

²⁸ See Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., pp. 592-593, where the formula is translated as follows: «God ordained one death, in the moment of death they dissolve» (pp. 587; 591). Editorial corrections are usually mere conjectures and they never moved from the only kind of bilingual tools which might have supported Theon in his work, namely the bilingual Latin-Greek or Greek-Latin glossaries, be they lexicons, *idiomata* or *hermeneumata*.

²⁹ *Una* in place of *unam* can be explained either with the loss of *-m* (which is common in this age) or with the levelling of the Latin ending

determine»³⁰. The second half of Theon's *sententia* is more imperfect having its illustrious model in mind. «*Lues autem com mortis fieri*» translates «καὶ δίκην μετὰ θάνατον ἔσεσθαι» «and that a sentence will take place after death»: differently from καί, *autem* has an adversative meaning³¹, while μετὰ θάνατον would have been translated with *com mortis* (with a vocalic alteration and an incorrect ending in place of *cum morte*); *fieri* and ἔσεσθαι mostly overlap³². The apparently inexplicable *lues* – which would translate the Greek δίκη – might have a more complex origin, and nothing prevents the hypothesis that Theon incorrectly copied a word from the glossary he might have used for his 'literary creation' and perhaps copied *lues* instead of a more plausible *poenam*³³.

on the original Greek one. As for *mortis*, a genitive in place of the accusative, it can be explained as an error in the nominal declension or due to a misleading belief that it was an indeclinable noun.

³⁰ The Greek ὀρίζω is mainly translated as *constituo* (CgL II 113, 13; 460, 61), and *constituo* is found as a synonym of *condo* – see for instance the attestations in monolingual lexicons: CgL IV 40, 30; 321, 47; 435, 10; 496, 20–21.

³¹ There are no occurrences of καί ~ *autem* in the CgL. One might suppose that the adversative nuance was due to Theon's willingness to..., or perhaps Theon already found it in his model, or perhaps Theon even wrongly copied *autem* instead of *aut* (see CgL II 27, 35) or instead of *et* from his reference glossary.

³² *Fio* usually translates γίνομαι; see e.g., CgL II 263, 20; III 74, 17–18; 132, 27–29; 406, 30–32. There is a difference in terms of tense, as the Greek future corresponds here to the Latin present infinitive.

³³ As it stands, *lues* shall be the accusative plural subject of the infinitive. In Greek, *lues* is intended as φθορά (CgL II 150, 4; 471, 12) or λοιμός (II 150, 4; 362, 28). The idea of *luere* is often found together with a *poena* – see CgL V 114, 15 («*luentes poenas persolventes*»); II 469, 16 («*luet poenam ὑφέξει δίκην*»); IV 256, 13 («*luís persolvís poenas*»); 415, 23 («*luetis poenas persoluitis*») – and *poena* is identified with the δίκη (CgL II 152, 41; III 276, 49). Thus, one might hypothesise that the possible reference glossary Theon

If so, «*una mortis condidit deus lues autem com mortis fieri*» could be an imperfect adaptation by Theon moving from something which might have sounded like *unam mortem condidit deus poenam autem cum morte fieri* «God determined that there is one death and that the sentence will come together with the death itself» in a ‘depurated Latin’, which might have mirrored the answer given by the wise Apollonius to the governor Perennius. Apollonius was famous among observant people for his education and his philosophical erudition³⁴. His maxims (*sententiae*) and even the *Acta* of his martyrdom might have circulated widely within a peculiar religious and cultural milieu. The words he pronounces might have had different origins which will remain obscure to us and of which Theon’s formula might be a deformed result. Nonetheless, Theon sets his (or indirectly his) *sententia* and makes it an important structural element of his letters, which is even more significant because – especially if it came from the court summons involving the martyr Apollonius – it would sound as a warning to the addressee of his letters. Such an addressee had a decisive power in judging the cases Theon was defending. In sum, Pascentius would have been warned by Theon in the same way Apollonius would previously have warned Perennius. A warning in Latin can be explained by having the Roman Pascentius in mind³⁵, and this warning clearly has a symbolic value. Before writing the proper message in his own language, Theon addresses himself to the person who has charge of the judgment of a peculiar issue, and he does that using the language of law, on one side, and a sententious tone proper to an authoritative

was using might have had the two forms as a couple, with the noun and the verb with the same root (*lues poenam* or *poenam lues*), and that, when translating, there was something like a ‘short circuit’ which might have led to the wrong choice of word.

³⁴ Euseb. *hist.* 5, 21, 2.

³⁵ On the Roman name *Pascentius* see Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 588.

character, on the other side. An open question remains whether or not Pascentius understood Theon's Latin maxim. The only certainty is that the clunky and very humble Latin maxim of Theon is recognised as coming from an authority which made it become formulaic in correspondence of this character.

The Latin of Theon could have had as its point of departure the well-known tools proper to contexts where Latin was learnt as a foreign language. Theon's unhappy Latin seems to have had an original Greek phrase as a reference point, and such a work of translation might have been supported by a bilingual Latin-Greek glossary³⁶. Theon will have known this kind of tool also for another reason. In fact, one finds in his letters a singular sign, made up of two oblique parallel strokes; this sign is found to separate Latin from Greek (and vice versa) in some bilingual glossaries such as the (Christian) one known from the so-called 'Dishna Papers'³⁷.

3. *Vestiges of an Educational Route: Readings and Tools for Learning Latin*

If the 'Dishna papers' and the Nag Hammadi codices were to be connected as disjointed sections belonging to the same monastic library, it would be worth further reflecting on the role Latin played within the multilingual context of the Pachomian order in the area of Pbow, Upper Egypt, and assuming that Latin had to circulate there at least for learning purposes³⁸. The case of the miscellaneous codex

³⁶ On these kinds of tools see *Artes grammaticae in frammenti: i testi grammaticali latini e bilingui greco-latini su papiro. Edizione commentata*, ed. M.C. Scappaticcio, Berlin 2015, pp. 39-49, with bibliography.

³⁷ On this peculiar sign see S. Ammirati, *Sul libro latino antico. Ricerche bibliografiche e paleografiche*, Pisa - Roma 2015, p. 59.

³⁸ Since a lot of the twelve papyrus codices mainly transmitting Christian texts in Coptic (but also in Sahidic and Subacmimic, dialectic variants of Coptic) was discovered in Jabal al-Tarif in 1945, the Nag Hammady Li-

at the Montserrat Abbey is famous³⁹. Pagan and Christian themes

brary became the subject of several important works. See e.g., the state-of-the-art in *Nag Hammadi à 70 ans. Qu'avons nous appris? / Nag Hammadi at 70: What have we learned?* Colloque international, Québec, Université Laval, 29-31 mai 2015, cur. E. Crégheur, L. Painchaud, T. Rasimus, Leuven - Paris - Bristol 2019, with an exhaustive bibliography. See also the reference work of J.M. Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Story. Voll. I-II*, Leiden - Boston 2014. As for the so-called 'Dishna Papers' – both papyrus and parchment fragments split among several collections among which is the Bodmer one in Geneva –, which are supposed to come from Jabal Abu Mana, see Id., *The Story of the Bodmer Papyri. From the First Monastery's Library in Upper Egypt to Geneva and Dublin*, Cambridge 2013. Within the 'Dishna Papers' one finds texts in Greek, Latin, Coptic, Sahidic, Boharic, Proto-Madaic, Subacmimic and even a peculiar dialect called *P* (or 'Proto-Theban', in *P. Bodmer VI*). Jabal al-Tarif is very near to the monastery known as *Chenoboskion* and Jabal Abu Mana is near to Tabennesis, where Pachomius founded the first monastery. Both Jabal al-Tarif and Tabennesis are in the area of Pbow. There is a huge quantity of works on the possible contexts of production and circulation of these texts; see e.g., the whole n. 21 of the review «Adamantius» on *I Papiri Bormer. Biblioteche, comunità di asceti e cultura letteraria in greco, copto e latino nell'Egitto tardo-antico*, collecting several contributions among which G. Agosti, *La poesia greca nella Biblioteca Bodmer: aspetti letterari e socioculturali*, «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 86-97; A. Camplani, *Per un profilo storico-religioso degli ambienti di produzione e fruizione dei Papiri Bodmer: contaminazione dei linguaggi e dialettica delle idee nel contesto del dibattito su dualismo e origenismo*, «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 98-135 and J.-L. Fournet, *Anatomie d'une bibliothèque de l'Antiquité tardive: l'inventaire, la facies et la provenance de la 'Bibliothèque Bodmer'*, «Adamantius», 21 (2015), pp. 8-40 deserve to be mentioned. On this topic see also B. Nongbri, *God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts*, New Haven 2018, pp. 157-215. The hypothesis of a common provenance and of a common ownership by a Pachomian library is strengthened in H. Lundhaug, *The Dishna Papers and the Nag Hammadi Codices: The Remains of a Single Monastic Library?*, in *The Nag Hammadi Codices and Late Antique Egypt*, cur. Id., Tübingen 2018, pp. 329-386, with an updated bibliography. See also Buzi, *Egypt, Crossroad* cit., pp. 24-30.

³⁹ Durham (NC), Duke University, P. 798 + Montserrat, Abadia,

– both in the Greek and Latin language – are flanked and they are found together within the manuscript, where a huge portion of Cicero's *Catilinarians* is followed by a responsorial psalm, by a drawing of a mythological nature (perhaps Hercules against Ornis, or Perseus against the sea-monster), by prayers (in Greek), by the well-known hexametric poem on the myth of Alcestis, by a prose folktale on the emperor Hadrian, and finally by a list of words from a commentary to a stenographic manual (in Greek). It is a 'working copy', and the texts in Latin (with the only exception of the psalm) are all characterised by a plausible educational destination. In fact, Cicero is one of the four authors who made up the educational *quadriga* of the grammarian Arusianus Messius; the *Alcestis* is a mythological composition destined for performance and with the remarkable presence of Virgilian material⁴⁰; and the *Hadrianus* is a peculiar biographic and fictional tale about the emperor made up of travels and maxims⁴¹.

Roca 126-178 + Roca 292 + Roca 338 (P.Duke inv. 798 + P.Monts.Roca inv. 129-149: *CLa* XI 1650 + *Suppl.* 1782; LDAB 552; MP³ 2921.1 + 2916.41 + 2998.1 + 2752.1 + 2998.1). The dating to the 4th century AD is supported by Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., pp. 57-58, with bibliography.

⁴⁰ On the so-called *Alcestis Barcinonensis* see the following editions *Alcestis Barcinonensis. Text and Commentary*, ed. M. Marcovich, Leiden 1988 and Anonimo. *L'Alceste di Barcellona. Introduzione, testo, traduzione e commento*, ed. L. Nosarti, Bologna 1992; see also *L'Alceste de Barcelone* (P.Monts.Roca inv. 158-161). *Édition, traduction et analyse contextuelle d'un poème latin conservé sur papyrus*, ed. G. Nocchi Macedo, Liège 2014, with bibliographical updates. In Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 58 footnote 10 the composition on Alcestis in the *Anthologia Latina* is drawn as a parallel for the poem known from the Montserrat codex.

⁴¹ The *editio princeps* of the *Hadrianus* is recent; see Hadrianus. *P.Monts. Roca III*, edd. J. Gil, S. Torallas Tovar, Barcelona 2010. The text was edited again in recent times in G. Ammannati, *L'Hadrianus del P.Monts.Roca III*, «Materiali e Discussioni», 81 (2018), pp. 221-240 and *L'Hadrianus de Montserrat* (P.Monts.Roca III, inv. 162 - 165). *Édition, traduction et analyse contextuelle d'un récit latin conservé sur papyrus*, ed. T. Berg, Liège 2018.

In addition, that which remains of Latin from another codex – like a ‘twin codex’ for the Monserrat one –, Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1499, can be reconnected to an educational destination. In this codex there is a Greek grammar, but also a Greek-Latin glossary made up of miscellaneous material from the Pauline epistles, from the *Vulgata* and from the *Vetus*, and the glossary is followed by a Latin alphabet⁴². Whether this singular glossary circulated in a context where Coptic was practised can be reconstructed by having the possible library to which it belonged in mind. Moreover, its having been destined for someone familiar with Greek and learning Latin can suggest that it was created for someone who already knew Greek – which was a necessary condition for those who entered the monasteries in Egypt.

Among the bilingual glossaries of Eastern circulation (and provenance), the only one which seems to have been created with a Coptophone readership in mind is the peculiar trilingual Latin-Greek-Coptic *colloquium*⁴³. It has recently been supposed that the Latin of this

⁴² Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1499 (P.Chester Beatty inv. Ac. 1499: *CLA Suppl.* 1683; LDAB 3030; MP³ 2161.1). On this codex see Wouters, *Chester Beatty Codex*. The glossary has been recently studied again by E. Dickey, *A Re-Examination of New Testament Papyrus P99 (Vetus Latina AN glo Paul)*, «New Testament Studies», 65 (2019), pp. 103-121, with new interpretations; Dickey will publish the new edition of this glossary for the *CLTP*.

⁴³ Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, Papyrussammlung, P. 10582 (P.Berol. inv. 10582: *CPL* 281; LDAB 6075; MP³ 3009). See Ead., *How Coptic Speakers Learned Latin? A Reconsideration of P.Berol. Inv. 10582*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 193 (2015), pp. 65-77, and *The Colloquia of the Hermeneumata Pseudo-Dositheana. Vol. II: Colloquium Harleianum, Colloquium Montepessulanum, Colloquium Celtis, and Fragments. Edited with Translations and Commentary*, ed. Ead., Cambridge 2015, pp. 270-279. This fragment has a very complex tradition: an original bilingual Latin-Greek *colloquium* seems to have been adapted to a renewed need with the later addition of a Coptic section and with the subsequent transliteration of Latin in Greek script.

glossary is like a relic of a more ancient and original Latin-Greek version of the *colloquium* – with Latin in Latin script and Greek in Greek script – and that it was later modified because of the necessity of creating a Greek-Coptic *colloquium* addressed to Coptic-speakers learning Greek. The presence of Latin there would have been no more than symbolic⁴⁴. Moreover, Coptic there translates Greek more than Latin. This certainly is a possibility, but one might wonder why the Latin section was not excluded, which would have been more economical. Another possibility is to recognise in such a trilingual *colloquium* the best solution for an educational tool addressed to an, albeit circumscribed, public made up of trilingual people like the Theon known from the *History of the Monks*. (The only difference would be that this Theon had both a spoken and a written knowledge of Latin, while the reader of the trilingual *colloquium* would have learned only spoken Latin, like the trilingual monks surrounding Abba Apollonius and assuring him the service of translators. In fact, the *colloquium* has Latin and Greek in Greek script, and Coptic in Coptic script.)

If it was addressed to a readership who knew Coptic and needed to approach Latin and / or Greek, this trilingual *colloquium* could open a new window (1) on the forms in which Latin was taught (and learnt) in Egyptian milieux where Coptic literature circulated and (2) on the possible education of those autochthonous monks who knew Latin (about whom we know from literary sources). Another example is offered by Kellis, in Egypt's Eastern Desert, where Latin is known to have been practised in such a Manichaean environment and where a certain Macharius, in a letter where he also talked about his sons, stated that one of them, Pienes, could travel together with the «great Master» to learn Latin⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ See Ead., *How Coptic Speakers* cit.

⁴⁵ *P.Kellis* V 20 ll. 24-26, on which see *P.Kellis* V, pp. 75-76; 170.

4. *Readers, Readings, Schools, Authors*

A tool like the aforementioned trilingual *colloquium* might have been also of help for Latin-speakers like the one for whom the translation into Latin of the Pachomian rule by Jerome was necessary.

The presence of Romans in the Egyptian monasteries is known from more than a Pachomian life where one reads how some of them were hosted in a house directed by Theodore of Alexandria. This house became the point of reference for all the foreign people arriving in Egypt and approaching the Pachomian order, since they were ignorant of the Egyptian language⁴⁶. In contexts of this kind, similar to Theodore's house, one can imagine something like linguistic 'islands' where Latin was practised by Roman native-speakers and perhaps by those translators transmitting Pachomius' precepts to them. The various lives do not make it clear how strangers could understand local languages, and it is unclear whether these precepts were issued in Greek or in Latin.

⁴⁶ See e.g., what arises from one of the lives in Coptic (known as *Bo*) according to the translation in *Les vies coptes de saint Pachôme et de ses premiers successeurs*, ed. L.-T. Lefort, Louvain 1943: «la renommée de notre père Pachôme et celle de sa charité arrivait chez chacun, si bien qu'on entendait son nom à l'étranger et chez les Romains, et qu'on venait se faire moine auprès de lui» (*Bo* 89; 151, 24-27 Lefort); «voici quelles furent, dans sa maison (*scil.* of Theodorus), les prémices de la fructification: [...] parmi les romains il y avait Firmus, Romulus et Domnius l'arménien» (*Bo* 91; 156, 8-11 Lefort). See also the life known as *G*¹: «καὶ οὕτως εὐρήσομεν ἦν Θεόδωρος, ὅτε ἐξηγείτο τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς Παχούμιος, διὰ τοὺς μὴ ἀκούοντας αἰγυπτιστί. Καὶ ἐποίησεν ἰγ' ἔτη οἰκιακός, πρὸ τοῦ τελευτῆσαι τὸν μακάριον Παχούμιον. Καὶ τῆς οἰκίας ἀπὸ μὲν Ἀλεξανδρέων πρωτοτόκοι καρποφορίαὶ οἶδε εἰσὶν. Αὐσόνιος ὁ μέγας καὶ Αὐσόνιος, καὶ παιδίον Νεών ὀνόματι· καὶ Ῥωμαίων θεοφόροι. Φίρμιος καὶ Ῥώμυλλος καὶ Δομνῖνος Ἀρμένιος καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ ἄγιοι» (*G*¹ 95; 64, 3-11 Halkin).

The origin of the translation into Latin of the Pachomian precepts by Jerome is linked to a context of this kind. Jerome lived for years in the Eastern empire, he spent many years of his life familiarising himself with Egyptian monasticism, and he played a decisive role in making the Pachomian rule arrive and circulate in the Western empire. A certain Sylvan received from Alexandria a copy of Pachomius' precepts and he asked Jerome to make a translation into Latin which would have been destined for the many monks of the Monastery of the Metanoia, in the Delta, given that these monks were Latin-speakers (*plurimi Latinorum*) and were ignorant of the Egyptian autochthonous language(s) and the Greek language⁴⁷. Jerome's Latin translation of the Pachomian rule seems to have been done from a Greek version. Jerome is not explicit on this issue, but in the preface he states that his Latin version tends to reflect the rigour and the conciseness (*simplicitas*) of Coptic and is lacking rhetorical bombast⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ Hier. *Pachom. reg. praef.* 1: «aiebat enim (scil. Silvanus) quod in Thebaidis coenobiis, et in monasterio Metanoiae, quod de Canopo in paenitentiam felici nominis conversione mutatum est, habitarent plurimi latinorum qui ignorarent aegyptiacum graecumque sermonem, quo Pachomii et Theodori et Orsiesii praecepta conscripta sunt», on which see A. De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire du mouvement monastique dans l'antiquité. Vol. 4.1 (Première partie: le monachisme latin)*, Paris 1997, pp. 296-297; Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés* cit., pp. 57-59; Torallas Tovar, *Linguistic Identity* cit., p. 41. Nonetheless it does not seem to be plausible that they did not know the Egyptian language(s). Boon's edition of the *Pachomiana Latina* is the reference one. On the Pachomian works of Jerome see in general De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire* cit., pp. 295-405, with bibliography. On the Monastery of the Metanoia, in Kanopos near Alexandria, see P. Barisson, *Ricerche sui monasteri dell'Egitto bizantino ed arabo secondo i documenti dei papiri greci*, «Aegyptus», 18 (1938), pp. 29-148, with a reference to Jerome's aforementioned preface.

⁴⁸ Hier. *reg. Pachom. praef.* 9: «aiunt autem Thebaei quod Pachomio Cornelioque et Syro, qui usque hodie ultra centum et decem annos vivere dicitur, angelus linguae mysticae scientiam dederit, ut scriberent sibi et loquerentur per alphabetum spi-

A knowledge of the Coptic language, albeit embryonic and limited to technical terms, arises from a letter Jerome wrote once he came back to Rome after his Eastern ‘parenthesis’, namely the letter addressed to Eustochium. Eustochium was preparing to enter a monastic community of virgins. While writing to the daughter of her benefactress Paula, Jerome described to her the three *genera* of monks in Egypt, but, while for the cenobites he also gives the (local) name of *saubes*, he only knows the original *remnuoth* for this *genus*, with *remnuoth* being a transliteration from the Coptic original⁴⁹.

There is something more. Jerome’s fundamentalism is clear from some letters he wrote once back in Rome. This fundamentalism forced him to convert his Ciceronian nature (*Ciceronianus*) into a Christian one (*Christianus*)⁵⁰. Nonetheless, his school in Bethlehem

ritale, signis quibusdam et symbolis absconditos sensus involventes; quas nos epistulas ita ut apud Aegyptios Graecosque leguntur in nostram linguam vertimus: eadem ut repperimus elementa ponentes, et quod simplicitatem Aegyptii sermonis imitati sumus interpretationis fides est, ne viros apostolicos et totos gratiae spiritalis sermo rhetoricus immutaret», on which see De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire* cit., pp. 321-323.

⁴⁹ Hier. *epist.* 22, 34 (to Eustochium): «*tria sunt in Aegypto genera monachorum: coenobium quod illi saubes gentili lingua vocant, nos ‘in commune viventes’ possumus appellare; anachoretæ, qui soli habitant per deserta et ab eo quod procul ab hominibus recesserint nuncupantur; tertium genus est, quod dicunt remnuoth, deterimum atque neglectum, et quod in nostra provincia aut solum aut primum est*», on which see Torallas Tovar, *Linguistic Identity* cit., p. 38; Y.-M. Duval, P. Laurence, *Jérôme. La Lettre 22 à Eustochium: de virginitate servanda*, Bégrolles en Mauges 2011, p. 265.

⁵⁰ Hier. *epist.* 22, 29 (to Eustochium): «*quæ enim communicatio luci ad tenebras? qui consensus Christo et Belial? quid facit cum psalterio Horatius? cum evangeliiis Maro? cum apostolo Cicero? nonne scandalizatur frater, si te viderit in idolo recumbentem? et licet ‘omnia munda mundis et nihil reiциendum sit, quod cum gratiarum actione percipitur’*, tamen simul bibere non debemus calicem Christi et calicem daemoniorum». A negative example of morally corrupted women is put under the eyes of Eustochium. The narration of Jerome’s conversion

was a fortunate centre stimulating the library circulation of pagan authors. Jerome asked the scribes of his circle to copy the dialogues of Cicero, and Virgil was one of the first readings he submitted to his disciples⁵¹. Virgilian codices are known from Christian milieux of late antique Palestine, such as the two *Aeneids* – one only in Latin

follows. When he left Rome to go into Palestine, Jerome long regretted not having with him some volumes of his pagan library, such as those of Cicero and Plautus, but being accused of his Ciceronian nature in place of a Christian one (*Ciceronianus es, non Christianus*) made him leave pagan authors and only read Holy Scripture (*epist.* 22, 30). This episode is famous. See Duval, Laurence, *Jérôme. La Lettre 22*, pp. 244–251. See also Hier. *epist.* 21, 13 (to Damasus): «*alioquin quale erit, ut aestimemus apostolum eius qui vescebatur in idolio scientiam conprobasse, et eum dixisse perfectum quem sciret de idolothytis manducare? Absit, ut de ore Christiano sonet 'Iuppiter omnipotens' et 'mehercule' et 'mecastor', et cetera magis portenta quam numina. Ac nunc etiam sacerdotes Dei omissis evangeliis et prophetis videmus comoedias legere, amatoria bucolicorum versuum verba cantare, tenere Vergilium, et id quod in pueris necessitatis est crimen in se facere voluntatis*». These passages are important for showing how Christian and pagan authors could live together in both late antique West and East, which is an abundantly discussed topic.

⁵¹ Rufin. *apol.* 2, 11: «*alioquin, si inficias eat, etiam testes quamplurimos fratrum habere possum, qui in meis cellulis manentes, in monte Oliveti, quamplurimos ei Ciceronis dialogos descripserunt, quorum ego et quaterniones, cum scriberent, frequenter in manibus tenui et relegi, et quod mercedes multo largiores, quam pro aliis scripturis solent, ab isto eis darentur agnovi. Mihi quoque ipsi aliquando, cum de Bethleem Ierosolymam venisset et codicem se cum detulisset, in quo erat unus dialogus Ciceronis et idem ipse Graecus Platonis, quod dederit ipsum codicem et aliquandiu fuerit apud me, nullo genere negare potest. Sed quid immoror tandiu in re quae luce est clarior? Cum ad haec omnia quae supra diximus, etiam illud addatur, ubi cesset omne commentum, quod in monasterio positus in Bethleem, ante non multum adhuc temporis partes grammaticas executus sit, et Maronem suum comicosque ac lyricos et historicos auctores traditis sibi ad discendum dei timorem puerulis exponebat, scilicet ut et praeceptor fieret auctorum gentilium, quos si legisset tantummodo, Christum se iuraverat negaturum*».

and one bilingual Latin-Greek – from the Church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus in Nessana, and precisely from its *genizeh* where a small library for the monastic school of the Church stood⁵².

Jerome issued his disciples, his *pueruli*, with rudiments of grammar, on one side, and (Latin) epics, theatre, poetry and historiography, on the other side. Whether Jerome's *pueruli* were Latin-speaking Romans or Greek-speaking Palestinians is unclear from Rufinus' description of Jerome's school in his *Apologia*. Moreover, if we know – as we do know – that Jerome asked his scribes to copy Cicero's dialogues, one can legitimately wonder what the aforementioned Cassian's Simeon used to copy. Egyptian scriptoria produced both pagan and Christian books, such as the parchment codex from Antinoopolis with a Latin-Greek version of an Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians (6, 5-6), of which only a fragment is extant⁵³.

What one knows of the Palestinian school of Jerome – with Cicero and Virgil being the classics at the origin of an educational

⁵² New York (NY), Pierpont Morgan Library, H. Dunscombe Colt Collection, pap. 1 (*P.Ness.* II 1: *CLA* XI 1652; *CPL* 8; LDAB 4166; MP³ 2939) and New York (NY), Pierpont Morgan Library, H. Dunscombe Colt Collection, pap. 2 (*P.Ness.* II 2: *CLA* XI 1653; *CPL* 16; LDAB 4164; MP³ 2945), on which see Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., pp. 63-65, with bibliography.

⁵³ Cairo, Egyptian Museum, SR 3796 25/1/55/2 (21) (*PSI* XIII 1306: *CLA Suppl.* 1694; *CPL* 51; LDAB 3204), on which see Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 78 and the new annotated edition by M. Fressura, *PSI XIII 1306: note codicologiche e paleografiche*, in *Spazio scritto e spazio non scritto nel libro papiroaceo. Esperienze a confronto*. Atti della Seconda Tavola Rotonda del Centro di Studi Papirologici dell'Università del Salento (Lecce, 9 ottobre 2014), cur. N. Pellé, Lecce 2017, pp. 77-128. Papyri transmitting Christian literary texts are collected by J. van Haelst, *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires juifs et chrétiens*, Paris 1976, pp. 363-373 nn. 1202-1226. Only circa ten of these are of archaeological provenance, and they (plus an unpublished one) will be newly edited by H.A.G. Houghton and C.M. Kreinecker in the *CLTP*. On late antique Latin books produced in the Eastern empire see Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., pp. 45-73.

process – reflects a common tendency of the first Christian period, when the classical *paideia* still played a decisive and influential role⁵⁴.

