

Promotor	Prof. dr. Marc De Groot Vakgroep Taalkunde
Co-promotoren	Prof.dr.em. Willy Clarysse Vakgroep Oude Geschiedenis, KU Leuven Prof.dr. Bernard De Clerck Vakgroep Vertalen, Tolken en Communicatie (Engels)
Decaan	Prof. dr. Marc Boone
Rector	Prof. dr. Anne De Paepe

Nederlandse vertaling:

Het formulair taalgebruik van de Griekse private papyrusbrieven

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Faculteit Letteren & Wijsbegeerte

Delphine Nachtergaele

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1	Introduction	1
1.	Definition of the Greek private papyrus letters	4
1.1.	Writing materials	4
1.2.	Language of the private letters	5
1.3.	Private letters.....	12
2.	Status quaestionis of Greek private papyrus letters	16
2.1.	Past studies on Greek private papyrus letters	16
2.2.	Problems in past studies.....	16
3.	Methodology of variationist (socio)linguistics	18
3.1.	Recent methodological developments in papyrology	18
3.2.	Variationist (socio)linguistics and the Greek private papyrus letters	20
4.	Purpose and scope of this study	25
Part 1	<i>Diachronic variation</i>	31
A.	Greetings.....	33
Chapter 2	Opening formula	35
1.	Ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν and variants.....	35
1.1.	Ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν	35
1.2.	Τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν	36
1.3.	Τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα	37
1.4.	Τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν.....	44
1.5.	Τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος χαίρειν and variants	44
1.6.	Variants to the main verb	45
1.7.	Multiple senders and multiple addressees	45
2.	Χαῖρε and χαίροις and variants	50
2.1.	Χαῖρε.....	51
2.2.	Χαίροις	52
2.3.	Χαῖρε and χαίροις as regiolectic features	53
3.	Formulas without χαίρω.....	54
3.1.	Τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος and variants	54

3.2.	Τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα and variants	57
3.3.	Formulas with γράφω	58
4.	Extensions	58
4.1.	Intensifiers and other extensions	58
4.2.	References to the gods.....	60
5.	Letters without opening formula	60
6.	Conclusion	62
Chapter 3	Salutations	63
1.	Salutations from the sender to the addressee's social circle	68
1.1.	Verb forms.....	69
1.2.	Persons greeted	75
1.3.	Sender of the regards.....	76
1.4.	Extensions	79
2.	Salutations from the sender's social circle to the addressee	82
2.1.	Verb forms.....	82
2.2.	Addressee.....	85
2.3.	Sender of the regards.....	87
2.4.	Extensions	88
3.	Salutations from the sender to the addressee.....	88
3.1.	Verb forms.....	89
3.2.	Addressee.....	92
3.3.	Sender	95
3.4.	Extensions	96
4.	Salutations from the sender's social circle to the addressee's social circle	98
5.	Salutations from third persons in the first person perspective	99
6.	General extensions	101
6.1.	References to groups	102
6.2.	Κατ' ὄνομα and other extensions to greetings from or to a group of people.....	113
6.3.	Reference to gods	114
6.4.	Reference to the mailman.....	116
6.5.	Δι' ἐπιστολῆς and variants	116
6.6.	Intensifiers	117
6.7.	Minor extensions.....	120
7.	Conclusion	120
B.	Health wishes	121
Chapter 4	Initial health wish.....	123
1.	Εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον and variants.....	124
1.1.	Conditional clause εἰ ἔρρωσαι and variants	124
1.2.	Main clause εὖ ἂν ἔχοι and variants	133
1.3.	Information about the sender's health	138

2.	Ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν and variants	143
2.1.	Verbs expressing a health wish.....	143
2.2.	Extensions.....	149
3.	Πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν and variants	152
3.1.	Main verb.....	153
3.2.	Words and constructions expressing the health wish.....	156
3.3.	Extensions.....	180
4.	Conclusion	191
Chapter 5 Proskynema formula.....		195
1.	Introduction	195
1.1.	Textual and factual attestations of the Greek proskynema.....	195
1.2.	Egyptian background	198
2.	Variation regarding god	199
2.1.	Reference to a specific deity	200
2.2.	General reference to deities.....	210
2.3.	Epithets and additions to the god(s).....	214
3.	Variation regarding the verb ποιέω	215
3.1.	Person and number	215
3.2.	Tense	216
3.3.	Voice.....	216
3.4.	Mood.....	219
4.	Intensifiers.....	223
5.	Persons made obeisance to	226
6.	Conclusion	229
Chapter 6 Final health wish.....		231
1.	Ἐπιμέλου σεαυτοῦ ἵν' ὑγιαίνης.....	232
1.1.	The main verb	232
1.2.	Object of ἐπιμέλομαι	235
1.3.	Purpose clause	237
1.4.	Extensions.....	239
2.	Conclusion	241
Chapter 7 Closing formula		243
1.	Ἔρρωσο	244
1.1.	Personal preferences	246
2.	Ἐρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι	247
2.1.	Main verb.....	248
2.2.	Words expressing the health wish.....	249
2.3.	Reference to the addressee	252
2.4.	Abbreviations of the basic formula.....	254
3.	Minor variants.....	255
3.1.	Ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξῃ	255
3.2.	Ἐγιαίνων δῖελθε.....	257
3.3.	Εὐτύχει and διευτύχει	258

4.	Extensions.....	259
4.1.	Intensifiers	259
4.2.	Participles	261
4.3.	Reference to gods	266
4.4.	Reference to third persons	268
4.5.	Mention of the addressee's name	270
4.6.	Dativus ethicus.....	270
4.7.	Τὰ ἄλλα and variants	271
4.8.	Minor extensions.....	272
5.	Conclusion	272
Part 2	<i>Synchronic variation</i>.....	275
Chapter 8	Idiolects and shared language	277
1.	Saturnila and her sons	277
1.1.	Ἐρωτάω.....	281
1.2.	Ἀνόκνωσ	282
1.3.	Extension: a reply would reassure the sender	283
2.	Archive of Apollonios strategos	285
2.1.	Initial health wish	286
2.2.	Initial greetings	293
2.3.	Courtesy formula with προτρέπω and ἐπιτρέπω	294
Chapter 9	The (socio)linguistic approach to archive studies.....	297
1.	Asklepiades and Athenodoros	297
1.1.	Linguistic overlaps between the archives	298
1.2.	Isidora's language	300
2.	Thermouthas	304
2.1.	Further evidence in favor of the inclusion of P.Mich. III 202, BGU I 261 and BGU III 822 in the Thermouthas dossier	305
2.2.	New documents in the Thermouthas dossier: P.Corn. 49, P.Mich. VIII 464 and P.Col. VIII 215.....	308
Chapter 10	Politeness and conversational strategies	313
1.	Polite directives	313
1.1.	Polite directives in the letters of Apollonios dioiketes	315
1.2.	Polite directives in the Athenodoros archive	318
2.	Hierokles' variation in the initial health wish and register	319
3.	Claudius Tiberianus' 'code alternation' as conversational strategy	323
3.1.	Greek Letters	326
3.2.	Latin Letters	328
3.3.	Conclusion	333
Conclusion	335	

Appendix I	Description of the correspondents.....	345
1.	Kinship terms	346
1.1.	Kinship terms in the opening formula.....	346
1.2.	Kinship terms in the salutations	349
1.3.	Kinship terms in the closing formula.....	352
2.	Polite terms.....	353
2.1.	Polite terms for the addressee in the opening formula.....	353
2.2.	Polite terms in the salutations	355
2.3.	Polite terms in the closing formula	357
3.	Other characterizations	359
3.1.	Characterizations in Ptolemaic and Roman times	359
3.2.	Characterizations in Late Antique letters.....	366
4.	Conclusion	373
Appendix II	Register analysis and the definition of private letters	375
1.	Linguistic features typical of the registers of petitions, official letters, cheirographa and hypomnemata	377
1.1.	Cheirographa and hypomnemata	377
1.2.	Petitions	377
1.3.	Official letters.....	379
2.	Linguistic features typical of the private letters' register.....	380
2.1.	Opening formula.....	382
2.2.	Health wishes	385
2.3.	Proskynema	386
2.4.	Sending regards	388
3.	Content and other indications of the text type	389
4.	Conclusion	390
Appendix III	Corrections and emendations.....	391
1.	Corrections with regard to the text	391
2.	Corrections with regard to dating.....	399
Bibliography.....		401

Chapter 1 Introduction

The discovery of carbonized rolls in Herculaneum in 1752 was not only a major archaeological find, but it was also the starting point for the new discipline of papyrology —although papyrology admittedly only really began to flourish by the end of the 19th century, from the so-called miracle year 1891 onwards¹. Especially in the period between 1900 and the First World War large-scale expeditions were undertaken in Egypt, during which countless papyrus sheets, ostraca and wooden tablets were uncovered from the desert sands². Together with the various similar (but far less numerous) finds from the surrounding areas in the Mediterranean basin and even from northwest Europe³ they constitute a vast richness of resources. In the decades following the expeditions, more than 50,000 Greek papyrus sheets and 10,000 Greek ostraca were edited (Clarysse 2010a: 47). Still, the amount of papyri waiting to be published and studied is overwhelming: a relatively short period of papyrus digging produced material

¹ In the *annus mirabilis* the first volume of The Flinders Petrie Papyri (P.Petr.) was published. That year also saw the inauguration of the longest-running series of papyrus editions, the BGU (*Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Königlichen* (later: *Staatlichen*) *Museen zu Berlin, Griechische Urkunden*). Further, the words ‘papyrology’ and ‘papyrologists’ came into use in 1891, and the discipline was on its way to be accepted as a science (Keenan 2009: 61).

² Far from all papyri were uncovered during archaeological expeditions. Egyptians themselves too, along with adventurers and thieves clandestinely dug up many finds and sold them to dealers, which explains why archives ended up scattered in collections around the world and why the provenance of numerous papyri is unknown. Unfortunately, we also lack detailed information about the precise finding places of papyri which were excavated by archaeological units: the approach in those days does not meet modern standards, and often a great deal of valuable information on the archaeological context of the papyrus finds was lost.

³ Although the finds outside Egypt —such as the wooden tablets found at the site of a Roman fort in Vindolanda, northern England— may well be limited in number, they are methodologically important. In the past decades, there has been a renewed interest in papyri found outside Egypt, e.g. Cotton, Cockle, and Millar 1995: on papyrology in the Roman Near East.

for possibly hundreds of years of research⁴. The fact that an edition is the result of a long and labor-intensive process is one of the main causes for this. But this hard work is considered worth the effort, since papyri are unique documents, first-rate witnesses to ancient history. They contain such a variety of text types —ranging from poems by Sappho⁵ over birth notifications to letters of condolence— that more or less every aspect of life is mentioned in the papyri. But much as their value is praised, it has become commonplace to point at the difficulties of working with these isolated and often fragmentary documents.

As said, whereas almost all papyri preserved until today were recovered in Egypt, this writing material was used in a much larger region. This is due to climatic factors: papyrus, as any organic material, decays and ultimately disappears when exposed to humidity and air. Egypt's dry desert climate and the protection of the sand have been the perfect storage for innumerable valuable documents. However, until recently Egypt was said to have occupied a special position in the Mediterranean world, and therefore extrapolations of evidence from Egypt to general observations on the entirety of the ancient world met with methodological issues. Nevertheless, in the past decades the idea of Egypt as the odd one out has been questioned and nowadays there is a broad consensus that Egypt was not an exception in the Graeco-Roman world. Documents from Egypt are now acceptable to substantiate general claims about life in ancient times (Bagnall 2011: 39). For instance, in epistolography specifically, the letters written in Egypt have been recognized to show many traits similar to the rest of the Hellenized world (Dickey 2004a: 524; Choat 2006: 5; Palme 2010: 7-8).

Also within Egypt itself, the geographical distribution of papyrus finds is uneven (cf. Habermann 1998: 149-151). Alexandria and the Nile Delta lacked the protection which preserved papyri in other regions: the humidity in that area was one of the main factors that prevented the good preservation of documents. Also the continuous habitation, and the agriculture and irrigation which go hand in hand with it, have left the Nile Delta almost entirely deprived of papyrus finds⁶.

⁴ From Oxyrhynchos alone, it is estimated that some 500,000 scraps of papyri were recovered, of which only a small part has been deciphered (Blumell 2012: 5). In total, somewhere between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 (often short) fragments are still unpublished (van Minnen 2009: 644-645; 658).

⁵ E.g. the so-called Tithonos poem preserved in P.Köln inv. 21351 + 21376, 3rd century BC.

⁶ This does not mean that we do not have information about Alexandria and the Nile Delta at all: papyri found elsewhere may have come from Alexandria, or may provide information about that region in one way or another (Lewis 1986: 6).

In chronological terms, the distribution is quite variable as well, and the overall picture is highly influenced by the preservation of large archives⁷. This applies especially to the 3rd century BC and the 6th century AD, with respectively the archive of Zenon⁸ and the archive of Aphrodito dominating the papyrus landscape: investigating papyrus letters of the 3rd century BC is *de facto* equal to examining the language of Zenon and his acquaintances (Kelly 2011: 23). Nevertheless, archives are important to this sociolinguistic study since they are contextually rich in terms of information, and since they thus are an excellent starting point for a linguistic investigation⁹.

In other words, the papyrus material cannot be considered a homogeneous whole — not even within Egypt itself— but it is rather a collection from limited findings and excavations of a restricted number of places (Bagnall 1995: 9-10).

Also the various text types are not equally represented among the findings: literary papyri are far rarer than petitions, for example. Yet, for papyrus letters, there is a richness compared to other text types: this study has collected 4,334 (edited)¹⁰ Greek private papyrus letters dated between the 3rd century BC and the 8th century AD.

⁷ Archives are collections of documents gathered in Antiquity, including documents that the owner had thrown away for some reason (Clarysse 2010a: 48). Unlike archives, dossiers are a collection of documents, which are brought together by modern scholars through careful reading.

⁸ The archive contains nearly 2,000 (mostly) Greek documents. Zenon was an immigrant from Kaunos. Firstly he was the private secretary of Apollonios *dioiketes*; later he acted as the manager of an estate of Apollonios in Philadelphiea and also conducted business himself. For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/256 (accessed on April 29, 2015). Incidentally, whenever I mention a specific archive for the first time, I will refer to the Trismegistos website for general information; some archives are studied more in depth (part II) and in those cases I will provide additional contextual details.

⁹ Contrary to individually preserved letters, for letters in archives and dossiers there is (more) information on the sender's and addressee's identities, about their relationship, about the time, place and circumstances of writing. Furthermore, archives and dossiers are also important to determine authorship of the documents: since the collections often contain multiple letters sent by a particular person, palaeographers are able to determine which ones are autographs (cf. *infra*, § 1.2.2).

¹⁰ Recently, a large archaeological expedition in the Eastern Desert, resulted in numerous ostraca —mainly from Krokodilo and Maximianon— which are still waiting to be published. Among these potsherds, there are about 1200 private Greek letters from the 2nd century AD (cf. Fournet 2003: 432). I am well aware that these (and other) unedited documents could alter our knowledge about ancient letter-writing and about the language of the private letters. Therefore, the preliminary descriptions of the unedited texts from Maximianon and Krokodilo (cf. Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 51-60; Fournet 2003: 427-500), have been taken into account and referred to in footnotes wherever this is relevant. Similarly, I have read the letters in the collection of the Didymoi ostraca, which have been published after my corpus' compilation; they are mentioned in footnote whenever they alter the findings that are based on my corpus. In this way, I hope to have kept my corpus as up to date as possible.

1. Definition of the Greek private papyrus letters

Assembling the corpus of Greek private papyrus letters was not straightforward since all elements of the research topic —‘Greek’, ‘private letter’ and ‘papyrus’— are far from unambiguous.

1.1. Writing materials¹¹

In the tradition of Greek (and Latin) papyrology, the term papyrus applies to “all materials carrying writing in ink done by a pen” (Turner 1968: vi). Hence, in this respect too, our corpus is heterogeneous. Most of the letters in my corpus are composed on papyrus, but also ostraca —pieces of pottery, usually broken off from a vase or other earthenware vessel— are included in the discipline of papyrology, so that the private letters on ostrakon are equally the object of this study: 9% of the private letters in this study are written on pottery. Thanks to their smooth surface, ostraca served as a free writing material which was readily available. Even though pottery provides only limited space to write a message, it must have been a popular writing material given the advantages of price and availability. It was probably central to everyday writing (Bagnall 2011: 118). Nevertheless, the number of private letters on ostraca in relation to those on papyri is rather low. This is not only the case for private letters, but it is a general phenomenon: the contrast between the popularity of ostraca in ancient times and the scarcity of published ostraca, is probably due to former archaeological practices: the excavators of the late 19th and early 20th centuries missed —or were not interested in— ostraca and other things which modern archaeologists would recover (Bagnall 2011: 121). The recent excavations in the Eastern Desert, uncovered almost no papyri, but mainly ostraca¹² —their publication (cf. *supra*, footnote 10) will change the proportions of private letters vs. letters on ostrakon. Finally, there are two other writing materials on which letters were penned and which belong to the discipline of papyrology: four letters were written on wood, and five on parchment. Wooden tablets were not frequently used in Egypt: they were rather expensive as wood was scarce in the region. Also parchment was much higher-priced than papyrus and therefore it was mostly used

¹¹ Of course, letters were also written on other materials than the ones listed here: for instance, among the oldest private letters preserved are letters from the Black Sea written on lead. Other early documentary letters come from the Gulf of Massalia, Sicily and Attica. For a recent study and overview on the documentary letters dated before 350 BC, see Ceccarelli 2013: 38-45 and 335-356. Further, letters are sometimes written in stone as well (cf. Welles 1934: on epigraphical letters by Hellenistic leaders). All those are not discussed in papyrology, but in epigraphy.