Direct traces from Coptic environments are rare, and they are often linked to the recycling of (parchment?). Fragments from manuscripts of Livy's *Ab urbe condita*⁵⁵ and Seneca's *Medea*⁵⁶ were respec-

⁵⁴ See Buzi, *Egypt, Crossroad* cit., while on the role of *paideia* in the first monastic environments see Agosti, *La poesia greca* cit. See also the contributions collected in *Early Monasticism and Classical Paideia – Studia Patristica vol. LV: Papers Presented at the Sixteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford 2011*, cur. S. Robinson, Leuven - Paris - Walpole 2013, where specific attention is given to the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, and in Gemeinhardt, Van Hoof, Van Nuffelen, *Education and Religion* cit., in *Teachers in Late Antique Christianity*, cur. P. Gemeinhardt, O. Lorgeoux, M.L. Munkholt Christensen, Tübingen 2018, and in Lundhaug, *The Dishna Papers* cit. Important contributions are in *Monastic Education in Late Antiquity*, cur. L.I. Larsen, S. Rubenson, Cambridge 2018, on the monastic education and on the transformations of the classic *paideia*.

⁵⁵ Cairo, Coptic Museum, 15/86, also known as P.Naqlun inv. 15/86 (LDAB 2576; MP³ 2926.01). See the new and richly annotated edition in *Corpus dei papiri storici greci e latini. Parte B. Storici latini Vol. 1: Autori noti- Titus Livius*, ed. R. Funari, Pisa - Roma 2011, pp. 239-258 (3F). The importance of this fragment lies in transmitting a portion of Book 11, only known from the *Periochae*. A palaeographic analysis is found in Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., pp. 80-81. It is a parchment fragment for which a Western (African?) origin was supposed. See also Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés* cit., p. 72, where the possibility that Livy's work might have belonged to the library of Naqlun is introduced.

⁵⁶ Ann Arbor (MI), University of Michigan, University Library, P. 4969 fr. 36 (P.Mich. inv. 4969: LDAB 3907; MP³ 2933.010), on which see D. Markus, G.W. Schwendner, *Seneca's Medea in Egypt (663-704)*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 117 (1997), pp. 73-80 and the palaeographic analysis in Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 61. As for the provenance of this fragment, see M.C. Scappaticcio, *Un testimone, due recensioni e un 'singolare' Typhon. Appunti su un testimone senecano dall'Egitto tardoanti-*

tively found in the bindings of two Coptic manuscripts, one from the Monastery of Deir el-Malak and one from the White Monastery of Sohag (in the Thebaid) or perhaps from that of St. Michel the Archangel in Hamouli (in the Fayyum). This does not necessarily mean that Livy's historiographical work or the Senecan tragedies stood among the readings of a Coptic environment, as it is impossible to know with certainty whether the portions of juridical literature, which recently emerged from the lower script of a Coptic manuscript from the Fayyum, – among which Ulpian's *On Edict*, Papinian's *Questions*, and Trebatius are found⁵⁷ – came from the manuals of law which had to enrich the shelves of monasteries whose monks shall have not ignored law⁵⁸. One can only affirm that they entered within the pools of scribal material recycled to prepare Coptic books.

The two miscellaneous codices – miscellaneous in terms of their languages, themes, and the cultures to which they give voice –, which can be reconnected to the 'Dishna papers' and perhaps belonged to the same Pachomian library, stand as the most evident witness of the presence of Latin in these kinds of environments. Cicero's *Catilinarians* are certainly among the speeches which met with a wider and undebatable scholastic success⁵⁹. Moreover, bilingual glossaries – as the Christian one from the Chester Beatty codex – clearly exemplify the way in which non-native speakers approached

co sui suoi lectores, sulle sue lectiones (P.Mich. inv. 4969 fr. 36 – Sen. Med. 663-704), «Rheinisches Museum», 164 (2021), pp. 124-144, with bibliography.

⁵⁷ This is a recent discovery; see S. Ammirati, *Frammenti inediti di giurisprudenza latina da un palinsesto copto. Per un'edizione delle scripturae inferiores del ms. London, British Library, Oriental 4717 (5)*, «Athenaeum», 105 (2017), pp. 736-741.

⁵⁸ On the knowledge of law and on the legal aspects of documents in Coptic see T.S. Richter in *Law and Legal Practice in Egypt from Alexander to the Arab conquest*, cur. J.G. Keenan, J.G. Manning, U. Yiftach-Firanko, Cambridge 2014, pp. 28-30; 134-144.

⁵⁹ See G. La Bua, *Cicero and Roman Education. The Reception of the Speeches and Ancient Scholarship*, Cambridge 2019, p. 73, with bibliography.

Latin and became accustomed to both a new language and its authors – mainly Cicero and Virgil – whose texts were modified in proper glossaries. As for the alphabet closing the Chester Beatty codex, it is worth remembering that the alphabet is the point of departure for a linguistic reflection moving towards the learning of a foreign language. Declining a word like *dominus* might be re-connected with a Christian environment, at least in the case of the partial declension of *dominus* one finds on a recycled papyrus roll with a few lines from the preface of Faustinus Luciferianus' treatise *On Trinity* (*De Trinitate*) and a Latin version of Psalm 52⁶⁰.

The *Alcestis* and the *Hadrianus* of the Montserrat codex, on the other hand, flex the Christian *paideia* to Christian needs. *Alcestis*, a mythical heroine, becomes the feminine model of resurrection⁶¹. The emperor Hadrian, characterised by the virtues of *clementia* and

⁶⁰ Cairo, Egyptian Museum, PSI 1309 v (*PSI XIII 1309 v*), Cairo, Egyptian Museum, PSI 1309 r (*PSI XIII 1309 r: ChLA XLII 1226; LDAB 6095; MP³ 3016*); see its new annotated edition in Scappaticcio, *Artes grammaticae* cit., pp. 231-237. This fragment is especially important for our knowledge of the affirmation of the Luciferian heresy in late antique Oxyrhynchus (from where the fragment comes), which is also known from Faustinus Luciferianus' *Libellus precum* (92-101). See especially 93: «certa pars est apud Oxyrynchum sanctae plebis, in cuius sacro numero plerique, quanto intentius ad res divinas studium curamve posuerunt, tanto sollicitius diligentiusque fidem catholicam inviolabiliter servare contendunt, ita ut se nullis haereticis nullisque praevaricatoribus per divina commisceant sacramenta. Ad hanc observantiam plerique eorum eruditi sunt exemplo et motu beatissimi Pauli, qui isdem fuit temporibus quibus et famosissimus ille Antonius, non minori vita neque studio neque divina gratia quam fuit sanctus Antonius. Novit hoc et ipsa civitas Oxyrynchus, quae hodieque sanctam Pauli memoriam devotissime celebrat», on which see Faustin (et Marcellin), *Supplique aux empereurs* (*Libellus precum et Lex Augusta*), ed. A. Canellis, Paris 2006, pp. 198-199 and E. Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church. People and Institutions*, Warsaw 2015, pp. 137-138.

⁶¹ R. Cavenaile, *Le latin dans les milieux chrétiens d'Égypte*, in *Miscel·lània Papirologica* R. Roca-Puig, cur. S. Janeras, Barcelona 1987, pp. 103-110, esp. 104.

liberalitas, is the protagonist of adventures and proper *itineraria* which put him on the same level as martyrs and the protagonists of the *Passiones*. There is also a dialogue between Hadrian and a certain Saturninus, and this dialogue is structured *per interrogationem et responsionem*, which is a scheme common in the late antique technical grammatical works, with disciples and grammarians questioning one another. But Hadrian's sententiousness also aligns his tale of the Montserrat codex with the *Altercatio Hadriani cum Epicteto* and the *Vita Secundi*⁶², as well as with the gnostic anthology of the *Sexti sententiae*⁶³, whose only copy in Coptic belongs to the Nag Hammadi Library. The tale of Hadrian especially has a novel vein which seems to reflect literary tastes well known from the 'Dishna Papers', among which a late antique copy of the adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon of Achilles Tatius is found⁶⁴. Another example is the *Historia Apollonii* in a palimpsest from the library of St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai, perhaps incorporated its *repositorium* of codices in various languages and of different centuries of which the only trace is left in lower scripts⁶⁵. The relationship between Chris-

⁶² Gil, Torallas Tovar, *Hadrianus* cit., pp. 95-99.

⁶³ See Buzi, *Egypt, Crossroad* cit., pp. 31-33.

⁶⁴ Köln, Papyrussammlung, P. 901 + Durham (NC), Duke University, P. 772 (P.Colon. inv. 901 + P.Duke inv. 772: *olim* P.Rob. inv. 35: LDAB 8; MP³ 0002.1), dating to 3rd century AD.

⁶⁵ See C. Sirat, F. Déroche, U. Ehrlich, A. Yardeni, *Vingt manuscrits (hebreux, grec, latin-grec, grec-arabe, arabes) pour un seul palimpseste*, «Scripta», 1 (2008), pp. 145-156, and Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 71 on another palimpsest possibly coming from the Monastery on Mount Sinai, that is the bilingual *Aeneid* of Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, L 120 *sup.* ff. 113-120 (CLA III 306; CPL 7; LDAB 4156; MP³ 2943). The *Historia Apollonii* has been recently discovered within the 'Sinai Palimpsest Project', on which see M.P. Brown, *Were Early Medieval Picture Cycles recycled from Late Antiquity? New Evidence for a Lost Archetype of the Apollonius Pictus – An Illustrated Classic*, in *Illuminating the Middle Ages. Essays for John Lowden* by

tian and pagan *paideia* in the first milieux of Coptic culture – as Coptic is not simply the language of Christianity, but especially the expression of a cultural identity⁶⁶ –, is even more complex from the perspective of Latin; nonetheless, it is osmotic and undeniable, and deserves further exploration.

His Students, Colleagues and Friends, cur. L. Cleaver, A. Bovey, L. Donkin, Leiden 2020, pp. 4-18. I thank Brown for allowing me to read her still unpublished paper and for informing me of this unedited discovery. On the Latin texts which emerged within the ‘Sinai Palimpsest Project’ see Ead., *The Bridge in the Desert: Towards Establishing an Historical Context for the Newly Discovered Latin Manuscripts of St. Catherine’s Sinai*, in *Palaeography between East and West*. Proceedings of the Seminars of Arabic Palaeography held at Sapienza, University of Rome in 2013 and 2014, cur. A. D’Ottone Rambach, Pisa - Roma 2018, pp. 73-98.

⁶⁶ T. Orlandi, *Coptic Literature*, in *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, cur. B.A. Pearson, Philadelphia 1986, pp. 51-81, esp. 69.

Latin in the Egyptian Monasteries: A Context for Linguistic Interference*

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Modern lexicography explains all Latin terms in Coptic as adopted through Greek. While it is true that the preponderance of Greek in the linguistic landscape of Egypt can explain most borrowing, actual contact between Latin speakers and Coptic-speakers could also allow linguistic interference not necessarily mediated by the Greek language. It is not easy to ground this hypothesis, since the number of actual examples preserved in literature and documents is very scanty. I will present in this paper some evidence for the use of Latin in the monasteries and the environment in which borrowing was facilitated, followed by a sample of lexical loan exchange between the two languages.

The project ‘Database and Dictionary of Greek Loanwords in Coptic’ (DDGLC)¹ collects some 50 terms of Latin origin in Coptic, all of which are presented in the list that Sebastian Richter generously shared with me, in their Greek garb; that is, in their transliteration into Greek. The database editors consider, as does

* I am very grateful to M.C. Scappaticcio for inviting me to the stimulating conference ‘Latino e Copto: Lingue, Letterature, Culture in Contatto. Sondaggi dall’Egitto della Tarda Antichità’ in Naples in September 2019. I owe thanks to my colleagues J. Gil (Seville), S. Richter (Berlin) and D. Nirenberg (Chicago) for their help and comments which have much helped me improve this paper.

¹ The project’s site: (<https://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/en/e/ddglc/index.html>).

Hans Förster, in his *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, p. xxxi, that: «words of Latin origin are included since they were obviously brought into the Coptic via the Greek language». While this is true in general, I think it worth considering, with Jürgen Horn, that direct loans from Latin into Coptic could have taken place through at least two mechanisms: 1) the massive presence of the Roman administration and the Roman army, with whose functionaries and soldiers the Coptic population would have been in contact, where the loans from Latin into Coptic did not necessarily go through Greek; and 2) the phenomenon that Horn calls «Akklimatisierung»², that is, the time it takes for a loanword to enter the language and become naturally used by the speaker and adapted to the phonetics and morphology of the language. While some of these words were adopted by Coptic when they were already ‘adapted’ into Greek, in other cases, the terms were adopted simultaneously from Latin into Greek and Coptic, within the multicultural and multilingual environment in which the lexical interference is caused.

I would like to explore in this paper one specific environment where the contact of speakers of Latin with speakers of Coptic was direct, and not necessarily mediated by speakers of Greek, an administrative organisation or any other intervening agent: I refer to the monastic communities. I am interested, to start with, in the position of Latin in the linguistic landscape of these communities, and secondly the literary context of the exchange of loanwords: Latin loanwords in Coptic monastic literature and vice versa, Egyptian / Coptic words in Latin literature. I will provide a few examples of loanwords

² J. Horn, *Latino-Coptica. Erwäunungen zu den lateinischen Lehnwörtern des koptischen Wortschatzes*, in *Atti del XVII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia (Napoli, 19-26 maggio 1983)*, Napoli 1984, pp. 1361-1376. On gradual propagation of new terms in a speech community, see M. Haspelmath, *Lexical Borrowing: Concepts and Issues*, in *Loanwords in the World's Languages. A Comparative Handbook*, cur. Id., U. Tadmor, Berlin 2009, pp. 35-54, esp. 41.

in both contexts and make an attempt at characterising the context of linguistic interference through the prism of those examples.

By the 4th century AD, the Coptic language had risen as a literary language and (re-)occupied spaces the Egyptian language had lost in the previous centuries³. The monasteries of the Thebaid also rose as centres of Christian culture, and dedicated attention to pilgrims and visitors from other parts of Egypt and all the Mediterranean basin. These monasteries turned into multilingual spaces in a very special way. In these communities, according to the hagiographical sources, it seems that the Coptic language was the vehicular, preferred language and there was apparently some pressure to learn it⁴. But there was a multilingual dynamic, where Latin, Greek and Coptic developed some kind of balance, in which Latin had its own place⁵, albeit very marginal, as indeed was the place of Latin in

³ For the most recent and excellent monograph on the matter, J.-L. Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic: Egyptian versus Greek in Late Antiquity*, Princeton - Oxford 2020.

⁴ S. Torallas Tovar, *Linguistic Identity in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbassids*, cur. A. Papaconstantinou, Farnham - Burlington (VT) 2010, pp. 17-43. Most recently see Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic* cit., pp. 112-113. F. Millar, *A Greek Roman Empire. Power and Belief Under Theodosius II. 408-450*, Berkeley - Los Angeles 2006, on the balance of Greek-Latin. See as a testimony of the preference for Coptic or majority of Coptic-speakers, the Letter of Dioscoros, the patriarch of Alexandria, to Shenoute about a document sent to the community in Greek: «May your Reverence make speed to have the entire *memorandum* translated into the Egyptian tongue, so that it may be read in that form and none may be ignorant of the authority of the things that are written therein». For the text, see H. Thompson, *Dioscoros and Shenoute*, in *Recueil d'études égyptologiques dédiées à la mémoire de Jean-François Champollion*, Paris 1922, pp. 367-376.

⁵ I have written on the linguistic context in the monasteries before, S. Torallas Tovar, *Egyptian Lexical Interference in the Greek of Byzantine and Early Islamic Egypt*, in *Papyrology and the History of Early Islamic Egypt*, cur. P.M.

Egypt in general. As Jean-Luc Fournet has shown⁶, Latin continued to occupy an official role in some sections of administration and the military. I am presenting here a different positioning of this language: Latin brought to Egypt by travellers and pilgrims⁷, who were interested in learning the new ascetic practice, and in translating into Latin and spreading towards the West the texts and regulations of the emerging Egyptian monastic communities.

Sijpesteijn, L. Sundelin, Leiden 2004, pp. 143-178; Ead., *Linguistic Identity* cit., and see also A. Martin, *Athanase d'Alexandrie et l'Église d'Égypte au IV^e siècle (328- 373)*, Roma 1996, pp. 662-663; A. Papaconstantinou, *Egyptians and 'Hellenists': Linguistic Diversity in the Early Pachomian Monasteries*, in *Le myrte et la rose. Mélanges offerts à Françoise Dunand par ses élèves, collègues et amis*, cur. G. Tallet, C. Zivie-Coche, Montpellier 2014, pp. 15-21 with more evidence on the Pachomian monasteries, and most recently see Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic* cit. The place of Latin in Egypt, and in particular in the monastic communities, has been studied in recent publications: J.N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language*, Cambridge 2003, pp. 527-640, who however does not include a discussion of the monasteries. For these, see J.-L. Fournet, *The Multilingual Environment of Late Antique Egypt: Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Persian Documentation*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, cur. R.S. Bagnall, Oxford 2009, pp. 418-451; Id., *La pratique du latin dans l'Égypte de l'Antiquité tardive*, in *Latin in Byzantium I. Late Antiquity and Beyond*, cur. A. Garcea, M. Rosellini, L. Silvano, Turnhout 2019, pp. 73-91; Id., *The Rise of Coptic* cit.; C. Rapp, *The Use of Latin in the Context of Multilingual Monastic Communities in the East*, in Garcea, Rosellini, Silvano, *Latin* cit., pp. 93-107. See also R. Cavenaile, *Le latin dans les milieux chrétiens d'Égypte*, in *Miscel-lània Papirologica* R. Roca-Puig, cur. S. Janeras, Barcelona 1987, pp. 103-110.

⁶ Fournet, *La pratique* cit.

⁷ Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit. explores travel East and West connected to ecclesiastical matters: ecumenical councils (where Greek was the vehicular language). She points out (p. 95) that the earliest pilgrimage accounts were written in Latin, such as Egeria's *Itinerarium* at the end of the 4th century AD or Antoninus Placentinus in the 6th century AD; cfr. Millar, *A Greek Roman Empire* cit., p. 23.

Multiple strategies were developed to deal with the multilingual environment in the monastic communities: interpreters, language learning, and translations are attested. In this environment language contact took place, causing loans and linguistic interference. The sources we have for this interference are however not completely transparent. Embedded in literary texts, the traces are obscured and transformed. However, it is worth exploring the few traces, perhaps only to identify some channels of connection, or to explore a methodology to deal with texts that carry loanwords or evidence of code-switching.

1. *Linguistic Landscape in the Egyptian Monasteries: Multilingual Spaces: Travellers and Pilgrims*

The *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* (*History of the Monks in Egypt*)⁸, is a pilgrim's memoir or travelogue, written by a Jerusalem monk who visited several monasteries and hermits at the end of the 4th century AD. The *History of the Monks* is a miscellany of anecdotes, small biographical notes, and travellers' descriptions and impressions. This unsystematic description of Egyptian monastic communities was soon translated into Latin⁹ and found a large audience outside Egypt. But it was not the first work about Egyptian monasticism to reach the West. As attested in Athanasius' prologue to the *Life of Anthony*¹⁰, there was interest and eagerness to

⁸ The most recent study of this text is A. Cain, *The Greek Historia monachorum in Aegypto. Monastic Hagiography in the Late Fourth Century*, Oxford 2016. For the Greek text, *Historia monachorum in Aegypto. Édition critique du texte grec*, ed. A.-J. Festugière, Brussels 1961. For the Latin see below p. 111 footnote 9.

⁹ Tyrannius Rufinus, *Historia monachorum sive De vita sanctorum partum*, ed. E. Schulz-Flügel, Berlin 1990.

¹⁰ Athanasius in the prologue to the *Life of Anthony*; he addresses the letter to «monks in foreign parts» («ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς τοὺς ἐν τῇ ξένῃ

read and know about Egyptian monasteries in the East and West, and this eventually brought large numbers of pilgrims and visitors to Egypt, along with their languages. Some of these visitors would travel around, like Rufinus, whose travels to the remotest deserts of Egypt are attested in Jerome's *Epistle* 3¹¹; some would stay for longer periods of time and even join the communities. This was the case for Ammon¹² and many other pilgrims and monks¹³.

The integration of these visitors (temporary or permanent) was an important matter which undoubtedly was taken into consideration in the managing of the monastic communities. There was a provision for newcomers to the monasteries in matters of language. After all, language is an important element in the activities developed in these communities: communal reading, Bible learning, and

μοναχούς»), and states: «Ἀγαθὴν ἀμιλλαν ἐνεστήσασθε πρὸς τοὺς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ μοναχοὺς ἥτοι παρισωθῆναι ἢ καὶ ὑπερβαλέσθαι τούτους προελόμενοι τῇ κατ' ἀρετὴν ὑμῶν ἀσκήσει» «You have joined a noble contest with the monks of Egypt by your purpose of either equaling or surpassing them in your practice of virtue». See Cain, *The Greek Historia monachorum* cit., pp. 80-91. See also above p. 110 footnote 7, about the earliest pilgrimage accounts in Latin.

¹¹ Hier. *epist.* 3, 1 (to Rufinus): «*Ego enim [...] audio te Aegypti secreta penetrare, Monachorum invisere choros, et coelestem in terris circumire familiam*» «I hear that you are penetrating the remotest parts of Egypt, that you are visiting the choirs of monks and going around the celestial family upon earth». In fact, Rufinus is the translator of the *Historia Monachorum* into Latin.

¹² *The Letter of Ammon and Pachomian Monasticism*, ed. J.E. Goehring, Berlin 1986, with text and English translation.

¹³ See the case of Arsenios (*Apophthegmata Patrum collectio alphabetica*), sub Arsenios, 28-29 (PG LXIV 96-97), see commentaries by Rapp, *The Use of Latin* cit., p. 103. Of senatorial rank, and with a high-class education, he is a model of renunciation and ascetic life. Simeon, in Cassian. *inst.* 5, 39, 1-2, only know Latin, no Greek nor Coptic, and earned a living in Egypt copying manuscripts.

administrative tasks. The strategies that can be reconstructed were: distribution in houses according to language, language learning, and the use of interpreters. For all of these strategies we have evidence in the Coptic hagiographies, especially in the Lives of the desert fathers, of Pachomius and of Shenoute.

1.1. *Distribution in Houses according to Language*

Pachomius' Greek *Vita Prima* or *G*¹ (94)¹⁴ gives an account of the arrival of Theodore, the reader (ἀναγνώστης) of the church at Alexandria, at the monastery of Pachomius¹⁵. He was welcomed and placed close to an old man who knew the Greek language until he could get along in Coptic, called here the «Theban language»¹⁶:

καὶ οὕτως ὑποδεξάμενος αὐτὸν ἐποίησεν εἶναι ἐν οἰκίᾳ παρὰ τινι ἀρχαίῳ
ἀδελφῷ εἰδότι τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν γλῶσσαν εἰς παραμυθίαν Θεωδώρου, ἕως
μάθῃ ἀκοῦσαι τὴν Θηβαϊκὴν.

And having welcomed him he assigned him, for encouragement, in a house with an elder brother who knew the Greek language, until he learned to understand the Theban (language).

¹⁴ The edition is *Sanctii Pachomii Vitae Graecae*, ed. F. Halkin, Bruxelles 1932; see also *Le corpus athénien de Saint Pachôme, avec une traduction française*, ed. F. Halkin, Geneva 1982. The narration of the Bohairic life (89 Lefort) is more accurate. It includes the first interview in Alexandria of Theodore and the monks sent by Pachomius mediated by an interpreter. This account highlights several times the importance of the interpreters and the efforts devoted by Pachomius to learning Greek to communicate with Theodore.

¹⁵ On Theodore, see Goehring, *The Letter* cit., p. 201; Papaconstantinou, *Egyptians and 'Hellenists'* cit., pp. 16-17.

¹⁶ Halkin, *Sanctii Pachomii* cit., p. 63. On other occasions he refers to Coptic as the Egyptian language or dialect, *Letter of Ammon* 4: «τῇ Αἰγυπτίῳ διαλέκτῳ», and 29: «τῇ Αἰγυπτίῳ γλώσσῃ».

Later on, Theodore was appointed head of the house (οἶκος) of the «Alexandrians», Greek speaking monks, and became himself a guide for foreigners arriving at Pbow¹⁷. These foreign monks, after a period of time, would eventually learn Coptic, since there was some pressure to learn this language in the communities of Upper Egypt¹⁸.

In his *Preface* to his Latin translation of the Pachomian monastic rule, Jerome states that he had received the text from a priest by the name of Silvanus, who had received it from Alexandria. It needed to be translated into Latin for the monks of the monastery of Metanoia or Canopos, in the Delta, who knew neither Greek nor Coptic. They were probably staying at a ‘Roman house’ at the monastery:

Aiebat enim (Silvanus) quod in Thebaidis coenobiis et in monasterio Metanoiae, quod de Canopo in paenitentiam felici nominis conversione mutatum est, habitarent plurimi latinorum qui ignorarent Aegypticum Graecumque sermonem, quo Pachomii et Theodori et Orsiesii praecepta conscripta sunt.

(Silvanus) told us that in the cenobia of the Thebaid and in the monastery of Metanoia (which had changed from Canopos into ‘repentance’ with a happy conversion of name) there lived many ‘Latins’ who ignored the Egyptian and Greek languages, in which the precepts of Pachomius, Theodore and Horsiesis were written.

¹⁷ For this Greek-speaking community, see also *Letter of Ammon* 7 and *Vita Prima* 95.

¹⁸ This is the case of Ammon. He was fluent in Greek, and while he required a translator when he arrived at Pbow, at a later point he indicates that he has learnt Coptic (*Letter of Ammon* 17): «καὶ λοιπὸν νοοῦντά με τὴν θηβαίων γλώτταν» «because I knew the language of the Thebans». However, there is some suspicion that he already knew Coptic, perhaps the dialect from the North –Bohairic–, and that is why he highlights he knows «Theban», see Goehring, *The Letter* cit., p. 247. See also *Vita Tertia* 146, about Theodore learning Coptic.

Monastic communities soon grew to become multilingual spaces, developing linguistic needs. Bilingual monks were a very important part of these community as instructors for the recently arrived brothers, not only in the language but also in the routines of the congregation¹⁹. The *Letter of Ammon* (4) reports Theodore's activity as an interpreter²⁰: «ταῦτα δὲ ἡμεῖς ἠκούομεν αὐτοῦ λέγοντος τῇ Αἰγυπτίῳ διαλέκτῳ ἑρμηνεύοντος ἑλληνιστὶ Θεοδώρου τοῦ Ἀλεξανδρέως» «we listen to him when he speaks in Egyptian, while Theodore of Alexandria translates it into Greek»²¹.

1.2. *Language Learning and Exposure*

Let me start with the episode of Pachomius' pentecostal miracle: a Latin-speaking visitor wanted to speak to Pachomius, but not through an interpreter: «οὐκ ἐβούλετο ὁ Ῥωμαῖος τὰ τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ πλημμελήματα δι' ἑτέρου εἰπεῖν τῷ μεγάλῳ» (27, 8 Halkin) «the Roman did not want to tell the Great (Pachomius) the sins of his heart through someone else».

Pachomius then retired for prayer and asked God for knowledge of languages so as to be able to attend to this visitor and miraculously acquired the knowledge of Greek and Latin²².

¹⁹ J. Dummer, *Zum Problem der sprachlichen Verständigung in den Pachomius-Klöstern*, «Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte», 20 (1971), pp. 46-47.

²⁰ A man named Elurion is also acting as an interpreter for the author of the *Letter* (6): «καὶ τῶν μοναζόντων τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ ἀλλήλοις διαλεγόμενων, Ἐλουρίῳ τοῦνομα, ἀνὴρ τὸν Χριστὸν ἐνδεδυμένος, ἔφη πρὸς με τῇ Ἑλλήνων διαλέκτῳ» «while the monks were speaking their own language with each other, someone called Elurion, a man invested in Christ, said to me in Greek»; see Goehring, *The Letter* cit., p. 207.

²¹ Also in *Vita Graeca* 95, Halkin, *Sanctii Pachomii* cit., p. 64: «When Pachomius gave instructions to the brothers, Theodore interpreted for the brothers who did not understand Egyptian».

²² *Paralipomena Pachomiana* 27. Halkin, *Sanctii Pachomii* cit., p. 154; Halkin, *Le corpus athénien* cit., p. 89.

Καὶ ἐπὶ ὥρας τρεῖς προσευχομένου αὐτοῦ καὶ πολλὰ παρακαλοῦντος τὸν Θεὸν περὶ τούτου, ἄφνω ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατεπέμφθη ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ τῇ δεξιᾷ ὡς ἐπιστόλιον χάρτινον γεγραμμένον· καὶ ἀναγνοὺς αὐτὸ ἔμαθεν πασῶν τῶν γλωσσῶν τὰς λαλιάς. Καὶ δόξαν ἀναπέμψας τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῷ υἱῷ καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι, μετὰ χαρᾶς μεγάλης ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἐκεῖνον· καὶ ἤρξατο αὐτῷ διαλέγεσθαι καὶ ἑλληνιστὶ καὶ ῥωμαϊστὶ ἀπταιστώως, ὥστε τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἀκούσαντα λέγειν περὶ τοῦ μεγάλου ὅτι πάντας ὑπερβάλλει τοὺς σχολαστικοὺς εἰς τὴν διάλεκτον.

And for three hours he prayed and much besought God about this, and suddenly a small letter written on papyrus fell from Heaven into his right hand. Having read it he learnt to speak all languages. Glorifying the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, with great joy he went to that brother and started to speak to him in Greek and Latin perfectly, so that the brother, having heard him, said that the Great (Pachomius) surpassed all the scholars in the language.

The miraculous acquisition of languages is but an anecdote. In fact, Pachomius seems to have learned Greek with some effort (ἐσπούδασεν), as attested by another text in one of his Lives, in which Pachomius tried to learn Greek himself so as to guide Theodoros the Alexandrian personally (*Vita Prima* 95): «καὶ ἐσπούδασεν ἑλληνιστὶ μαθεῖν χάριτι Θεοῦ, ἵνα εὖρη τὸ πῶς παραμυθῆσασθαι αὐτὸν πολλάκις» «and (Pachomius) tried hard to learn Greek by God's mercy so as to be able to guide him often»²³.

These efforts attest at the very least to the necessity of speaking different languages as a means of communication with the ever-growing flow of visitors.

Less hagiographic texts, like glossaries and conversation manuals, may provide a more accurate reflection of reality, since they rep-

²³ See also *Vita Tertia* 146: «καὶ ἐσπούδασε θηβαϊστὶ μαθεῖν αὐτὸν τῇ χάριτι τοῦ Χριστοῦ» «and he made an effort to learn the Theban language – Sahidic Coptic – in the grace of Christ», referring to Theodore learning Coptic.

resent the tools used for mutual understanding among the peoples who populated the desert²⁴.

1.3. *Use of Interpreters*

In the communication with newcomers, bilingual or even trilingual monks were an asset. The *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* 6, 3 (Festugière) describes the remarkable capacity of the monk Theon to speak three languages:

ἐπεπαίδευτο δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ τριπλῇ τῶν διαλέξεων χάριτι ἐν τε Ἑλληνικοῖς καὶ Ῥωμαικοῖς καὶ Αἰγυπτιακοῖς ἀναγνώμασιν, καθὼς καὶ παρὰ πολλῶν καὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐκείνου ἐμάθομεν.

This man had been educated in reading three languages, Greek, Latin and Coptic, as we learnt from many and also from him.

There is evidence of interpreters in the monastic environment, who specialised in communication with the newcomers, visitors and the faithful. Saint Anthony, according to some sources, apparently did not speak Greek, but only Coptic: «τῇ Αἰγυπτιακῇ φωνῇ» (Athanasius, *Vita Antonii* 16, 1), and often made use of interpreters in his relationship with disciples and other monks. Athanasius also explains that he spoke through interpreters: «ἔλεγε δι' ἑρμηνέως» (*Vita Antonii* 74, 2; see also 77, 1)²⁵. Visitors would also

²⁴ For a trilingual (Greek-Latin-Coptic) conversation manual, see Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, Papyrussammlung, P. 10582 (P.Berol. inv. 10582), edited by W. Schubart, *Ein lateinisch-griechisch-koptisches Gesprächsbuch*, «Klio», 13 (1913), pp. 27-38; A. Bataille, *Glossaires greco-latins sur papyrus*, «Recherches de Papyrologie», 4 (1967), pp. 161-169; J. Kramer in *C.Gloss. Biling.* I 15; E. Dickey, *How Coptic Speakers Learned Latin? A Reconsideration of P.Berol. Inv. 10582*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 193 (2015), pp. 65-77. See also the contribution of Orlandi above.

²⁵ Palladius (*Historia Lausiaca* 21, 15) provides the name of one of his interpreters, Kronios: «τῶν λόγων τούτων ὅλων ἑρμηνεὺς γέγονα, τοῦ

have recourse to the service of interpreters. Palladius is an example, when he visited John of Lycopolis (*Historia Lausiaca* 35, 6). We may imagine similar interpretive services when visitors were Latin-speaking.

There also existed the practice of simultaneous translation in communal reading in the monasteries as an internal service to brothers who were not familiar with Coptic (see above). Anthony sent epistles to monasteries, which were written in Coptic but that would eventually be translated into Greek²⁶. This was clearly done in writing but we also have evidence from the *Letter of Ammon* (29)²⁷ for oral translation. He reports that a letter of Anthony was addressed to the monks at Pbow, the central monastery in the Pachomian order. The letter was read out loud by one of the monks while another monk translated it.

μακαρίου Ἀντωνίου ἑλληνιστὶ μὴ εἰδότης· ἐγὼ γὰρ ἡπιστάμην ἀμφοτέρας τὰς γλώσσας, καὶ ἡρμήνευσα αὐτοῖς μὲν ἑλληνιστί, ἐκεῖνῳ δὲ αἰγυπτιστί» «of all these words I have been interpreter, since Anthony did not know Greek. I know both languages, and I have translated for them into Greek and for him into Egyptian». In his *Vita Hilarionis* 25, Jerome says that Anthony's interpreter was Isaac.

²⁶ Hier. *vir. ill.* 88: «*Antonius monachus [...] misit aegyptiace ad diversa monasteria apostolici sensus sermonisque epistolas septem, quae in graecam linguam translata erunt, quorum praecipua est ad Arsinoitas*» «Anthony the monk sent seven epistles in Egyptian with apostolic sense and content to various monasteries. These were translated into Greek. Of them the most important is the one addressed to the Arsinoites».

²⁷ Goehring, *The Letter* cit., pp. 200; 207.

2. *Exchange of Loanwords*

As has been mentioned, among the thousands of Greek loanwords attested in Coptic²⁸, both in documents and in literature from all times, the presence of Latin loanwords is very limited. It is already difficult to characterize the use of loanwords, and to understand the process of adoption, and their integration in the target language, when the evidence is so scarce. In order to extract the most from this linguistic contact, I would like to present a few examples of both Latin loanwords in Coptic, and Coptic loanwords in Latin, as the last token of this interesting and fruitful interaction. The body of examples is so reduced that it is impossible to know whether these words were just the product of code-switching, were ‘incipient loans’, or were adopted terms²⁹. We have already mentioned the question of the Greek language as intermediary in the loan, and the general belief that Latin loans entered Coptic through Greek³⁰. While I do not pretend to solve this question – which, by the way, I think cannot be answered – I do believe that there was direct contact, as suggested above, between speakers of Latin and speakers of Coptic, and that direct borrowing could in fact happen. As reduced as this corpus of loanwords between these two languages may be, it stands as evidence for the linguistic environment mentioned above.

²⁸ See T.S. Richter, «*Whatever in the Coptic Language is not Greek, Can Wholly Be Considered Ancient Egyptian*»: *Recent Approaches Towards an Integrated View of the Egyptian-Coptic Lexicon*, «*Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies*», 9 (2017), pp. 9-32, and E. Grossman, *Greek Loanwords in Coptic*, in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Greek Language and Linguistics*, cur. G.K. Giannakis, Leiden 2014, pp. 118-120, both with bibliography on the topic.

²⁹ For a full definition of these phenomena of borrowing, see Haspelmath, *Lexical Borrowing* cit.

³⁰ See Förster, p. xxxi.

2.1. *Latin in Coptic*³¹

Among the few Latin loanwords in the early monastic literature we can distinguish different sources: 1) administration and military; 2) Coptic translations of biblical and patristic texts; 3) contact in the everyday life of the monasteries. Latin vocabulary could have reached the monastic environment through any of these sources. Hagiographic literature, especially martyrologies, include many terms related to the administration of justice, the military and prisons in the description of the judicial process suffered by the martyrs³², and of course monasteries also had contact with the administration for reasons of taxation and census.

As for the first source, terms coming from administration, there are a number of examples in Coptic monastic texts. The term **ⲧⲓⲣⲱⲛ** or **ⲧⲓⲣⲱⲛ**, «recruit», appears in the life of Pachomius³³, referring to his conscription to the Roman Army before his conversion. Other terms like **ⲁⲓⲓⲟⲩⲥⲧⲁⲗⲓⲟⲥ**, *Augustalis* «governor»³⁴; **ⲙⲓⲗⲓⲟⲛ**, «Roman mile»³⁵;

³¹ Latin loanwords in Coptic documentary texts were part of a lexicographical enterprise that was unfortunately discontinued: I.M. Cervenka-Ehrenstrasser (and J. Diethart) started publishing a *Lexikon der lateinischen Lehnwörter in den griechischsprachigen dokumentarischen Texten Ägyptens mit Berücksichtigung koptischer Quellen*, two decades ago. Only two fascicles saw the light: fasc. 1 covers letter Alpha, and fasc. 2 covers from Beta to Delta.

³² Horn, *Latino-Coptica* cit., pp. 1371-1372 gives the term **ⲙⲉⲧⲁⲗⲟⲥ** as an example (TLA lemma n. C9767, Förster, p. 517) cfr. Latin *damnatio in metallum*, condemnation to the mines.

³³ TLA lemma n. C10745 (**ⲧⲓⲣⲱⲛ**), *Life of Pachomius*, Sahidic version 212, 9; 212, 27 and 104, 35 Lefort.

³⁴ *Life of Pachomius*, Sahidic version 350, 10 Lefort, not included yet in the CD, Förster, p. 122. Cervenka-Ehrenstrasser, pp. 119-122.

³⁵ TLA lemma n. C9791 (**ⲙⲓⲗⲓⲟⲛ**), *Life of Pachomius*, Sahidic version 74, 2; 139, 25; 222, 16 Lefort. *Apophthegmata Patrum Alph. Benjamin* 5 (6 Chaîne).

ΤΡΙΒΟΥΝΟΣ, *tribunus* «tribune»³⁶; ΠΡΙΜΙΚΕΡΙΟΣ, *primicerius* «head of an administration»³⁷; and ΤΙΤΛΟΣ, *titulus* «title»³⁸, which appear in hagiography, clearly belong to this area too. Many of these terms were adopted probably through their use in documentary texts, but also through the translations of the Bible³⁹.

Perhaps also connected to the military terminology, and also adopted in Greek at the same time, is the term **ἄρμα** for the monastic habit used in the Coptic text for the Pachomian regulations (98): «ΠΝΕΛΑΔΥ ΦΒΛΑΔΥ ΠΕΙΔΟΣ ΕΠΕΦΑΡΜΑ ΔΧΜΠΕΦΡΜΗΗ» «no one will alter the shape of his habit without (the permission) of the head of his ‘house’»⁴⁰.

³⁶ TLA lemma n. C10781 (ΤΡΙΒΟΥΝΟΣ), Shenoute of Atripe, 33, 6 (*De sapientia magistratum*) Wiesmann.

³⁷ *Life of Pachomius*, Sahidic version 11, 22 Lefort, not included yet in the CD. Förster, p. 676.

³⁸ TLA lemma n. C10747 (ΤΙΤΛΟΣ), A. Böhlig, *Ein Lexikon der griechischen Wörter im Koptischen. Die griechisch-lateinischen Lehnwörter in den koptischen manichäischen Texten*, München 1953, p. 203. Gospel of John 19:19.

³⁹ A glance at Latin words in the Gospel of Mark: *census* (κῆνσος «poll tax», 12:14), *centurio* (κεντυρίων «centurion», 15:39, 44, 45), *denarius* (δηνάριον, Roman coin, 12:15), *legio* (λεγιών «legion», 5:9, 15), *modius* (μόδιος, measure of volume, 4:21), *praetorium* (πραιτώριον, residence of the governor, 15:16), *quadrans* (κοδράντης, Roman coin, 12:42), *sextarius* (ξέστης, liquid measure, 7:4), *speculator* (σπεκουλάτωρ «executioner», 6:27), and *flagello* (φραγελλώ «to scourge», 15:15), show that they are all related to administration and the military.

⁴⁰ Coptic text in *Oeuvres de S. Pachôme et de ses disciples*, ed. L.-T. Lefort, Louvain 1956, p. 31. On the Pachomian monastic regulations, see introductions to *Pachomiana Latina: règle et épîtres de saint Pachôme, épître de saint Théodore et Liber de saint Orsiesius, texte latin de saint Jérôme*, ed. A. Boon, Louvain 1932 and *S. Pachonii Abbatis Tabennensis Regulae Monasticae*, ed. P.B. Albers, Bonnae 1923, and *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, cur. J.

Connecting this term to the Latin *arma* has the difficulty that the Latin term is *pluralia tantum*, but it is not surprising that Greek would have adopted it into its declension of nouns in -μα⁴¹. Some of the Greek versions of the Pachomian regulations also use the term ἄρμα, others use σχῆμα and φόρεμα⁴², while in Latin we find the term *armatura*. One may argue that Greek preferred the abbreviated form *arma*, because it was easier to integrate into the declension of nouns in -μα, -ματος, and felt like a natural word in Greek, rather than a foreign sounding ἄρματοῦρα, attested in Greek, but much later, and with a different meaning (see *LBG*, s.v.).

A small number of terms belong to the terminology of everyday life objects and events. In some cases, with due prudence, they can be explained as a direct loan: I will start with the term λιμην «portrait, image»⁴³. Walter E. Crum (143a) notes that it is not to be confused with the Greek λίμνη «harbour» but cannot point to its derivation. It seems to be a loanword thoroughly assimilated to Coptic through a vowel shift. James Drescher⁴⁴ derives it from

Thomas, A. Constantinides Hero, Washington DC 2000, pp. 32-38; S. Torallas Tovar, *La Regla monástica de Pacomio de Tabenesí*, «Erytheia. Revista de Estudios Bizantinos y Neogriegos», 22 (2001), pp. 7-22.

⁴¹ Lampe, p. 227 s.v. ἄρμα 3, monastic habit, provides as an example the Latin Pachomian regulations mentioned in the following footnote.

⁴² The *Excerpta Graeca* A 17 and 43: use ἄρμα (175, 180 Boon); B 50: σχῆμα (175 Boon). Jerome however, uses *habitus*: «in vestimenta et in habitu suo nihil novi praeter caeteros causa decori inveniet» (*reg. Pachom.* 97; *PL* XXIII 78; 40 Boon). And *armatura* in *reg. Pachom.* 81; Horsiesi, *Doctrina de institutione monachorum* 25, in the translation of Jerome, uses *armatura*, referring to the monastic habit (*reg. Pachom.* 81; *PL* XXIII 77; 37 Boon, cfr. 126 Boon).

⁴³ TLA lemma n. C1660 (λιμην).

⁴⁴ J. Drescher, *Graeco-Coptic: Postscript*, «Le Muséon», 89 (1976), pp. 307-321.

Greek λαιμός «throat», and Gérard Godron⁴⁵ derives it from Latin *lumen* «light»⁴⁶.

The *Prophecy of Charour*⁴⁷, a curious text from the corpus of *Pachomiana* (only preserved in Coptic) has a few terms that might be explained as originating in Latin. They appear in the context of a prophecy in which the monks are warned against their bad behaviour, referring to the reversal of their everyday life. Among the everyday objects, the term **ΚΑΒΑΝΩ** (103, 20 Lefort)⁴⁸, probably related to Lat. *campana* (in Latin this term refers originally to any object made of bronze produced in Campania, cfr. *TLL* III 208.55-66), attested in the Greek papyri as weighing device, but here it appears as an instrument of the shoemaker⁴⁹. Another term, of difficult interpretation is **ΓΑΟΝ** (104, 7 Lefort, *Oeuvres* cit.):

⁴⁵ G. Godron, **ΛΙΜΗΝ** *Image, Portrait*, «Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte», 25 (1983), pp. 1-53.

⁴⁶ In a later article, Id., *A nouveau ΛΙΜΗΝ (complements)*, «Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte», 29 (1990), pp. 43-47 added further evidence. Y. Nessim Youssef, *La terminologie de l'icone selon les livres liturgiques coptes*, «Göttinger Miszellen», 158 (1997), pp. 101-105 shows that **ΛΙΜΗΝ** means «icon», that is, cult object, whereas **ΕΙΚΩΝ** can be a statue, physical appearance, or the concept of the image of God.

⁴⁷ Lefort, *Oeuvres* cit., edition and translation. For an explanation and context of the text, see L.S.B. MacCoull, *The Prophecy of Charour*, in *Documenting Christianity in Egypt. Sixth to Fourteenth Centuries*, cur. Id., Farnham - Burlington (VT) 2011, pp. 44-55, who deplors that it has merely been regarded as a 'philologists' playground of strange words', which is precisely what I am doing here. See also H. Lundhaug, L. Jenott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, Tübingen 2015, p. 166.

⁴⁸ The numbers refer to pages and line numbers in Lefort, *Oeuvres* cit.

⁴⁹ LSJ s.v. **κάμπανος** «weighing-machine, steelyard», in Greek in the papyri *P.Cair.Masp.* III 67325 l. 37 (4th century AD, TM 36540). See also the verb **καμπανίζω** «to weigh», in *P.Lond.* V 1708 l. 130 (6th century AD, TM 19725). Förster, p. 374.

«ΟΥΔΕ ΧΟΕΙΤ ΖΗΠΓΑΟΝ» «no olives in the *gaom*», where it might stand for Latin *cavum*, as suggested by Louis-Théophile Lefort⁵⁰, a round concave vessel, though it is not attested elsewhere. It could also be a corrupted spelling of ἀγγεῖον⁵¹. Finally, in the same text, the term **CIKEΛΛΕ** («ΟΥΔΕ ΝΕΖ ΖΗΤCIKEΛΛΕ» «no oil in the **CIKEΛΛΕ**») can mean in this case some kind of container for the oil. In this sense, it can be connected to the Latin term for a measure *sicilicus*⁵². Another interpretation might be a connection to the verb **CIKE**⁵³ «to grind, to pound» with the meaning «mill»: «there is no oil in the oil-mill». These terms refer to everyday life, but at the same time, if these interpretations are correct, they are all measures, and artefacts connected to trade, which puts the source also in administration.

My last example appears in a recently published text⁵⁴, the *Sermo Asceticus* of Stephen of Thebes. This Egyptian ascetic author lived in the late 4th or early 5th century AD, probably in the monastic communities from Scetis, Nitria, and Kellia. Alin Suciu suggests that the *Sermo asceticus* was originally composed in Coptic, and later translated into several other languages. The only Latin loanword in this text is interesting. The verb **CEPBΕ**, Latin *servio*, with the meaning of «to devote oneself, to worship»⁵⁵ appears in a fragmentary but clear context: «**CEPBΕ ΕΠΙΝΟΥΤΕ**» «devote yourself to God», a sense

⁵⁰ Lefort, *Oeuvres* cit., p. 107 (in the translation volume).

⁵¹ Attested in Coptic in documentary texts, Förster, p. 6, TLA lemma n. C8064.

⁵² OLD, s.v. But cfr. **CIKE**, TLA lemma n. C3423, «to grind, to pound». Perhaps it is connected to this latter term, and the term means «there is no oil in the oil-mill».

⁵³ TLA lemma n. C3423.

⁵⁴ A. Suciu, *The Sermo Asceticus of Stephen the Theban in Sahidic Coptic*, «Journal of Theological Studies», 69.2 (2018), pp. 628-673.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 649.

of the term very much connected precisely to the monastic contexts where the concept of *servus Dei* was developed⁵⁶. There is enough evidence of the borrowing of Greek verbs in Coptic, so this example should not be surprising.

2.2. *Coptic in Latin*

Let us turn to the reverse situation, which is also infrequent: that of the Coptic terms that migrated into the Latin language in the context of early monasticism. As for the source of these loanwords, they are all connected to everyday life in the monasteries and administration of the community, and they might have been transmitted through translation, but also by oral transmission, through the already mentioned contact with monks and priests, and also with the guides who accompanied them. These guides were probably native Egyptians, and it is not guaranteed that there was mutual understanding⁵⁷. This fact is important in our assessment of the sources, as I will discuss below.

The literary sources we have for these loanwords are, as mentioned above, either translations from Coptic texts into Latin – like the translation into Latin of the Monastic regulations from the Pachomian federation, mentioned above, which were crucial for the formation of ascetic communities in the West – or literature produced in Latin, or translated from Greek, about the monastic communities of Egypt by travellers and pilgrims. These texts spread rapidly in the West, transmitting within it a few Coptic words to denote new realities for which specialised terminology was felt necessary.

It must be remarked that the use of Coptic loanwords in Latin is not that of naturalised loanwords, adopted and perceived by

⁵⁶ Or *famulus*, TLL VI.1 268.27-32, referring to monks and presbyters.

⁵⁷ There is evidence of local guides for travelers from very early times. See L. Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, Toronto 1974, pp. 104-106; 264-267.

the speakers as natural words of their language. They are instead invariably perceived as foreign by the speaker⁵⁸. As such, they are explained, and often introduced with expressions such as ‘they call this so-and-so’. They are often presented as specialised terminology of this emerging phenomenon, monasticism.

I will offer in the following pages a few examples culled from translations of monastic literature, like those of Jerome⁵⁹, or works produced in Latin, such as John Cassian. In each case, I will provide some context in order to appreciate the nature of the loanwords.

Jerome translated the regulations of the Pachomian communities through the mediation of a Greek translation, as he himself indicates in the Preface (*PL* XXIII 65; 4 Boon):

urgebant autem missi ad me ob hanc ipsam causam Leontius presbyter, et caeteri cum eo fratres, accito notario, ut erant de Aegyptiaca in Graecam linguam versa, nostro sermone dictavi ...

(Since) the priest Leontius and the other brothers who had been sent to me with him were urging me about precisely this matter, I summoned a scribe and I dictated (a translation) into our own language, as they (scil. the regulations) had been translated into Greek from Coptic.

In his translation, the *Pachomiana Latina*, Jerome keeps and indicates the terms used by Egyptians for artefacts or realities that were

⁵⁸ Haspelmath, *Lexical Borrowing* cit., p. 43, «foreignisms», «Fremdwörter», as opposed to «Lehnwörter», although it is very difficult to understand the perception of the speaker.

⁵⁹ On Jerome and his translation technique, see S. Brock, *Aspects of Translation Techniques in Antiquity*, «Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies», 20 (1979), pp. 69-87; more recently *La libertà del traduttore: l'epistola de optimo genere interpretandi di Gerolamo. Testo latino, introduzione, traduzione e note*, ed. E. Bona, Acireale - Roma 2008, among some approaches to the topic.

considered typical of the monastic communities. These included the parts of the monastic habits, and other objects that were part of everyday life in the monastery, especially in cases where they were regulated. Often these terms were of Greek origin, like the *meloté*, a goat skin used as a cloak, attested in Coptic as βαλοτ or μαλλοτ, from Gk. μηλωτή⁶⁰: «*Et caprinam pelliculam quam meloten vocant*» (*praef.* 4) «And a goat skin that they call ‘meloté’».

Other terms were originally Egyptian, such as *embrimum* (Gk. ἐμβρύμιον, ἐμβρίμιον «pillow» or perhaps «mat» or «bundle of papyrus»)⁶¹, connected to the Coptic term ἡρωμ⁶². This word is an excellent example of how the *Pachomiana Latina* would impact later production in Latin of texts related to Egyptian monasticism. It appears in the *Praecepta* 15 (16 Boon): «*In die dominica ... nullus deerit de ebdomadariis, sedens in loco embrimii, psallentique respondens*» «On Sunday none of the weekly servers shall be absent from his seating place in the place of the mats / pillows, and not responding to the psalmist».

The term is only attested in monastic literature in Greek. In Latin it is attested in Cassian, *Conferences* 1, 23, where he gives some further description of what this artefact is⁶³:

⁶⁰ Crum 38b; E. Dévaud, *Notes de Lexicologie Copte*, «Le Muséon», 36 (1923), pp. 83-99, esp. 91. S. Torallas Tovar, *El hábito monástico en Egipto y su simbología*, «Ilu. Revista de Ciencias de las Religiones», 7 (2002), pp. 163-174, esp. 170.

⁶¹ It is already a loanword in Greek, Lampe, s.v.; LBG, s.v.; Torallas Tovar, *Lexical Interference* cit., p. 183. It appears not only in literary texts, but also in the papyri, showing some level of integration in the language, see DGE, s.v.; M. Pezin, *Pour une étymologie égyptienne de ἐμβρύμιον*, «Chronique d’Égypte», 63 (1988), pp. 341-343; G. Husson, ἐμβρύμιον, ἐμβρίμιον: à propos d’un objet mobilier égyptien, «Chronique d’Égypte», 63 (1988), pp. 331-340. For the Latin, Du Cange, s.v.; Blaise, s.v.

⁶² TLA lemma n. C2010, Vycichl, p. 120 considers it Greek.