¹² Papyri were either sent to the Nile valley or were probably used to light a fire in absence of wood (Cuvigny 2003: 267).

for book production, not for everyday documents. Yet, some of the letters written on parchment may have been penned on leftover scraps from book production (Blumell 2012: 179-180).

1.2. Language of the private letters

This study is concerned with the documents from the Ptolemaic, Roman and Byzantine periods (i.e. 300 BC–AD 800)¹³ —three eras in which Greek had a prominent role in Egypt. But in these periods, Greek was not the only language in Egypt¹⁴.

1.2.1. Various levels of Greek

Although there had been a small number of Greek mercenaries and merchants in Egypt since the 7th century BC, the actual history of Greek in Egypt starts with Alexander the Great and the foundation of Ptolemaic rule from 332 BC onwards. During the first century of Ptolemaic reign, Greek-speaking immigrants were eager to settle in Egypt, which they considered an exotic and mysterious place where fabulous wealth could be attained —an Eldorado (Lewis 1986: 11). They came from different parts of the Greek world, including Cyrenaica, Asia Minor, Crete and Attica, but spoke a more or less unified language called *koine* Greek (ἡ κοινὴ διάλεκτος). This term, however, should not tempt one into thinking that the Greek papyrus texts are linguistically uniform (cf. Evans 2012c: 40): the language of the Greek papyri in general, and of the papyrus letters and their formulaic phrases more specifically, show a wide range of different levels and styles. This is partly due to the education of specific writers (Evans 2012c: 40)¹⁵: some letters, such as the letters by Zenon and other members of the Greek upper class (cf. Evans 2012c), show an excellent knowledge of the Greek language; other documents often have more so-called ‘substandard’¹⁶ variants (cf. Fournet 2003: 454). Furthermore, the language of these texts was also influenced by the fact that far from everybody who

¹³ Traditionally, the Ptolemaic period runs from 323 to 30 BC; the Roman period from 30 BC to AD 284 (or sometimes AD 312) and the Late Antique period from AD 284/AD 312 onwards. In papyrology the Late Antique period is widely called the ‘Byzantine’ period, a term which is confusing when referring to a period starting as early as the late 3rd century AD (Bagnall 1993: ix). These historical periods are also relevant to the linguistic study of the papyri as they coincide with the three periods of the *koine* language: Early (III–I BC), Middle (I–III AD), and Late Koine (IV–VI AD) (Lee 2007: 113).

¹⁴ It is not my goal to study the complex usage of the different languages in Egypt, but only to discuss what is relevant to the study of the Greek private papyrus letters.

¹⁵ In the past, this social variable was largely ignored in favor of bilingual interference, but the former may well be a more defining factor than the latter (cf. Evans 2012c).

¹⁶ I am well aware that terms like ‘standard’, ‘substandard’, ‘everyday’, and ‘vulgar’ language are rather vague and thus not unproblematic (cf. Evans and Obbink 2010: 10). Yet, in this study it is not my goal to seek further terminological refinement.

wrote Greek was a native speaker of that language¹⁷. A large part of the people in Egypt must have known Greek (cf. Horrocks 2010: 89), but there was significant variation in the level of knowledge among individual members of the broad category of bilinguals: on the one end of the spectrum, there was a large group of Egyptian-speaking people, especially those living in the χώρα (cf. Thompson 2009: 400-401), who would probably only have understood a few Greek words or phrases, without being able to write or read Greek, nor even to speak it fluently themselves. So, for instance, Petaus, the village scribe of Ptolemais Hormou, was barely literate in the Greek language. As part of his job he therefore had to practice phrases such as Πεταῦς κωμογραμματεὺς ἐπιδέδωκα. However, of course, on the other end of the spectrum, there were also native Egyptians who had a very good knowledge of Greek: the evidence from the Zenon archive shows that the level of Greek literacy among the indigenous community, at least among the Egyptian scribes, in the 3rd century BC was high (Evans 2012a: 122).

1.2.1.1. Egyptian

In the period under consideration in this work, two stages of written Egyptian are attested: Demotic and Coptic. The term Demotic refers to the specific stage of the Egyptian language during the period from the 7th century BC to the 5th century AD. Coptic, then, was the fifth and final stage of Egyptian (Depuydt 2010: 732). The earliest Coptic texts date back to the late 3rd or the early 4th century AD.

Even though Greeks were a minority in Egypt¹⁸, their language dominated Egypt for over a millennium: Greek became the language of administration in the 3rd century BC, and Demotic lost its administrative function and slowly fell into decline: from the beginning of Roman rule of Egypt, it was progressively less used in public life. The prestige of Greek resulted from the fact that many native Egyptians learned the language: *koine* Greek increasingly became an international language (Blomqvist 2010: 139-144). Because of this, the scope of Greek broadened from being the language of the (Greek) administration and the ruling class to being a language also spoken and written by Hellenized Egyptians. The Egyptians not only used Greek to communicate with Greeks, but among themselves too (Maehler 1983: 191)¹⁹:

¹⁷ However, the social background of the senders is often unknown: their native language and educational background are often hard to retrieve (cf. *infra*, § 3.2).

¹⁸ Overall, the Greeks represented probably only fifteen percent of the entire population of Egypt (Thompson 2009: 401).

¹⁹ Examples, for instance, are the letters BGU VI 1300 (TM 4560); P.Tebt.Tait 52 (TM 44465); P.Tebt. I 56 (TM 3692); P.Lips. I 104 (TM 83); P.Grenf. II 36 (TM 76).

“Greek was used both when a non-Greek addressed Greeks and in situations in which none of the involved parties had Greek as their first language, much as English at an international symposium today.” (Blomqvist 2010: 144)

However, the choice of native Egyptian speakers to write in Greek was not only voluntary. There is a gap of two centuries between the decline of Demotic and rise of Coptic: during the period from around AD 100 until approximately AD 300, Demotic disappeared almost completely from daily life and its use became confined to religious purposes; for all other text types, people had to use Greek. In this period, the only possibility for speakers of Egyptian to write a letter was to do it in Greek, or to have someone else do it for them (Clarysse 1993: 201).

1.2.1.2. Latin

Greek was, of course, not the only language of intruders in Egyptian history: Roman rule in Egypt complicated the linguistic situation even more, bringing the Latin language with them. Nevertheless, the impact of Latin was limited compared to that of Greek: the number of Latin texts found in Egypt is low (cf. Adams 2003: 527) and Greek remained the *lingua franca* in Egypt (cf. Horrocks 2010: 126-127)²⁰. The Latin material is scattered, diverse and fragmentary, and allows therefore only a partial understanding of the role of Latin in Egypt; drawing general conclusions from this material is often dangerous (cf. Evans 2012b: 517-518). For instance, describing the function of Latin in Graeco-Roman Egypt as the ‘official language of the military’ is a wide-spread but inaccurate generalization: there are many Latin letters without a military background, and official military documents could also be written in Greek (Adams 2003: 599-601). Yet, it is a fact that Latin was more widespread than in other contexts (Adams 2003: 527). I focus here on two regions in Egypt where the military was more present than elsewhere, viz. the Eastern Desert and Karanis. In the former, the Roman army supervised and guarded the quarries, the roads in the region and the desert area in general (Alston 1995: 80-82; Gates-Foster 2012: 737-743); the population of these remote military outposts might have been “a mixture of first-language speakers of Greek and of first-language speakers of Latin” (Adams 2003: 599)²¹. In Karanis, Roman veterans formed such a significant proportion of the village that it was called a ‘veteran community’ (Alston 1995: 39-51); at

²⁰ Presumably, Romans did not undertake wide-scale training programs to teach Latin, but exploited the pre-existing knowledge of Greek in the Eastern provinces: not only did they allow, but they also encouraged Greek as a means of communication in those regions (Millar 1995: 409). In the army, however, recruits were given the opportunity to learn Latin, if they did not know the language (Adams 2003: 599).

²¹ Of course, the military population also has an important Egyptian component (Fournet 2003: 429-430): for instance, there are also indications of inference from Egyptian Demotic in the Greek ostraca from Mons Claudianus (Leiwo 2005: 242).

least some of these veterans must have known Latin as well as Greek (cf. Adams 2003: 593)²². Yet, whereas (some) of these (ex-)military were (native) speakers of Latin, also in these regions more Greek documents (including private letters) than Latin ones have been preserved (cf. Adams 2003: 544). So, the minority of speakers of Latin (cf. Fournet 2003: 436) seem to have adapted (at least to some extent) to the *lingua franca* (Adams 2003: 589; Fournet 2003: 438-439); some of these bilingual speakers seem to have used Greek in their correspondence (Adams 2003: 560-561; Fournet 2003: 442; Leiwo 2005: 242)²³. Such Greek texts are thus a potential source of contact-induced variation and may show traces of the Latin *substratum* (cf. Adams 2003: 618; 631; Fournet 2003: 439)²⁴.

In other words, some of the Greek letters might in fact have been written by native Egyptians (especially from the 1st-2nd century AD until the rise of Coptic) or by Latin speakers (which are most present in (former) military contexts, such as the Eastern Desert and Karanis), which has obviously had a linguistic impact on the texts, perhaps even on the level of the letters' stock phrases.

1.2.2. Formulaic language

Letters on papyrus are praised as the text type that brings us closest to the ancient people. The language of private letters has often been defined as spoken-like and colloquial (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 146) (cf. *infra*, § 1.3); implicitly or explicitly, the letters are thought to offer a unique view on the spoken language. The body of the letter indeed shows many features similar to an actual conversation (such as *ad hoc* structures and afterthoughts). Yet, the letters are a mixture of different linguistic varieties (cf. Halla-aho 2010: 172) and they “fall somewhere between spoken and written registers” (Leiwo 2005: 238). Especially, the formulaic phrases in the letters –the topic of this dissertation²⁵– cannot be viewed as reflections on the spoken language: they preserve features which are no longer productive in the spoken language (e.g. the

²² The fact that these men received Roman citizenship, does not tell anything conclusive about their linguistic abilities and does not necessarily imply that they knew Latin (Adams 2003: 562).

²³ Of course, not every Greek letter from such a ‘Latinized context’ was written by a bilingual speaker of Latin and Greek; moreover, letters from other regions could also attest to the Latin *substratum*. To determine whether the use of a certain variant is contact-induced and due to interference from Latin, the context of the texts in which this variant occurs, need to be investigated in detail (and with caution). For instance, the *ductus* of the characters can reveal the Latin background of the writer (Fournet 2003: 442). It is not my goal in this thesis to study the palaeography in detail, nor the motives for language choice in general; yet, the latter will be the subject of a case study viz. the bilingual archive of Claudius Tiberianus, cf. *infra*, chapter 10, § 3 (for more information on the archive, see also www.trismegistos.org/archive/54, accessed on May 21, 2015).

²⁴ Also “forms of bilingualism or a passive knowledge of Latin must have been widespread”, in the military as well as in other parts of society (Adams 2003: 617-618; 629; Fournet 2003: 444-446). Yet, since interference usually occurs from the native language into the second language, this is less relevant to my investigation.

²⁵ The specific formulas under discussion are summed up in at the end of this introductory chapter.

infinitive clause in the initial health wish and closing formula, cf. *infra*, chapter 4 and 7); rather, letter writers had an idea of what a (polite) letter should sound like: the clichéd phrases in letters have thus a close link to the (written) epistolary tradition: the epistolary framework is not rooted in spoken language, but in the social habits and norms of its time. It is (for instance²⁶) by means of stock phrases that the sender conveys a polite and socially acceptable message²⁷. In other words, the goal of this thesis is not to study the diachronic evolution of the spoken language reflected in the epistolary genre, but to study this text type *an sich*, and to evaluate the changes in the formulaic phrases as reflections of changing cultural patterns and practices.

Since stock phrases are linked to social habits, it requires familiarity with the epistolary tradition to write a (socially acceptable) letter. The question thus arises as to how the letters' formulas were learned. The functioning of epistolary training is not yet fully understood²⁸, as the ancient writers are not very helpful on this topic, and information has to be derived from the papyri themselves (Cribiore 2001: 216). Students may have learned the basics of epistolary formulas with the grammarian and they may have perfected their skills with the rhetor (White 1986: 189; Muir 2009: 22); some evidence for practical training for everyday use, such as (Latin and/or Greek?) letter-writing, is found in the material from the Eastern Desert (Fournet 2003: 466). For the Late Antique period there is evidence that letter-writing may have been part of a standard curriculum (Fournet 2009: 58-60). However, book learning is only a (minor) part of the picture: formulaic phrases were probably also passed on orally: one could get familiar with letter structures by listening to letters which were read out loud (Choat 2006: 27-28).

Given the high illiteracy²⁹ rates in Antiquity (Harris 1989: 22), many letters were written by scribes³⁰; yet, illiteracy is only one reason why ancient people dictated their

²⁶ Also by addressing the recipient as *γλυκύτος* or by using kinship terms and polite terms such as *κύριος*, the sender creates a polite letter. These characterizations are discussed as a whole in appendix I.

²⁷ This changes in the Late Antique period, where the epistolary framework starts disappearing: for instance, the opening and closing formulas are increasingly omitted, and the letters commonly start *in medias res*. Then, other politeness strategies are needed to convey a polite message: elaborate and polite references to the addressee seem to have filled this vacuum (cf. Papatomas 2007: 507). Since the characterizations and polite terms are thus intrinsically connected to the letters and to their politeness strategies, I felt that an overview of them had to be given in this thesis (i.e. appendix I).

²⁸ The acquisition of Coptic epistolography is clearer: "A characteristic of Coptic education was to teach beginners to write the opening and formulaic parts of letters, therefore addressing practical needs." (Cribiore 2009: 328).

²⁹ Illiteracy is, admittedly, a generalizing term; we should not consider literacy and illiteracy as opposites but as the ends of a continuum. Further, more people could probably read than write in the ancient world (Thomas 1992: 10).

³⁰ It is not always easy to distinguish between autographs and dictated letters penned down by a scribe. There are two main techniques to recognize the two different types. Firstly, palaeography assists in this matter: a

letters to an amanuensis; also literate people did not (always) choose to write their letters themselves; for them, the —in general readily— available scribes were a convenience (Evans 2004: 197)³¹. So, people of different places on the (il)literacy continuum used scribes (Evans 2004: 208)³².

For the linguistic study of letters, the role of the scribe and his possible influence on the written text should be examined. It will be one of the research questions of this thesis to investigate to what extent scribes contributed to the language of the private letters found in archives. In order to study the role and the function of amanuenses in private letters, I should first make some general remarks about these people who penned down the messages. First of all, contrary to what the term ‘scribe’ implies, these persons were often not professionals; the writer was frequently a random literate person who was willing to pen down a letter for an illiterate fellow villager (cf. Fournet 2003: 461-462)³³. Secondly, there are different ways by which the sender could transfer his message to the scribe, viz. dictating the message to him³⁴, handing over a written draft³⁵ or merely giving instructions about the content of the letter³⁶; the letter could even be the product of a mixture of dictation and delegation: some parts could be copied

letter written in two different hands —one for the body and another for the closing formula— was probably dictated. Sometimes several letters from one and the same person survive (e.g. in archives); when such letters are penned in different hands, one can also safely assume that the sender used the services of different scribes; *vice versa*, if we can presume that the sender was literate and if a non-expert hand appears in several letters, this is thought to be the hand of the sender; but one cannot be absolutely certain about this as those letters might, for instance, also be the work of a regular amanuensis (cf. Evans 2010: 52; 62-63).

Further, studying the language of the letter can reveal the use of a scribe as well. In some formulaic phrases, the amanuensis comes to the fore and leaves anonymity behind. This is, for instance, the case in the greetings of P.Herm. 13 (TM 33471): “ἀσπάζομαί σοι ἐγὼ Νιλάμμων ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς κατ’ ὄνομα” (ll. 13-16).

³¹ However, a correspondent would appreciate the sender’s effort to write a letter in his own hand, which carried an implicit social message to the addressee: the ancient correspondents were well aware of the personal character of handwriting. If the letter was dictated, the final greetings were often written by the sender him-/herself: penning the closing formula in one’s own hand is equivalent to our modern personal signature (Luiselli 2008: 689). For instance, at the end of P.Herm. 14 (TM 33472), several people add the closing formula by their own hands (ll. 6-18).

³² Obviously, a single author does not necessarily choose the same way to materialize all his messages: within the body of material attributed to one particular author, some letters are dictated to a scribe whereas others are autographs (Evans 2004: 208).

³³ Cf. <http://sitemaker.umich.edu/verhoogt/files/dictating1.pdf> (accessed on January 27, 2014), pages 4-6. Yet, upper-class families —such as the family of Apollonios *strategos*— employed scribes who were well trained in writing, as is clear from their handwriting (cf. Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 7). Also the hands of the letters by Apollonios *dioiketes* show the professionalism of his scribes.

³⁴ For instance, this was probably the case in the (Latin) letters by Terentianus (Adams 1977: 3; 84).

³⁵ This seems to have been a regular practice of Zenon, for example (Evans 2004: 205).

³⁶ Sometimes the message was delivered in Egyptian and the scribe was responsible for the translation to Greek (Evans 2004: 208).

from a draft or written from dictation, whereas the exact wording of other parts could be left (to some extent) to the scribe³⁷. These options imply different levels of (possible) scribal influence: in autographs, the language can certainly be attributed to the sender; this is also the case when certain elements appear in an autograph as well as in a letter penned by a scribe. Then, the latter was probably directly written down from dictation (cf. Evans 2010: 68-69). Also, if two letters that were penned by different amanuenses preserve idiosyncratic peculiarities, there does not seem to be a scribal contribution. Only in the case that a letter was (partly) delegated to a scribe, the writer was (partly) responsible for the language of the letter. Overall, scribal influence is thought to have been negligible:

“The examination of the language [...] leads us to believe that in most cases the interposition of an amanuensis had relatively little effect on our ability to discern the actual words of the author or something very close to them” (Bagnall, Criboire, and Ahtaridis 2006: 8)³⁸

In conclusion, it is not necessary to study the palaeographical background of every single papyrus letter in order to investigate the letters diachronically (cf. part I of this thesis). However, if one wants to study the language of a particular (group of) individual(s) (cf. part II of this thesis), it is important to know the exact palaeographical background of letters. Trevor Evans has emphasized with good reason the “importance of combining prosopographical, linguistic, and palaeographic analysis for the study of the language of the individual” (Evans 2010: 66). One does not only need to study the

³⁷ It is not easy to infer from the written text whether the sender dictated the message or rather delegated the writing of the letter to the scribe. Letters written from dictation may have a paratactic and spoken-like style with direct quotations indicating that they were presumably penned down as heard: universals of this style include the use of short sentences, grammatically incorrect constructions which a grammarian would call *anacolutha* or contaminations and parentheses (cf. Criboire 2002: 150). Typical also are the allusions, the many deictic elements, ellipses and *aposiopeseis*, which is the sudden, but conscious interruption of an unfinished utterance (cf. Halla-aho 2011: 431-433). Sometimes mistakes emerge in the process of dictation: J.N. Adams has observed this in a Vindolanda letter by Flavius Cerialis (Tab. Vindol. II 234): the word *etiam* is corrected from two words *et hiem*. The amanuensis penned the words down as he thought he had heard them but later noticed his mistake and made the correction (Adams 1995: 90).

Further, there is often no way of explaining why a certain method was chosen, although the social background can give some hints. An illiterate sender obviously could not hand over a written draft to the scribe. On the other hand, it is likely that someone as high on the social ladder as Apollonios the *dioiketes* (Zenon archive) did not dictate his letters *verbatim*, but gave (written or spoken) instructions to his staff of scribes (cf. *infra*, chapter 10, § 1.1). It is not my goal in this thesis to evaluate the specific circumstances of letter-writing for each document; when such information is highly relevant (for instance for the study of letters in archives, cf. *infra*), I rely on the knowledge of experts of the palaeography of the papyri.

³⁸ Cf. Nachtergaele forthcoming. a: the conclusion of this forthcoming article is indeed that scribal influence in private papyrus letters was limited. Another hint at this is the fact that scribes, when finished writing, probably read the letter out loud to the sender for his approval (Luiselli 2010: 73).

frequency of occurrence of a linguistic phenomenon in the letters of one certain individual; also the composition of the letters needs to be analyzed. Only in this way one can ascribe a certain variant to the sender, ruling out the possibility that this variant should in fact be linked to the scribe's language (cf. Evans 2010: 55-57).

In addition to the possible scribal contributions, other persons might have contributed to the letter as well. Letters should in my opinion not be regarded as the product of a written conversation between two (or three) people, viz. the sender (with possible influence from a scribe) and the addressee; recently, scholars have started to stress that writing a letter was a social activity involving other members of the community:

“[T]he most revealing way of investigating letter writing is to view it as a social practice, examining the texts, the participants, the activities and the artefacts in their social contexts.” (Barton and Hall 2000: 1)³⁹

Writing and receiving letters was not a private activity that one undertook alone in one's own house. Writing probably took place outside, and different persons were presumably present during this activity: as the message was composed out loud, these bystanders could follow the content and comment on it. They could contribute to the message by making remarks. For this study about the formulaic language of letters, it is important to note that bystanders especially had an effect on the salutations: people, who were present when the letter was written, could send their regards to the addressee (and to his social circle). A concrete example of this is found in BGU II 615 (TM 28191), a papyrus which contains two letters: one letter from Ammonous to her father, followed by a message from Celer to his brother Antonius. Celer is obviously present when Ammonous composed her letter and this is reflected in the salutations found in Ammonous' letter:

“ἀσπάξετέ (= ἀσπάζεται) σε Κέλερ καὶ οἱ αὐτοῦ πάντας (= πάντες)” (ll. 15-16)

1.3. Private letters

The further delineation of the corpus lies in the definition of the documents studied. First of all, literary letters are excluded⁴⁰ since their language conflicts with the

³⁹ Verhoogt is one of the first to demand attention to the activity of letter-writing itself. He sketched a probable picture of what letter-writing in ancient Egypt may actually have been by comparing it to the practices of letter-writing in present-day Mali. As far as I know, Verhoogt's paper has not been published and is only available online: <http://sitemaker.umich.edu/verhoogt/files/dictating1.pdf> (accessed on January 27, 2014).

“unmediated voice” of the private papyrus letters⁴¹ (cf. Trapp 2003: 1) —a characteristic that was already ascribed to private communication in Antiquity:

“Ἐπιστολὴ μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ὁμιλία ἀπόντος πρὸς ἀπόντα γινομένη καὶ χρειώδη σκοπὸν ἐκπληροῦσα. Ἐρεῖ δέ τις ἐν αὐτῇ ὥσπερ παρῶν τις πρὸς παρόντα.”
(pseudo-)Libanios in Olsson 1925: 1)⁴²

Further, some other text types have always been difficult to discern from private letters. I first sum up these text types and then I proceed by suggesting a new approach to the delineation of the corpus of private letters. *Cheirographa*, to begin with, are contracts and receipts drawn up in a style closely related to private letters (Wolff 1978: 106-108)⁴³: they have some typical epistolary formulas, such as the opening formula. On the basis of their formal similarity with letters, Exler 1923, for instance, included private letters as well as contracts, receipts and leases written in epistolary form in his analysis. Yet, they are not colloquial messages between spatially separated correspondents like in private communication: the two parties must have been present when the contract was drawn up (Wolff 1978: 106-108). Therefore, such papyri cannot be considered letters but legal documents. Also *hypomnemata* (in the sense of *memoranda*⁴⁴) show some resemblances to private letters. Similarly, the line between private letters with requests and petitions is thin, and petitions have often been included in studies of letters (e.g. White 1986: 3). But

⁴⁰ Some scholars studied the private papyrus letters in combination and in comparison with the literary letters of the Christian tradition, such as the letters of Paul and those of the Church Fathers (e.g. White 1972a: 93-99). Some private letters (especially from the Late Antique period) contain references to and quotations from classical literature (e.g. P.Herm. 5 (TM 21124) cf. Fournet 2009: 54-56). Whereas such research topics are unquestionably valid, including the literary letters would lead me too far from my original scope.

⁴¹ This definition of the letter’s language is mainly applicable to the Ptolemaic and Roman letters. From the 3rd and 4th centuries onwards, letter writers deliberately search for rhetorical phrases and include references to literature (Fournet 2009: 32-37). Yet, even in the Late Antique period, the letter is conceived as a conversation between absent parties (Fournet 2009: 44). In fact, the Late Antique letter plays with the contradiction of absence and presence (Fournet 2009: 45).

⁴² Translation: “The letter is a written conversation between absent persons which fulfills a practical purpose. One will express oneself in it like someone present expresses himself to another present person”. This quote comes from *Περὶ ἐπιστολομαΐου χαρακτήρος*, one of the two major ancient handbooks of letter-writing that are known to us —(many?) other manuals were probably not preserved (Keyes 1935: 31). The other one, *Τύποι ἐπιστολικοί*, was (falsely) ascribed to Demetrios of Phaleron. The antique manuals themselves were probably intended for professional scribes, and the influence of the works on the private papyrus letters does not seem to have been significant. Therefore, they are excluded from this study.

⁴³ Also in Demotic, contracts in epistolary style are not always easily discernible from real letters —although this division is thought to be necessary (Depauw 2013a: 155-158). Yet, the close linguistic investigation of letters and contracts provide criteria to distinguish between the two text types (Depauw 2013a: 159-170). A similar approach will be adopted in appendix II (cf. *infra*).

⁴⁴ Ὑπόμνημα has different meanings and refers to different text types (Ziemann 1910: 263; cf. LSJ s.v. ὑπόμνημα: petition, *memorandum*, draft, note, reminder).

most problematic is the distinction between private and official letters (cf. Leiwo 2010: 97)⁴⁵. To distinguish between them, content is often the criterion:

“[B]riefe die zwischen Beamten oder Beamten und privaten Personen gewechselt worden sind, sind Angelegenheiten des Finanzwesens, des Justiz und der übrigen Bereiche öffentlichen Lebens.” (Buzón 1984: 149)

However, in private letters:

“steht die Sorge um das Wohlbefinden des Adressaten und seiner Familienangehörigen sowie private Angelegenheiten, die beide Seiten berühren, im Mittelpunkt. Ebenso werden hier Briefe berücksichtigt, in denen sich der Absender über unmittelbare persönliche Belange hinaus wegen bestimmter Angelegenheiten (Bitte um Hilfe, Fürsprache, Gefälligkeit oder Empfehlung) an den Adressaten wendet.” (Buzón 1984: 1)

From a theoretical point of view, I can accept this categorization. Obviously, when a mother writes to her son about clothing, this should belong to the private domain. A circular letter sent to various officials, by contrast, must be part of the official communication. In reality, however, this distinction is not always that easy to make. The contributors to this field acknowledge the difficulties of their content-based approach:

“It is obvious that this arrangement is somewhat arbitrary. For familiar letters may treat of business; and a strategus may write to a fellow-strategus about official business in such a manner that his letter is classified more properly among familiar letters than among official communication.” (Exler 1923: 23)

Moreover, the content-based definitions of the private papyrus letters are, perhaps unconsciously, biased by modern assumptions about what ‘private’ and ‘letter’ actually mean. When one starts from a contemporary point of view, the association with warm, personal and spontaneous contact between two persons in a rather intimate relation is often, but erroneously made⁴⁶ (Stowers 1989: 19): in reference to private papyrus letters, ‘private’ is not used in the modern sense of ‘intimate’ (Turner 1968: 129-130).

Since content has persistently failed as the main criterion to define private letters, and to distinguish them from other similar text types, I tackle the problem from a

⁴⁵ Also in studies on private letters in other languages, the definition of this particular text type and especially the delineation between private and official letters seems to be an obstacle (cf. for Latin: Lanham 1975: 4-5; Bowman, Thomas, and Adams 1994: 122; Halla-aho 2009: 10; for Demotic: Depauw 2013b: 262; for Arabic: Grob 2010: XIV).

⁴⁶ Sourcebooks and anthologies may be somewhat misleading in this regard: whereas most letters are rather down to earth, those works often select the most colorful examples (Jördens 2011: 241).

different angle by focusing in this study on the potential of linguistic investigations in the classification of the text types:

“The need to reassess our traditional terms and concepts will be central to further work. Many are in danger of collapse when approached from a linguistic perspective. [...] Text-types are classified both in terms of content (for example public/official vs. private) or of formal structure (for example letter vs. memorandum, letter vs. petition, or letter vs. account). [...] Research into the language of the papyri has much to offer in sharpening the application of the established terminology.” (Evans and Obbink 2010: 9-10)

To my mind, the language of private and official letters can be considered as different, but related registers with distinctive characteristics –we could imagine these two text types as having ‘Wittgensteinian’ family resemblances; this is also true for the distinction between private letters on the one hand and *cheirographa*, *hypomnemata* and petitions, on the other hand. Here too, linguistic criteria can be helpful. In appendix II, I sum up the linguistic peculiarities of each text type which has enabled me to define and delineate my corpus of private papyrus letters. In this way, I hope to have taken the first step towards establishing a standardized typology of document categories, which is “highly desirable for the study of variation and change” (cf. Depauw and Stolk 2015: 212).

In spite of the exclusion of several text types, the corpus of private letters is still very heterogeneous. Therefore, some scholars make subdivisions within the category of private letters. Letters of recommendations, for instance, have some characteristic phrases, e.g. the formula introducing the person recommended, e.g.: “Φίλων ὁ ἀποδεδωκώς σοι τὴν ἐπιστολήν” (P.Lond. VII 2026, TM 1588, ll. 2-3), and are sometimes considered as a separate branch of private letters (e.g. Kim 1972; Treu 1973; Cotton 1981: on Latin letters of recommendation)⁴⁷. Likewise, in some studies, the category of private letters is subdivided into family letters, on the one hand, and business letters on the other. Koskenniemi, for instance, distinguished “*der sachliche Brief mit persönlichen Elementen*” and “*der persönliche Brief, der keinen anderen Zweck als die Unterhaltung der Verbindung im ihrer selbst willen hat*”, but admitted that “*die Grenze zwischen diesen zweien fließend ist*” (Koskenniemi 1956: 93). This division is not tenable: I have remarked *supra* that the private papyrus letters are in general not intimate in content, but rather businesslike (cf. Parsons 1980-1981: 9). Private letters also combine various functions into one letter: even the most ‘intimate’ letters often deal with practical matters such as sending of items –which runs counter to Koskenniemi’s definition. At this point I follow

⁴⁷ Letters of recommendation are also found in literary letters and in letters between officials (cf. Kaiser 2010: 61-62). Of course, only private letters of recommendation are studied in this thesis.

White who states that the designation ‘private’ needs to be extensive enough to include all correspondence in the personal domain, whether it concerns business or family (White 1986: 5). To my mind, it is both impossible and unnecessary to make subsequent divisions within the category of private letters⁴⁸. Hence, I treat private letters as one category in this study, accepting its miscellaneous content.

2. *Status quaestionis* of Greek private papyrus letters

2.1. Past studies on Greek private papyrus letters

Epistolography is a research field with a strong and long tradition. Letters are a popular and attractive subject to editors, annotators and scholars⁴⁹:

“Greek private letters on papyrus give one the distinctive pleasure of hearing one of the two sides of a spontaneous dialogue from antiquity.” (Criboire 2002: 149)

Yet, most comprehensive studies on the formulaic language of Greek private letters date back to the first half of the 20th century⁵⁰. In fact, in the past thirty years, no all-embracing study has been undertaken: the *status quaestionis* on the Greek private letters’ language –in contrast to the epistolographic studies on other ancient languages (cf. *supra*, footnote 49)— is thus based on rather outdated scholarly work.

2.2. Problems in past studies

2.2.1. Corpus

In order to come to a full understanding about private letters, its entire corpus needs to be studied:

⁴⁸ Like other scholars (e.g. Turner 1968: 129; Kim 1975: 397), I exclude invitations from this discussion on formulaic language, simply since they lack the typical stock phrases, which are the subject of this thesis.

⁴⁹ Not only the Greek private letters on papyrus have attracted scholars; in the past decades letters written in other ancient languages have received similar attention to their Greek counterparts (e.g. Biedenkopf-Ziehner 1983: on Coptic, Depauw 2006: on Demotic, Halla-aho 2009: on Latin and Grob 2010: on Arabic). These works have modern and refreshing methodologies (e.g. the pragmatic and sociolinguistic approach of Halla-aho and Grob) and are therefore an example for my investigation.

⁵⁰ Cf. Ziemann 1910; Witkowski 1911; Calderini 1915; Mondini 1917; Exler 1923; Ghedini 1923; Olsson 1925; Saloni 1927; Döllstädt 1934; Keyes 1935; Steen 1938; Cavassini 1954; Koskenniemi 1956; O’Callaghan 1961; Naldini 1968; Kim 1972; White 1972a; Treu 1973; Tibiletti 1979; Parsons 1980-1981; White 1981; Buzón 1984; White 1986; Worp 1995; Chapa 1998; Luiselli 2008; Fournet 2009; Kreuzsaler, Palme, and Zdiarsky 2010: many of the works –especially the more recent works— only discuss a chronologically or thematically limited section of the corpus (e.g. only Late Antique letters, or only letters of condolence).

“The very bulk of the material available is what gives it significance. In isolation each text is an antiquarian curiosity; when the texts are collected together, compared and contrasted with each other, in a word subjected to systematic study, results of scientific value can be obtained” (Turner 1968: 129)

This study is the first to assemble all so-far edited Greek private letters on both papyrus and ostraca, from the Ptolemaic, Roman and Late Antique periods⁵¹. My corpus of over 4,000 letters is considerably larger than the amount of letters investigated in past studies⁵², which were, as a result, rather impressionistic in their approach to the private letters. The low number of letters under review in each of those past studies is, of course, a consequence of the fact that those works are from the pre-digital era. Nowadays, the online availability of databases, transcriptions and digital images of the papyri has opened up a range of possibilities for renewed papyrological research (Dickey 2001: 2). Whereas the overwhelming amount of papyrus material was seen in the past as an obstacle to research (Gallo 1986: 79; Porter and O'Donnell 2010: 396), it is now regarded as one of its main advantages:

“Traditionally, students of the ancient world have had to be satisfied with a limited data set for almost everything they were interested in and with an ever-increasing level of sophistications in the interpretation of the same evidence. What papyrus texts offer papyrologists is a much better deal. [...] papyrologists will also be able to put more and more data in series and derive statistically better conclusions from them. Numbers do count.” (van Minnen 2009: 656)

⁵¹ This corpus was assembled in 2011, and new readings (as found in the *Berichtigungsliste (BL)* or via the Papyrological Navigator (PN)) which have been proposed since, have also been taken into account. The compilation of this corpus did not simply involve entering the query term ‘private letter’ into the database, since various labels in different languages —e.g. ‘private/business letter’ or ‘*Brief (privat/geschäftlich)*’— are used by Trismegistos and the *Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der Griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens (HGV)*. Yet, not all tags are so specific: some letters are simply labeled as ‘letter’, ‘*lettera*’, ‘*lettre*’ and make no distinction between private and official letters. Similarly, other documents are vaguely tagged as ‘*schreiben*’, ‘*Korrespondenz*’: also these texts needed to be incorporated into my database. In order to be sure of studying absolutely all available letters, I had to create a large corpus which did not only comprise private letters but also official letters, petitions, *hypomnemata* and *cheirographa* (more than 10,000 texts in total). The careful reading and tagging of all those documents enabled me to define criteria for the delineation of my corpus of private letters. I am grateful for the help of Mark Depauw and his colleagues from Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, who have provided vital digital support for this thesis.