⁶³ Other terms that might be Egyptian in Cassian: *athera*, a cereal porridge (*conl.* 15, 10, 1; cfr. Hier. *quaest. hebr. in gen.* 45, 21), with a contro-

Iisdem ipsis, quibus insidebamus psiathiis admonens incubare, embrimiis pariter capiti nostro cervicalium vice suppositis, grossioribus papyris in longos gracile-sque fasciculos coaptates.

Advising us to lie down on the same mats on which we were sitting, and to put our bundles under our heads instead of pillows, as these being tied evenly to thicker leaves of papyrus collected in long and slender bundles.

To complete the context of this term, there is an anecdote from an Apophthegma of Abba Macarius, in which he entered a pagan tomb, full of mummies. Taking one of these mummies, as a sign of contempt for pagan realities, he put it under his head, and used it as a «pillow» (Coll. Alph. Macarius 13, 44-45 = Coll. Syst. 7, 15):

Ἀνέβη ποτὲ ὁ ἀββᾶς Μακάριος ἀπὸ Σκήτεως εἰς Τερενοῦθιν· καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν κοιμηθῆναι. Ἦσαν δὲ ἐκεῖ σκηνώματα Ἑλλήνων παλαιά· καὶ λαβὼν ἓν, ὑπέθηκε τῇ ἑαυτοῦ κεφαλῇ, ὡς ἐμβρίμιον.

Once Abba Macarios went up from Scetis to Terenouthis, and he entered a sepulchre to sleep. There were old mummies of pagans. Taking one, he placed it under his head and used it as a pillow.

The translation into Latin keeps the Egyptian term: «*Erant autem ibi vetera ethnicorum cadavera; e quibus unum acceptum posuit sub capite suo, velut embrimum*» «There were old corpses of pagans. Taking one of those, he placed it under his head as if it were a pillow».

I will conclude this survey with two texts, one by Jerome, the other text by Cassian⁶⁴. Jerome's twenty-second epistle is addressed

versal etymology, Torallas Tovar, *Lexical Interference* cit., p. 178; *baucalis*, some kind of bottle (*inst.* 4, 16, 1), *Ibid.*, p. 182. Both probably through Greek ἀθήρα and βαυκάλις.

⁶⁴ Much has been written on these two texts. For a full study of the terms and the bibliography, see M. Blanchard, *Sarabaitae and Remnuoth*.

to Eustochium, a young girl who was about to enter a community of virgins. In this letter, Jerome gives her some basic training about monasticism in general, detailing among other things the three kinds of monks to be found in Egypt (*epist.* 22, 34):

Tria sunt in Aegypto genera monachorum: coenobium quod illi sauhes gentili lingua vocant, nos 'in commune viventes' possumus appellare; anachoretæ, qui soli habitant per deserta et ab eo quod procul ab hominibus recesserint nuncupantur; tertium genus est, quod dicunt remnuoth, deterrimum atque neglectum.

Three are the kinds of monks in Egypt: the cenobites, who are called sauhes in the local language, and we can call them 'those who live in community'; anchorites, who live alone in the desert areas and who receive their name from the fact that they withdraw far away from people; the third kind is the one called remnuoth, the worst and to be neglected.

Two of these kinds of monks are given with their denominations in the Egyptian language: *saubes* and *remnuoth*. There is a very similar passage with a tripartite typology of monks in John Casian's *Conferences* 18, 4, 7:

Tria sunt in Aegypto genera monachorum, quorum duo sunt optima, tertium tepidum atque omnimodis evitandum. Primum est coenobitarum, qui scilicet in

Coptic considerations, in *The World of Early Egyptian Christianity. Language, Literature and Social Context*, cur. J.A. Goehring, J.A. Timbie, Washington 2007, pp. 49-60. See also A. Alcock, *Two Notes on Egyptian Monasticism*, «Aegyptus», 67 (1987), pp. 189-190; Horn, *Latino-Coptica* cit.; A. Guillaumont, *Les remnuoth de Saint Jérôme*, in *Christianisme d'Égypte: Hommages à René-Georges Coquin* = «Cahiers de la Bibliothèque copte CGC», 9 (1995), pp. 87-92; C. Cannuyer, *L'identité des sarabaïtes, ces moines d'Égypte que méprisait Jean Cassien*, «Mélanges de Science Religieuse», 58 (2001), pp. 7-19; M. Choat, *Philological and Historical Approaches to the Search for the 'Third Type' of Egyptian Monk*, in *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium. Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies*, cur. M. Immerzeel, J. van der Vliet, II, Louvain 2004, pp. 857-865.

congregatione pariter consistentes unius senioris iudicio gubernantur: cuius generis maximus numerus monachorum per universam Aegyptum commoratur. Secundum anachoretarum, qui prius in coenobiis instituti iamque in actuali conversatione perfecti solitudinis elegere secreta: cuius professionis nos quoque optamus esse participes. Tertium reprehensibile sarabaitarum est.

Three are the kinds of monks in Egypt, from which two are best, and the third is weak, to be avoided in every possible way. The first is that of the coenobites, who certainly live together as equals in a congregation and are governed by the single direction of an elder monk: and of this kind there is the largest number of monks dwelling together throughout all of Egypt. The second is that of the anchorites, who having been trained in the congregations and then made perfect in active monastic life, chose the privacy of solitude: we also wish to take part in the latter order. The third is the reprehensible one of the sarabaites.

Three Egyptian / Coptic terms are used to define the types of monks in these texts. The cenobites are the sauhes in the text of Jerome. This term can be immediately connected to the Coptic Ⲫⲟⲟⲩⲁⲥ, which means «congregation»⁶⁵ (Ⲫⲟⲟⲩⲁ «to gather») rather than «monk». The third type of monk, of which both Jerome and Cassian coincide in their characterisation as a disreputable kind, receive two completely different names which have been widely discussed by scholars. The names are the remnuoth «lonely man» = μονάζων,

⁶⁵ TLA lemma n. C3894, Crum CD 373b. This Coptic term has the general meaning «congregation», corresponding to Greek ἐκκλησία or συναγωγή. It is found with the meaning of «monastic congregation», rather than «cenobite monks», as in Jerome, in monastic literature: e.g., Apoph. Anon. N126, *Le manuscrit de la version copte en dialecte sahidique des Apophthegmata Patrum*, ed. M. Chaîne, Le Caire 1960, pp. 28-29; *Life of Onnophrios* 11, *Coptic Martyrdoms in the Dialect of Upper Egypt*, ed. E.A.W. Budge, London 1914, p. 210. For further discussion and bibliography, see Blanchard, *Sarabaitae and Remnuoth* cit., p. 49.

μοναχός, from a reconstructed Coptic ***PMNOYWT** (from **PM** «man» and **OYWT** «single, one») not attested anywhere⁶⁶. It might be a calque of Greek **μονάζων**, using a nominal derivation construction in Coptic. The terms **OYA OYWT** or **OYA NOYWT** «single one»⁶⁷ are attested in the Gospel of Thomas (compare log. 16 and 23)⁶⁸.

The third term presents more complications than the first two. Some⁶⁹ have understood *sarabaitae* as a corruption of the existing Coptic term **CAPAKOTE** / **CAPAKOTE**, meaning «wanderer, pilgrim, vagrant»⁷⁰. There is no Coptic word in our sources which matches the Latin transcription *sarabaita*, and proposals are not completely satisfactory. I will summarise some of them⁷¹; Alcock and Horn propose **CA** «man (of)» and **PAH** «community, neighbourhood», thus ***CAPAH** «man belonging to a community»⁷². Monica Blanchard⁷³, discusses the use of the prefix **CA-**, used for offices and trades, with the meaning «maker of» or

⁶⁶ For variants of the term in the manuscripts, see Vycichl, p. 173. Vycichl also credits this identification to P.E. Jablonski, *Opuscula*, Leiden 1804-1813, p. 229. See Blanchard, *Sarabaitae and Remnuoth* cit., p. 50.

⁶⁷ TLA lemma n. C5191 (**OYA NOYWT**).

⁶⁸ A.F.J. Klijn, *The 'Single One' in the Gospel of Thomas*, «Journal of Biblical Literature», 81 (1962), pp. 271-278; Blanchard, *Sarabaitae and Remnuoth* cit., p. 51.

⁶⁹ Crum CD 354-355, H.G. Evelyn-White, *The Monasteries of the Wadi 'n Natrûn*, II, New York 1926-1933, p. 15.

⁷⁰ TLA lemma n. C3702. Crum 354b; Černý, p. 161.

⁷¹ For more details and full bibliography, see Blanchard, *Sarabaitae and Remnuoth* cit., pp. 51-60.

⁷² Alcock, *Two Notes* cit.; J. Horn, *Tria sunt in Aegypto genera monachorum: die ägyptischen Bezeichnungen für die 'dritte Art' des Mönchtums bei Hieronymus und Johannes Cassianus*, in *Quaerentes Scientiam: Festgabe für Wolfhart Westendorf zu seinem 70. Geburtstag*, cur. H. Behlmer, Göttingen 1994, pp. 63-76.

⁷³ Blanchard, *Sarabaitae and Remnuoth* cit., pp. 53-54.

«dealer in», such as **ϣⲁⲛⲧⲃⲧ** «fishmonger»⁷⁴, which should not be confused with the use of **ⲡⲙ**-, **ⲡⲙ-ⲛ**- and **ⲡⲙ**-, «man of», or «man from». The term **ⲡⲙⲡⲁⲩⲏ** «man of the neighbourhood» is attested in Coptic texts, but with the meaning of «neighbour». As Blanchard⁷⁵ points out, the term **ⲡⲁⲩⲏ** does not have the monastic connotations that a word like «community» might have in English. Malcolm Choat, on his part, suggests that the terms *remnuoth* and *sarabaitae* were both some kind of term of abuse, disqualifications of these despicable types of monks, rather than real characterisations. I will not linger on this discussion any longer, I refer to the bibliography cited for further details.

I would like to highlight that the ‘Egyptian terms’ that appear in Latin monastic literature do not seem always to have a counterpart in Coptic literature. This fact may be due to a number of reasons. The first that comes to mind is the corruption to which these terms have been submitted, not only by the authors who first heard them, perhaps through native guides, and included them in their works, but also in the process of textual transmission⁷⁶. Alternatively, these terms could have existed and were never recorded in the literary texts that have been transmitted to our day. If we agree with Choat’s suggestion that these were terms of abuse, this alternative suddenly seems plausible⁷⁷. Richter has already posed

⁷⁴ Se Vycichl, p. 181 for a list of compounds with **ϣⲁ**-.

⁷⁵ Blanchard, *Sarabaitae and Remnuoth* cit., p. 54.

⁷⁶ W. Spiegelberg, *Koptische miszellen XXXIII: Zwei koptische Mönchsamen bei hieronymus*, «Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l’archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes», 28 (1906), pp. 211-212 collects the evidence from five different manuscripts, from the 8th to the 12th centuries. The variation: *saubes* – *hauses* – *sauses*; *remnuoth* – *rennuo* – *remeboth* shows an extra obstacle to finding a clear connection with an Egyptian etymology.

⁷⁷ The practice of using disqualifications in the realm of religion can be used as parallels to the Egyptian example. In the Latin Mozarabic texts, Muslims and Christians called each other *canes* «dogs». A common term for Jews in Medieval Spain was *marrano* «pig».

the question of the distance between the literary and the spoken variants of the Coptic language⁷⁸. Probably a combination of both the textual corruption or the miscomprehension on the part of the Latin speakers, and the possibility of the singularity of spoken Coptic lurks behind these examples.

In this vein, I would like to offer one more example, in a text of Saint Augustine, to show the complexity of the interpretation of these rare terms. In his sermon On Resurrection Augustine describes the desiccation and treatment of bodies, in accordance with the Egyptians' belief in resurrection. He adds that the Egyptians call these (the mummified bodies?) *gabbaras* (*serm.* 361, 12; PL XXX-IV 1605):

Ægyptiū ergo soli credunt resurrectionem, quia diligenter curant cadavera mortuorum: morem enim habent siccare corpora, et quasi ænea reddere, gabbaras ea vocant.

Thus, the Egyptians alone believe in resurrection, since they diligently take care of the bodies of the dead. Indeed, they have the tradition of desiccating the bodies, and rendering them as bronze. They call these *gabbaras*.

There have been multiple attempts to explain the term⁷⁹, connecting it to Egyptian or Semitic roots, and it has entered the glossaries with some spelling variations, as *mortuorum corpora condita*⁸⁰. However, that short sentence, *gabbaras ea vocant*, seems to have been a marginal note in the manuscripts and not part of the text of the

⁷⁸ T.S. Richter, 'Spoken' Sahidic. *Gleanings from non-Literary Texts*, «Lingua Aegyptia», 14 (2006), pp. 311-323.

⁷⁹ See e.g., Jablonski, *Opuscula* cit., vol. I pp. 59-61.

⁸⁰ See du Cange, s.v. 4, col. 003a (accessed online). The *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum* (CgL IV 240, 46) refers to eight attestations of the word collected in different glossaries, all from a common source.

sermon of Augustine. Some scribe or scholar must have added it at some time, perhaps with a text of Pliny in mind (*nat.* 7, 16, 74-75), which describes the body of a giant, also desiccated or mummified, brought from Arabia, and exhibited in the Sallustian gardens for being remarkably tall (nine feet). This giant, Pliny explains, bore the name Gabbara. At this point one wonders whether it is productive to try and explain this term in the context we have proposed for this paper.

3. *Conclusion*

The knowledge of some Egyptian terms in the monastic literature produced outside Egypt is an artefact of the interaction of these monastic establishments with the rest of the Mediterranean through travellers and pilgrims. The Coptic language, spoken and promoted in these monastic communities might also have received some interference from Latin in different contexts: one, through Greek in administrative documents that featured Latin loans from the administration and the military; two, through literature, such as, for example, the few loans appearing in the New Testament, including also Latin literature read in the monasteries; and three, through direct contact with travellers and pilgrims. The very few lexical tokens of this linguistic contact, words that most often appear only once in the corpus of literature, is very difficult to assess as a whole, since the individual cases present so many doubts and problems of interpretation. The sources are also not completely reliable, since many of these texts have been transmitted into the Middle Ages in manuscripts which often include corruptions and misinterpretations.

But one thing seems clear: there was linguistic contact and there was exchange between speakers of Latin and speakers of Coptic. The sources describe the linguistic context of the early monasteries in some detail. Texts were translated, even in both directions,

sometimes with the mediation of Greek, and sometimes perhaps without it. Travellers returned home to the West carrying a treasure of ascetic knowledge, ready to found their own communities and produce their foundational texts. Among that treasure, some lexical terms in Egyptian managed to slip into the Latin language of these monastic authors, either as specialised terms for monastic realities, which could have been learned during their visits, or as other terms read in translations. Often their knowledge of Egyptian ascetics was acquired through ways that are now lost to us, such as the language of the native guides who accompanied the pilgrims or the spoken Coptic of their fellow monks. This would explain the fact that many of these terms are otherwise unattested.

Remarks on the Scope and the Functions of the Code-switching in the Letters of Theon*

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Papyrus documents from Egypt allow us to examine phenomena of Graeco-Latin language contact and their social correlations. Code-switching (from now on CS) is among these manifestations and under certain circumstances can be viewed as a communicative strategy. In fact, in the written documentation of the ancient world CS usually implies a certain knowledge of the languages involved, and is bound to sociolinguistic issues, such as the communicative and social intentions of the speakers. CS, therefore, helps us to understand how the languages are used and perceived, and to what extent they are spread, especially in some contexts¹. Among the extant evidence on papyrus three Latin-Greek letters from late antique

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¹ The terms bilingualism and bilingual are employed in the broadest sense, which is now preferred by scholars. On this matter and on the various aspects of Graeco-Latin bilingualism see J.N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language*, Cambridge 2003.

Oxyrhynchus sent by a certain Theon show several code-switches and are of great interest for their sociolinguistic value².

The letters were written between the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th centuries AD in a highly readable format and according to the literary conventions of Christian epistolography³. The main message is in Greek, whilst Latin is employed in one or more of the following sections: the preface (probably the translation of a literary quotation), the original greeting formula «*vale apud Deum*» and the peculiar address «*redde serbo dei tempore*» (*P.Köln* IV 200 l. 10). The relationship of the writer and the recipients of the letters with local languages is conceivable but impossible to establish with certainty, as it is hinted at by onomastics (with all its limitations) and the possibility of comparing the context with that of some literary sources.

The position and the content of the three code-switches suggest that the sender deliberately resorted to Latin in specific sections of the written communication with a precise meaning. These manifestations of CS have never been approached from a sociolinguistic

² *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 (TM 35623), 2194 (TM 35624); *P.Köln* IV 200 (TM 34796); L.H. Blumell, T.A. Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus. Texts, Documents, and Sources*, Waco 2015, pp. 585-596. Dr. A. Bernini is preparing a new edition of these texts for the forthcoming *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus* (CLTP).

³ L.H. Blumell, *Reconsidering the Dates of Three Christian Letters: P. Oxy. XVIII 2193, 2194, P. Köln IV 200 and a Reference in the Historia monachorum in Aegypto*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 54 (2008), pp. 219-223. Previously, the script was dated back to the period between the 5th and the 6th centuries AD: *P.Oxy.* VIII, pp. 153-154; *P.Köln* IV, p. 211. On Christian letters: M. Naldini, *Il Cristianesimo in Egitto: Lettere private nei papiri dei secoli II-IV*, Firenze 1998²; L.H. Blumell, *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus*, Leiden 2012 (pp. 1-26 for the discussion of pre-existing bibliography); Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit. Cfr. also M. Choat, *Monastic Letters on Papyrus from Late Antique Egypt*, in *Writing and Communication in Early Egyptian Monasticism*, cur. Id., M.C. Giorda, Leiden 2017, pp. 17-72.

perspective, although the documents have already been studied from the historic-cultural and socio-cultural point of views⁴. In the present paper this topic and some issues outlined by Maria Chiara Scappaticcio earlier in this volume will be explored based on a methodology that integrates sociolinguistic research with palaeography, history, and philology. The scope and the functions of the code-switches will be examined and compared with those of the CS occurring in other letters that come mostly (but not only) from Oxyrhynchus (1). In addition, the language of the epistles and their context will be considered to understand both how Latin was used and perceived, and what its role was in a specific micro-context of the late antique Oxyrhynchus (2). Tracing the sociolinguistic dynamics operating in a micro-context will allow us to glimpse the synchronic interactions that many languages (local idioms, Greek, Latin) have had in different ways within a multilingual environment (3).

1. *The Dossier of Theon*

Three Latin-Greek letters (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193, 2194; *P.Köln* IV 200) are thought to belong to the dossier of a certain Theon, because they share palaeographic, structural and linguistic features. Moreover, they were found in the same archaeological context – this datum is certain for at least two epistles – and concern a Christian environment, as revealed by the onomastics and textu-

⁴ P.J. Sijpesteijn, *Apphus and Pascentius: servo dei tempore*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 40.1 (1994), pp. 69-70; J. O'Callaghan, *Nota sobre 'servus Dei' en los papiros*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 106 (1995), pp. 201-202; Blumell, *Reconsidering the Dates* cit.; Id., *A Potential Source for the Latin Preface in P.Oxy. XVIII 2194*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 183 (2012), pp. 72-74; Id., *Lettered Christians* cit., pp. 21-22; 212-216.

al insights⁵. Theon is the sender of the two letters in which the *inscriptio* is preserved and possibly of the letter in *P.Köln* IV 200 that lacks the superior margin. He may be the homonym «ἄγιος ἀνήρ» mentioned in the *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* 6, 3 (Festugière) who would know Greek, Latin and Egyptian⁶. Twice he asks favours of Pascentius (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193, 2194), and once he writes to Aphous (*P.Köln* IV 200) for reasons now impossible to determine (although one of them is to comfort the addressee). The former is a clergyman or, more likely, a bureaucrat performing administrative tasks, whereas the latter is possibly the Apa Aphous who lived between the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th centuries AD⁷. As frequently happens in Christian papyrus letters, Theon supports his claims throughout the epistles with scriptural quotations, adapted to the new contexts of his messages⁸.

Palaeographic and linguistic features show that the letters were produced in a bilingual context. Theon did not write the epistles himself but resorted to a scribe. It is possible that he made use of the same scribe given the palaeographic analogies of the manuscripts. The scribe received a formal education in the Greek and Latin writing systems, which show a convergence especially in the shape of

⁵ The difference between a dossier and an archive is notoriously a much-debated topic among papyrologists. However, there are some solid points: an archive consists of a group of documents put together in Antiquity by one or more persons or by an institution for several reasons. Conversely, a dossier consists of documents that have been grouped together by modern scholars and often belong to different papyrological collections. On the matter see lastly K. Vandorpe, *Archives and Dossiers*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, cur. R.S. Bagnall, Oxford 2009, pp. 216-255.

⁶ Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit. For details see Scappaticcio above p. 84 footnote 21.

⁷ For more details on the context see Scappaticcio above pp. 85-86 footnote 24.

⁸ Scappaticcio above p. 86.

some letters⁹. As for the Latin, he used a semi-uncial like that of some coeval literary texts on papyrus¹⁰. The scribe was able to give the manuscripts a neat layout, such as to make clear the various sections of the letters, even before reading. The peculiar Latin introduction is separated from the proper message by different editorial strategies. As earlier underlined by Scappaticcio, the graphic devices are different in the documents, in spite of their palaeographic affinities, and are consistent with the uses of the documentary and (para)literary papyrus texts¹¹. The employment of three oblique strokes at the end of the Latin introduction of *P.Oxy. XVIII 2194* to isolate what appears to be a literary quotation (par. 2.2) calls for attention. This device can be paralleled both in form (although, to be precise, there is not perfect coincidence) and in function with those employed in some bilingual texts (Latin-Greek or vice versa and Coptic-Greek or vice versa) of the so called paraliterary genre (cfr. par. 2.3)¹². The care taken over

⁹ Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 586.

¹⁰ S. Ammirati, *Sul libro latino antico. Ricerche bibliografiche e paleografiche*, Pisa - Roma 2015, p. 53. The importance of valuing the intersection between literary and documentary papyri was often highlighted by J.-L. Fournet: e.g., Id., *Une éthiopée de Caïn dans le Codex des Visions de la Fondation Bodmer*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 92 (1992), pp. 253-266; Id., *L'influence des usages littéraires sur l'écriture des documents: Perspectives*, in *Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Papyrologists (Copenhagen, 23-29 August 1992)*, cur. A. Bülow-Jacobsen, Copenhagen 1994, pp. 418-422.

¹¹ Scappaticcio above p. 91. For material aspects of ancient epistolography see A. Sarri, *Material Aspects of Letter Writing in the Graeco-Roman World (c. 500 BC – c. AD 300)*, Berlin - Boston 2017.

¹² A definition of the paraliterary genre can be found in M. Huys, A. Nodar, *A Catalogue of Paraliterary Papyri (CPP): Presentation of the Project*, in *Proceedings of the 24th International Congress of Papyrology (Helsinki, 1st–7th of August 2004)*, cur. J. Frösen, T. Purola, E. Salmenkivi, Helsinki 2007, pp. 453-461, esp. 453-454.

the material aspects is also visible in the enlargement of characters for the writing of the address on the verso, at least in the epistle in *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194. This feature is found also in other Greek and Latin letters on papyrus written between the imperial era and Late Antiquity and is part of the tendency towards the ornamentation of the writing¹³. All the above-mentioned features suggest that the scribe was a professional and had familiarity with both documents and bilingual (para)literary texts¹⁴.

2. *Code-switching in the Letters of Theon*

CS is today described as the alternate use of two or more languages within the same conversation or text. This phenomenon is typical of bilingualism, has multiple manifestations and, consequently, is classified differently by linguists and not without problems¹⁵. When the first studies on language contact began to appear,

¹³ Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 591; Sarri, *Material Aspects* cit., pp. 122-124.

¹⁴ Cfr. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

¹⁵ There exists a copious bibliography on the theme. For the sake of brevity, cited here are some of the most important studies on bilingualism in the ancient world, to which the reader is redirected for further bibliography and discussion of the linguistic models so far proposed: Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 18-29; A. Mullen, *The Bilingualism of Material Culture?*, «HEROM, Journal of Hellenistic and Roman Material Culture», 2 (2013), pp. 21-43; O. Elder, A. Mullen, *The Language of Roman Letters: Bilingual Epistolography from Cicero to Fronto*, Cambridge 2019. It is also impossible to mention the tendencies of (socio)linguistic studies on CS. For this aspect see the introduction and the articles collected in *One Speaker, Two Languages: Cross-disciplinary Perspectives on Code-switching*, cur. L. Milroy, P. Muysken, Cambridge 1995 and P. Gardner-Chloros, *Code-switching*, Cambridge 2009, pp. 1-20.

CS was looked at as an aberrant linguistic behaviour¹⁶. However, several studies have then shown that CS can also often be the mark of bilingual competence – varying in degree – and be connected to specific communicative and social intentions. This perspective, promoted especially by Shana Poplack and John J. Gumperz, who studied oral manifestations of CS in modern languages based respectively on variationist sociolinguistics and interactional sociolinguistics, has been enhanced in numerous works devoted to bilingual communities of the present and of the past¹⁷.

Sociolinguistic studies on CS from Greek to Latin and vice versa in the bilingual communities of the past are based on written sources (be they documents and / or literature). The greater formality of written evidence as opposed to the spontaneity of the oral evidence has been debated for many years and is no longer considered only a limitation, although linguists still have different opinions about that. The formality of a text ensures the largely deliberate and marked character, as well as the social significance, of the change of language¹⁸. Recent studies on written CS have thus confirmed the approach of James N. Adams, who was among the first linguists to evaluate the advantages of the written sources in studying bilingual phenomena¹⁹.

¹⁶ The locus classicus is U. Weinreich, *Languages in Contact. Findings and Problems*, New York 1953, pp. 74; 76.

¹⁷ S. Poplack, *Sometimes I'll start a Sentence in Spanish y termino en español: Toward a Typology of Code-switching*, «Linguistics», 18 (1980), pp. 581-618; J.J. Gumperz, *Discourse Strategies*, Cambridge 1982.

¹⁸ For the discussion of the concept of 'marked', of the 'markedness model' proposed by C.A. Myers-Scotton and of its applicability in studies on written evidence of the ancient world see Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 299-308; 410-413. In those pages one will also find an examination of the sources where CS is attributable to imperfect command of a language.

¹⁹ Work on the subject was initiated by the in-depth study of E. McClure, *The Relationship Between Form and Function in Written National Language—*

Intentional CS can be linked to a language choice, which can be described according to different models, and to the purpose of negotiating identities and social relationships²⁰. Adams has demonstrated that some models employed in sociolinguistic research on modern languages – especially but not only those of Poplack and Gumperz – can be applied also to the ancient bilingual communities, as long as they are adequately adjusted to the specific contexts²¹. In his monograph on the Latin language and ancient bilingualism Adams mainly focused on four general issues, since CS can: 1. establish a relationship with the addressee (e.g., solidarity, dominance, divergence, feeling of a shared mixed identity or culture); 2. express

English Codeswitching: Evidence from Mexico, Spain, and Bulgaria, in *Codeswitching Worldwide I*, cur. R. Jacobson, Berlin 1998, pp. 125-150 and during the years was further developed on the basis of different written sources. On this see Mullen, *The Bilingualism* cit., pp. 24-25; Elder, Mullen, *The Language of Roman Letters* cit., pp. 8-9 with further bibliography and indications of possible future research on CS. The impulse to study CS through the written evidence of the ancient world was given by the articles collected in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society. Language Contact and the Written Texts*, cur. J.N. Adams, M. Janse, S. Swain, Oxford 2002 and by Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., who was the first to deal with the matter in a systematic way on the basis of a selection of the Latin evidence, both literary and documentary.