⁵² White, for instance, investigated only 117 documents (White 1986: 3). In 1981 Chan-Hie Kim could fit an up-to-date list of all Greek papyrus letters on five pages (Kim 1981: 107-112). Ziemann investigated 368 private letters (Ziemann 1910: 277); Ghedini did slightly better with “*circa 600 lettere*” (Ghedini 1917: 52). Mandilaras draws conclusions about epistolary formulas based on a corpus of 151 documents (Mandilaras 1973: 304-305). Other researchers, like Exler, did not provide information on the corpus they were working with.

2.2.2. Methodology and research goals

This brings me to my next and most important criticism of the older studies: their methodology and their goal to deduce the standard phraseology of the formulas. Although the scholars did notice the variation in the formulaic language⁵³, they tried to straitjacket the phraseology of the Greek papyrus letter. In their focus on the stock phrases, variation was often disregarded and considered uninteresting; some scholars even made value judgments about deviations from the formulaic phrases.

“plerumque tantummodo propter negligentiam vel ignorantiam scribentium different a communi consuetudine” (Ziemann 1910: 296)

“Quae epistulae [i.e. the opening formula with the verb χαίρω in the optative or the imperative; DN] magna ex parte scriptae sunt ab hominibus ineruditis” (Ziemann 1910: 296)

Ignoring the existing linguistic diversity is not a typical problem in epistolography, but is emblematic for the linguistic study of the papyri in general (cf. Evans and Obbink 2010: 6).

As a result of this, also diachronic change could not be investigated in detail, since it has been acknowledged that a study of language change starts with that of linguistic variation (cf. *infra*, § 3.2). Whereas past studies aimed to describe the letters' framework diachronically, they simply pointed out that new formulas (e.g. for the closing formula: ἐρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι) replaced older ones (e.g. ἔρρωσο) (e.g. Exler 1923: 70; Koskenniemi 1956: 134-135), but they hardly attempted to explain this transformation. My methodology of variationist (socio)linguistics hopes to shed new light on the patterns of language change.

3. Methodology of variationist (socio)linguistics

3.1. Recent methodological developments in papyrology

Papyrologists have since long recognized the potential of the papyri to change (some aspects of) the way we think about the Greek language (cf. Salonius 1927: 3; Frösén 1974: 15)⁵⁴, but mainly due to practical reasons (cf. *supra*, § 2.2), the rich linguistic resource of

⁵³ *“Si in formulae ipsius speciem et faciem inquiremus, videbimus apud Graecos non ita rem se habere, ut una tantummodo valetudinis formula extiterit, sed eius varia inveniri genera, ita ut vix altera alteri sit omnino similis.”* (Ziemann 1910: 305). A similar idea is expressed by White (White 1986: 200-201).

⁵⁴ Similarly, Cugusi has recognized the value of Latin documentary letters for the study of the history of the language (Cugusi 2007: 141-150).

papyri has barely begun to be explored (cf. Evans 2012d: 197). Easy digital access to papyri has overcome many practical issues: it has made quantitative analyses of the material possible⁵⁵ and stimulated linguistic research on papyri by describing variations.

Further, in recent years the field of papyrology has undergone a methodological change: to deal with the new research questions concerning the linguistic study of papyri, papyrology has shifted its methodological focus onto modern approaches. The methodological framework of variationist (socio)linguistics, which has been developing and applied to modern languages⁵⁶ since the 1960's, is now increasingly used to study papyri in general, and especially private papyrus letters. Trevor Evans has been one of the leading figures in the application of modern linguistic theories such as sociolinguistics—including for instance bilingualism⁵⁷—to Greek private papyri and papyrus letters⁵⁸. Adams investigates Latin documentary texts (including private letters) from a sociolinguistic perspective⁵⁹. Also the Finnish group of researchers led by Martti

⁵⁵ For a corpus language such as Ancient Greek, tools such as corpus linguistics are now acknowledged to be of value (Porter and O'Donnell 2010: 289-291). In this thesis I have combined quantitative analysis with qualitative analysis—the former is relevant to diachronically investigate the different variants of one epistolary formula (cf. part I of this thesis). This is done by manually tagging the formulaic phrases and the variants in the phraseology of these formulas in each letter. The different variants for each epistolary formula are listed and discussed in each chapter of part I of this thesis. This enables me to evaluate an editorial supplement in relation to the actual frequency of that very variants (cf. 'principle of accountability'; Tagliamonte 2012: 9-10). In the same approach, I also hope to complete some fragmentary formulaic phrases myself. Yet, the choice as to whether or not to complete a fragment, is of course somewhat subjective; I only included readings which were fairly certain or at least very probable; suggestions like “ἀσ[πάζομαι (?). . . .]” (O.Claud. II 272; TM 29689; l. 9) are too speculative to me.

The different cases studies on idiolects and shared language (discussed in part II of this study) are based on qualitative analysis (cf. Leiwo 2012: 2). Of course, both approaches complement each other: also the outcome of the quantitative analysis is always taken into account when evaluating idiolectic deviations from standard phraseology.

⁵⁶ Sociolinguistics initially studied only spoken and synchronic data, and its application on historical data has been described as “the art of making the best use of bad data” (Labov 1994: 11). However, since the work of Romaine (cf. Romaine 1982: on historical sociolinguistics), working with written and historical documents, are no longer considered the Achilles' heel of the discipline. It even has some advantages in comparison with the study of spoken, synchronic material; for instance, the historical sociolinguist does not have to deal with the 'observer's paradox'.

⁵⁷ In the past, the study of bilingualism was confined to the elite (cf. the code-switching in Cicero's letters) and to Latin and Greek only (Mullen 2012: 11). An important trigger in the broadening the scope was the work of Adams, Swain, and Janse 2002: in this work, the subjects range, for instance, from Lycian and Phrygian to Frankish. In papyrology, this has resulted in an emphasis on the multilingual context of Egypt: studying papyri as testimonies of a multilingual society makes it necessary to include Greek, Latin, and Egyptian material, and to study the mutual language contact (cf. Papaconstantinou 2010: a series of papers on bilingualism in Egypt).

⁵⁸ E.g. Evans 2012c: on education and bilingualism as factors in the variation from the standard *koine*. Evans' and Obbink's edition of “The Language of the Papyri” covered many different linguistic aspects of papyri.

⁵⁹ Works directly relevant to this study are, for instance, Adams 1977, 2003: both on bilingualism.

Leiwo studied (mainly) the (Latin) papyri and other documentary texts from a (socio)linguistic point of view, and pays a great deal of attention to linguistic variation (cf. Leiwo, Halla-aho, and Vierros 2012: on variation and change in Greek and Latin; and Halla-aho 2009: pragmatic study of Latin documentary letters). These and other scholars⁶⁰ have acknowledged that private papyrus letters form an excellent corpus for (socio)linguistic studies, as they give immediate access to the language penned down 2000 years ago:

“[A]n ancient Greek or Latin letter on a papyrus, ostrakon, or tablet potentially offers a remarkably direct connection with its author. We are not separated from that author by a long manuscript tradition, as with most literary texts, but can work from an autograph.” (Evans 2010: 51)

Some (promising) case studies on (Greek) papyrus letters have already been undertaken⁶¹, but a comprehensive work on the entire corpus of Greek private papyrus letters remains a *desideratum* which this thesis hopes to fulfill.

3.2. Variationist (socio)linguistics and the Greek private papyrus letters

Sociolinguists are interested in the language as it is actually produced by its speakers (the ‘performance’). They stress that language is never used in a vacuum but that it is always embedded in the social context of communication. Consequently, among different speakers and in different contexts, different linguistic variants appear. Hence, the starting point of variationist (socio)linguistics is that variation is ubiquitous in natural and everyday language. From a synchronic perspective, language users constantly make choices between various so-called ‘linguistic variables’ (old forms and innovations) and they alternate depending on the context of the utterance. On a linguistic level, the choice between linguistic variables is insignificant; on a social level, however, it is meaningful: some types of variation are linked to the function of the text, such as legal language or literary language, and they are indicative of the text type. This category is called ‘use-related variation’. Use-related variation is the subject of the sociolinguistic subdiscipline of ‘register analysis’. In this thesis register analysis is

⁶⁰ E.g. Browning 1983²: 5; Brixhe and Hodot 1993: 14; Torallas Tovar 2004: 166.

⁶¹ E.g. Evans 2005: on the language of Hierokles in the Zenon archive; Adams 2007: on regiolects in Latin; Halla-aho 2010: on linguistic variation in Latin non-literary letters; Clarysse 2010b: on the language in the Kleon archive; Dickey 2010b: on Latin linguistic interference on Greek request formulas; Evans 2010: on the language of Amyntas in the Zenon archive; Leiwo 2010: on imperatives in Greek letters from the Mons Claudianus; Rutherford 2010: on bilingualism in the archive of Phatres of Narmuthis; Clackson 2011: on the social dialects in Latin.

applied to define the corpus of private letters in relationship with and in contrast to official letters, petitions, *cheirographa* and *hypomnemata* (cf. *infra*, appendix II).

The second category of variation, ‘user-related variation’, is linked to the identity of the speaker, viz. his gender, age, status, level of education, region, and so on⁶². By using one form or another, a language speaker links himself to a certain group: whereas the sentence “Adonis saw himself in the mirror” is emblematic of middle-class, educated, or relatively formal speech, “Adonis seen hisself in the mirror” is more typical of working-class, uneducated, or highly colloquial (vernacular) speech (Chambers 2002: 3-4). My corpus of private letters provides a rich diversity in social variables with texts from people of different gender, social class, educational background, native language, regions and texts that are chronologically variable as well. However, the contextual information about the social context of a specific text is often limited; only some of the categories of user-related variation are applicable to papyrological material. In order to discuss age, for instance, one needs to have this information about multiple generations of senders. Only in a limited number of archives, there are private letters from several generations, and the senders’ ages are approximately known; but the material is too scarce to be the subject of an in-depth study. The same goes for level of education and status: only when it comes to archival material, there is something solid to say about the effect of these social variables on the formulaic phrases in letters, otherwise the discussion risks to fall into vague generalities: Witkowski could only make a very general distinction between *epistulae hominum eruditorum*, *epistulae hominum modice eruditorum* and *epistulae hominum non eruditorum* (Witkowski 1911: xiii-xv). Furthermore, the language itself does not provide definite answers about the level of education: for example, short sentences with paratactic constructions could have been penned down by individuals who lacked a good education, but they are also one of the typical stylistic characteristics of letters in general, which have often a spoken-like register (cf. *supra*, § 1.2.2). In autographs spelling and spelling mistakes can be telling about the educational background of the writer, but in letters written by a scribe these kind of mistakes are not so relevant, as they most likely reflect the linguistic abilities of the writer. Female speech has been a popular topic, but it is also difficult to describe in scientific terms: less than 10% of the Greek private letters were sent by women, and the occurrences are not equally distributed across time: only twenty letters from women are from the Ptolemaic period, and the Late Antique period is underrepresented as well. Thus, most letters by women date back to the Roman era. Further, whereas the private papyrus letters are heterogeneous with regard to content, women’s letters are much more ‘private’ in the

⁶² Zilliaccus and Saloniuss already realized in a pre-sociolinguistic period that the letters are heterogeneous as they are different in terms of chronology and geography, and also in terms of the sender’s identity and education (Saloniuss 1927: 6-10; Zilliaccus 1943: 6-7).

modern sense of the word; there are few actual ‘business’ letters. When a feature appears significantly more (or less) in the corpus of women’s letters than in the rest of the corpus, we cannot simply ascribe this to female speech, as also chronological or content-related issues might influence the results. Here, too, archives can shed an interesting light on the language use of some women (cf. *infra*, chapter 8, § 2 and chapter 9, § 1.2 and § 2), but we cannot generalize the conclusion based on archival case studies. In general, I agree with the following statement⁶³:

“No clear gender distinctions are discernible in the way males and females sent letters.” (Bagnall, Criore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 60)

Dialects have been considered an important type of variation in past studies (e.g. Parsons 1980-1981: 15). Older studies did not have enough data to draw firm conclusions; my corpus, however, is not much better off either: only in a limited number of cases, we know where the letter was sent from⁶⁴. And even if there is information about the place of sending, this does not necessarily imply that the sender was a speaker of the regiolect (if there was any) of that place: a traveler writing a letter from Oxyrhynchos will not provide information about the dialect of that city.

In sum, there is only limited contextual information about the sociohistorical individuals behind letters preserved in isolation. Furthermore, the language of an individual will be influenced by all sociolinguistic variables at the same time: when the language of an educated upper-class adult male differs from that of a lower-class uneducated young woman, the social variables triggering the linguistic variation are not easy to identify. In isolated private letters, it is often a vain hope to grasp the complete sociohistorical background of the correspondents. This makes the investigation of ‘user-related variation’ and sociolects in the private papyrus letters very difficult, if not impossible⁶⁵. Only letters preserved in archives or dossiers can —and will— be subject to such kind of sociolinguistic study.

It is thus clear that the preserved corpus of private letters is not ideal for a user-related investigation. Consequently, many variants cannot be linked to a certain functional context due to the fragmentary nature of the corpus and of its context, and

⁶³ Further, Bagnall and Criore argue against the hypothesis that women’s and men’s handwritings are distinguishable (Bagnall, Criore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 7).

⁶⁴ More often, we have information on the place of destination —which is mostly the finding place— but that is not relevant to discern regiolectic features, although most letters do not seem to have traveled very far.

⁶⁵ A further difficulty is that categories such as gender, class and ethnicity are modern concepts. It cannot be taken for granted that people in Antiquity thought of themselves in such terms (Bagnall, Criore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 8).

conclusions may be hard to draw (cf. Kruschwitz 2010: 160; 170)⁶⁶. However, this should not prevent us from describing the linguistic variation in the corpus of private letters, since a promising type of synchronic variation is idiolectic variation (cf. part II of this thesis). An idiolect is generally defined as a linguistic variety that is unique to a certain person; it is the whole of a person's vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Of course, in papyri all non-verbal and spoken idiolectic features such as pronunciation are lost. In this study, the term idiolect is used in a restricted meaning, only to refer to an individual's formulaic language. The search for personal characteristics in documents from one single person is focused on texts preserved in an archive: a number of archives contain multiple documents from one single person. Some letter writers seem to have (consistently) used the same epistolary variants (cf. *infra*, chapter 8, especially § 1). Such recurring uncommon linguistic features might also help to link an isolated papyrus letter to other documents informing about the same protagonist (cf. *infra*, chapter 9). In some letters, senders deviate from standard phraseology, whereas in others they conform their letters to the common formulaic framework. In such cases, we can investigate why people alternate certain epistolary formulas with others and what communicative strategies might be at the basis of this (cf. *infra*, chapter 10, especially § 2).

Further, an individual might not only vary between existing variants, he might also create a new linguistic variable⁶⁷. An innovation may then spread to a wider group of language users, e.g. his family and friends, about whom the archive often contains linguistic information too. In this way, it is possible to discern so-called 'shared language'. Closely connected to this is the concept of 'community of practice', which deals with the effects of interpersonal relationships on language choices (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 116). In the community of practice, language is understood as a vehicle by which speakers construct and maintain membership to a social group. By means of idiosyncratic expressions, individuals thus —often unconsciously— underline their in-group identity and their bond with relatives and friends. But variation is not necessarily limited to one group of acquaintances: it may spread to a larger group, and eventually to

⁶⁶ Kruschwitz experienced the same difficulties in distinguishing between regional variations and several sociolects in his heterogeneous corpus of inscriptions on the walls in Pompeii. Also Leiwo remarked that "variation as such can easily be detected, but we cannot usually identify the functional dimensions of existing variants" (Leiwo 2012: 4).

⁶⁷ In theory, such new variants should be visible in a corpus, but for the corpus of papyrus letters, this is problematic: the preserved papyrological corpus is only a fraction of what was once produced; when only one attestation (a possible innovation) is preserved, there is always the possibility that other similar occurrences are lost. Yet, in the case of *ad hoc* variations, which are intended to adapt stock phrases to specific circumstances, papyrus letters give a unique opportunity to see how a new variant was applied for the first time.

the entire community. In this way, a synchronic linguistic innovation could gradually spread, replace older forms and create diachronic language change⁶⁸. Of course, this is not to say that every new variant will ultimately become a new widespread form that replaces the older variants: not all variability involves change, but change involves per definition variability (Tagliamonte 2012: 55-56). So, (variationist) sociolinguistics has not only emphasized that variation is ubiquitous in natural and everyday (synchronic) language, but also that variation is a conduit for language change. In part I of this thesis, I describe the existing variation in the formulaic phrases of the Greek private papyrus letters in order to detect the patterns of language change.

There are different sources of language change depending on the source of the new variant, which can be external linguistic/contact-induced or internal linguistic. External linguistic changes are caused by contact between languages. In the formulaic framework of the Greek private letters, some traces of contact with Egyptian (Demotic and Coptic) and Latin have already been discussed in the scholarly literature (e.g. Clarysse 1990: 105; Dickey 2009: 158). In various chapters I thoroughly investigate how contact with other languages, especially with Latin⁶⁹, influenced the evolution of the Greek epistolary phraseology⁷⁰. This idea is rather new in the study of Greek and Latin bilingualism: whereas older scholars only saw the influence of Greek on Latin⁷¹, present-day scholars have pointed to some aspects in which Latin influenced the *koine* language (cf. Dickey 2004a: 527).

In conclusion, against the background of variationist (socio)linguistics, this study wants to take both the synchronic as well as the diachronic perspective into account. To my mind, the reason why past studies did not succeed in explaining the diachronic evolutions in the formulaic phrases of the letters, lies in the fact that they had no full access to, and did not pay much attention to, the synchronic variation at each moment in time. Whereas it is often not possible to link synchronic variation to a specific social context, the meticulous description of the preserved synchronic variation is necessary to clarify the patterns of language change, and has the potential to reveal features of epistolary idiolects and shared language on a synchronic level.

⁶⁸ As described above, the spread of a given linguistic variant follows a certain pattern, spreading from a certain linguistic and a social context to other social and linguistic contexts. Emphasizing the orderly way of language change is typical of variationist (socio)linguistics (cf. Romaine 1994: 143).

⁶⁹ Being a classicist, I will focus in this study on the interference between Latin and Greek.

⁷⁰ Yet, linguistic interference might have gone the other way around as well. But it is not my goal in this thesis to study how Greek, in its turn, might have influenced the epistolary formulas of, for instance, Latin and Coptic.

⁷¹ E.g.: “*Cum igitur minime consendum sit Romanos, qui ceteras omnes epistularum formulas a Graecis acceperunt, hac in re antecessisse, nos colligere oportet Graecos iam initio s.l.a. hunc habuisse morem, etiamsi nobis nullum illius temporis exemplum traditum est*” (Ziemann 1910: 327).

4. Purpose and scope of this study

In this study, a specific kind of variation is studied, viz. phraseological variation in the formulaic framework of the private papyrus letters⁷². My interest is to investigate by means of what stock phrases certain epistolary *topoi*—such as saluting the addressee and his social circle—are expressed; how they are applied by different writers on a synchronic level, and how they change during the papyrological millennium. The main goals of this thesis are thus twofold: first, to describe (the patterns in) the existing variation in a number of selected epistolary formulas in order to understand their diachronic changes (part I); secondly, to appreciate, in a number of case studies, the means by which individuals and groups of people dealt with the epistolary framework on a synchronic level (part II). Papyrological archives are the basis for this kind of research; whereas in the past archives were mainly studied for historical goals, this study underlines the linguistic potential of archival studies.

In the first part of this study, I describe the different variants of each formulaic phrase; I seek to link them, as far as possible, to chronological and social contexts and I try to define whether they are internal or contact-induced variants. In this way patterns emerge, showing which variants were successful⁷³ and which variants were so widespread that they caused permanent linguistic change in the phraseology of the private letters. As a result, it is possible to discern the regularities that can be expected in the text type of the private letter at a certain point in time. Through this, I eventually attempt to understand how epistolary formulas—and letter-writing in general—are a reflection of (evolving) politeness norms and (changing) cultural habits and conventions, and how the multilingual environment in Egypt influenced the framework of Greek private papyrus letters. In other words, I intend to study the private letters against their sociohistorical background (cf. Choat 2010: 154).

The case studies of part II deal with a number of research questions: can the sender's 'voice' be heard in the private letters?; and how exactly can traces of a personal preference for a certain phraseology be uncovered?; are there preferences that are

⁷² The epistolary formulas attest, of course, to other types of variation, such as orthographic variation; but these are not the object of this study—however, aspects of orthography may be discussed when relevant in a certain argumentation. Similarly, private letters are often considered as good sources to trace phonological evolutions in Ancient Greek, but—interesting as this may be—such an investigation is beyond the scope of this study. Variation in word order is not systematically investigated unless the word order has a pragmatic function—which is the case in a number of formulaic phrases (e.g. the standard opening formula ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν and its polite variant τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν). Describing morphological variation is not one of the research goals either.

⁷³ Here again, the fact that the preserved corpus is only a fraction of the private letters that were once written, prevents firm conclusions, but only allows probabilities.

shared by a group of people (so-called ‘shared language’)?; and what is the potential of investigating such shared linguistic elements for the study of archives?; how does a person tailor his formulaic language to different social contexts and what motives lie behind certain linguistic choices⁷⁴?; how do scribes influence the language of the letters? Part II is thus intrinsically connected to part I: idiolectic deviations from the formulaic phraseology cannot be identified without a detailed picture of the expected variants. In the linguistic study of archives, I hope to address a wider public than those who only are interested in specific case studies –I hope to illustrate the potential of linguistic research for the study of archives.

I intend this research study to go beyond the theoretical and hope to make some practical contributions to the field of papyrology. A practical result of the detailed study of formulaic variation is that this enabled me to review a number of supplements and emendations and to suggest new readings of my own (cf. *supra*, footnote 55). My hope is that this thesis will help future editions of letters as well: since all (preserved) variations are now described in detail, editors will have an overview of the most common variants in a certain period, which may allow them to decipher and reconstruct new letters more easily. Since this study offers a more precise knowledge about the rise and fall of different epistolary formulas, they could serve as rather reliable dating criteria for private letters.

⁷⁴ The question as to why certain epistolary *topoi* are present or absent in a certain letter, will only be touched upon in some case studies; it is not my goal to address such a research question for every given letter.

Epistolary formulas: an overview

By means of the two following letters, I illustrate what formulaic phrases are discussed in this thesis and studied diachronically in part I: these formulas form the epistolary framework of the letter and they envelop the body of the letter⁷⁵. In order to avoid confusion, this overview also lists the terminology used in this study⁷⁶. The chapters of part I are organized both functionally and structurally: according to their two main functions, I have divided the *topoi* into two groups: greetings and health wishes. Greetings appear in the opening formula and the salutations; the initial and final health wishes, the *proskynema* and the closing formula are concerned with the addressee's health. Within these two parts of the diachronic overview, however, the *topoi* are studied according to their (usual) place in the letter, so that the chapter on the initial health wish is followed by that on the *proskynema*, as this is the expected order of the *topoi* in the Greek private papyrus letter.

In part II of this thesis, I incidentally study other *topoi* that are found in the body of the letter: these elements only occur in a minority of the private letters and often do not have a fixed phraseology. Examples of these are the formula in which a sender requests the addressee to send an answer (cf. *infra*, chapter 8, § 1), the 'courtesy formula' by means of which the sender asks out of politeness if there is anything he can do for the addressee (cf. *infra*, chapter 8, § 2.3) and the ways to formulate a polite order (cf. *infra*, chapter 10, § 1). In part II, the investigation of the language of a certain archive also leads me to study more in depth certain words or word groups that are used in the body of the letter (e.g. *infra*, chapter 9, § 1.1).

In appendix I, I analyze the kinship terms, polite terms and characterizations, often found in the opening and closing formulas, which are used to describe the addressee and—to a minor extent—the sender. Further, in the salutations, I examine the same terms and characterizations for the sender and his social circle as well as for the addressee and his social circle (cf. *supra*, footnotes 26-27).

⁷⁵ I do not discuss the parts of the letter that are between square brackets, such as the body text, in part I. Of course, there are other stock phrases and conventions in the body of the letter as well; whereas these undeniably also contain interesting linguistic variants, they are not systematically investigated in this study.

⁷⁶ There is a great deal of variation in the terms used for each of the phrases (e.g. in other studies, the term 'greetings' is used where I apply 'opening formula', or 'salutation' denotes 'initial health wish' in other studies).

P.Mich. VIII 491 (TM 27101; 2nd century AD)⁷⁷:

ll. 1-2	Ἀπολινᾶρις Ταῖσι (= Ταῖσει) τῆ μητρει (= μητρι) καὶ κυρία πολλά χαίρειν.	opening formula (chapter 2) (the kinship term μήτηρ and the polite term κύριος are described in appendix I)
ll. 2-3	πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν (= ὑγιαίνειν) κάγῳ (= καὶ ἐγῶ) αὐτὸς ὑγιαίνω (= ὑγιαίνω)	initial health wish (chapter 4)
ll. 3-4	καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς.	<i>proskynema</i> (chapter 5)
ll. 4-14	γινώσκεις (= γινώσκεις) σε θέλω, μήτηρ, ὅτι ἐρρωμένος ἐγενόμην εἰς Ῥώμην Παχῶν μηνὶ κε καὶ ἐκκληρώθην εἰς Μισσηνοῦς. οὕτω δὲ τὴν κετυρίαν (κε<v>τυρίαν) μου ἔγνω· οὐ γὰρ ἀπεληλύθειν (= ἀπεληλύθειν) εἰς Μισσηνοῦς ὅτε σοὶ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ταύτην ἔγραφον. ἐρωτῶ σε οὖν, μήτηρ, σεαυτῇ πρόσεχε, μηδὲν δίσταζε περὶ ἐμοῦ· ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰς καλὸν τόπον ἦλθον. καλῶς δὲ ποιῆς (= ποιήσ<εις>) γράψασά (= γράψασά) μοι ἐπιστολὴν πε[ρ]ὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου καὶ τῶν σῶν πάντων. καὶ γῶ (= ἐγῶ) εἴ τινα ἐὰν εὕρω γράφω σοι· οὐ μὴ ὀκνήσω σοὶ γράφειν (= γράφειν)	[body text]
ll. 14-20	ἀσπάζομαι τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου πολλά καὶ Ἀπολινᾶριν καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ καὶ Καραλαῖν καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ. ἀσπάζ[ο]μαι Πτολεμαῖν καὶ Πτολεμαεῖδα καὶ τὰ τέκν[α] αὐτῆς καὶ Ἡρακλοῦν καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς. ἀσπάζομαι τοὺς φιλοῦντάς σε πάντας κατ' ὄνομα.	salutations (chapter 3) (the kinship terms ἀδελφός μου and τέκνον μου / αὐτοῦ / αὐτῆς are described in appendix I)
l. 21	ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὐχομαι.	closing formula (chapter 7)
verso	ἀπόδ(ος) εἰς Καρανίδα × Ταῖσι (= Ταῖσει) ἀπὸ Ἀπολιναρίου υἱοῦ (= υἱοῦ) × Μισσηνάτου	[external address]

⁷⁷ The papyri are referred to by their (main) publication and by their Trismegistos number (TM number). This TM number enables the reader to quickly consult the online version of the text on www.papyri.info. The abbreviations in the publication correspond to the 'Checklist of editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic papyri, ostraca and tablets', see: http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/texts/clist_papyri.html, for the most recent version (accessed on May 21, 2015).

BGU IV 1206 (TM 18656; BC 28):

ll. 1-2	Ἰσιδώρα (= Ἰσιδώρα) Ἄσκλητι τῶι ἀδελφῶι χαίρειν ...	opening formula (chapter 2) (the kinship term ἀδελφός is described in appendix I)
ll. 2-3	... καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὑγειαί (= ὑγιαί<νειν>) καθάπερ εὔχομαι	initial health wish (chapter 4)
	κεκόμισμαι ἃ ἐγεγράφις (= ἐγεγράφεις). ὁ ἀδελφὸς (= ἀδελφός) Πανίσκος γέγραφε Νουμήνιν πεπομφέναι Φίλωινα (= Φίλωνα) τὸν οἰκονόμον ἐπ' αὐτὸν κατασπουδέως (= κατασπουδαίως) ἐπεὶ (= ἐπὶ) τὴν διοίκησιν, οὕπωι (= οὕπω) σεσήμαγκε τί ἐκβέβη[κ]ε. περὶ δὲ Ἀρήου αὐτὸς Πατρ. . γράφι (= γράφει) ἐπ' αὐτὸν χάριν το[ῦ π]αραγράφεσθαι πυρούς. σὺ δὲ καὶ Ἀραμώιτης (= Ἀραμώτης) διανδραγα[θ]εῖτε ἐν τῇ εἰσαγῆι (= εἰσαγ<ωγ>ῆι) τῆς τιμῆς [τ]οῦ φακοῦ καὶ ὀλύρας. ἐάν τι ἄλλο προσπέση σημανῶι (= σημανῶ) σοι	[body text]
ll. 17-18	καὶ σεατοῦ (= σεαυτοῦ) ἐπειμελοῦ (= ἐπιμελοῦ), ἵν' ὑγιαίνης.	final health wish (chapter 6)
l. 19	ἔρρωσο	closing formula (chapter 7)
ll. 19-20	(ἔτους) γ' Ἀθῶρ ς. πρωι. .	[date]
l. 21	Ἄσκλητι τῶι ἀδελφῶ[ι]	[external address]

Part 1 Diachronic variation

A. Greetings

In the first part of the diachronic overview, I discuss the two formulas in which the sender directs greetings to the addressee. These *topoi* not only serve to formulate a polite letter, but they also maintain social relations. In chapter 2, I study the opening formula at the top of the letter; chapter 3 deals with the salutations from the sender (and his social circle) to the addressee (and his social circle).

Chapter 2 Opening formula

1. Ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν and variants

1.1. Ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν

The standard opening formula of the private papyrus letters was ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν¹, e.g.:

“Πτολεμαῖος Ἀπολλωνίῳ χαίρειν” (P.Sorb. I 20; TM 3135; ll. 1-2)

The formula is a fossilized abbreviation of the original phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι τάδε λέγει and ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν λέγει used in letters that were orally conveyed by messengers (Gerhard 1905: 56-58). From the 5th century BC onwards, opening formulas containing the verb χαίρω are starting to appear in letters from various regions of the Greek-speaking world (Ceccarelli 2013: 38-45; Sickinger 2013: 128-129)².

Ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν is by far the most common opening formula in papyrus letters and it appears more than 2300 times between the 3rd century BC until the 4th or perhaps even the 5th century AD. In the Ptolemaic period, this phrase hardly experienced competition from other variants, except from the χαίρειν phrases with other word orders (cf. *infra*, § 1.2 and 1.3). Also in the Roman period (until the 3rd century AD), ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν was standard. That is why this opening formula is supplemented in many fragmentary letter openings, e.g.:

“Ἐρμοκράτη[ς Χαιρᾶ] τῷ υἱῷ [χαίρειν]” (BGU II 530; TM 25647; ll. 1-2)

“Ἀρτεμ[ί]δωρος Ζήνωνι [χαίρειν]” (P.Col. IV 111; TM 1824; l. 1)

¹ Translation: “X (sender) to Y (addressee), greetings”.

² The formula ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν also appears in other types of communication on papyrus such as *cheirographa* (e.g. SB XVIII 13212; TM 2534) and official papyrus letters (e.g. P.Sorb. I 10; TM 3125) (cf. *infra*, appendix II).

“[-ca.?-]ανος Σερη[-ca.?- χαίρειν] (SB XII 11254; TM 16410; ll. 1-2)

“Θοτεὺς Ζήν[ωνι χαίρειν]” (P.Cair.Zen. V 59830; TM 1454; l. 1)

“Απολλ[ώνιος Πανακέστορι χαίρειν]” (PSI V 497; TM 2124; l. 1)

Similarly, I feel that χαίρειν could be added in the following Ptolemaic and Roman excerpts, which seem to have the structure ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι. Since the phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι without χαίρειν is uncommon —especially in letters dated before the 3rd century AD (cf. *infra*, § 3.2)— χαίρειν is a logical supplement in a number of documents summed up in appendix III³.

1.2. Τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν

The variant τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν is attested about 300 times in private papyrus letters⁴. The addressee’s name was put in front in a handful of isolated cases from the Ptolemaic period, as a polite variant of the standard phrase⁵, e.g.:

“Ζήνωνι Πατῦμις χαίριν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59491; TM 1129; ll. 1-2)

This is the earliest attestation of τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν in private letters. Patymis is accused of robbery and wants to prove his innocence. Given Patymis’ precarious situation and his hierarchical lower position, putting the addressee’s name first in the opening formula is part of Patymis’ politeness strategy.

From the 3rd and 4th centuries AD onwards⁶, the correspondents’ names are systematically inverted: τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν became the standard phrase and did no

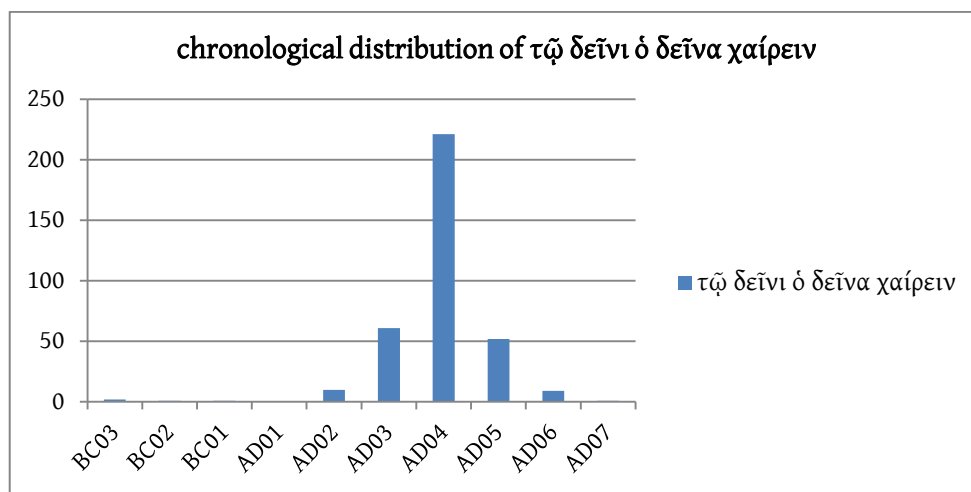
³ I.e. P.Palau Rib. 28 (TM 26157), O.Berenike II 189 (TM 89215), O.Berenike II 194 (TM 89220), SB VI 9276 (TM 25296), PSI VIII 974 (TM 25224), P.Alex. 25 (TM 26994), SB XII 11253 (TM 16409), P.Cair.Zen. III 59420 (TM 1060), P.Cair.Zen. II 59165 (TM 812), P.Cair.Zen. II 59171 (TM 817), P.Cair.Zen. II 59185 (TM 831), P.Cair.Zen. III 59380 (TM 1023), P.Cair.Zen. III 59385 (TM 1028), P.Cair.Zen. III 59390 (TM 1033), P.Cair.Zen. III 59402 (TM 1044), P.Cair.Zen. III 59505 (TM 1143) and P.Cair.Zen. III 59506 (TM 1144).