²⁰ B. Spolsky, *Jewish Multilingualism in the First Century: An Essay in Historical Sociolinguistics*, in *Readings in the Sociology of Jewish Languages*, cur. J.A. Fishman, Leiden 1985, pp. 35-50, esp. 44-46; D.R. Langslow, *Approaching Bilingualism in Corpus Languages*, in Adams, Janse, Swain, *Bilingualism in Ancient Society* cit., pp. 23-51, esp. 36-41; S. Swain, *Bilingualism in Cicero? The Evidence of Code-switching*, in Adams, Janse, Swain, *Bilingualism in Ancient Society* cit., pp. 128-167, also for discussion of previous studies.

²¹ Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 297-416. Cfr. also Elder, Mullen, *The Language of Roman Letters* cit., pp. 40-110, who deal with the possibility of analysing CS from Latin to Greek in the epistles from the Republican age to the first two centuries of the Empire according to a grammatical approach.

different types of identity; 3. be the response to the topic of part of the discourse, if this is allowed by the addressee and the communicative context; 4. be a stylistic resource and evoke the exotic²². The first two points are often coincident, since in defining his identity the speaker will also have to negotiate his relationship with the addressee. Sometimes creating a relationship of solidarity with the addressee can involve accommodation, namely the act of modifying the language during an oral or a written exchange so as to make the language choice more acceptable or appropriate to the addressee and / or the circumstances of the communication²³.

In the present paper CS is conceived mainly as the alternate use of two languages, Greek and Latin, within the same written source; more specifically, their alternate use in different sections of the same document. In the sources cited below the change of language is not necessarily due to the initiative of the same person and can be paralleled with the examples of CS in an oral conversation due to the alternation of speakers (which in general are ascribed to CS)²⁴. The present analysis does not dwell on the possible categorisations of CS, since this operation is notoriously difficult²⁵, and is based on the theoretical framework and terminology proposed by Adams, aiming to understand the scope and functions of the code-switches in the letters of Theon.

²² Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 297-416.

²³ On the accommodation theory see *Ibid.*, pp. 350-351; 576; Mullen, *The Bilingualism* cit., p. 31 footnote 52.

²⁴ Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., p. 393. Cfr. Milroy, Muysken, *Code-switching* cit., p. 7: «Sometimes switching occurs between the turns of different speakers in the conversation, sometimes between utterances within a single turn, and sometimes even within a single utterance». See also Elder, Mullen, *The Language of Roman Letters* cit., p. 7. Examples of this type of CS are not numerous in the monograph of Adams, who takes account of CS within the same period: Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., p. 19 footnote 55.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-25.

A necessary premise concerns the discussion of the one responsible for the choice of language, since it is a well-known fact that in the written documentation of the ancient world the author of a text is not always identifiable with the scribe and vice versa. In a way, the problem is less prominent for private letters, since the communication is personal and, therefore, the linguistic and communicative strategies are almost certainly attributable to the sender (to his communicative and social intentions and / or to other factors, both internal and external to the communicative exchange) rather than the scribe. After all, in a multilingual province like Egypt it would not be economical for a scribe to be versed in just one language or script²⁶. Therefore, although some difficulties remain, scholars are inclined to believe that usually the scribe might be responsible for the graphic and some morphological features of the texts but have (almost) no role in shaping the syntax of the message and in choosing the language²⁷.

As for the letters of Theon, these overall considerations are confirmed by the circumstance that the scribe is well versed in Latin and Greek scripts (par. 1). Thus, CS relies on the communicative and social intentions of Theon. In the epistles, CS coincides with the switch of the alphabet and happens between the boundaries of different sections of the letter, occurring in: 1. the introduction that precedes the proper message; 2. the greeting formula at the end; 3. the address on the verso. The three code-switches are differently distributed in the letters. In the epistles addressed to Pascentius, CS is found in the introductory lines and in the address, whilst in the letter to Aphous, CS occurs in the peculiar greeting formula and in the address. The code-switches in the greeting formula and in the address can be considered as a creative production of Theon, whereas CS in the introduction is possibly an original use.

²⁶ Cfr. *Ibid.*, pp. 398; 542; 593-595.

²⁷ On this matter see H. Halla-aho, *The Non-literary Latin Letters. A Study of Their Syntax and Pragmatics*, Helsinki 2009.

2.1. Code-switching to Latin in the Coeval Greek Epistles from Oxyrhynchus: An Overview

The scope and functions of CS to Latin in the letters of Theon can be better understood if compared with those of the code-switches from Greek to Latin found in the coeval epistles from Oxyrhynchus. As noted by Jean-Luc Fournet²⁸, during Late Antiquity the Latin language gradually disappeared from private letters on papyrus. In the epistles, Latin continued to be displayed especially for official communications according to an established tradition or in specific sections of public documents issued by an authority. The former use is represented, for example, by letters of recommendation²⁹, and the latter in dating formulae and subscriptions such as *legi* and *recognovi*.

The examples of CS in the late antique Graeco-Latin letters from Oxyrhynchus fall into the second category. In these epistles CS has a social intention and can be interpreted as an act of either solidarity or divergence, shaping the relationship between sender and addressee³⁰. Usually the code-switches found in these sources are not attributable to the scribe who wrote the message. CS occurs in formulae and in stereotyped sections of: 1. official documents issued from the praefect's chancery dating to the 4th AD and containing orders from an authority to a subordinate; 2. a military letter datable to the 6th AD which is perhaps connected to a Christian milieu³¹. In all these cases,

²⁸ J.-L. Fournet, *La pratique du latin dans l'Égypte de l'Antiquité tardive*, in *Latin in Byzantium I. Late Antiquity and Beyond*, cur. A. Garcea, M. Rosellini, L. Silvano, Turnhout 2019, pp. 73-91, esp. 75-76.

²⁹ Cfr. the list made by P. Cugusi in *C.Epist.Lat.* I, p. 11. On recommendation letters see H.M. Cotton, *Documentary Letters of Recommendation in Latin from the Roman Empire*, Königstein 1981. *ChLA* XIX 687, on which see par. 2.4, is part of this group.

³⁰ The terms convergence and divergence are discussed by Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 301-305.

³¹ In the list of bilingual letters from Oxyrhynchus in Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., p. 212 footnote 217 there is also *SB* XVI 12990 (5th-6th AD;

CS is from Greek to Latin and mostly concerns the use of Latin as the language connected to the power and its manifestations.

In the official documents issued by the Roman administration in the Greek language – which was the one regularly used in administrative documents according to a long-standing tradition – CS mainly occurs in the dating formulae in Roman style, namely those formulae characterised by specific linguistic and formal features and by the use of the Roman calendar. These formulae conferred legal value on the document and at the same time authenticated it, since they were added after the text was written, at its bottom, by a different hand³². CS is apparently favoured by the Romanness of the dating formula and the circumstance that its presence is a formal requirement in numerous documents. The switch to Latin serves the purpose of highlighting the distance between sender, an authority, and addressee, a subordinate receiving instructions, thereby reinforcing the power of the former³³.

A good example of the pattern often found in the bilingual official letters from Oxyrhynchus is the original Greek letter sent in AD 335 by the prefect Flavius Philagrius to instruct Synesios, the strategus of the Oxyrhynchite nome³⁴. In the epistle there are two Latin dating formulae, namely the consular one «*Iulio Constantio v(iro)*

TM 36017). I have omitted this document from the evidence here examined, since in his new edition for the forthcoming *CLTP* Dr. Bernini has labelled it as a petition. I thank him for kindly sharing with me this information.

³² Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 392-393.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 393.

³⁴ *P.Oxy.* XLIII 3129 (TM 16008); LV 3793 (AD 340; TM 22517); 3794 (AD 340; TM 22518); L 3577 (AD 342; TM 15398); 3579 (AD 341-343; TM 15400); LXIII 4369 (AD 345; TM 22132). For the context of these manuscripts see G. Iovine, *Data epistula: Later Additions of Latin Dating Formulae in Latin and Greek Papyri and Ostraka from the First to the Sixth Centuries AD*, «Manuscripta», 63.2 (2019), pp. 157-230, esp. 163-167; 175-176.

c(larissimo) pat[r]icio fratre d(omini) n(ostru) [- - -]», and the one preceded by «dat(-), dat(a) [- - -] . . . Kal(endas) [- - -] Octobr(es) [- - - Al]ex(andriae)»³⁵. The former was written by a fourth hand in the bottom margin, whereas the latter by a third hand in the left margin. According to John R. Rea, the insertion of the Latin dating formula in the left margin should be viewed as an ancient Roman practice intended as a countersignature³⁶. The Roman character of these formulae has also been stressed recently by Giulio Iovine, who called them «inorganic» because they are added after the text was written³⁷.

CS can be a manifestation of authority and express acts of divergence also when it occurs in other syntactical contexts than the Roman dating formula³⁸. An instance is found in a Greek official letter which is addressed to the curator of the Oxyrhynchite nome at around AD 340 and concerns the works ordered by the *dux Aegypti* Flavius Valacius for the renovation of the walls of the fort of Psobthis³⁹. The epistle is entirely in the Greek language except for the greeting formula and the Roman dating formula, both in Latin. The sender is perhaps a subordinate instructed by the *dux*⁴⁰, and himself wrote the greeting formula «*opto bene valeas per multos ann[os]*». This formula is required by the literary conventions of the ancient epistolography and at the same time serves the purpose of authen-

³⁵ On Roman dating formulae preceded by *dat(-)* see *ibid.*

³⁶ *P.Oxy.* XLIII, p. 99. On the Roman character of this formula see J.R. Rea in *P.Oxy.* L, p. 192. On the forms of authentication in the papyrus epistles see Sarri, *Material Aspects* cit., pp. 125-192 (170-176 for the official context). The reading *Al]ex(andriae)* in place of [- - -]l () is proposed by Rea (*P.Oxy.* L, p. 195).

³⁷ Iovine, *Data epistula* cit., who discusses some diplomatic aspects of the Latin dating formulae.

³⁸ Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 301; 383; 399.

³⁹ *P.Oxy.* LV 3793; TM 22517. On the date: *P.Oxy.* LV, pp. 63-64.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 63; 65; 66.

ticating the message⁴¹. The sender resorted to the Latin language deliberately, possibly as a result of his institutional role, and apparently not taking into consideration the linguistic preferences of the addressee, who perhaps was a Greek-speaker. This is implied by the writing in Greek not only of the letter here examined but also of another epistle addressed to the curator of the Oxyrhynchite nome and collected in the same *tomos synkollesimos*⁴². The distance between sender and addressee is reinforced by the Latin dating formula at the bottom of the text, which is written by a different hand from those responsible for the letter and the greeting formula.

In the only Greek letter from a Christian milieu the sender, possibly an army officer⁴³, gives orders to Paulus, perhaps a subordinate, to protect a recently plundered village⁴⁴. At the end of the message

⁴¹ Ll. 15-17. *Ibid.*, p. 63. Details on the structural and linguistic features of the ancient letters can be found in F.J. Exler, *The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter of the Epistolary Papyri (3rd c. b. C.-3rd c. a. D.): A Study in Greek Epistolography*, Chicago 1976; J.L. White, *The Greek Documentary Letter Tradition Third Century B.C.E. to Third Century C.E.*, «Semeia», 22 (1981), pp. 89-106; P. Cugusi, *Evoluzione e forme dell'epistolografia latina nella tarda repubblica e nei primi due secoli dell'impero con cenni sull'epistolografia preciceroniana*, Roma 1983; R. Luiselli, *Greek Letters on Papyrus, First to Eighth Centuries: A Survey*, in *Documentary Letters from the Middle East. The Evidence in Greek, Coptic, South Arabian, Pehlevi, and Arabic (1st - 15th c CE)*, cur. E.M. Grob = «Asiatische Studien», 62 (2008), pp. 677-737, with further bibliography.

⁴² P.Oxy. LV, p. 62.

⁴³ P.Oxy. VIII 1106 l. 1: κομμω[ν]ι τώρ(τον); TM 37834. The reading was proposed by J. Maspero (*P.Cairo Masp.* III 67282, p. 14) in place of Κόμμω[ν] Ταρ(-). The loanword from Lat. *commonitorium* indicates a letter of instruction, especially from the emperor; it occurs since the 5th century AD in literary sources and since the 5th-6th centuries AD in the documentary evidence, being then scarcely attested. See LSJ *Suppl.*; S. Daris, *Il lessico latino nel greco d'Egitto*, Barcelona 1991, p. 59.

⁴⁴ P.Oxy. VIII, p. 177. For Christians in the army being charged

both the scribe and the sender added their autograph subscriptions «*legi*», even though neither of the two is a native speaker of Latin. In fact, the scribe wrote «*legi scribus*» using *scribus* instead of *scriba*.⁴⁵ The double subscription recalls the double farewell greetings in Greek letters examined by Antonia Sarri⁴⁶. The recourse to the Latin language is not surprising in a military environment, as soldiers were well aware of the Roman character of the institution in which they served and were prone to resorting to Latin to shape a Romanised (if not bilingual) identity⁴⁷. Examples of CS such as those of the letter can be a result of the formal and bureaucratic character of the information and, in this specific case, they may have a social intention, marking a solidarity between the scribe and the sender and at the same time a distance between the sender and the addressee, and thereby highlighting the authority of the former⁴⁸.

The code-switches in the letters of Theon have a few elements in common with the abovementioned letters from Oxhyrhynchus in as much as they occur in conventional and structural sections of the epistolary communication in at least two cases (greeting formula and address). The comparison allows us to establish the following unparalleled features: 1. there is no scribe alternation; 2. the nature of the letters is mostly private; 3. there are both linguistic and stylistic peculiarities in the Latin lines (see par. 2.2); 4. the purposes of the switches of language are different. The code-switches likely mark a communication between pairs with equal cultural and linguistic com-

with safeguarding local villages or restoring order see Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., p. 109.

⁴⁵ *CbLA* IV, p. 18.

⁴⁶ Sarri, *Material Aspects* cit., pp. 184-188.

⁴⁷ For example, this datum is evident from the recourse to the Latin language in those specific sections of Greek funerary inscriptions where there are references to the Roman army: Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., p. 382.

⁴⁸ For CS to convey bureaucratic information see *Ibid.*, pp. 399-403.

petences and happen from the speakers' native language (Greek) to the language they somehow learned (Latin). CS possibly has a social intention as it would serve the purpose of shaping a bilingual identity while also negotiating an intimate relationship between the speakers based on a shared belief and a common cultural background.

2.2. *The Introductory Lines*

The Latin lines that precede the usual *formula valetudinis* are apparently present only in the letters to Pascentius since the epistle to Aphous lacks the superior margin. The introductory lines are similar in both content and form and are known in a brief (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 ll. 1-3) and a long (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 ll. 1-5) versions; they catch the interest of the reader for at least two reasons. Firstly, they are a distinctive feature of the two epistles, especially if one thinks of the manifestations of CS in the coeval Greek letters from Oxyrhynchus (par. 2). Secondly, they most likely contain a literary quotation that implies a process of translation from Greek to Latin, which is not signalled by any metalinguistic remarks. The hypotext would not be the *Sapientia Salomonis* (2:23-24), as once proposed by the editor princeps Colin H. Roberts, but the *Acta Apollonii* (25), as shown by Lincoln H. Blumell⁴⁹. The *Acta Apollonii* are part of the Greek hagiographic literature and refer to a martyrdom which occurred at around the end of the 2nd century AD⁵⁰. They are known

⁴⁹ *P.Oxy.* XVIII, p. 154. *Vet. Lat. sap.* 2:23-24: «*quoniam Deus creavit hominem inexterminabilem et ad imaginem similitudinis suae fecit illum: invidia autem diaboli mors introivit in illum*». The hypothesis of the scriptural quotation, already questioned by P. van Minnen, *Notes on Texts from Graeco-Roman Egypt*, «*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*», 96 (1993), pp. 117-122, esp. 120, was refused by Blumell, *A Potential Source* cit., pp. 72-74; Id., *Lettered Christians* cit., pp. 228-230.

⁵⁰ On the *Acta Apollonii* see *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, ed. H.A. Musurillo, Oxford 2000², pp. xxiii-xxv and the information provided by Scappaticcio above pp. 87-88 footnote 27.

in two late recensions (one in Greek and one in Armenian), possibly reshaped during the textual transmission, as is customary for hagiographic literature. Furthermore, the Latin lines with which we are concerned here pose some problems in terms of the morphology and the syntax. For these reasons, before analysing the scope and function of the change of language, it is necessary to understand whether from a linguistic point of view it is plausible that this is a translation of *AApoll.* 25. In fact, Blumell, who himself detected the possible Greek source text, did not rule out the hypothesis that the substantive *lues*, which occurs in both the brief (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 l. 2) and long (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 l. 4) version, may allude generically to a negative event, despite being little convinced by the alternative since historical evidence is absent⁵¹.

The similarities between the introductory Latin lines and the description of the process against Apollonius before the proconsul of Asia Perennis are of style and content, whilst *Vet. Lat sap.* 2:23-24 shares with the Latin lines only a general sense.

P.Oxy. XVIII 2193 ll. 1-3: *Una mortis condidit deus, lues autem com* (cum *legendum*) *m[or]tis fieri.*

God ordained one death, in the moment of death they dissolve⁵².

P.Oxy. XVIII 2194 ll. 1-5: [±12] . [. . .] . [±22 | ±15] *os et probatos et imperatorum* (*imperatorum legendum*) *et senatorum et maximo diserto et pauperos una mortis condidit deus, lues autem com mortis fieri.*

[... for all men(?), good] and bad, emperors and senators, the mighty, the eloquent, the poor, God ordained one death, in the moment of death they dissolve⁵³.

⁵¹ Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., pp. 229-230.

⁵² Translation from Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 587.

⁵³ Translation: *Ibid.*, p. 591.

A. Apoll. 25 Musurillo: γινώσκειν δέ σε θέλω, Περέννιε, ὅτι καὶ ἐπὶ βασιλεῖς καὶ ἐπὶ συγκλητικούς καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔχοντας ἐξουσίαν πολλήν καὶ ἐπὶ πλουσίους καὶ πτωχοὺς καὶ ἑλευθέρους καὶ δούλους καὶ μεγάλους καὶ μικροὺς καὶ σοφοὺς καὶ ἰδιώτας ἓνα θάνατον ὥρισεν ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ πάντων καὶ δίκην μετὰ θάνατον ἔσσεσθαι ἐπὶ πάντας ἀνθρώπους.

But I wish you to know, Perennis, that for emperors and senators and for those who wield great power, for rich and poor, for slave and free, for the great and the insignificant, for the philosopher and the simple man, God has laid down one and the same death for all and a judgement after death that shall be for all mankind⁵⁴.

The syntax of the long version cannot be established with certainty due to the loss of the superior margin of the papyrus. However, two data deserve attention: the eventuality that in the lacuna was lost the independent sentence (1) and the joint recourse to the perfect «*condit*» and the infinite «*feri*» (2). These elements may suggest at least two scenarios: 1. the adherence to the mixed declarative clause of the Greek source text ruled by «γινώσκω», where there is an alternate use of explicit and implicit verbs (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 ll. 4; 5)⁵⁵; 2. a reference, deprived of the original syntactical context. The latter hypothesis is perhaps preferable, since the former would result in a construction apparently not admitted by Latin grammar. Also, in the brief version, where the text is preserved in its entirety, one can see an unchanged resumption of the period from «*una mortis*» to «*feri*». These data are of interest for at least two reasons: 1. in neither case could the linguistic competence of the translator be assessed positively; 2. these may be hints that the passage from the Acts is not translated but quoted

⁵⁴ Translation from Musurillo, *The Acts* cit., p. 97.

⁵⁵ For the Greek construction see A.N. Jannaris, *An Historical Greek Grammar; Chiefly of the Attic Dialect as Written and Spoken from Classical Antiquity down to the Present Time*, London - New York 1897, par. 2030; *App.* VI 7b-c.

in a crystallised form in both the long and the short version. Some linguistic peculiarities shared by the two versions seem to point in the same direction.

The period «*una mortis condidit deus*» matches the Greek «ἐνα θάνατον ὥρισεν ὁ θεός»; on the contrary, the expression «*lues autem com mortis fieri*» does not perfectly correspond to «καὶ δίκην μετὰ θάνατον ἔσσεσθαι». The conjunction *autem*, present in both versions, is not a perfect equivalent of the *καὶ* in the source text⁵⁶. Anyway, as expected, *autem* occurs after the first element of the period⁵⁷.

The two versions of the preface share some other linguistic features. The expression «*una mortis*» (P.Oxy. XVIII 2193 l. 1; 2194 l. 4) can be understood in several ways (*unius mortis*, *unam mortem*) and is apparently formed by a nominative and a genitive⁵⁸. The hypothesis that the sequence can be equivalent to *unam mortem* due to the loss of the final *-m* may be consistent with the traces of an influence of the spoken language in «*com*» and in «*inperatorum*» (P.Oxy. XVIII 2194 l. 2)⁵⁹. Furthermore, the hypothesis would allow us to reconstruct a translation closer to the source text, whereas *unius mortis*, implying an infinitive with *esse* governed by *condo*, would be very different from the Greek text. Due to the loss of the superior margin of P.Oxy. XVIII 2194 the question arises whether *condo* is constructed

⁵⁶ For the various interpretations see Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 588; Scappaticcio above p. 89 footnote 31.

⁵⁷ TLL II 1576.84-1577.44; R. Kühner, C. Stegmann, *Ausführliche Grammatik der Lateinischen Sprache. Zweiter Teil: Satzlehre. Zweiter Band*, Darmstadt 1966, parr. 165; 174 A1-3.

⁵⁸ Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 592; Scappaticcio above pp. 88-89 footnote 29.

⁵⁹ On the late spelling of *cum* see J. Kramer, *Vulgärlateinische Altagsdokumente auf Papyri, Ostraka, Täfelchen und Inschriften*, Berlin 2007, p. 71. For *u > o* cfr. also V. Väänänen, *Introduzione al latino volgare*, Bologna 1971 (ed. or. Paris 1963), pp. 77-78; 88. For the loss of final *-m* see Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 47; 51.

with indirect complement + genitive (*unius mortis*) + (implied) infinitive or with accusative (*unam mortem*) + indirect complements on the example of $\delta\pi\iota\zeta\omega$ ⁶⁰. The occurrences of *mortis* in the two versions of the preface possibly point to the latter hypothesis. The term *mortis* may witness the modification of a monosyllabic nominative of an imparisyllabic noun to bring it into line with the syllabic structure of the oblique cases. An example of this process, mostly occurring in Latin texts labelled as non-standard, can be found in the nominative singular «*lites*» in a letter from the archive of Claudius Tiberianus from Karanis⁶¹. According to this hypothesis one could also explain the presence of *mortis* in union with the preposition *com* as an example of the extended use of the nominative as a base-form. In Latin papyrus documents from Egypt drawn up by scribes with an imperfect command of the language the nominative is sometimes used instead of other cases. This happens because the nominative is the first case a language learner would learn and is thus at times perceived as a sort of base-form⁶². It is uncertain whether there is a concordance between «*lues*» and «*fieri*» (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 l. 2; 2194 l. 4), since *lues* could be either a plural accusative or a singular nominative. The doubt arises, as the occurrences of the plural forms of *lues* recorded in the *TLL* VII 2.1794.73-75 are scarce and in the source text there is a singular accusative (« $\delta\iota\kappa\eta\eta$ »). However, no solid evidence can be cited to support either of the hypotheses.

The phrase «*com mortis*» would have temporal value and indicate simultaneity with the action expressed by the verb («and that in the moment of death they dissolve»), whereas $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$ refers to the

⁶⁰ LSJ, s.v. For the transitive use of *condo* with a meaning similar to that of *constituo*: *TLL* IV 135.34-73.

⁶¹ *P.Mich.* VIII 471 l. 27. J.N. Adams, *An Anthology of Informal Latin, 200 BC-AD 900: Fifty Texts with Translations and Linguistic Commentary*, Cambridge 2016, p. 278.

⁶² Id., *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 621; 633.

future⁶³. The change could be explained in at least two ways: it could be conscious, since simultaneity between the moment of the death and that of divine punishment would make the latter more formidable or, as is perhaps more plausible given the other linguistic peculiarities, it could be the result of an inadequate translation of *μετά*. In bilingual texts for learning Latin as a foreign language, such as glossaries and *colloquia*, the Greek preposition is often linked to *cum* (especially if it indicates the way something was done / is being done or that the action was done / is being done together with other people)⁶⁴. However, there does not seem to be any solid element to hypothesise a connection between the glossaries and the case here examined.

The phrase «*maximo dissertos*» (P.Oxy. XVIII 2194 l. 3), used in place of *maxime dissertos*, does not find a precise parallel in the passage from the Acts: following the order of the Greek text, it should match

⁶³ This hypothesis was suggested by J. Hammerstaedt and accepted by Blumell, *A Potential Source* cit., p. 73 footnote 13.

⁶⁴ Dosith. *gramm.* 79, 7; 81, 2 Bonnet; Fressura 1, 124; 203; 345; 3, 78; 4, 154; Internullo 1, 26; 50; 4, 9; Hermen. *Monac. coll.* 6b 2; 11k 5; 11l 2; S 13d 1; 30a 2; 31a 3; *Harl. coll.* 5c 2; 9a 4; 13b 4; 21f 3; 6; 22b 4; *Montepess. coll.* 4f 3; 8a 4; 18f 4; *Celtis coll.* 12b 1; 2; 33a 3; 62b 4 Dickey; *P.Bon.* 5 (late III - early IV AD; LDAB 5498; MP³ 2117) col. III l. 18; *CgL* II 118, 55 (Ps.-Phil.). The new reading of A. Gitner and Scappaticcio in *P.Bon.* 5 col. IV l. 26 for the forthcoming *CLTP* does not allow for the equivalence, which is instead reported in *C.Gloss.Biling.* I 16. There exists a mass of bibliography dedicated to the various and complex issues related to these texts (firstly on the concept of 'school' in Antiquity). See *The Colloquia of the Hermeneumata Pseudo-Dositheana. Vol. I: Colloquia Monacensia-Einsidlensia, Leidense-Stephani, and Stephani. Edited with Introduction, Translations and Commentary*, ed. E. Dickey, Cambridge 2012, pp. 1-51; *Artes grammaticae in frammenti: i testi grammaticali latini e bilingui greco-latini su papiro. Edizione commentata*, ed. M.C. Scappaticcio, Berlin 2015, pp. 32-48, with further bibliography.

«ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔχοντας ἐξουσίαν πολλήν»⁶⁵. However, the parallelism is not supported by the lexicon, since the adjective *dissertus* is not linked to the sphere of power either by means of synonymic relationships or by means of the semantic correspondences established in the ancient sources (e.g., ἐλλόγιμος, λόγιος, σῶφρων, σαφής)⁶⁶. The adjective *dissertus* recalls the semantics of σοφός, which in the source text appears right after «ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔχοντας ἐξουσίαν πολλήν». Can it be that the translator did not translate «ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔχοντας ἐξουσίαν πολλήν» and moved further? The answer appears to be no. In the Latin introduction there would not be a complete translation of *A. Apoll.* 25: from the list of people subject to death, which are expressed through binary categories, some pairs («ἐλευθέρους καὶ δούλους», «μεγάλους καὶ μικρούς», «σοφοὺς καὶ ἰδιώτας»)⁶⁷ and the adjective πλούσιος are excluded. However, if *dissertus* would be a rendering of σοφός, the translator would interrupt the orderly process of translation only momentarily and only at this point, since after *maximo dissertos* he translates with «*pauperos*» (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 ll. 3-4) the adjective πτωχοὺς, which is expressed in the Acts almost immediately after «ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔχοντας ἐξουσίαν πολλήν» («ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔχοντας ἐξουσίαν πολλήν καὶ ἐπὶ πλουσίου καὶ πτωχοῦς»).

⁶⁵ Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 593. On the employment of *maxime* in a periphrastic superlative: Väänänen, *Latino volgare* cit., pp. 207-208.

⁶⁶ E.g., Char. *gramm.* 422, 20 Barwick: «*disertus. eloquens. facundus. praestans. diuinitus. caelitus*»; *CgL* IV 57, 27 (*Gloss. Cod. Vat.* 3321): «*prudens. intellectus*»; IV 229, 27 (*Gloss. Cod. Sangall.* 912): «*dissertum expositum*»; IV 332, 33 (*Abav.*): «*doctus, eloquens*»; *Lib. Gloss.* DI801: «*dissertus scolasticus*». In the bilingual glossaries edited in the *CgL* *disertus* is equivalent to λόγιος (e.g., II 362, 6; III 178, 16) and to ἐλλόγιμος (II 295, 35), whereas *dissertus* to ἐλλόγιμος (e.g., III 446, 25; 479, 28), λόγιος (II 52, 37), φιλόλογος (II 52, 17), σῶφρων (III 332, 61) and σαφής (III 332, 52).

⁶⁷ Blumell, *A Potential Source* cit., p. 73 footnote 13.

Failure to comply with the binary trend of the source text is found not only in *maximo dissertos* but also in *pauper* (P.Oxy. XVIII 2194 ll. 3; 3-4). In addition, neither the long nor the brief version takes account of «ἐπὶ πάντων», which groups all the mortals, and of «ἐπὶ πάντας ἀνθρώπους», which groups the people subject to δίκη. In the Latin lines there would be not only some omissions, but also one addition. In the long Latin version, the adjective «*probatas*» (P.Oxy. XVIII 2194 l. 2) is not paralleled by any of the Greek terms in the source text, whereas the genitives of the two substantives «*imperator*» (P.Oxy. XVIII 2194 ll. 2-3) and «*senatores*» (P.Oxy. XVIII 2194 l. 3), governed by *probatas*, respectively match «βασιλεύς» and «συγκλητικοί». However, one cannot discount the hypothesis that the 'original' elements are not original at all and that the translator, whoever he is, is using a version of the *Acta Apollonii* which does not correspond to the preserved one.

Lexical equivalencies are usually precise and consistent with the ones found in documentary sources (especially with regard to the offices) as well as in the bilingual texts for learning Latin as a foreign language which belong both to the late antique and medieval tradition (e.g., *imperator* = βασιλεύς⁶⁸, P.Oxy. XVIII 2194 ll. 2-3; *senatores* = συγκλητικοί⁶⁹, l. 3). A peculiar correspondence is that between *lues* and δίκη⁷⁰. The choice of the Latin word is particular, in as much as it never has a sense fully coincident with that of δίκη,

⁶⁸ H.J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institution: A Lexicon and Analysis*, Toronto 1974, pp. 120-121. This correspondence occurs in Char. gramm. 49, 14 Barwick; Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, Papyrussammlung, P. 21860 (P.Berol. inv. 21860) l. 32 (4th century AD; LDAB 8897; MP³ 3004.02); CgL II 78, 21 (Ps.-Phil.); III 297, 40 (*Herm. Mp.*); 510, 50 (*Gloss. Vat.*).

⁶⁹ Mason, *Greek Terms* cit., p. 88. This correspondence occurs in CgL II 440, 26 (Ps.-Cyr.); III 182, 56 (*Herm. Mon.*); 275, 49 (*Herm. Eins.*); 297, 50 (*Herm. Mp.*); 362, 36 (*Herm. Steph.*); Hermen. Montepess. coll. 4g 4 Dickey.

⁷⁰ P.Oxy. XVIII 2193 l. 2; 2194 l. 4. On this matter see Scappaticcio above pp. 89-90 footnote 33.

although the term is sufficiently employed in the Christian literature with metaphorical meanings⁷¹. Furthermore, the two epistles are the only occurrences of *lues* in the Latin documents on papyrus.

In conclusion, although the Latin lines sometimes do not perfectly match with the syntax and lexicon of the Acts, it is perhaps unlikely that they contain a generic allusion to a sententious message instead of a translation of *A. Apoll.* 25. In fact, a literary quotation, especially of one in a different language from the original and more specifically in Latin, would be more trenchant. Also, the description of the process against Apollonius and the contexts of the two letters sent by Theon share some similarities. Blumell noted that, despite the absence of allusions to either a martyrdom or a process, the quote possibly stands as a warning to Pascentius that he is mortal and exposed to the judgement of God – note that this is feared by Apollonius more than the decision of the inquisitor⁷². Finally, a literary quote would be coherent with the ways Theon quotes and adapts some Greek scriptural texts to the context of his epistles in order to reinforce his requests, and with the instrumental functions and the currency of these texts⁷³. The Christian works cited (*Genesis*, *Job* and *The Book of Sirach*) are among the most widely disseminated ones in Oxyrhynchus and, more in general, in Egypt⁷⁴. For these reasons it is perhaps possible that the *Acta Apollonii* had some circulation too. Scappaticcio was the first to propose this scenario, basing her suggestion on Euseb. *hist.* 5, 21, 2, where is witnessed the fame of Apollonius among the Christians⁷⁵. Other

⁷¹ TLL VII 2.1794.53-1797.82 (esp. 1797.52-68).

⁷² Blumell, *A Potential Source* cit., pp. 73-74; Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 593.

⁷³ Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., pp. 212-216; Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., pp. 589; 593; 596.

⁷⁴ Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., pp. 233-235.

⁷⁵ Scappaticcio above p. 90.

factors might also point in this direction, namely the circulation in Oxyrhynchus of various Christian texts and the circumstance that biblical and hagiographic texts had a prominent role in late antique education, as they link fundamental concepts and ideals of Christian identity to the name of a famous and distinguished person⁷⁶.

Accepting the hypothesis that a translation of *A. Apoll.* 25 is contained in the introductory lines of the letters to Pascentius, the origin of this translation remains unclear. The unchanged resumption of the period «*una mortis*» to «*feri*» in the brief version (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 ll. 1-3) and the presence of phonetic and morphosyntactic peculiar features common to both versions would suggest that Theon used a pre-existing translation. It is not easy to state whether its author was Theon or an anonymous translator, since the issue is complicated by several factors: 1. the absence of a mention of, or even a slight clue to, the (complete or partial) Latin translation of the *Acta Apollonii* in the surviving evidence; 2. the failure to adapt the literary quote to the syntax of the Latin lines, unless this is a further indication of an imperfect command of Latin; 3. the incompleteness of our data (first of all, the Latin lines of *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194); 4. the late and most likely spurious character of the tradition of the *Acta Apollonii*. Consequently, the circumstance that the translation is sometimes messy and incomplete is relatively significant. Furthermore, the subjective character of the quote and its instrumental scope are controversial clues, since they could mean that Theon either translated a passage from the *Acta Apollonii* for his own needs or that, for the same reason, he referred to a specific passage already translated into Latin.

⁷⁶ Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., pp. 163-182. The concept of *παιδεία* and the educational environments, especially the monastic ones, are receiving renewed scholarly attention: *Ibid.*, pp. 183-236; C. Bay, *The Transformation and Transmission of Paideia in Roman Egyptian Monasticism*, «Eastern Great Lakes Biblical Society», 34 (2014), pp. 335-363 and the essays collected in *Monastic Education in Late Antiquity*, cur. L.I. Larsen, S. Rubenson, Cambridge 2018.

The issue is perhaps unsolvable and does not spoil the sociolinguistic value of the introduction. The Latin lines witness a contact with forms of the spoken language (*com, inperatorum*) and an imperfect command of Latin, consistent with the hypothesis that the translator (whoever he is) learned Latin as a second language. Words are not always inflected correctly: *pauper* has the ending of the plural accusative of the second declension (*pauperos*) instead of the ending of the third declension⁷⁷. Some terms are not inflected at all. More specifically, the substantive *mortis* may be an example of two features common in the writing of language learners, namely the creation of a new nominative for an imparisyllabic word and the use of the nominative as a base-form. The ending of *pauper* and the occurrences of *mortis* may also prove the difficulties in inflecting nouns of the third declension, given the absence of morphologic similarities between the Greek and Latin third declension. In addition to the unfamiliarity with the syntactic agreement, in the text one finds original uses of some parts of speech: the adjective *dissertus* is preceded by *maximo*, recurring in place of the adverbial form *maxime*. The Greek text of *AApoll.* 25 was perhaps subject to rearrangements (*lues, probatus*). Finally, even if the translator was not Theon, the latter employs the Latin lines in the introduction in a very creative way. The reference to the *Acta Apollonii* implies that Theon and the addressee, who has to detect the quote despite the linguistic reshaping and the absence of metalinguistic remarks, knew this literary work. This aspect, like the Greek scriptural quotations, denotes that the sender and the addressee shared a cultural background.

2.3. *The Greeting Formula*

The greeting formula «*vale apud Deum*» is written in Latin only in the letter to Aphous (*P.Köln* IV 200 l. 10). The wording is otherwise

⁷⁷ Väänänen, *Latino volgare* cit., p. 191. Cugusi in *C.Epist.Lat.* II, p. 381 compares the phenomenon with Prob. *app. gramm.* 5, 42 Asperti, Passalacqua: *pauper mulier non paupera mulier*.

unknown in the Latin evidence. As noted by Blumell, the similar formula «*vale in deo*» is found once in the writings of Angela of Foligno; in addition, comparable expressions are present in few and mostly late Greek lexicographic and documentary sources, where the verb ἔρρωσθαι is followed by ἐν θεῷ⁷⁸. There is no perfect coincidence between these formulae and that written in the letter to Aphous, since in late Latin *apud* can be employed as an equivalent of σύν not of ἐν; furthermore, at the moment expressions like ἔρρωσθαι / ἔρρωσο... σύν θεῷ are unknown⁷⁹. Considering that most likely Theon is a Greek-speaker, it is possible that he has transferred into Latin expressions apparently typical of Christian letters in Greek, sometimes failing to make precise equivalencies. The transfer of formulae and idiomatic expressions from one language to another is found in some papyrus documents from Egypt and sometimes it relates to the fact that the author / scribe is unaware that a certain expression is not idiomatic in the language into which it is translated⁸⁰.

The presence of a code-switch in the greeting formula has some parallels in the bilingual papyrus evidence, both official and private. Parallels are not numerous; however, they are distributed in a period between the end of the 1st and the 6th century AD (namely, for the whole period covered by Latin papyrus evidence) and belong mostly to administrative and military contexts. In these texts, the message is in Greek and the greeting formula, basically an autograph, is one of the variations of the customary *bene valere*. The use of another language for the greeting formula can be interpreted in various ways.

The letter to the *curator* of the Oxyrhynchite nome analysed in par. 2.1 has shown that a switch of language in the greeting formula

⁷⁸ Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 596.

⁷⁹ P.Köln IV, p. 215; Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 596. The equivalence between *apud* and ἐν is not found in the bilingual glossaries of the medieval tradition edited in the *CgL*.

⁸⁰ See the evidence in Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 79-80.

can be an act of divergence. However, this type of CS can also be an act of convergence. In a Greek letter sent in around the 4th century AD to Flavius Abinnaeus the sender, Sabikas, *praepositus* of a *vexillatio*, wrote in his own hand the greeting formula «*et te per multos annos be[n]e valeres*»⁸¹. As already noted by Adams, it is implausible that Sabikas chose to write down the letter in Greek because he thought that otherwise Abinnaeus would not understand the message. In fact, the archive of Abinnaeus contains two Latin documents, concerning the appointment to the post of cavalry commander in Dionysias and the dismissal of this function⁸². One of them is issued by Abinnaeus through a scribe and possibly contains a clue that he knew some Latin⁸³. Therefore, the CS possibly marks the bilingualism of both the sender and the addressee and a shared feeling of belonging to the same social group⁸⁴.

CS has a 'positive' social meaning also in the letter to Aphous. More specifically, the greeting formula is among the hints of a Christian context, which is further characterised by the use of the Latin language with a precise meaning.

Remarkably, this peculiar use of Latin within a Christian milieu can be paralleled with that in the *tabulae ansatae* from the bilingual *Codex miscellaneus Barcinonensis* (Durham (NC), Duke University, P. 798 + Montserrat, Abadia, Roca 126-178 + Roca 292 + Roca 338 = P.Duke inv. 798 + P.Monts.Roca inv. 129-149) also because the possible context of the correspondence would be consistent with the one that is conceivable for the miscellaneous codex⁸⁵. The codex, al-

⁸¹ *P.Abinn.* 16 l. 20; TM 10018.

⁸² For a sociolinguistic analysis of the archive of Abbinnaeus see Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 555-557.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 556.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 396; 399.

⁸⁵ The affinity between the two contexts had already been noted by Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., pp. 59-60 footnote 8.

ready mentioned in earlier contributions within this volume, is assigned on palaeographic grounds to the second half of the 4th century AD; it was bought on the antiquities market and is connected with one of the most important late antique libraries, the so-called Bodmer Library, whose dating and origin are at the centre of a debate⁸⁶. This anthology of Christian and pagan texts in Greek and in Latin was assembled by a sole scribe at different times and has *tabulae ansatae* with an explicit at the end of Cic. *Cat.* 1 and 2, of the two prayers and of the tale about the Emperor Hadrian. The *tabulae* are similar in decorations and scripts⁸⁷. The Latin *tabulae ansatae* contain the expression «*feliciter Dorotheo*» written at the centre and under the tabula «*utere [f]elix Dorothee*». These dedications from the scribe to his client presuppose a close relationship between the two, possibly distinguished by a shared religious belief, a common cultural background, and a certain knowledge of Latin⁸⁸. The social intention of the dedications, which recalls that of the subscriptions found in some Latin grammatical treatises of Late Antiquity⁸⁹, is enhanced by the use of the Latin language, which evidently acquires a symbolic value. This aspect is strengthened by the circumstance that on the superior edge of the tabula one can read «*επαγαθω*» plausibly standing for *ἐπ'*

⁸⁶ *MP*³ 2921.1 + 2916.41 + 2998.1 + 2752.1 + 2998.11; LDAB 552; TM 59453. For details on the Bodmer Library and the codex see B. Nongbri, *God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts*, New Haven 2018, pp. 157-215; Buzi above pp. 63-68; Scappaticcio above pp. 91-92 footnote 38.

⁸⁷ Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 59.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁸⁹ M. De Nonno, *I codici grammaticali latini d'età tardoantica: osservazioni e considerazioni*, in *Manuscripts and Tradition of Grammatical Texts from the Antiquity to the Renaissance*. Proceedings of a Conference held at Erice, 16-23 October 1997, as the 11. Course of International school for the study of written records, cur. M. De Nonno, P. De Paolis, L. Holtz, I, Cassino 2000, pp. 133-172, esp. 146-149.

ἀγαθῶ, which would be a translation of *feliciter*⁹⁰. The identification of Dorotheus, only mentioned in the dedications, with Dorotheos (Antioch, AD 255-Edessa, AD 362), presbyter of Antioch, author of one of the visions of *P.Bodm.* 39, who during his life had held duties on behalf of Diocletian, is uncertain and excluded by some scholars⁹¹. His identity is still debated and far from certain⁹². However, there exists a connection between the *Codex Miscellaneus Barcinonensis* and the manuscripts preserved at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (one of the most important is the Greek-Latin glossary mostly on Paul. II *Cor.* 268, *Gal.* 89, *Eph.* 66, *Rom.* 1: Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ac. 1499 = P.Chester Beatty inv. Ac. 1499)⁹³ and those at the Martin Bodmer Foundation in Geneva. These oldest examples of antholo-

⁹⁰ Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 58 footnote 2.

⁹¹ The identification was proposed by P. De Paolis, *Cicerone nei grammatici tardoantichi e altomedievali*, in *Atti dell'XI Colloquium Tullianum* (Cassino - Montecassino, 26-28 aprile 1999) = «Ciceroniana N. Ser.», 11 (2000), pp. 36-67, esp. 46 footnote 25 and rejected by J. Gil and S. Torallas Tovar in *P.Monts.Roca* III, pp. 30-31. According to Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 58, the possibility cannot be excluded that the manuscript is a copy made a short time later from an antigraph kept by Dorotheos himself. This hypothesis is challenged by the textual and archaeometric analysis by T. Ghigo, S. Torallas Tovar, *Between Literary and Documentary Practices: The Montserrat Codex Miscellaneus* (Inv. Nos. 126-178, 292, 338) and the Material Investigation of Its Inks, in *Coptic Literature in Context (4th-13th cent.): Cultural Landscape, Literary Production and Manuscript Archaeology*. Proceedings of the Third Conference of the ERC project 'Tracking Papyrus and Parchment Paths: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature. Literary Texts in their Geographical Context' ('PATHs'), cur. P. Buzi, Roma 2020, pp. 99-112, who confirmed that the manuscript was composed at different times according to the needs of the scribe.

⁹² Buzi above pp. 65-68 with references to the hypothesis of Á.T. Mihálykó.

⁹³ Buzi above pp. 62-63 footnote 76 and Scappaticcio above p. 94 footnote 42 with bibliography. On the Beatty papyri see Nongbri, *God's Library* cit., pp. 116-156.

gies of Christian and pagan literature share a common type of book (the so-called 'library book')⁹⁴ and possibly belong to a common historical-cultural context, presupposing common reading interests and learning practices among the Christian communities of late antique Egypt⁹⁵. The neat but not sophisticated book typology of the *Codex Miscellaneus Barcinonensis*, typical of 4th to 5th century AD Egypt, can be described as a study manuscript collecting different texts according to the educational needs of educated people⁹⁶. The manuscript implies the existence of Christian circles interested in Christian and profane literature and, most importantly, in acquaintance with Latin.

The connection of the letters of Theon with these manuscripts is also suggestive because the oblique strokes marking the end of the quote from *A. Apoll.* 25 and the beginning of the letter in *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 (par. 1) can be paralleled with the editorial strategies in the bilingual glossaries to Paul's *Epistles*⁹⁷.

2.4. *The Address*

The address, written on the verso, is the only example of CS present in all the three of the letters sent by Theon (*P.Oxy.* XVIII 2193 v l. 1, 2194 v l. 1; *P.Köln* IV 200 v l. 1). Its pattern is: *redde serbo dei tempore* + name of the addressee in the dative case. In the address, the recourse to *b* in place of *v* finds parallels in Latin documents from other provinces of the empire and proves a contact with the spoken language⁹⁸. The writing of the address in a language dif-

⁹⁴ On the 'library book' see the bibliography cited by Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 58 footnote 9.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 61. See also Ghigo, Torallas Tovar, *Between Literary and Documentary Practices* cit., p. 103.

⁹⁶ Ammirati, *Sul libro latino* cit., p. 61.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60 and footnote 8.

⁹⁸ J.N. Adams, *Latin and Punic in Contact? The Case of the Bu Njem Ostraca*, «The Journal of Roman Studies», 84 (1994), pp. 87-112, esp. 106.

ferent from that used in the message is a relatively common practice in the bilingual documents on papyrus from Graeco-Roman Egypt. Usually, the switch of language is a form of accommodation to the language use preferred by the carrier of the letter and might be interpreted as an act of convergence.

For example, on the verso of a recommendation letter of uncertain provenance, written in a particularly elegant Latin according to a well-established tradition for these documents (par. 2.1), there is the address «*domino suo Fl(avio) Achillio ἡγεμ(όνι) Φοινείκης Vitalis*»⁹⁹. Here the names of both the sender and the addressee are in Latin, while the title of the addressee are the only two words in Greek. Vitalis, perhaps the homonymous *rationalis* of an official letter of the 4th century AD, asks the *praeses Phoeniciae* Flavius Achillius to help Theophanes, *scholasticus* of the prefect of Egypt, during his business trip from Egypt to Antiochia (AD 317 and 324)¹⁰⁰. Scholars

⁹⁹ *CbLA* XIX 687 (TM 70001). R. Marichal (*CbLA* XIX, p. 69) read the name of the addressee. According to P. van Minnen, *Bemerkungen zu Papyri XXXII. Korr. Tyche 886-949*, «Tyche», 34 (2019), pp. 259-268, esp. 265, one can read «*Fl(avius)*» also before *Vitalis*. Different dates, always within the 4th century AD, are indicated in *C.Epist.Lat.* II, p. 325. A duplicate of the epistle but addressed to Delphinus, perhaps another governor of an unknown province, is preserved in *P.Ryl.* IV 623 (AD 317-324; unknown provenance; TM 17314). On the documents belonging to the so-called archive of *Theophanes* – which were actually sent – see A. Moscati, *Le lettere dell'archivio di Teofane*, «Aegyptus», 50 (1970), pp. 88-154; Cugusi in *C.Epist.Lat.* II, pp. 324-332; J. Matthews, *The Journey of Theophanes. Travel, Business, and Daily Life in the Roman East*, New Haven - London 2006, pp. 33-40; S. Ammirati, *Cum in omnibus bonis ... Un inedito frammento berlinese tra papirologia e paleografia*, *Ianuensis non nascitur sed fit. Studi per Dino Puncuh* = «Quaderni della Società Ligure di Storia Patria», 7 (2019), pp. 79-89, esp. 86-89.

¹⁰⁰ *P.Vind.Bosn.* 14 l. 5 (Hermopolite; TM 17303). For the identification of the three see Moscati, *Le lettere* cit., pp. 89-96; *C.Epist.Lat.* II, p. 324.

do not agree on the number of hands active in the address: Robert Marichal and Paolo Cugusi believed that the Greek title was written by a different scribe from the ones respectively responsible for the message and the subscription, whereas Peter van Minnen hypothesised that the whole address was written by the same scribe as that of the letter on the recto¹⁰¹. Anyway, the writing of the title of the officer in Greek may be interpreted as an act of accommodation to the language use of the carrier of the letter¹⁰². At the same time, the latter is excluded from the other information of the address.

The switch to Latin as an act of accommodation is also plausible for the letters of Theon. The wording of the address has no parallel in the extant Latin evidence, despite the currency of *servus Dei*¹⁰³. Given this circumstance and the fact that Theon was presumably a Greek-speaker, the address possibly hides the same process of transference of Greek expressions into Latin which is detectable in the greeting formula (par. 2.3). In fact, the address recalls Greek wordings of the kind ἀπόδος + dative case¹⁰⁴.

3 Conclusions

The recourse to the Greek language for the messages, together with the linguistic peculiarities of the Latin lines, and partly the onomastics, suggests that Greek was the language preferred by the speakers (at least by the sender). The Greek language shows features

¹⁰¹ *CbLA* XIX, p. 68; *C.Epist.Lat.* II, p. 329; van Minnen, *Bemerkungen* cit., pp. 265-266.

¹⁰² Matthews, *The Journey* cit., p. 33.

¹⁰³ Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit., p. 589. On the interpretation of the formula see Scappaticcio above pp. 85-86 footnote 24.

¹⁰⁴ Cugusi, *Evoluzione e forme* cit., pp. 66-67 and footnote 114; *C.Epist.Lat.* II, p. 381.

of so-called postclassical Greek: besides the customary instances of etacism and confusions between τ and δ («οὐεδρανός», *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 l. 7), the nominative is employed in place of the accusative in the substantivized use of the infinite to indicate purpose («πρὸς τὸ μηθεὶς τῶν ἐκτὸς ὀχλήσιεν αὐτῷ περὶ τοῦ πλοίου», *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2194 l. 10)¹⁰⁵. The nature of the three documents and the presence of certain literary and linguistic strategies suggest that Theon and his addressees possibly had the same linguistic and cultural competences: they are able to quote and detect literary texts, even if the quotation implies a formal or linguistic reshaping. Furthermore, they seem to know both Greek and Latin. In addition, Theon is in the position to have his manuscripts of a certain value produced by a competent scribe. Considering the complex linguistic environment of late antique Egypt, it is plausible that at least Theon and Aphous had some knowledge of the Egyptian language¹⁰⁶. If so, regardless of the identification of Theon with the homonymous mentioned in *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* 6, 3 (Festugière), the letters would be among the very few documentary sources witnessing the existence of a plurilingual speaker in a Christian milieu. This datum would be consistent with what different sources (mostly literary) tell us about the fluid linguistic and cultural environment of late antique Egypt, where Latin had a limited but significant written and oral diffusion for eminently pragmatic reasons and for prestige or as a technical-liturgical language next to Greek and local idioms¹⁰⁷. However,

¹⁰⁵ F.T. Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, Milano 1976, pp. 80-81; 189-190.

¹⁰⁶ On language and culture in late antique Egypt see M. Choat, *Language and Culture in Late Antique Egypt*, in *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, cur. P. Rousseau, Oxford 2009, pp. 342-355 with further bibliography.

¹⁰⁷ In addition to the bibliography cited by Scappaticcio above pp. 76-77 footnote 3 see also B. Rochette, *Des pèlerins latins en terre sainte. Rencontre de langues et de cultures*, «Byzantion», 66.2 (1996), pp. 363-372; Id., *Le latin dans le monde grec. Recherches sur la diffusion de la langue et des lettres latines dans*

besides the onomastics, which are not always a reliable source of information, there are no clues in the epistles.

The Latin language is used in stereotyped and structural sections, which usually show some opposition to innovations. This aspect underlies the symbolic value of the CS, which is also enhanced by the many and remarkable differences that can be established with the coeval code-switches from Greek to Latin in the coeval official correspondence from Oxyrhynchus. In the epistles of Theon, the switches are from Greek to Latin and occur in a private communication; they are written by the same scribe who was responsible for the messages under dictation by the sender and can be considered as creative strategies originally produced by Theon (greeting formula, address) or at least employed by him originally (introductory lines). CS is deliberate and has social meaning.

So far, these code-switches have not received much scholarly attention nor have they been interpreted from a sociolinguistic point of view. Scholars have mostly tried to identify the reason why Latin is used in the introductory lines in the epistles to Pascentius. One of the reasons would be the identity of the addressee, who has a Roman name and possibly administrative duties, for which at this chronological stage the knowledge of some Latin was plausible¹⁰⁸.

les provinces hellénophones de l'Empire, Bruxelles 1997, pp. 150-153; Id., *Les ἐρμηνεῖς dans le christianisme primitif. Aux sources du schisme byzantin*, «Byzantion», 67 (1997), pp. 421-438; R. Mairs, *Hermēneis in the Documentary Record from Hellenistic and Roman Egypt: Interpreters, Translators and Mediators in a Bilingual Society*, «American Journal of Ancient History», 7.2 (2019), pp. 1-53, esp. 46-49; J.-L. Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic: Egyptian versus Greek in Late Antiquity*, Princeton - Oxford 2020.