Perhaps other more fragmentary phrases (e.g. “Ἀλέξανδρος [-ca.?-]” O.Florida 22; TM 74516; l. 1) also had the structure ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν, but here a supplement would be too speculative. The same is true for letters dated in the 3rd century AD and later, where it is impossible to tell whether ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι or ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν was intended.

⁴ Also this phrase was not limited to the private papyrus letters; it also appears in official letters, e.g. PSI IV 421 (TM 2104) and petitions, e.g. P.Oxy. IV 705 (TM 20404) (cf. *infra*, appendix II).

⁵ This variant is attested much earlier than Exler thought: according to this scholar, τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν only started to appear from the 2nd century AD onwards (Exler 1923: 61). Ziemann acknowledged that there were a few attestations of the phrase dating before the 2nd century AD, but he did not discuss them, nor gave more information about their date (Ziemann 1910: 253). Buzón did not discuss this type of opening formula in his discussion of the Ptolemaic letters (Buzón 1984: 5-9). Koskenniemi did not make a distinction between the χαίρειν phrases with different word orders, and did not investigate τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν either (Koskenniemi 1956: 155-169).

longer necessarily convey a particularly polite tone. As a result, in the Late Antique period, putting the sender's name in front —as in ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν— seems to have come across as impolite. Some scholars have argued that τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν is typical of Christian letters (Ghedini 1923: 12-13; Cavassini 1954: 273; O'Callaghan 1961: 27): putting the receiver's name first was thought to be an application of the known saying “εἴ τις θέλει πρῶτος εἶναι, ἔσται πάντων ἔσχατος καὶ πάντων διάκονος” (Marcus 9,35)⁷. The attestations in Ptolemaic and in pagan letters, however, contradict this. The inversion of the addressee's name seems to be a more general evolution towards a more polite phraseology, in which Christianity obviously has played a role (Fournet 2009: 43).



1.3. Τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα⁸

Τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα was the standard opening formula of Ptolemaic petitions to the king (and occasionally to high officials) (Ziemann 1910: 259). This word order illustrates the hierarchical relationship between the petitioner (the sender) and the receiver⁹:

⁶ In the letters precisely dated to the 3rd century AD, 361 have the formula ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν, whereas only 34 address the receiver with the phrase τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν. In the letters dated precisely to the 4th century AD, the relationship is inverse: 55 have the formula ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν, whereas the phrase τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν is found in 165 private letters. In other words, in the turn of the century there also seems to be a shift in the popularity of the phrases (if, of course, we are right in assuming that the letters are dated correctly).

⁷ Translation: “Anyone who wants to be first will be the very last, and the servant of all.”.

⁸ This section will be published in the proceedings of the conference “The Vocabulary of the Zenon Archive and the Language of the Greek Papyri” (i.e. Nachtergaele forthc. b: § 2).

⁹ The phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα also occurs in polite official letters. In P.Cair.Zen. I 59021 (TM 681), for instance, Demetrios was probably head of the Alexandrian Mint and writes to Apollonios in his function of *dioiketes*. The opening formula τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα reflects an unequal hierarchical relationship between the (lower-ranked) sender and the (higher-ranked) addressee.

“The petitioner’s inferior status is reflected formally in the letter’s opening. Writing out of deference to the recipient, she places the addressee’s name before her own in the address, in the form, “To B χαίρειν A,” i.e., “A (nominative case) sends greetings to B (dative).” (White 1986: 195)

Yet, this opening phrase also occurs in private letters. Apart from some general remarks¹⁰, the occurrences of τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα in the (private) letters have not yet been thoroughly studied as a whole.

1.3.1. Occurrences of τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα in the private letters

63 letters have an opening formula of the type τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα¹¹. All but two belong to the Zenon archive¹². One of the two exceptions, P.Oxy. LI 3646 (TM 30075), written in the 3rd or 4th century AD, is a false positive, since the sender’s name was inserted afterwards:

“κυρίῳ μου πάτρωνι καὶ| υἱῷ Φλαβιανῷ χαίρειν.| \’Αρσωνθωοῦς ὁ πατήρ/” (ll. 1-3)

Line 3 was added later in a smaller version of the same hand (Rea 1984: 129). As there is space above the first line¹³, the sender could theoretically have inserted his name at the top of the papyrus, resulting in \’Αρσωνθωοῦς ὁ πατήρ| κυρίῳ μου πάτρωνι καὶ| υἱῷ Φλαβιανῷ χαίρειν. However, he might have avoided spoiling the layout of the letter by starting at the very top of the papyrus. Perhaps, he also wanted to put the addressee’s name first, which was the standard and polite word order of the opening formula in the 4th century AD (cf. *supra*, § 1.2). These two elements might have led him to insert his own name after χαίρειν.

¹⁰ Various scholars have remarked that also in private letters the front position of the addressee’s name in the formula —like in the phrase τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν— fits the sender’s politeness strategy and the acknowledgment of his inferiority (White 1986: 196; Dickey 2009: 160). Exler summed up the attestations of the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα under the general heading “petitions, complaints, applications” (Exler 1923: 42-44). Petitions to the king and private letters were grouped together without distinction, which gives the wrong impression that every private letter of complaint was constructed with the opening formula τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα.

¹¹ Further, two other letters from the Zenon archive, P.Cair.Zen. IV 59601 (TM 1234) and P.Lond. VII 2072 (TM 1633) perhaps also had this formula, but they are too fragmentary to be included in this overview.

¹² For more information on this archive (cf. *supra*, chapter 1, footnote 8).

¹³ For the digital image of the papyrus, see <http://163.1.169.40/cgi-bin/library?a=q&r=1&hs=1&e=p-000-00---0POxy--00-0-0--0prompt-10---4-----0-11--1-en-50---20-about---00031-001-1-0utfZz-8-00&h=ded&t=1&q=3646> (accessed on October 18, 2013).

The other attestation of this set expression outside the Zenon archive is P.Petr. II 4 (7) (TM 7658), a letter from Demetrios to Kleon, in which the former begs the latter to do whatever is in his power to release him from prison¹⁴:

“Κλέωνι χάριον (= χάριεν) Δημήτριος” (l. 1)

This letter was preserved in the archive of Kleon and Theodoros¹⁵. My research has thus revealed that all 62 attestations of the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χάριεν ὁ δεῖνα come from 3rd century BC Fayum¹⁶. Apparently, the formula τῷ δεῖνι χάριεν ὁ δεῖνα was a short-lived variant in the early Ptolemaic period¹⁷.

1.3.2. Socioeconomic context of τῷ δεῖνι χάριεν ὁ δεῖνα in the private letters

1.3.2.1. Ethnicity

Taking the Greek or Egyptian name of the sender as a starting point to discuss linguistic peculiarities is admittedly tricky, even in the 3rd century BC (cf. Evans 2012a: 110). Nevertheless, personal names can be indicative. The Greeks in the archive, as members of the ruling class, were high on the social ladder, whereas the indigenous population is generally associated with lower social class. Given that all occurrences but one come from the Zenon archive, I investigate the Greek and Egyptian names in the entire

¹⁴ Admittedly, some might consider this letter as a petition, given its formal characteristics (cf. the opening formula and the closing formula εὐτύχει) (cf. Clarysse 2010b: 47). However, since this document is not addressed to a person in his capacity as office-holder, and since it lacks other formal elements of a petition (e.g. ἀδικοῦμαι), I see it as a private letter from an employee to his employer (cf. *infra*, appendix II). Also the HGV labeled this document as a private letter. Other documents studied here as private letters, might be classified as petitions by other scholars as well; it all depends on the definition that one uses to distinguish between the two text types.

¹⁵ The engineer (ἀρχιτέκτων) Kleon and his successor Theodoros were responsible for irrigation, quarrying and public works in the Arsinoites *nomos*. The archive contains different text types: besides correspondence, also contracts and accounts have been preserved. For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/122 (accessed on April 29, 2015).

¹⁶ Since the lion's share of our material of the 3rd century BC comes from the Zenon archive, this feature does not qualify as a regiolect.

¹⁷ Perhaps, the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χάριεν ὁ δεῖνα did not remain in use for a long period, because the reversed word order could create confusion: ὁ δεῖνα could be regarded as the subject of the next sentence, and not a part of the opening formula. The editors' punctuation shows this kind of confusion (cf. Ziemann 1910: 59), e.g.: “[βασιλεῖ Πτολεμ]αίωι χάριεν. Ἀντίγονος ἀδικοῦμαι ὑπὸ Πάτρωνος τοῦ [φυλα]κιτε[ύ]οντος τὴν κάτω τοπαρχίαν” (P.Hib. I 34; TM 8186; l.1). In the other polite opening formula in use (*viz.* τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χάριεν), the word order does not cause confusion, as χάριεν is placed at the end of the phrase. This might be why τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χάριεν did remain in use, and τῷ δεῖνι χάριεν ὁ δεῖνα did not. It is, admittedly, tentative to offer possible explanations for the short-livedness of the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χάριεν ὁ δεῖνα, and it seems impossible to ascertain whether the ancient letter writers had the same confusion.

archive in general and compare them to the names in the archive's attestations of τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα¹⁸.

There are 119 documents of persons with an Egyptian name in Zenon archive (i.e. 6.5% on total of 1,831 papyri in the entire archive) (Evans 2012a: 109 and 114). In the 61 private letters from the Zenon archive with the reversed word order, 62 names of senders have been preserved in 58 letters¹⁹; 29 letters are sent by people with an Egyptian name²⁰. Hence, whereas the percentage of Egyptian-name documents in the Zenon archive is approximately 6.5%, about half of the occurrences with the opening formula τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνι are from Egyptian senders²¹. Apparently, the phrase was relatively often used by people with an Egyptian name to write to Greeks: most letters with the opening formula τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνι are addressed to Zenon, others are sent to Apollonios or Eukles. The phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνι thus seems to be particularly often used in private letters written 'from low to high'. The (rather) large social distance between lower-ranked Egyptians and higher-ranked Greeks might have resulted in the relatively frequent use of this courteous formula.

1.3.2.2. Occupation and self-representation

The 62 senders' names preserved in the archive refer to only 57 individuals, since three letter writers are attested more than once²²: Pyron, for instance, who worked first for Apollonios, and later on the *dorea*, was responsible for three letters with the opening formula τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα. Also from Ktesias, a shopkeeper in Alexandria, three letters containing this phrase have been preserved. The potter Paesis is attested to use the formula twice.

Of 39 of those persons, the occupation is known²³. Ktesias is the only shopkeeper, and Pyron is the only γραμματεύς. Five people, including Paesis, are potters. Four are farmers, and one person works in a παράδεισος. There is one shepherd, one swineherd,

¹⁸ Since I do not have numerical data on the Egyptian names in the documents from the Kleon archive, I have not taken this collection into account; given that I only discuss the documents from the Zenon archive in this section, the attestation of τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα of the Kleon archive P.Petr. II 4 (7)) is left out of the discussion so that only the 61 occurrences from the Zenon archive are studied in this section.

¹⁹ Some letters are sent by multiple senders, whereas others have never borne (or have not preserved) the sender's name.

²⁰ To decide whether a name is Egyptian or Greek, I relied on the information in the Guide to the Zenon archive and on the Trismegistos People's database.

²¹ Since only a small number of letters are written by persons with the same name or by the same individuals (cf. *infra*, § 1.3.2.2), this cannot account for the high percentage of Egyptian names in the letters with the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα.

²² Clarysse's prosopography in Guide to the Zenon archive is the starting point for this investigation.

²³ Here too, I relied on Clarysse's prosopography in Guide to the Zenon archive.

one goatherd, one pigeon keeper and one female beekeeper. There are two stonecutters, two craftsmen, a brick maker and a worker in tow. Several people are involved in the textile industry²⁴. Further, there are two vine dressers and a brewer. Four people are linked to the temple: two warders for Isis, a temple servant and a ἱερεὺς for Isis and Sarapis²⁵. Overall, people using the opening formula τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα did not occupy high positions in society.

Moreover, in twenty private letters with the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα, the sender explicitly gives more information about his identity. In fourteen letters, the sender refers to his profession²⁶, e.g.:

“Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Πετόβαστις περιστεροτρόφος” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59498; TM 1136; ll. 1-2)

“[Ζήνωνι χαίρειν] Πατυμῖς Ἀραπάκτιος ἰσιονό[μος]” (P.Ryl. IV 569; TM 2425; ll. 1-2)

Further, there are four more cases like in P.Ryl. IV 569, in which the senders state their relationship to a third person who is (perhaps better) known to the addressee, e.g.:

“Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Πάεις (= Πᾶις) ὁ τοῦ Πάτειτος (= Πάτιτος) ἀδελφός” (P.Lond. VII 2045; TM 1607; l. 1)²⁷

Other opening formulas give different types of information about the sender(s):

“[Ζήνωνι χαίρειν] Δράκων καὶ Νεχθε[μβῆς, Ἄρα]βες” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59425; TM 1065; l. 1)

“Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Θέων [ὁ συ]ταθει[ς ὑπ'] Ἐφαρμόστου τοῦ μακαρίτου” (P.Cair.Zen. V 59852; TM 1476; ll. 1-2)

Giving information about yourself as a sender is not common (cf. *infra*, appendix I, § 3.1.5): appositions and adjectives added to the sender’s name appear in only 26 Zenon

²⁴ There is one carpet weaver, one person working in a weaving factory and a pattern-weaver.

²⁵ Further, one person is perhaps a soldier, but this is not certain. Finally, there is a φύλαξ, a manager (χειριστής), a painter (ἐγκαυτής), a steersman and a collector of the τριηράρχημα tax.

²⁶ Perhaps also P.Lond. VII 2046 and P.Cair.Zen. III 59455 originally had a reference to the sender’s job, respectively: “Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Πετεερμῶτις γ[.] παρὰ σοῦ ἐκ τοῦ Σαραπειείου” (l. 1) and “[Ζήνωνι χαίρειν] Καλῆς [-ca.-?] γεωργός” (ll. 1-2). In the second case, it is not clear whether γεωργός is still part of the opening formula or not. These cases have not been taken into account.

²⁷ This feature is also attested in PSI IV 372 (TM 2057) and P.Cair.Zen. III 59492 (TM 1130). Further, in P.Cair.Zen. I 59034 (TM 694), the meaning of the sender’s description as Ζώιλος Ἀσπέν[δ]ιος is not clear, cf.: “Zoilos of Aspendos, [from the entourage, military unit or association of?]” (Renberg and Bubelis 2011: 173). Yet, also this is an example of an extensive identification of the sender, as the complete opening phrase is as follows: “Ἀπολλωνίω χαίρειν Ζώιλος Ἀσπέν[δ]ιος τ[ῶν -ca.-?] ὃς καὶ διασυνεστάθη σοι ὑπὸ τῶν τοῦ βασιλέως φίλων” (ll. 1-2).

letters in total. This means that almost 80% (i.e. 20/26) of the occurrences appear in opening formulas with the construction τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα²⁸.

The senders probably added information about themselves in the opening formula because they wanted to make sure that Zenon did not confuse them with namesakes. But the recurring names for different individuals cannot be the only cause for this use. Apollonios the *dioiketes*, for instance, did never add an apposition to his name to discern himself from other Apollonioi²⁹. This is no doubt because he knew his addressee well and because he had a higher position than his addressee. In examples of τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα, on the other hand, there seems to be a large social distance between sender and receiver: Zenon probably did not know these senders personally. Moreover, in four of the attestations, the senders do not state their names and only refer to themselves by their occupation, e.g.:

“Ζήνωνι χαίρειν οἱ μελισσοῦργοὶ οἱ ἐκ τοῦ Ἀρσινοίτου νομοῦ” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59467; TM 1105; ll. 1-2)³⁰

In these cases, the senders are a group of people: they do not deem it relevant to give their names. This shows even more that the senders in these cases did not know the addressee privately.

1.3.2.3. Contents

According to Exler, the formula τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα only appears in complaints and job applications (cf. *supra*, footnote 10). I, however, also find attestations of τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα in letters of requests, e.g.:

“Ζή[ν]ωνι χαίρειν Πύρων. βουλόμενος ἀξιῶσαί σε παλαιότερον περὶ χαλκῶν εἰς μήκωνος συναγορασμόν, διαισχυνόμενος καὶ πλείους προσπορευομένους ἀπέιρημαι” (P.Mich. I 46; TM 1946; ll. 1-5)

In these cases, the sender is in the humble position of supplicant, whereas the addressee has the power to grant or turn down the request. The receiver thus has contextual power. In other words, in addition to being lower on the social ladder than the addressee, the sender is also put in a position where he is likely to be extra polite because of the context of requesting something. The reversed word order reflects this. Since in complaints, job applications and letters of request the sender asks the

²⁸ The other letters with more information about the sender's identity take the standard word order ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν.