¹⁰⁸ Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit., p. 217 footnote 234; Scappaticcio above p. 90. Much of the legal writing of this time and the teaching in law and rhetoric schools are in Latin: R. Criboire, *Higher Education in Early Byzantine Egypt: Rhetoric, Latin, and the Law*, in *Egypt in the Byzantine World (300-700)*, cur. R.S. Bagnall, Cambridge 2007, pp. 47-66.

Addressing Pascentius, Theon would use a language associated with prestige especially in Late Antiquity, partly accommodating the language uses of a potential Latin speaker partly giving authority to his words. Such a hypothesis, although sketching some important elements, does not explain the scope and the function of the CS. Here, therefore, an alternative is proposed.

The change of language significantly occurs at the beginning of the epistolary communication and takes the form of a literary quotation apparently not signalled by metalinguistic features. If one accepts the hypothesis that the introductory lines contain a translation of *A. Apoll.* 25, CS helps us partly to understand the diffusion of religious texts in late antique Oxyrhynchus, both of the scriptural and the hagiographic ones. The circulation and use of religious texts in this city are consistent with the presence of the translation of *A. Apoll.* 25 in the introductory lines of the letters to Pascentius. In these lines, the switch of language has a social meaning in as much it underlies the circumstance that both belong to a Christian milieu, and both know the religious texts and the language of Rome, which they acquired in some way. CS expresses cultural solidarity since it shapes a relationship of shared cultural and religious background as well as common bilingual competences between the sender and the addressee. This function is here stressed by the absence of metalinguistic remarks (at least in the preserved text) signalling the quotation and /or the translation from Greek to Latin and finds parallels in other contexts of the ancient world, where a quotation in another language is employed to negotiate a relationship between the sender and the addressee¹⁰⁹. Thus, CS is part of the same communicative

¹⁰⁹ This is a well-known fact for the Greek quotations in the letters of Cicero to Atticus: G.E. Dunkel, *Remarks on Code-switching in Cicero's Letters to Atticus*, «Museum Helveticum», 57.2 (2000), pp. 122-129, esp. 127-129; Swain, *Bilingualism in Cicero* cit.; Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 312-316; A. Mäkilähde, *Solidarity in Cicero's Letters: Methodological Considerations in Analysing the Functions of Code-switching*, «Pallas», 102 (2016), pp. 237-245.

strategy of the scriptural quotations and establishes a relationship of equality between the sender and the addressee. In fact, it would be pointless to evoke literary texts if the addressee were not thought to have the necessary linguistic and cultural skills to identify them. The relevance of alluding to an intimacy between the sender and the addressee, based on a shared background, is even clearer if one keeps in mind that in both the epistles to Pascentius Theon is asking favours of him. The presence of literary quotations and their meaning possibly connect to the two complementary processes referred to by Fournet as the «literarisation of the document» and the «documentarisation of literature»¹¹⁰. These aspects may be considered as part of a broader tendency, especially detectable in late antique Greek papyrological evidence, to use (more or less reworked) quotations from literary works, paraphrases, refined expressions or terms in order to indicate one's own culture and to use it to one's own advantage¹¹¹.

The particular type of CS outlined here is unique among the documentary sources on papyrus from a Christian milieu, and, on the contrary, is very frequent in letters belonging to historical linguistic and cultural contexts far removed from that of the letters of Theon¹¹². For example, it can be compared with the so-called emblematic switching, which Otta Wenskus found in some of the code-switches of the epistles of Cicero¹¹³. These switches occur mostly at the beginning and at

¹¹⁰ J.-L. Fournet, *Archives and Libraries in Greco-Roman Egypt*, in *Manuscripts and Archives. Comparative Views on Record-Keeping*, cur. A. Bausi, C. Brockmann, M. Friedrich, S. Kienitz, Berlin 2018, pp. 171-200.

¹¹¹ Id., *Culture grecque et document dans l'Égypte de l'Antiquité tardive*, «Journal of Juristic Papyrology», 43 (2013), pp. 135-162.

¹¹² Cfr. e.g., Elder, Mullen, *The Language of Roman Letters* cit., pp. 94-103.

¹¹³ O. Wenskus, *Emblematischer Codewechsel und Verwandtes in der lateinischen Prosa. Zwischen Nähesprache und Distanzsprache*, Innsbruck 1998.

the end of the texts and are loosely adapted to the new syntactic context. According to Adams, they would establish «a particular type of cultural equality» and be «a mark of shared bilingualism»¹¹⁴.

The recourse to the Latin language as a means of generating a sense of belonging to the same social group is also detectable in the greeting formula «*vale apud Deum*» and in the address «*redde serbo Dei tempore*». In the latter case, it is possible that the switch of language is an act of accommodation to the needs of the carrier (or the carriers).

The three letters witness the existence of a bilingual context, perhaps in connection with local idioms too (this aspect, though, cannot be verified with certainty) includes the senders, the addressees, and perhaps also the carrier (or the carriers), but its actual extension is unknown. The city of Oxyrhynchus appears to maintain a Roman(ised) character in the Late Antiquity and the Byzantine age, as shown by various sources in the archaeological tradition, and to have a Christian identity¹¹⁵. Latin is mostly used as an identifying mark among individuals, who share a religion and a cultural background and who perhaps belong to the same social group. The hypothesis is intriguing because the use of Latin with a similar social meaning is known from some miscellaneous literary manuscripts from late antique Egypt that relate to coenobitic contexts and preserve texts of a different nature pointing to quite a broad spectrum of skills. In environments like these, the language of Rome could be learned both for pragmatic purposes (for example, to communicate with Latin speakers) and for its prestige.

¹¹⁴ Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 345-346; 399. On CS in the letters of Cicero see Swain, *Bilingualism in Cicero* cit.; Adams, *Bilingualism* cit., pp. 308-347; Elder, Mullen, *The Language of Roman Letters* cit., pp. 111-174.

¹¹⁵ Blumell, *Lettered Christians* cit.; Blumell, Wayment, *Christian Oxyrhynchus* cit.; Nongbri, *God's Library* cit., pp. 216-246. See also Buzi above pp. 49-52.

Small Remarks on Latin-Greek-Egyptian Multilingualism in a Late Record of Court Proceedings from Aphrodito*

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A record of court proceedings runs on the recto, along the fibres of the papyrus *P.Cair.Masp.* III 67329 (TM 18454). The document, arranged in two columns, is written on a roll of remarkable dimensions (the surviving fragments are circa 135 cm wide). This manuscript is relevant primarily for its historic and legal implications, but it also bears some information on the use of Latin in late antique provincial chanceries and on its role and relationship with Greek and local languages. In fact, this record not only offers evidence for Graeco-Latin language contact but also hints at language contact with Coptic. However small and circumstantial, these aspects help us shed light on who learned Latin, in what contexts and why.

The chairing officer of the hearing was a certain Fl. Paulus, *scholasticus* and *defensor civitatis* of the city of Antaiopolis. His prosopography, along with the mention of the month Payni of the third indiction (col. I l. 2), indicate a narrow range of dates for the document: May 26-June 24 of AD 524¹. Given the mention of the *proto-*

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¹ See *P.Cair.Masp.* II 67254 and *P.Ross.Georg.* III 34. In *P.Cair.Masp.* III,

kometes of Aphrodito, Apollos, it is generally accepted that the papyrus belonged to the well-known archive of his son, Dioscoros². In spite of the different opinion expressed by the first editors³, the case discussed before the judge concerned the transfer of some lots of land from the territory of the village of Thmonachtê to that of Aphrodito, and in particular its consequences in terms of taxation⁴.

p. 149, the papyrus is mistakenly attributed to AD 529 / 530. The error was first noted by G. Zereteli in *P.Ross.Georg.* III, p. 141. The date of AD 524 / 525, which the latter suggested, was later approved by B.R. Rees, *The defensor civitatis in Egypt*, «Journal of Juristic Papyrology», 6 (1952), pp. 73-102, esp. 93 footnote 130, and by subsequent scholars. The precise date of AD 524 was first argued by C. Zuckerman, *Du village à l'empire. Autour Du Registre Fiscal d'Aphrodito (525/526)*, Paris 2004, p. 32 footnote 21; his opinion was shared by M. Resel, *Syndikoi, Ekdikoi und Defensores Civitatis in Prozessprotokollen aus der Provinz/Diözese Ägypten*, «Imperium and Officium Working Papers» (2011), pp. 1-56, esp. 39.

² L.S.B. MacCoul, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito. His work and his world*, Berkeley - Los Angeles - London 1988, p. 9.

³ See *P.Cair.Masp.* III, p. 149. It must be noted that the introduction of *P.Cair.Masp.* III 67329 was written by É. Cuq and not by J. Maspero. The latter, in fact, died on 17 February 1915 in the battle of Vauquois and his father, G. Maspero, edited the volume but found no descriptive entry on this item among his son's papers. Cuq's opinion was shared by Rees, *The defensor civitatis* cit., p. 93.

⁴ A similar operation is attested by *P.Lond.* V 1686. H.I. Bell, *Review of: Catalogue Général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire: Papyrus grecs d'époque byzantine*, «The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology», 3.4 (1916), pp. 288-292, esp. 292; R. Rémondon, *P. Hamb. 56 et P. Lond. 1419 (notes sur les finances d'Aphrodito du VI^e siècle au VIII^e)*, «Chronique d'Égypte», 40.80 (1965), pp. 401-430, esp. 428; T. Dorandi in *CbLA* XLI 1194; Zuckerman, *Du village* cit., p. 32; G. Bransbourg, *Capital in the Sixth Century: The Dynamics of Tax and Estate in Roman Egypt*, «Journal of Late Antiquity», 9.2 (2016), pp. 305-414, esp. 323 footnote 64.

This papyrus was mainly studied in the framework of the historical research into 6th century Aphrodito. Thanks to the vast amount of material coming from Kôm Ishgau, scholars have deeply investigated this peculiar town – which, to use Roger S. Bagnall's words, was «anything but a typical village»⁵ – and minutely reconstructed many aspects of the human presence in that place in Late Antiquity. In particular, *P.Cair.Masp.* III 67329 provides us with some information on the tax administration of the village and on its relations with the neighbouring hamlets⁶.

Furthermore, the document is of particular interest for the research on Roman military units in the region in Late Antiquity – namely for the presence of cavalry squadrons of the *equites Maurii scutari* garrisoning Hermopolis⁷ – and for the enquiry into the nature of the ἀρouraτῶν, a tax on real estate which could also be collected by clerks of public banks (χρυσῶναι)⁸.

As far as Roman law is concerned, moreover, scholars have seen in this text a confirmation that the proceedings of the hearings held by the *defensor civitatis* had to be recorded in written form, although this officer at the time dealt with limited issues, both in terms of the territory subject to his power (the single *civitas* with its

⁵ R.S. Bagnall, *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History*, London - New York 1995.

⁶ Rémondon, *P. Hamb.* 56 cit., p. 428.

⁷ A.M. Kaiser, *Rekrutierungspraxis im spätantiken Ägypten*, in *Le métier de soldat dans le monde romain*, cur. C. Wolff, Lyon 2012, pp. 99-123, esp. 109; 116; Ead., *Egyptian Units and the Reliability of the Notitia dignitatum, pars Oriens*, «Historia», 64.2 (2015), pp. 243-261, esp. 252 footnote 70.

⁸ R. Bogaert, *La banque en Égypte byzantine*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 116 (1997), pp. 85-140, esp. 117 footnote 150; J.G. Keenan, *Review of: Du village à l'empire. Autour Du Registre Fiscal D'Aphrodito (525/526)*, «Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists», 42.1-4 (2005), pp. 285-296, esp. 291.

territorium) and of the possible content of the cases (*causae minores*)⁹. It should also be noted that in this document the *defensor* served a function which can be considered administrative or notarial rather than judicial. In fact, this is not a case of litigation, for the officer is not asked to decide the case, but only to control and certify that the parties made their statements about the transfer of the estates and about the taxes due by Psimanobet. It is uncertain whether Fl. Paulus acted in the framework of the tax jurisdiction attributed

⁹ The duty of recording the proceedings of the hearings held by the *defensor civitatis* may probably be inferred by *Cod. Theod.* 1, 29, 2: see A. Steinwenter, *Das Verfahren sine scriptis im justinianischen Prozeßrecht*, «Zeitschrift der Savigny Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Romanistische Abteilung», 74 (1957), pp. 306-323, esp. 321. As for the object of litigation, the *defensor* at the time was responsible only for lawsuits which did not exceed the value of 50 *solidi*, since it was no earlier than in AD 535 (see Novell. Iust 15, 3, 2) that his jurisdiction was extended to cases worth up to 300 *solidi*. On the origins of the *defensor civitatis* and on his evolution between the East and the West see V. Mannino, *Ricerche sul defensor civitatis*, Milano 1988; R.M. Frakes, *Contra Potentium Iniurias: The Defensor Civitatis and Late Roman Justice*, Munich 2001; F. Pergami, *Sulla istituzione del defensor civitatis*, «Studia et Documenta Historiae et Iuris», 61 (1995), pp. 413-431; P. Biavaschi, *Lingua, diritto e cultura nel Codice Teodosiano. Alcune note sul defensor civitatis al tempo di Teodosio I*, in *Miscellanea Italica*, cur. G. Rocca, G.M. Facchetti, P. Biavaschi, Milano 2005, pp. 7-23; F. Oppedisano, *Maiorano, la plebe e il defensor civitatis*, «Rivista di Filologia e d'istruzione classica», 139.2 (2011), pp. 422-448. For the *defensor civitatis* in Egyptian records of proceedings see Resel, *Syndikoi* cit. The epigraphic evidence on the *defensor civitatis* was investigated by D. Feissel, *Trois fonctions municipales dans l'épigraphie protobyzantine* (curator, defensor, pater civitatis), in *The Epigraphic Cultures of Late Antiquity*, cur. K. Bolle, C. Machado, C. Witschel, Stuttgart 2017, pp. 473-500. A comprehensive and updated report of the imperial legislation on the *defensor civitatis* and on the extension of its jurisdiction can be found in R.M. Frakes, *The defensor civitatis and the Late Roman City*, «Antiquité Tardive», 26 (2018), pp. 127-147.

to the *defensor civitatis* by some imperial constitutions, such as *Cod. Theod.* 11, 1, 19¹⁰ and 12, 6, 23 (= *Cod. Iust.* 10, 72(70), 10)¹¹.

Besides these relevant historic and legal-historic aspects, there is a feature that deserves some attention with regard to the possible contacts between the Latin language and Coptic culture. This feature involves both script and language.

According to a practice constantly attested from the age of Diocletian (although there are some forerunners in the Principate), the records of the proceedings of the hearings held by the Roman officers in the Hellenophone provinces were not entirely in Latin¹². The rich papyrological sources of this era clearly show

¹⁰ Impp. Gratian. Valentin. Theod. (31 January AD 348): «*Id, quod in titulis debitis sub praestatione confertur auraria, non aliter nisi scientibus defensoribus detur, quo sub eorum conscientia, sicut et ante praeceptum est, solvantur debita securitatesque reddantur, custodita sanctione emissae primitus legis, quo apocharum vel securitatum, quae restituentur, digesta signatio, cum a susceptoribus dabitur, et formam indictionis teneat et manifestationem eius quae fuerit exacta praestationis ostendat*».

¹¹ Impp. Valentin. Theodos. Arcad. Cynegio pp. (28 November AD 389): «*Susceptores praesentibus defensoribus et modum iugationis possessorum et species singulas vel earum numerum quantitatemque perscribant*». See Mannino, *Ricerche* cit. pp. 110-116; Frakes, *The defensor civitatis* cit., pp. 131-143.

¹² R.A. Coles, *Reports of Proceedings in Papyri*, Bruxelles 1966; R. Haensch, *Typisch römisch? Die Gerichtsprotokolle der in Ägyptus und den übrigen östlichen Reichsprovinzen tätigen Vertreter Roms*, in *Monumentum et instrumentum inscriptum. Beschriftete Objekte aus Kaiserzeit und Spätantike als historische Zeugnisse*, cur. H. Borm, N. Ehrhardt, J. Wiesehofer, Stuttgart 2008, pp. 117-126; B. Palme, *Die bilingualen Prozessprotokolle und die Reform der Amtsjournale im spätantiken Ägypten*, in *Symposion 2013*, cur. M. Gagarin, A. Lanni, Wien 2014, pp. 401-427; J.-D. Rodríguez-Martín, *Protocolos procesales en dos lenguas: un ejemplo en un papiro de Montserrat*, «*Index*», 44 (2016), pp. 123-140; B. Palme, *Libellprozess und Protokollverfahren*, in *Symposion 2017*, cur. G. Thür, U. Yiftach, R. Zelnick-Abramovitz, Wien 2018, pp. 257-275; J.-L. Fournet, *La pratique du latin dans l'Égypte de l'Antiquité tardive*, in *Latin in Byzantium I. Late Antiquity and Beyond*, cur. A. Garcea, M. Rosellini, L.

that, with rare exceptions, Latin was used for the ‘framework’ of the record: that is, for non-dialogic sections, such as the identification of the speakers and the descriptive phrases regarding events occurring in court (e.g., people entering or leaving the courtroom¹³, members of the administration reading aloud a document¹⁴, the use of torture¹⁵). By contrast, the ‘body’ of the record – that is, the utterances spoken in court – were written in *oratio recta* in Greek, with the single exception of the sentences of the magistrates, which had to be in Latin until AD 397, when an imperial constitution by Honorius and Arcadius eventually permitted that the judges issue their verdicts in Greek¹⁶.

These features are to be found also in *P.Cair.Masp.* III 67329, which ranks among the latest samples of this type of document. Latin is employed to introduce the statements from the parties¹⁷, whereas most of the report consists of speeches in Greek. A sin-

Silvano, Turnhout 2019, pp. 73-91; M. Pedone, *Apud acta. Studi sul processo romano alla luce della documentazione papirologica (IV-VI sec. d.C.)*, Torino 2020.

¹³ See e.g., *P.Sakaon* 34 l. 2: «C[u]m adisset Arion{e}, Horion d(ixit)».

¹⁴ See e.g., *SB XX* 14707 l. 2: «officium recitavit»; *P.Thomas* 25 l. 2: «ex officio dictum est».

¹⁵ See e.g., *P.Oxy.* LI 3619 l. 24: «quq̄ vexato»; *P.Lips.* I 40 ll. 20-21: «et ad officium d(ixit) ‘τυπτέσθω’. Et cumque buneuris caesus fuisset, Fl(avius) Leon-tius Beronicianus v(ir) c(larissimus) pr(aeses) Tebaei(dis) d(ixit) ‘Ελευθέρους μὴ τύπτῃτε’ et ad officium d(ixit) ‘Parve’. Cumque pepertum ei fuisset».

¹⁶ *Cod. Iust.* 7, 45, 12, *Imp. Honor. Arcad.* (AD 397): «Iudices tam Latina quam Graeca lingua sententias proferre possunt». See C. Russo Ruggeri, *C. 7.45.12 ed il problema della legittimità dell’uso della lingua greca nell’amministrazione della giustizia in età imperiale*, in *Modelli di un multiculturalismo giuridico. Il bilinguismo nel mondo antico. Diritto, prassi, insegnamento*, cur. C. Cascione, C. Masi Doria, G.D. Merola, II, Napoli 2013, pp. 601-630.

¹⁷ E.g., col. II l. 35: «Apollos fil(ius) D[iō]scoru pro]tocom(etes) ex Afrodit(es vico) d(ixit)»; col. II l. 37: «Fl(avius) Paulus schol(asticus) [et] defen(sor) Antaeopol(eos) c(larissimus) v(ir) d(ixit)».

gle scribe wrote the record by using different scripts (so-called *duplex manus*¹⁸): (1) new Roman cursive for the ‘framework’; (2) a carefully produced, rounded and enlarged Greek semicursive was used for the statements by the judge; (3) a quite angular Greek cursive, slanting to the right and faster in execution, was used for the speeches of the other individuals. Given the poor condition of col. I l. 1, almost nothing remains of the Latin dating formula, which was presumably written in the old-fashioned ornate chancery script known as «misteriosa scrittura grande»¹⁹. The Latin and Greek cursives are much alike, which is typical of the so-called late antique graphic κοινή²⁰. The scribe, therefore, had

¹⁸ See G. Cavallo, *Una mano e due pratiche. Scrittura del testo e scrittura del commento nel libro greco*, in *Le commentaire entre tradition et innovation. Actes du colloque international de l'Institut des traditions textuelles*, cur. M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, Paris 2000, pp. 55-64; Id., *Il contributo delle ChLA agli studi paleografici. Tre schizzi*, in *Die Privaturkunden der Karolingerzeit*, cur. P. Erhart, K. Heidecker, B. Zeller, Dietikon - Zürich 2009, pp. 237-242. A recent discussion of an example of *duplex manus* in a papyrus is found in A. Bernini, *Fasce di lana in un papiro latino (P.Masada 723 riedito)*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 64.2 (2018), pp. 312-323, esp. 313-314.

¹⁹ On this script see J.-O. Tjäder, *La misteriosa scrittura grande dei papiri ravennati e il suo posto nella storia della corsiva antica latina e nella diplomatica romana e bizantina dall'Egitto a Ravenna*, «Studi Romagnoli», 3 (1952), pp. 173-221; D. Feissel, *Deux modèles de cursive latine dans l'ordre alphabétique grec*, in *Sixty-Five Papyrological Texts. Presented to Klaas A. Worp on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday (P.L.Bat. 33)*, cur. F.A.J. Hoogendijk, B.P. Muhs, Leiden - Boston 2008, pp. 53-64 (rist. in Id., *Documents, droit, diplomatie*, Paris 2010, pp. 541-551); L. Iannacci, M. Modesti, A. Zuffrano, *La misteriosa scrittura grande dei papiri ravennati, tra prassi documentaria pubblica e legislazione*, «Legal Roots», 1 (2012), pp. 89-119; F. Manservigi, M. Mezzetti, *The Didyma Inscription: Between Legislation and Palaeography*, in *Understanding Material Text Cultures*, cur. M. Hilgert, Berlin - Boston 2016, pp. 203-242.

²⁰ G. Cavallo, *La κοινή scrittoria greco-romana nella prassi documentaria di età bizantina*, «Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik», 19 (1970), pp. 1-31.

received a Greek and a Latin graphic education and was capable of writing the text with competence, using the main abbreviations and ligatures in both languages.

These linguistic and graphic skills may be considered normal, since they are paralleled by most late antique records of proceedings. What is remarkable in this document, however, is that – beside the customary phenomena of Graeco-Latin language contact – it bears some graphic element of the Egyptian linguistic component. One of the estates to be transferred, in fact, is spelled «Πίαρ Σε» in the papyrus²¹. The same location is mentioned in *P.Cair.Masp.* II 67128 and, with the common Greek spelling Πίασε, in several other documents of the archive of Dioscoros²². The term Πίαρ («estate, field») is rather common in the names of cultivated lots of land²³, as is clearly shown by several papyri²⁴, including the famous land-register of Aphrodito (*P.Cair.Masp.* III 67325), which is closely connected to this *P.Cair.Masp.* III 67329²⁵.

According to a custom attested by other documents coming from the Anteopolite nome, the name of the country quarter is highlighted by a superposed horizontal line. It has been argued that this practice might have been used to signal the presence of words

²¹ Col. I ll. 11; 16 and 18.

²² *P.Cair.Masp.* II 67134; 67135 = SB XX 14294 (supplemented); III 67325; 67326; 67327; *P.Lond.* V 1677; 1689; 1702.

²³ A. Syrcou, *Three Byzantine Documents*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 48 (2002), pp. 225-232, esp. 227.

²⁴ E.g., Πία Πετό (*P.Cair.Masp.* III 67300); Πιαρσαχώ (*P.Cair.Masp.* III 67319).

²⁵ J.-L. Fournet, *Annexe 2. Liste des papyrus édités de l'Aphrodité byzantine. Les archives de Dioscore d'Aphrodité cent ans après leur découverte. Histoire et culture dans l'Égypte byzantine*, in *Les archives de Dioscore d'Aphrodité cent ans après leur découverte. Histoire et culture dans l'Égypte byzantine (Études d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne)*, cur. Id., Paris 2008, pp. 307-343, esp. 325.

in Egyptian within Greek texts²⁶. In this peculiar case, however, the Egyptian word is evidently shown by the use of the *hori*: this letter is *ictu oculi* larger than the others and it would itself have been sufficient to display the presence of the foreign word. At any rate, it clearly appears that the scribe was so proficient in spoken and written Egyptian that he chose the spelling Πίαρ Σε instead of Πία Σε.

The deep connection between the Greek language and Coptic culture is an obvious element: the archive, the library and the intellectual activity of Dioscoros himself are some of the most famous examples in this respect²⁷. Pieces of evidence for the links between Latin and the Coptic milieu, on the other hand, are much rarer: this text provides a small sample of the coexistence between them. A clerk of the chancery of a city officer of Higher Egypt was capable of writing not only in Greek and in Egyptian, but also in Latin. Records of proceedings like this one remind us that, even in the peripheral cities of the empire, there were categories of individuals which were required to have at least a basic knowledge of written Latin as a second or third language. In a similar fashion, officers (like the *defensor civitatis* himself) who represented the Roman authority and were elected among the most prominent members of the city elites were expected to know some Latin, since they were supposed to use Roman Law, which was issued almost exclusively in Latin until AD 534²⁸. If they did not, they

²⁶ S.J. Clackson, *Coptic or Greek? Bilingualism in the Papyri*, in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, cur. A. Papaconstantinou, Farnham - Burlington (VT) 2010, pp. 73-104, esp. 85.

²⁷ MacCoull, *Dioscoros* cit. pp. 16 ss.; Id., 'The Holy Trinity' at Aphrodito, «Tyche», 6 (1991), pp. 109-111, esp. 109; J.G. Keenan, *On Languages and Literacy in Byzantine Aphrodito*, in *Proceedings of the 18th International Congress of Papyrology*, cur. B. Mandilaras, Athens 1988, pp. 161-167; J.-L. Fournet, *Hellénisme dans l'Égypte du VI^e siècle. La bibliothèque et l'oeuvre de Dioscore d'Aphrodité*, Le Caire 1999.

²⁸ S. Corcoran, *Roman Law and the two Languages in Justinian's Empire*, «Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies», 60.1 (2017), pp. 96-116, esp. 101.

were possibly helped by the members of their *officia*, like the scribe of this document.

From this perspective, a thorough survey of Latin texts coming from Egypt and an archaeological atlas of Coptic literature may shed light on the environments where the two elements potentially overlapped, thus creating new research horizons in both fields. Despite coming from distant contexts, these two worlds happened to coexist in late antique Egypt, and it is possible that the ‘sword’ of Roman law and the ‘cross’ of Christian Egyptian culture operated through the same individuals for some time.

Notes on the Formula *Sator Areto* in the Late Antique Egypt*

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Palindromes, acrostics, cryptograms and word games in general have been popular in every time, since they fascinate and stimulate the curiosity and talent of their readers¹.

One of the oldest and most famous acrostics in Latin is the Sator-acrostic, made up of five words inscribed into a square, in the following order: *Rotas Opera Tenet Arepo Sator*. Alternatively, according to a more recent version, it can be proposed that these five words were arranged in a very slightly different order: *Sator Arepo Tenet Opera Rotas*².

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¹ For an overview of ancient palindromes, *carmina figurata* and acrostics see M. Guarducci, *Dal gioco letterale alla crittografia mistica*, in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II.16.2, cur. W. Haase, Berlin - New York 1978, pp. 1736-1773. More specifically, on Pompeii attestations see R.R. Benefiel, *Magic Squares, Alphabet Jumbles, Riddles and More: The Culture of Word-Games among the Graffiti of Pompeii*, in *The Muse at Play: Riddles and Wordplay in Greek and Latin Poetry*, cur. J. Kwapisz, D. Petrain, M. Szymanski, Berlin - Boston 2013, pp. 65-79.

² The bibliography on the topic is particularly broad and is characterized by different perspectives, some of them nowadays are now outda-

This formula is usually inscribed into a square, with each word on a single line; it is thus known as a magical square as well, and it can be read in every direction. It had a particular fortune not only in the ancient world but also in the modern era up to the present day. For instance, *Sator Arepo eccetera* is the title of the volume of Umberto Eco, published in 2006, that includes several acrostics and riddles.

Scholars have considerably disputed on the nature of the formula and the context in which it was created, and they have proposed different solutions and interpretations; for this reason, they concentrated their interest largely on the most ancient instances of this acrostic. However, it is also worth evaluating the history of the formula, its changes, and its re-elaborations in different contexts of the ancient world.

This paper aims to investigating the instances of the Sator-formula in Coptic circles on the basis of papyrological evidence from Late Egypt. The occurrences – which are very numerous – show both the tenacity of the main features and their changes through time. Through a selection of important instances, this paper will try to elucidate the circulation of the formula and, thus, of the Latin language in Coptic environments.

1. *Structure, Origin, and Significance of the Formula*

Before discussing the Egyptian papyri, it is useful to specify some points about the original purpose of the formula and the con-

ted. At any rate, the works of M. Guarducci, *Il misterioso «quadrato magico». L'interpretazione di Jérôme Carcopino e documenti nuovi*, «Rivista di Archeologia Classica», 17 (1965), pp. 219-270 and J.G. Griffiths, 'Arepo' in the Magic 'Sator' Square, «The Classical Review», 21.1 (1971), pp. 6-8 remain valid. See also the very useful study of C. Kreuzsaler, *Die Magie im Sator-Quadrat*, in *Orakelsprüche, Magie und Horoskope. Wie Ägypten in die Zukunft sah*, cur. A. Zdiarsky, Wien 2015, pp. 43-52, with previous bibliography.

text in which it was particularly highly conceived; this will help to explain its use in Coptic Egypt.

The formula, as is well-known, is made up of five words, each of five letters, which are usually written underneath one another. These words can be read in each direction (horizontally from left to right and vice versa, and vertically from the top to the bottom and vice versa) but their order does not change. Moreover, the third word *Tenet* is a perfect palindrome.

As discussed above, the surviving evidence shows both the sequence starting with *Rotas* and *Opera*, and the sequence with *Sator* and *Arepo* in first position. The most ancient occurrences from Pompeii demonstrate that the former version is the original version. The ruins of the Campanian city preserve two instances of the acrostic: the former was discovered in the domus of *Publius Pasquius Proculus* together with other graffiti and was published by Matteo Della Corte in 1929³. The latter – preserved in its entirety – was read by the same scholar shortly after, in 1936, on a column of the *palaestra* near the amphitheatre; this was scratched together with other inscriptions (alphabets, Virgilian verses and greetings)⁴. Both these instances show that the formula was created before AD 79 and through the 1st century AD it was sufficiently well known and widespread that it was written on the walls.

There are further occurrences, coming from other contexts, that attest to the same order of the words: a graffito written on a brick has been discovered in Conimbriga (now Coimbra), and is

³ M. Della Corte, *Pompei: Epigrafi della casa di P. Paquio Proculo* (Reg. I, Ins. VII n. 1), «Notizie e Scavi» (1929), pp. 354-476, esp. 449 n. 112. See also *CIL* IV Suppl. 8123.

⁴ M. Della Corte, *Il crittogramma del 'Pater Noster' rinvenuto a Pompei*, «Rendiconti della Pontifica Accademia Romana di Archeologia», 12 (1936), pp. 397-400; Id., *Le iscrizioni della «grande palestra» ad occidente dell'anfiteatro*, «Notizie e Scavi» (1939), pp. 239-327; then *CIL* IV Suppl. 8623.

datable to the 1st century AD as well⁵. Other instances come from Aquincum (now Altona, near Budapest), on shingle found among the ruins of the palace of the *legatus provinciae*, and from *Mamucium* (now Manchester), on a fragmentary amphora⁶.

Other instances which deserve a mention were discovered at Dura-Europos on the Euphrates, in Syria, during the Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters campaign of 1932-1933: the formula was repeated four times, together with other graffiti, on the walls of a room in the temple of Artemis Azzanath-kona. Such a room served as an office and archive of the *actuarii* – who were in charge of the accounting system and documentation in general – of the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* which was stationed at Dura in the first half of the 3rd century AD⁷. Consequently, the instances must have been inscribed before the destruction of the site in AD

⁵ See *Fouilles de Conimbriga. II. Épigraphie et sculpture*, edd. R. Etienne, G. Fabre, P. Lévêque, M. Lévêque, Paris 1976, n. 372. Published also as *AE* 1975, 493.

⁶ The formula from Aquincum was published by J. Szilágyi, *Ein Ziegelstein mit Zauberformel aus dem Palast des Statthalters*, «Acta antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae», 2 (1954), pp. 305-310. This scholar suggests dating the instance to the early 2nd century AD on the basis of the paleographic features and the archaeological context. See also *AE* 1956, 63 = 2000, 1221. On the formula discovered in 1978 at Mamucium and dated to the 2nd century AD see R. Goodburn, M.W.C. Hassall, R.S.O. Tomlin, *Roman Britain in 1978, II: Inscriptions*, «Britannia», 10 (1979), pp. 339-356, esp. 353 n. 34.

⁷ See M.I. Rostovtzeff, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: Preliminary Report of Fifth Season of Work*, New Haven 1934, pp. 159-161 n. 481; Id., *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: Preliminary Report of Sixth Season of Work*, New Haven 1936, p. 486 n. 809. In this same room, the papyri were also discovered which are published by *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: Final Report, V 1. The Parchments and Papyri. With an Account of Three Fragments by W.B. Henning*, edd. C.B. Welles, R.O. Fink, J.F. Gilliam, New Haven 1959.

256. Among these, three are written in the Latin alphabet, and the fourth one is in Greek letters.

Lastly, a further instance of the formula was found in Rome, on a wall of the *macellum Liviae* – under the Cathedral of Santa Maria Maggiore and in association with other acrostics – which can be dated between the 3rd and 4th century AD; to this same chronological scenario belongs an instance that was read among the ruins of Corinium Dobunnorum, (near Cirencester), in the countship of Gloucester, within a private house⁸.

Since all these examples of the formula start with the words *Rotas Opera*, one can conclude that this sequence was the original one. By contrast, there is no ancient occurrence in which *Sator Areto* are written first which is known until now; all occurrences showing a different order of the words can be dated to the 4th or 5th century AD⁹.

Furthermore, the evidence shows us the incredible popularity of the acrostic during the first three centuries AD, not only in different geographical contexts, but also in different social environments: together with a private use of the acrostic, some instances clearly point to the public sphere, and particularly to the military (Dura-Europos) and administrative bureaucracy (Aquincum). At the same time, it is interesting to note that in some of the contexts (Pompeii, Dura-Europos and Rome), the acrostic was written together with other palindromes, verses and cryptograms.

This point assumes value when one considers the controversial question of the possible – pagan or Christian – origin of the formula. On this topic, scholars have suggested several and very different hypotheses, mostly based on the word *Areto*. Since it does not exist

⁸ On the formula preserved by *macellum Liviae* cfr. P. Castrén, *Appendice*, in *Il calendario dipinto sotto Santa Maria Maggiore, con appendice sui graffiti del vano XVI a cura di Paavo Castrén*, cur. F. Magi, Roma 1972, pp. 77-78. On the other instance see R.G. Collingwood, *The Archaeology of Roman Britain*, London 1930, p. 176.

⁹ Guarducci, *Il misterioso «quadrato magico»* cit., p. 226.

in Latin, some scholars believed that it was a Celtic word, very similar to the noun *arepennis* that occurs in the work of Columella and is equivalent to the Latin *semiingerum*¹⁰. On this basis, they reconstructed a hypothetical *arepos*, which would be *arepus* in Latin, meaning the plough; such a meaning seemed to be related to the significance of «seeder» expressed by the word *Sator*¹¹.

Alternatively, some scholars have speculated that the word *Arepo* makes references to the *Harpocrates*¹², the Mithraic cults, Orphism, Pythagorean philosophy and the Hebrew religion¹³. Such different interpretations depend on the different ways of dividing the single words or of rearranging the single letters. The majority of scholars were in favour of the Christian origin of the acrostic: through a different order of the five words, it is possible

¹⁰ Colum. 5, 1, 6, 4: «*At Galli candetum appellant in areis urbanis spatium centum pedum, in agrestibus autem pedum CL, quod aratores candetum nominant; semiingerum quoque arepennem vocant*».

¹¹ Such a theory has been formulated mostly by J. Carcopino, *Études d'histoire chrétienne: le Christianisme secret du carré magique; les fouilles de Saint-Pierre et la tradition*, Paris 1953, pp. 9-102, to prove the Christian origin of the formula, that would be created by St. Ireneus during the persecutions in Lyons of AD 177.

¹² See especially M. Markovich, *Georgos Harpon (Knoyphi) Harpos*, «*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*», 50 (1983), pp. 155-171 (rist. in Id., *Studies in Graeco-Roman Religions and Gnosticism*, Leiden 1988, pp. 28-46) and G.M. Browne, *Arepotenet = Harpocrates*, «*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*», 52 (1983), p. 60, with other bibliographical references.

¹³ On the Mithraic hypothesis see for instance W.O. Moeller, *The Mithraic Origin and Meanings of the Rotas-Sator Square*, Leiden 1973. On the formula and Orphism see S. Eitrem, *The Sator Arepo-formula once more*, «*Eranos*», 48 (1950), pp. 73-74. On the Hebrew origin see lastly N. Vinel, *Le judaïsme caché du carré SATOR de Pompéi*, «*Revue de l'histoire des religions*», 223 (2006), pp. 173-193.

to obtain the formula *Pater noster* (repeated twice), together with the two Apocalyptic letters *A* and *O*; moreover, according to the same scholars, the formula would contain Christ's cross, which is featured by the letter *T* repeated four times¹⁴. On the basis of these coincides, the theory of the Christian origin of the acrostic achieved a considerable success among scholars: the acrostic would have created by the first communities and used by them as a company sign during the persecutions.

Such a theory – as well as the other ones that are in favour of a religious origin of the formula – was rejected by the work of Margherita Guarducci in 1965: starting from the most ancient instances in Pompeii, the epigraphist showed that in origin the formula had no one religious significance; it was born in pagan contexts and worked only as pastime, in a similar way to other acrostics.

It is likely that the formula came from the word *Rotas* and its palindrome *Sator*, which feature the 'frame' of the formula itself; then the verb *Tenet* was added, given the presence of the letter *T* in the four sides. Consequently, the letters *O* and *A* appeared in second position and gave rise to the word *Opera*. Its palindrome was *Arepo*, which was inserted despite its absence of meaning. Like other palindromes, acrostics and *carmina figurata*, the Sator-formula was born simply by combining the letters of the alphabet¹⁵.

Only afterwards was the formula adopted by Christian milieu, where it had a great fortune and was inscribed both on the walls of buildings and churches, and on objects (amulets), both alone and together with prayers and other formulas of blessing. Such fortune of the formula was very likely due to its apotropaic and positive val-

¹⁴ This theory was expressed for the first time by F. Grosser, *Ein neuer Vorschlag zur Deutung des Sator-Formel: Pater Noster*, «Archiv für Religionswissenschaft», 24 (1926), pp. 165-169.

¹⁵ Guarducci, *Il misterioso «quadrato magico»* cit., pp. 226-240. See also M. Guarducci, *Il misterioso Arepo*, in *Miscellanea etrusca e italica in onore di Massimo Pallottino* = «Archeologia Classica», 43 (1991), pp. 589-596.

ue: read all together and with their particular arrangement, the five words were believed to be a cure against fevers, illness and difficulties; they had to stimulate a general fascination and mostly a sense of the mystery in their readers.

It cannot be ruled out that the formula had already assumed a magic-apotropaic value perhaps also in pagan contexts; it is, however, certain that the Christians used it mostly as a sort of remedy against the Evil and the adversities in general¹⁶.

This same significance explains the longevity and the popularity of the Sator-formula through time and in different fields, such as the medicine and the magical practice.

2. *The Formula in Coptic Egypt*

2.1. *From Sator Arepo to Sator Areto*

The idea that the acrostic had a magical force which could remove difficulties and illnesses clarifies its use and fortune in Late Egypt and in Coptic environments as well. The surviving Coptic evidence is particularly rich and covers a large chronological period from the 5th to the 11th century.

Given this scenario, all Coptic instances show the version starting with *Sator Arepo*. Moreover, such instances attest to an important change in the formula: the Latin *Arepo* and *Opera* are writ-

¹⁶ Scholars have deeply debated about ancient magic and early Jewish-Christian relations, focusing on differences, on syncretism and common features. More recently, the idea of boundaries between magic and early Judaism and Christianity has been put in question by the material evidence. In this respect, see e.g., J.E. Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits on Amulets from Late Antique Egypt. Text, Typology, and Theory*, Tübingen 2014; further bibliography is listed by J.E. Sanzo on the site of his ERC project (Grant agreement no. 851466: <https://pric.unive.it/projects/ejcm/home>, l.a. 20/10/2021).

ten with *tan*, thus appearing as *Areto* and *Otera*¹⁷. This change is very useful for us in evaluating the extant evidence: generally, in the instances in which the formula is written alone, we cannot be completely certain if the alphabet is Greek or Coptic because no one of the additional Coptic signs is used. However, the variant with *Areto* and *Otera* permits us to reach a certain linguistic classification.

It remains uncertain if such a variant was made intentionally or not. The same arguments can be used in favour of both hypotheses. On the one hand, the graphical interchange between the two letters – very similar among them – could be made as a mechanical mistake; on the other hand, such interchange could be inserted because it caused a further symmetry within the formula itself with the triple *tan*. Despite this question, it is however certain that the variant with *Areto* and *Otera* gave the impression that the formula now had a stronger and superior magical value and, thus, stood out through the centuries.

2.2. *Instances of the Formula Alone*

In the Coptic milieu the formula is often attested alone and, in these cases, it is written in a square, in as similar way to the most ancient instances.

This is shown by an ostrakon kept in the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung of Berlin, numbered as P. 982. The piece was donated to the Museum by the consul Gustav Travers in 1897; its provenance remains unknown. It preserves all four margins, and the ink is very legible; the script is clear and traced slowly with a soft calamus; the big letters suggest the 7th century as its date¹⁸. The five

¹⁷ A.M. Kropp, *Ausgewählte Koptische Zaubertexte. Vol. III: Einleitung in koptische Zaubertexte*, Bruxelles 1930, pp. 203; 222.

¹⁸ See the edition of A. Bastian, *Die Sator-Arepo-Formel*, «Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik», 13 (1881), pp. 35-36, esp. 35 (who suggested a 4th-5th century AD dating) and of W. Beltz, *Noch zwei Berliner Sator-Amulette*, «Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete», 24-25 (1976), pp. 129-134, esp. 131. The verb *Tēnet* shows the use of *ei* and then of *eta*.

words are perfectly inscribed in a square, complete with all borders, both the exterior and interior ones.

The geometrical form is attested in other instances, both on papyrus and parchment. The Papyrussammlung of Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna preserves three items, numbered as K 2434, K 2435, K 2436 and acquired on the antiquarian market. All are parchment sheets and, on the basis of the palaeographic features, can be dated between the 10th and 11th century¹⁹. Similarly, the three items show the formula inscribed into a square with the horizontal lines only. In addition, in both K 2434 and K 2436 the formula is preceded by a cross; given the general resemblance, it is highly likely that these three pieces were written out by the same hand and belonged to the same owner as well.

A very similar instance, preserved by the same Collection and deserving a brief mention, is P.Vindob. inv. K 10336: the item consists of a papyrus fragment, written only on one side, along the fibres, and dated to the 11th century²⁰. It proves that, until this time, the formula was written in its characteristic square form.

All the aforementioned instances share a common and important feature: the formula is inscribed in the square, it occurs alone, without other religious or magical texts, and it occupies all the writing space. Together with these instances, the extant evidence also shows cases in which the formula is written alone and lacks its typical square; such cases, moreover, feature an 'obsessive' use of the formula, since it is written several times. This proves, again, that the five words and their particular disposition were perceived as a powerful and useful tool against difficulties.

¹⁹ See Kreuzsaler, *Die Magie* cit., pp. 49-50, and Zdiarsky, *Orakelsprüche* cit., p. 106 nn. 30-32.

²⁰ Kreuzsaler, *Die Magie* cit., p. 49. As noted by the scholar, the dating of this instance and of the other Coptic pieces is often on the basis of the script only and, consequently, should be regarded cautiously.

An instance of this use of the formula is preserved by P.Vindob. inv. G 46006²¹. It is a papyrus strip written around the middle of the 6th century AD: the Sator-formula is written three times, each word occupying a line itself; there is no graphical device to separate the three sequences, but the scribe was forced to reduce the height of the letters in the last sequence because of the lack of space. A mistake can be also noted in l. 10 where the word «*Totas*» was written in place of *Rotas*.

Despite the presence or not of the square form, it is clear that all these attestations worked as a personal amulet or charm to ward off evil or illness; papyri and parchments, in particular, were rolled up and worn attached to the neck. This is proved by the (small) dimensions of the items and the signs of wrinkles, which are well visible in, for instance, P.Vindob. inv. K 2436.

2.3. *Instances with Prayers, Magic Texts, and Other Formulas*

The Egyptian evidence shows that the formula was also used together with other texts, both religious and magical ones, and with other palindromes and acrostics too.

A similar use can be noted, for instance, in a parchment fragment preserved in Berlin (inv. P. 8096) and dated to the 7th century²². Each word of the formula occupies a line itself; then the magic words «*μουλαλ βουλαλ θουλαλ*» follow, which were used to invoke angels and demons; in addition, the Apocalyptic letters *alpha* and *omega* were written out, together with the letter *chi*, repeated several times, as it indicates Christ's cross. Lastly, the vocalic sequence, the symbol of the seven planets and thus of God, was written.

A further example is *P.Bad.* V 138²³, a paper strip of the Institut für Papyrologie in Heidelberg, bought on the antiquarian market

²¹ Zdiarsky, *Orakelsprüche* cit., p. 106 n. 33.

²² See Beltz, *Noch zwei* cit., pp. 132-134.

²³ *P.Bad.* V, pp. 397-399.

by Carl Schmidt in 1930 and published in 1934 by Friedrich Bilabel. The large and clear script points to the 11th century as dating. The text starts with an invocation, followed immediately by the Sator-formula.

Some instances appear to be more interesting for us, since they attest not only the simple juxtaposition of the acrostic with other prayers and formulas, but they re-use it to create new texts. This is shown by an Oxyrhynchus papyrus kept in the Sackler Library of Oxford (inv. 39 5B. 125/A) and assigned to the 11th century²⁴. The formula – in which the word $\omega\tau\eta\rho\omega$ was erroneously written in place of *Otera* and repeated twice (ll. 4-5) – works as the beginning of a magic spell against malaria and illness in general; the charm covers further magic formulas and the vocalic sequence.

A further interesting instance is preserved by P.Vindob. inv. K 7093, a paper fragment, written by a skilled scribe during the 10th century²⁵. It preserves a prayer against physical pain and makes use of the Sator-acrostic as a sort of frame: the acrostic is repeated at the start and the end of the text, perhaps making it more effective. Together with this acrostic, indeed, the anonymous author added a further well-known palindrome, *Alpha Leon Phone Aner*.

In Coptic environments, the formula is attested also with sacred and religious texts; an example features in a papyrus sheet, of the Papyrussammlung in Vienna, inventoried as K 3178²⁶. The script, running along the fibres, is small in size and rapid in execution and suggests the 7th and 8th century. In order, the text contains several formulas of invocation, a quotation from the opening of the Gos-

²⁴ *Editio princeps* in A. Alcock, *A Coptic Magical Text*, «Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists», 19 (1982), pp. 97-103.

²⁵ See Kreuzsaler, *Die Magie*, p. 50; Zdiarsky, *Orakelsprüche* cit., p. 108 n. 35.

²⁶ S. Pernigotti, *Un nuovo testo magico in copto della Papyrussammlung di Vienna*, «Ricerche di egittologia e di antichità copte», 6 (2004), pp. 131-138.

pels, combined with the Sator formula at ll. 16-17. It ends with an unclear section which seems to invoke the Virgin Mary.

Such examples – like the ones in which the formula occurs alone – served the same purpose: they worked as an amulet and tools against evil. Such examples, indeed, are small in size and show wrinkle lines. This is proved, again, by the last example of the present selection: P.Vindob. inv. K 8302, a parchment fragment written during the 10th century²⁷. The formula, placed in a single line and separated through a horizontal line, occurs with other two prayers.

3. *Conclusions*

The Egyptian evidence clearly shows the fortune and the popularity of the Sator-formula within the Coptic milieu. However, the Coptic communities did not limit themselves only to adopting the formula, but they also changed it: firstly, the Latin alphabet was replaced by the Greek one; secondly, the words *Arepo Opera* became *Areto* and *Otera*, with the result of adding to the symmetries and the magical power of the formula itself.

Until the 11th century, the formula was inscribed in its typical square; however, and more often, it was written in single lines. In comparison to the most ancient instances, the Coptic evidence clearly illustrates the religious / magical value assumed by the five words. All attestations were used as an amulet against physical and mental pain. This is made more evident by the instances in which the formula is written together with other texts and formulas.

Unfortunately, most of the surviving items come from the antiquities market and their provenance, remains, therefore, unknown. An exception in this respect is the papyrus inventoried as 39 5B.

²⁷ See Kreuzsaler, *Die Magie* cit., p. 49.

125/A and kept in the Sackler Library, which comes from Oxyrhynchus. In P.Vindob. inv. K 3178 some linguistic features are typical of the Fayyum and might reveal an origin from this area²⁸. However, no manuscript contains elements which suggest a link with one of the monastic contexts of Late Egypt. At the same time, the purpose of the surviving items – that is of the amulet – shows that they were conceived for private use only.

Lastly, the extant evidence leads to an important consideration concerning the knowledge and the circulation of Latin in Late Egypt. Of course, the formula did not require knowledge of the Latin language or script; however, no indications were found to suggest that the formula was perceived as an expression of a different linguistic or cultural identity. By contrast, it is perfectly integrated into the Coptic context. It is worth underlining, again, that the formula occurs in combination with other formulas, prayers, and magic texts in general. Such combinations perfectly reflect the multicultural context of Late Egypt.

One should admit that, in general, the texts preserved by the papyrological evidence are well-known and quite common; however, the Coptic items show that, often, the formula was not only juxtaposed with the other prayers and formulas, but it was given a new function and revitalised, becoming a single new text with the other ones.

This can be regarded as further (small) evidence of the larger contact between Latin culture and Coptic culture in Late Egypt.

²⁸ Pernigotti, *Un nuovo testo* cit., p. 132.

Abbreviations

Editions of papyri, *corpora* and papyrological tools are cited according to the *Checklist of Editions of Greek and Latin Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets* (online at <https://papyri.info/docs/checklist>).

Additionally, the following abbreviations are used:

- Blaise: A. Blaise, *Dictionnaire latin-français des auteurs chrétiens*, Turnhout 1962.
- CD: Coptic Dictionary Online, edited by the Koptische / Coptic Electronic Language and Literature International Alliance (KELLIA) (online at <https://coptic-dictionary.org/>).
- Černý: J. Černý, *Coptic etymological dictionary*, Cambridge-New York 1976.
- Cervenka-Ehrenstrasser: I.M. Cervenka-Ehrenstrasser, J. Diethart, *Lexikon der lateinischen Lehnwörter in den griechischsprachigen dokumentarischen Texten Ägyptens mit Berücksichtigung koptischer Quellen*, fasc. 1, Vienna 1996, and fasc. 2, Vienna 2000.
- CgL: *Corpus glossariorum Latinorum* a Gustavo Loewe inchoatum ... composuit recensuit edidit Georgius Goetz. Voll. I-VII, Lipsiae 1888-1923.
- CIL: *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin 1863-.
- CLA: E.A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores*. Voll. I-XI, Oxford 1934-1966.
- CLA Suppl.: *Codices Latini Antiquiores. Supplement*, Oxford 1917.
- CLM: Coptic Literary Manuscript (online at [paths.uniroma1.it; https://atlas.paths-erc.eu](https://atlas.paths-erc.eu)).
- CLTP: *Corpus of Latin Texts on Papyrus*, cur. M.C. Scappaticcio, Cambridge (forthcoming).

- CPL: R. Cavenaile, *Corpus Papyrorum Latinarum*, Wiesbaden 1958.
- Crum: W.E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, Oxford 1939.
- DGE: F.R. Adrados, E. Gangutia, D. Lara, J. Rodríguez Somolinos, *Diccionario Griego-Español*, Madrid 1980- (online version at <http://dge.cchs.csic.es/xdge/>).
- Du Cange: C. du Fresne du Cange, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis. Editio nova I-X*, Nior 1883-1887.
- Förster: H. Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, Berlin 2002.
- Lampe: G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek lexicon*, Oxford - New York 1987.
- LBG: E. Trapp, *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität*, Wien 1994-2017 (online version 2017).
- LSJ: A Greek-English lexicon compiled by Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, Oxford 1940¹.
- OLD: *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Oxford 2012².
- PLRE: J.R. Martindale, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire. Vol. 2: A. D. 395-527*, Cambridge 1980.
- TLL: *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, Leipzig 1900-.
- Vycichl: W. Vycichl, *Dictionnaire Étymologique de la langue Copte*, Leuven 1983.

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This volume is the first work devoted to the contacts between Latin and Coptic in late antique and Byzantine Egypt. It follows in the footsteps of a renewed interest in this multilingual and multicultural area, but it approaches an untapped theme aiming to show that it can profitably be explored. The papers examine different type of evidence on the basis of a multi-perspective approach. Some of them deal with wide-ranging issues, such as the presence of Latin in monastic or scholastic contexts alongside local varieties, some others deal with specific subjects, such as the use of Latin in a certain milieu or in specific documents. All papers show that the contact between languages, scripts and cultures took many forms depending on various factors.

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