²⁹ Of course, the letters are also recognizable by other features such as the chancellery hands.

³⁰ The other attestations are P.Cair.Zen. V 59838 (TM 1462), PSI V 531 (TM 2153) and PSI VI 599 (TM 2209).

addressee for a favor, they are contentwise close to the register of petitions, which could explain the transfer of the opening formula τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα from petitions.

However, the use of the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα is not limited to this context. My investigation has revealed that the phrase also occurs in ‘business letters’: in PSI IV 420 (TM 2103), Semtheus reports that he has finished his assignment and asks Zenon to give him other tasks. In this and similar business letters, the superior position of the sender results in the word order τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα (and in the use of the closing formula εὐτύχει). In choosing the opening and closing formulas typical of the petition and in mixing the registers of the private letter and the petition, the sender probably wanted to adopt a humble attitude. In this way, the choice for τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα reflects how the sender might have used polite phrases as a part of a conversational strategy.

In other words, the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα seems to be limited to a specific time period, but not a specific context or text type: the borders between the phraseologies of the different text types are not fixed, and the 3rd century BC sender of a private letter could vary between the standard formula ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν and τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα, according to his own preferences, to his politeness strategy and to the circumstances of writing. As a result different types of opening formulas can appear in the letters between two correspondents, depending on the context. Pais, for instance, addresses Zenon with τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα in P.Cair.Zen. III 59483 (TM 1121) and P.Mich. I 60 (TM 1960), but uses the standard opening formula in PSI IV 382 (TM 2066), another letter addressed to Zenon³¹. Both P.Cair.Zen. III 59483 and P.Mich. I 60 are letters of request and P.Cair.Zen. III 59483 even concludes with εὐτύχει. PSI IV 382, by contrast, is a simple business letter with ἔρρωσο at the end. Although it is tentative to formulate hypotheses about the motives behind choosing different formulas, this sender perhaps deliberately mixed the registers of the private letter and the petition when he made a request to the addressee³².

³¹ The three texts are probably written in different hands (I am grateful to prof.dr.em. Willy Clarysse for checking the hands in these documents for me). This is especially relevant to P.Cair.Zen. III 59483 and P.Mich. I 60: the preference of one certain scribe for the uncommon phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα could not be the explanation for this similar use in the letters of request.

³² Other elements might also have influenced the choice for a specific opening formula, e.g. epistolary habits could also change overtime. For instance, of the five letters by Ktesias to Zenon, the documents that have the opening formula τῷ δεῖνα χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα seem to be older than the letters with ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν. Perhaps Ktesias wanted to be polite in his earliest letters to Zenon, but once he got to know Zenon better, he might have switched to the neutral opening formula ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν.

1.4. Τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν

In 23 letters³³, mainly from the 2nd to the 4th centuries AD³⁴, the sender does not give his name, but only mentions the addressee in the opening formula. In P.Leid.Inst. 42 (TM 43134), the omission of the sender's name can be explained from a pragmatical point of view. The papyrus contains two private letters. The first letter was sent by Heras to Taphes. Upon receiving Taphes formulated a reply to Heras on the same sheet. In that reply, a short Ἡρᾶτι τῇ ἀδελφῇ πλῖστα χαίρ[ε]ιν does not cause confusion as it is clear that Taphes is the sender of this message. Yet, in the other letters it is not clear why the sender did not add his name.

Two letters with the opening formula τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν were preserved in the Heroninos archive³⁵, and they were both sent to Keletes:

“Κηλητῆ χαίρειν” (SB V 7529; TM 27325; l. 1)

“Κηλητῆ χαίρειν” (P.Ups.Frid 10; TM 30180; l. 1)

There is no way of ascertaining whether the two letters were sent by one single sender who perhaps had a preference for the short opening formula.

1.5. Τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος χαίρειν and variants

In 26 letters, the opening formulas τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος χαίρειν (eleven attestations) and παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν (fifteen attestations) are contaminations of the standard χαίρειν phrase and the opening formula with παρὰ, which will be discussed *infra* (§ 3.1). As this variant is only attested from the 3rd century AD onwards, the opening formula of the late 1st century BC letter P.Princ. III 160 (TM 78736) is presumably not an example of a contaminated phrase:

“παρὰ Σ[. . .] Ἀγχασίωι καὶ Θαμίνει χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρ[ῶσ]θαι” (ll. 1-2)

³³ I am not sure if the opening formula of P.Iand. VI 115 (TM 30602) was convincingly supplemented: “[κυρίω μου ἀ]δελφῷ Εὐ[δ]αίμ[ονι] π[ο]λλ[ᾶ] χαίρειν καὶ εὖ[] πρᾶ[ττ]ειν” (ll. 1-2). This supplement seems to be based on the analogy with the external address: “κυρίω μου ἀδ[ελφῷ] -ca.?-]”. However, these two formulas do not always match. Perhaps the sender's name opened line 1, i.e. [ὁ δεῖνα ἀ]δελφῷ Therefore, I have not included this attestation in the total number of occurrences of the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν.

³⁴ The fragmentary and therefore uncertain attestation BGU VI 1299 (TM 4559) is dated to the 3rd century BC. BGU IV 1141 (TM 18585) is dated in BC 14-13. SB XIV 12173 (TM 32954) is probably dated between 350 and 450 AD.

³⁵ The 3rd century AD archive of Heroninos is the largest collection of texts from Roman Egypt. It is named after the addressee of most letters, Heroninos, who also drafted most of the accounts preserved (Rathbone 1991: 1). Heroninos was the manager (φροντιστής) of Aurelius Appianus' estate in Theadelphia. For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/103 (accessed on April 29, 2015).

Probably the sender's name was Paras, which is attested in papyri from Upper Egypt (Hanson 1973: 82-83). My investigation not only confirms Hanson's feeling that "a private letter of this date is most likely to begin with a personal name in the nominative case" (Hanson 1973: 82), it also rejects the plausibility of the older reading *παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν*.

1.6. Variants to the main verb

In a few opening formulas, the verb in the infinitive is not *χαίρειν*³⁶. In sixteen private letters, dated between the late 1st century BC and the 6th century AD, the phrase *εὖ πράσσειν* is found³⁷, e.g.:

“κυρία μου μητρὶ καὶ ἀδελφοῖς Εὐδαίμων ὁ ἰατρὸς εὖ πράττειν” (P.Fouad I 80; TM 33384; ll. 1-2)

This phrase was already used in the Classical period by both Platon and Epikouros (Parsons 1980-1981: 7)³⁸. In PSI XII 1248 (TM 17411) and P.Hamb. IV 254 (TM 78276) the standard *χαίρειν* is replaced by *εὐθυμεῖν*. The latter is a model letter of condolence. Also *εὐψυχέω* is used once in a letter of consolation (P.Oxy. I 115; TM 28407)³⁹.

1.7. Multiple senders and multiple addressees

Of the letters with a *χαίρειν* phrase, about 250 opening formulas from the 3rd century BC until the 6th century AD have more than one sender and/or addressee⁴⁰. In an opening

³⁶ There are many letters in which *χαίρειν* is combined with a verb expressing the health wish (e.g. *ἐρρῶσθαι*). These examples are not discussed here, but are studied extensively in the chapter on the initial health wish (cf. *infra*, chapter 4, § 2).

Like in the formulas with *χαίρειν*, there is also variation in word order: mostly, the opening formula is *τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα* verb or *ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι* verb.

³⁷ *Εὖ πράσσω* also appears in P.Iand. VI 115 (TM 30602). In this letter, it is used in combination with *χαίρω*. Its use is thus very similar to that *ὕγιαίνω* in the phrase *ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὕγιαίνειν*. Therefore, this case is not included in this overview, but is studied in chapter 4. Also the attestation of *εὖ πράσσω* in the fragmentary letter P.Oxy. IV 822 (TM 20474) is not included.

³⁸ The opening formula with *εὖ πράσσειν* is regarded as typical of philosophical letters (Ziemann 1910: 292). Also in P.Mil.Vogl. I 11 (TM 78532), this phrase appears in a letter to a philosopher (cf. the external address “*παρὰ Θέωνος Ἡρακλείδη φιλοσόφω*”).

³⁹ Koskenniemi and White believed that the verb *χαίρειν* was intentionally avoided because of its meaning ‘to rejoice’, but Worp convincingly showed that their hypothesis is a “phantom” since the bulk of the preserved letters of condolence have an opening formula with *χαίρειν* (Worp 1995: 151).

⁴⁰ The letters that have both multiple senders and multiple addressees are counted as one attestation. Therefore, the total number of occurrences is lower than the sum of the letters with multiple senders and those with multiple addressees (cf. *infra*, chapter 9, § 2.1.2). In some other letters, the senders or the

formula with multiple senders and/or multiple addressees, καί usually links the names of the correspondents⁴¹; the standard formula is then altered in the following way: ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν becomes ὁ δεῖνα καὶ ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι καὶ τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν, or ὁ δεῖνα καὶ ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν, or ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι καὶ τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν⁴², e.g.:

“Ανεΐκητος καὶ Ἡρακλείδης Σωτηρίχῳ τῷ πατρὶ χαίρειν” (O.Claud. I 173; TM 24181; ll. 1-3)

“Ἰσιδῶρος Ἰσιδῶρωι καὶ Πανίσκωι τοῖς υἱοῖς χαίρειν” (O.Claud. I 174; TM 29818; ll. 1-2)

“Κοπρὺς καὶ Σενθῶνις Σαραπάμμωνι καὶ Σύρα πλεῖστα χαίρειν” (SB XVIII 13591; TM 30980; ll. 1-2)

1.7.1. Asyndetic opening formula⁴³

24 instances deviate from the standard rules⁴⁴ and omit the conjunction between the names of the multiple senders or receivers⁴⁵. Examples of such asyndetic opening formulas are:

“Πύρρος Ζήνωνι Ἐφαρμόστῳ χαίρειν” (SB XIV 11639; TM 2100; ll. 1-2)

“Νίκανδρος Πεισικλῆς Ζήνωνι χαίρειν” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59309; TM 953; l. 1)

addressees are not individually referred to by name, but as a group; these occurrences are discussed further in § 1.7.2.

⁴¹ In two letters, another construction with prepositions appears: “κυρία μο[υ μητρὶ] ἅμα τοῖς κυρ[ίοις μου ἀ]δελφοῖς πλεῖστ[α vac.?(?)] χαίρειν” (P.Oxy. XIV 1770; TM 31812; ll. 1-4) and “Λουκρήτις (= Λουκρήτης) Ἄμμων<ι>αν\ῶ/ σὺν τῷς (= τοῖς) ἀδελφῷς (= ἀδελφοῖς) πολλὰ χέρειν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Gen. IV 163; TM 29470; ll. 1-3).

⁴² Of course, other word orders are attested as well, e.g.: “κυρίῳ μου πατρὶ Ἀφυγχίῳ καὶ τῇ κυρίᾳ μου μητρὶ Μαρίας (= Μαρία) Παπνοθίου (= Παπνοῦθις) χαίρειν” (P.Oxy. XLVIII 3396; TM 33708; ll. 1-2).

⁴³ This section will be published in the proceedings of the conference “The Vocabulary of the Zenon Archive and the Language of the Greek Papyri” (i.e. Nachtergaele forthc. b: § 3).

⁴⁴ In other three letters, all from the Zenon archive, the opening formula is supplemented viz. P.Zen.Pestm. 55 (TM 1886), P.Iand.Zen. 17 (TM 110071) and P.Cair.Zen. III 59368 (TM 1011). The first two are letters from Panakestor to Kleitarchos and Andron: the supplement seems to be modeled on the asyndetic opening formula of P.Lond. VII 1953 (TM 1516), in which Panakestor addresses Kleitarchos and Andron asyndetically. Similarly, the supplement of P.Cair.Zen. III 59368, a letter from Sostratos to Zenon and Xenophon, seems to be based on the asyndetic opening formula of P.Ryl. IV 560 (TM 2416), another letter from Sostratos to Zenon and Xenophon. These attestations have not been taken into account. Problematic are also P.Cair.Zen. III 59449 (TM 1088) and PSI IV 357 (TM 2045). The first letter is a draft: the actual private letter sent to the addressees might have had the standard phraseology. In the second letter, the writer has inserted the name of the second addressee above the line: “Φιλοκράτης \Δημόστρατος/ Ζήνωνι χαίρειν” (ll. 1-2). Here, lack of space might have been the cause for the deviation from standard phraseology. These two attestations have not been included in the number above either. In P.Köln IX 364 (TM 78426) and P.Cair.Zen. III 59501 (TM 1139), there is a small lacuna in the essential part of the opening formula. I trust the editors that the lacuna cannot contain more than two letters and that the opening formula could not have had a conjunction.

⁴⁵ This type of variation has not yet been discussed in previous studies.

Of the 24 letters with an asyndetic opening formula, nineteen are letters from the Zenon archive (or nearly 80%). However, letters with multiple senders and/or addressees are not (especially) common in the archive: only a total of 29 letters was sent by, or addressed to more than one individual. So, curiously, in the Zenon archive most letters with multiple senders and/or addressees do not have the standard phrase with the conjunction καί.

Outside the Zenon archive, the asyndetic variant appears only five times. The earliest example, SB VI 9090 (TM 5723), also comes from 3rd century BC Philadelphiea:

“Εὐφράνωρ Λαμέδων Ἑρμολάωι χαίρειν” (l. 1)

It belongs to the archive of Hermolaos *oikonomos*⁴⁶, who is known as an *oikonomos* in the Zenon archive —Zenon and Hermolaos certainly met from time to time (cf. Bagnall 1974: 215-220). Also three other letters date to the 3rd century BC: P.Heid. III 230 (TM 78316), P.Köln IX 364 (TM 78426) and P.Petr. II 40 (a) (TM 7473). The last two might have been written in the Arsinoite nome as well, and are thus chronologically and geographically similar to SB VI 9090 and the Zenon letters. P.Münch. III 57 (TM 78543), the last attestation, probably dates to the 2nd century BC. In other words, just like the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα, the use of asyndetic opening formulas seem to have been a short-lived variant⁴⁷.

In the two letters by Apollonios *dioiketes* to multiple addressees which have asyndetic opening formulas, there is perhaps an explanation for the omission of the conjunction⁴⁸:

“Ἀπολλώνιος Θράσωνι Παραμόνωι χαίρειν” (P.Cair.Zen. I 59130; TM 779; ll. 15-17)

“[Ἀπολλ]ώνιος Ζήνωνι Πανακέστ[ορι χαίρειν]” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59195; TM 841; l. 1)

The use of an asyndeton matches writing style of Apollonios' letters⁴⁹: they are generally to the point and do not contain unnecessary formulas such as epistolary phrases.

⁴⁶ For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/382 (accessed on April 29, 2015).

⁴⁷ Like τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα, the limited use of this phrase might have been due to the possible confusion caused by the omission of the conjunction καί —here, again proposing explanations is admittedly tentative: it is illustrative that SB VI 9090, a letter from Euphranor and Lamedon to Hermolaos (cf. *supra*), is described by APIS as “Letter from Euphranor Lamedon to Hermolaos”. For practical reasons, it was just easier to insert καί.

⁴⁸ Paramonos is an agent of Apollonios in the Memphite nome (Clarysse 1981: 388). Thrason is an assistant (of Zenon) as well (Clarysse 1981: 345).

⁴⁹ The letters were written in different hands (cf. <http://ipap.csad.ox.ac.uk/PCZ-colour/72dpi/P.Cair.Zen.I.59130r.jpg> and <http://ipap.csad.ox.ac.uk/PCZ-colour/72dpi/P.Cair.Zen.II.59195r.jpg>; accessed on April 29, 2015), so that one scribe could not have been responsible for the uncommon asyndeton. However, I do not intend to imply that the use of the asyndeton is a feature of Apollonios' *idiolect*. It has been pointed out that the *dioiketes* only had limited direct involvement in the compilation of the letters: he probably delegated the messages to his scribes, rather than dictating them word by word (cf. Evans 2010: 57-58).

Perhaps the omission of *καί* is in line with the ‘no-nonsense style’ in the letters from the *dioiketes* to his inferiors. Similarly, an asyndeton is attested in the letter(s) from Panakestor to his assistants Kleitarchos and Andron:

“Πανακέστωρ Κλειτάρχῳ Ἄνδρωνι χαίρειν” (P.Lond. VII 1953; TM 1516; ll. 1-2)

Like Apollonios, Panakestor may have adopted a straightforward style, in which omitting *καί* might have been felt—at least by Apollonios and Panakestor—suitable for writing to multiple inferior addressees⁵⁰.

Also another element seems to imply that an asyndetic construction was sometimes used to indicate the hierarchically lower party: in three letters with an asyndetic opening, the opening formula has the inverted word order *τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα*:

“Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Ἀπολλοφάνης Δημήτριος ἀδελφοὶ τεχνῖται τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἐρέαν πᾶσαν γυναικυῦφῆ (= γυναικοῦφῆ)” (PSI IV 341; TM 2029; ll. 1-2)

“Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Πετενοῦρις Σαμῶς οἱ ὑοφορβοί” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59495; TM 1133; l. 1)

“Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Ῥόδων, Μένιππος, Πausανίας” (PSI IV 419; TM 2102; l. 1)

The phrase *τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα* (cf. *supra*, § 1.3) and the Egyptian identity of some of the senders suggest that the senders have a lower rank than the addressee. The senders’ explicit mention of their occupation points in the same direction (cf. *supra*, § 1.3). The first letter is a letter of application and the second is a letter of request: in both, the context of asking a favor places the senders in inferior positions⁵¹.

Similarly, lower-ranked senders also describe themselves by means of asyndetic constructions in opening formulas of petitions and official letters⁵², e.g.:

⁵⁰ One might be tempted to think that Panakestor’s language was influenced by that of Apollonios. Yet, this is tentative since one does not know what letters have not been preserved. In any case, the chronology of the preserved letters cannot confirm this: the letter from Apollonios to Panakestor, P.Cair.Zen. II 59195, was written in 254 BC. P.Lond. VII 1953, the letter from Panakestor to Kleitarchos and Andron, was written three years earlier.

⁵¹ In a number of other cases, the multiple senders just use the standard opening formula *ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν*, but the asyndetic construction similarly seems to imply their inferiority, e.g.: P.Mich. I 85 (TM 1984), a letter of request to Zenon to make someone being released from prison: “Ἡρώιδης Ζηνικέτης Ζήν[ωνι χαίρειν]” (l. 1) or P.Cair.Zen. III 59329 (TM 972): “Ἀπολλώνιος Μένιππο[ς ἀ]μπελουργοί/ Ζήνωνι χαίρειν” (ll. 1-2). The senders are vinedressers, and they are thus inferior to Zenon. Further, they place a request Zenon to intervene on their behalf by reminding Metrodoros to pay them. The vinedressers thus have a double motive to be extra polite: they are writing to a superior and they need a favor from their correspondent.

⁵² It is beyond the scope of this thesis to investigate the opening formulas of all official letters and petitions. I am fully aware that, like the papyrus letters, not all attestations of asyndetic opening formulas will simply match with this general idea, since multiple and complex factors influence the language of the papyri.

“βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίωι χαίρειν Θεόδοτος, Γαδδαῖος, Φανίας” (petition P.Enteux. 59; TM 3334; l. 1)

“Ἀμμώνιος Πάχιτι Φαμώνθιος, Ψοσαῦτι Φεράτος [χ] χαίρειν” (official letter P.Mich. I 73; TM 1972; l. 1-2)

Yet, *asyndeta* are not always used in the context of an inferior party. In fact, sometimes an *asyndeton* describes the hierarchically higher party⁵³. Further, P.Köln IX 364 (TM 78426), a letter from outside the Zenon archive, is about the birth of a baby girl: in this instance the sender and the addressee seem to be hierarchically equal:

“ Κτησίπ[ωι] Πτολεμαίωι τοῖς ἐπὶ σκηνῇ πᾶσι χαίρειν” (l. 1)

In other cases the relationship between the sender and the addressee is unclear, for instance because the sender’s name is lost (e.g. in P.Cair.Zen. IV 59579; TM 1213) or because the correspondents’ identities are unknown (e.g. in PSI V 524; TM 2146).

In other words, the functional context (if there was a specific one⁵⁴) for this short-lived construction is mainly beyond retrieval.

1.7.2. References to groups

Mostly, individuals are mentioned in the opening formula, and general references to groups are not common. This is due to the fact that such references might hamper a correct identification of the letter’s correspondents. Only in three examples “(all) people from the house” are greeted in the opening formula:

“Ἀθηνοκλῆς Φιλιστείδου τῆι ἀδελφῆι [-ca.?-] καὶ τοῖς ἐν οἴκωι πᾶσι χαίρειν” (P.Tebt. III.2 949; TM 7985; ll. 1-2)

“Ἀπολλώνιος Ἰππάλωι καὶ Σαραπίωνι καὶ Βερενίκηι καὶ Πύρρωι καὶ τοῖς ἐν οἴκω (= οἴκω) πασαι (= πᾶσι) χαίρειν” (UPZ I 74; TM 3465; ll. 1-7)

“ὁ πατήρ Ἀμμωνίωι καὶ τοῖς ἐν οἴκω πᾶσι χαίρειν” (BGU VI 1296; TM 4558; ll. 1-2)

In two instances, expressions with the meaning “(all) our/my/your people” are found:

“Θωμάς καὶ [. . .] μας καὶ οἱ σὺν ἡ[μῖν] πάντες Παύλω τῶ [. . .] . . . ιωτ- ca.9 - . . . πε. [.]οις. [. .] πλ]εῖ[σ]τα [χα]ίρειν” (P.Col. XI 298; TM 32134; ll. 1-3)

⁵³ Pyrrhos, one of Zenon’s tenants, for instance, addresses Zenon and Epharmostos in an *asyndetic* construction: “Πύρρος Ζήνωνι Ἐφαρμόστωι χαίρειν” (P.Mich. I 58; TM 1958; ll. 1-3) and “Πύρρος Ζήνωνι Ἐφαρμόστωι χαίρειν” (SB XIV 11639; TM 2100; ll. 1-2).

⁵⁴ In some cases, not so much a functional context, but practical issues might have led to the omission of the conjunction: whereas most letters to multiple receivers are written to two or perhaps three persons (and similarly most letters from multiple senders are written by two or three people), P.Petr. II 40 (a) has at least sixteen addressees. Similarly, in long lists, such as tables or series of titles, *asyndeta* are more likely to be attested.

“τοῖς παν[αγίο(?)]ῖς ἀγαπητοῖς [καὶ γλυ]κυτάτοις [Παι]ηοῦτι πρεσβ[υτέρω καὶ] Διοσκορο[ς (= Διοσκόρω) καὶ] εραξ (= Ἰέρακι) καὶ [-ca.?-] καὶ ἄπα Σ[ου]ροῦ καὶ πᾶσ[ι τοῖς ἀδελ]φοῖς καὶ πᾶσι τ[οῖς] περὶ [ὑμᾶς] κατ’ ὄν[ο]μα Μωυση[ῆ]ς καὶ Ἐριηοῦς(?) οἱ] ὑποδεέστεροι ὑμῶν ἐν [κ(υρί)ω χαίρειν]” (P.Lond. VI 1916; TM 16854; ll. 1-7)

A similar instance is found in the opening formula with the imperative χαῖρε:

“χαῖρε, κυρι (= κύριέ) μου ἀδελφε Ἀπολλώνιε. Ἀσίννις σε ἀσπάζομαι σὺν τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἐρρωμένος καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ εὐχόμενός σε” (P.Brem. 56; TM 19640; ll. 1-5)

2. Χαῖρε and χαίροις and variants

In the first centuries of our era, the χαίρειν phrase experienced (limited) competition from the imperative χαῖρε and the optative χαίροις with vocative. These new formulas have a more direct and more personal phraseology. According to Ziemann and Döllstadt, the incompetence of the writer was the reason for the deviation from the standard opening formula with infinitive (cf. Ziemann 1910: 296; Döllstadt 1934: 13-14), but this thesis has been rejected⁵⁵. Since the letter was increasingly conceived as a conversation between sender and addressee (Koskenniemi 1956: 167; Fournet 2009: 45), the impersonal infinitive construction with χαίρειν did probably no longer suffice. With their use of the vocative, the χαίροις and χαῖρε formulas may have been an innovation to adapt to the changed, more direct tone of the private letter. This evolution may have been triggered by the fact that from 2nd century BC onwards vocatives had been common in all sections of a letter apart from the opening formula: the addressee was frequently directly addressed by means of a vocative in the body of the letter and in some other epistolary phrases such as the closing formula (cf. *infra*, chapter 7, § 4.5). The discrepancy that arose between the impersonal third person χαίρειν opening and the conversation-like tone in the rest of the letter, could be countered by the χαῖρε and χαίροις opening formulas.

⁵⁵ Not only occurrences in the papyrus letters themselves prove that this type of opening formula is certainly not limited to uneducated writers (cf. Koskenniemi 1956: 44), but also the attestation of the χαῖρε formula in Achilles Tatius’ novel ‘The Adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon’ (V 21, 5: “Χαῖρέ μοι, ᾧ δέσποινα Λευκίππη”) and in the Homeric hymns (at the end of the letter, not as an opening formula) (cf. Ceccarelli 2013: 41-42) is meaningful.

2.1. Χαῖρε

The imperative χαῖρε is attested 35 times⁵⁶ in private letters dated from the 1st to the 4th-5th centuries AD⁵⁷, e.g.:

“χαῖρε, κύριε τ[ι]μιώτατ[ε]” (P.Fay. 129; TM 31421; l. 1)⁵⁸

This short phrase appears six times. In this basic formula, the sender’s name is not mentioned; in other variants, the sender does reveal his identity, e.g.:

“χαῖρε κύριέ μου Ἀγῆνορ παρὰ Ξενοφῶντος” (SB XII 11009; TM 30312; ll. 1-2)⁵⁹

Although the addition παρὰ + sender’s name is syntactically incorrect⁶⁰, it appears in ten letters⁶¹. Besides the preposition παρὰ, also διά is attested in P.Oxy. XVIII 2193 (TM 35623). Another type of extension is the blending of the opening formula and the greetings:

“χ[αῖρ]ε κύριέ μ[ου] Ἀλέ[ξ]ανδρε, Βουκόλος σε προσαγορεύω” (P.Ryl. IV 691; TM 30590; ll. 1-3)⁶²

⁵⁶ Further, the plural form χαίρετε is found once (in P.Alex. 27; TM 30464), but every character of the verb form is uncertain; therefore, this occurrence has not been taken into account: “Δημέας . . . [-ca.?-]νίων καὶ χαίρετε” (ll. 1-2).

The verb is reconstructed in PSI XV 1554 (TM 30425): “[χαῖρε, κύριέ μο]υ Ἀπολλωνιανέ, Σεουήροσ σε [-ca.?-]σπάζομαι” (ll. 1-2), and was therefore not taken into account. Also in P.Bas. 16 (TM 30799) the reading χαῖρε is not compelling (cf. *BL* 11, p. 15). In P.Rain.Cent. 71 (TM 30084), the opening formula probably either had χαῖρε or χαίροις: “χα[.]ατε Δίδυμε” (l. 1). Since it is not sure what construction was used in this opening formula, this attestation has not been taken into account. In P.Oxy. XLIII 3094 (TM 15973), χαῖρε is supplemented as well, but the lacuna is probably too small to have contained χαίροις; χαῖρε is a very probable supplement and I therefore included this letter in my discussion.

⁵⁷ The imperative χαῖρε is also found in early documentary letters from different parts of the Greek world, e.g. at the end of a private lead letter from the Gulf of Massalia dated around 500 BC, as a kind of closing formula (Ceccarelli 2013: 41-42). It is further attested in curses and funerary and dedicatory epigrams of the same period. The early letters, curses and epigrams all originally had a direct style; however, from the 4th century BC onwards, the opening formula of private papyrus letters started distinguishing itself from the other text types: it adopted an opening formula in the third person (ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν and variants) instead of the second person address with χαῖρε which reflected the old use of a messenger (Ceccarelli 2013: 57). From the 1st century AD onwards, the reverse evolution seems to have taken place where letters again turned to direct addresses.

⁵⁸ Translation: “Greetings, most honored lord.”

⁵⁹ Translation: “Greetings, my lord Agenor, from Xenophon.”

⁶⁰ Koskeniemi therefore suggested splitting up those phrases as χαῖρε + vocative. παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος (Koskeniemi 1956: 166). I do not follow this interpretation, as the sender’s name is clearly part of the opening formula.

⁶¹ The formula is supplemented in SB XIV 11588 (TM 32936) and has not been taken into account.

⁶² Translation: “Greetings, my lord Alexander, I, Boukolos salute you.”

“χαῖρε, ἄδελφε Βρασίδα, Σαραπιὰς σε ἀσπάζομαι” (PSI XIV 1420; TM 30470; ll. 1-2)

The sender gives his name in an apposition to the verb of the greeting, viz. προσαγορεύω (ten attestations) or ἀσπάζομαι (seven occurrences)⁶³. According to Kim, Christians favored προσαγορεύω over ἀσπάζομαι (Kim 1972: 107-108): indeed, my investigation based on Tibiletti’s overview of Christian and pagan letters (cf. Tibiletti 1979: 5-22), has shown that five of the ten opening formulas with χαῖρε ... προσαγορεύω are Christian, whereas none of the occurrences appear in letters labeled as pagan by Tibiletti. The formula χαῖρε ... ἀσπάζομαι is found in only one pagan letter from Tibiletti’s list, and not in Christian ones. Of course, because of the limited number of occurrences we should be careful not to draw hasty conclusions; the study of προσαγορεύω and ἀσπάζομαι in the salutations (cf. *infra*, chapter 3) will provide firmer conclusions⁶⁴.

P.Lond. VI 1917 (TM 16855) seems to be a contamination of the χαίρειν opening formula and the χαῖρε phrase:

“τῷ γνησιωτάτῳ καὶ φω[τ]ινωτάτῳ (= φωτεινοτάτῳ) μ[α]καριωτάτῳ ἀ[γαπητ]ῷ καὶ θεῷ μαιμελημαίνῳ (= μεμελημένῳ) καὶ [π]α[π]ληρωμαῖνος (= πεπληρωμένῳ) πνεύμα\τος ἀγίου/ καὶ τιμιωτατος (= τιμιωτάτῳ) παρὰ κυρίῳ θαιῷ (= θεῷ) ἄπα Παιηοῦ, ἐγ δεσπό[τη] Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (= Χριστῷ) χαῖραι (= χαῖρε)”(ll. 1-2)

In two letters, the opening formula with χαῖρε is intertwined with the initial health wish⁶⁵:

“χαῖρε, κύριέ μου Ἀπίων, Φιλοσάραπις σε προσαγορεύω εὐχόμενός σε σώζεσθαι πανοικησίᾳ καὶ εὖ διάγειν” (P.Oxy. XIV 1664; TM 21964; ll. 1-3)

“χαῖρε, ἄδελφε Ἀρίστανδρε, [-ca.-] . ολλινάριος ἀσπάζο[μαι ε]ὐχόμενος . . εὖ [δι(?)]άγειν εὐτυχο . . .” (P.Phil. 34; TM 25215; ll. 15-18)

2.2. Χαίροις

The optative χαίροις is similar to the χαῖρε phrase: its 31 occurrences⁶⁶ are dated between the 2nd and the 4th centuries AD⁶⁷. The basic formula χαίροις + vocative⁶⁸ can be

⁶³ In P.Herm. 45 (TM 33480) the order of the χαῖρε and the ἀσπάζομαι phrase is reversed: “[.] ἐλαχίστου μου ῥήματος, ἀσπάζομαι τὴν σὴν λαμπρὰν ἀδελφότητ[α] ὡς καὶ ἀσπ[ά]σομαι αὐτὴν πάλιν ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ σώματος ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ χαῖρε” (ll. 1-2).

⁶⁴ The χαίροις opening formula (cf. *infra*, § 2.2) is not very helpful in this respect as the number of occurrences is even smaller and only PSI III 206 (TM 31222) appears in Tibiletti’s list as a pagan letter. Its opening formula is damaged, but it is clear that this pagan letter contained the greeting verb προσαγορεύω. In any case, the use of προσαγορεύω in the χαῖρε and χαίροις greetings was not confined to Christian letters.

⁶⁵ The specific phraseology of the initial health wish is discussed *infra*, in chapter 4.

extended with παρά (and variants)⁶⁹ or with the greeting verbs προσαγορεύω⁷⁰ or ἀσπάζομαι⁷¹, e.g.:

“χαίροις Χαρίτων” (SB XVI 12590; TM 30290; l. 1)

“χαίροις κύριε Ἡρακλείδη παρὰ Ἀπολλωνίου τοῦ Ἀντινου\έ/εως” (P.Mil. II 75; TM 28776; ll. 1-3)

“χαίροις Καλόκαιρε, Κύριλλός σε προσαγορεύω” (P.Oxy. III 526; TM 28366; ll. 1-3)

“χαίροις κύριέ μου Ἀθηνόδωρε Ἀλέξανδρός σε ἀσπάζομαι” (P.Lond. II 144 (S. 253); TM 28005; ll. 1-2)

2.3. Χαῖρε and χαίροις as regiolectic features

Many of the occurrences with χαῖρε are attested in private papyrus letters found in Oxyrhynchus, as Koskeniemi remarked. The scholar realized that this could be coincidental given the low number of attestations—he could only assemble 21 instances of the imperative (Koskeniemi 1956: 164-166). Even though the number of examples of χαῖρε is now higher, this type of opening formula remains rather uncommon. At present

⁶⁶ The number of attestations assembled in this study is much larger than in older studies, e.g. Mandilaras only had eight instances of the formula with χαίροις (Mandilaras 1973: 279-280), Exler thought the total number of χαῖρε and χαίροις was less than thirty (Exler 1923: 68). This study could add an attestation to Martinez' more recent overview, viz. P.Lond. III 899 (TM 29246). Further, Martinez does not signal the possible attestation of χαίροις (or χαῖρε) in the reconstructed opening formula of SB XXIV 16268 (Martinez 1996: 272-276). The plural is unattested.

The verb is completely supplemented in P.Oxy. XII 1587 (TM 31769), P.Oxy. XIV 1680 (TM 31788) and SB XXIV 16268 (TM 79416), and these attestations have not been included in the total number. Unlike Farid, I do not see a difference in use in the χαίροις and χαῖρε phrases: the scholar argued that χαῖρε as “an imperative, an ‘order’ to be in good health [...] bears a tone of superiority, or, at most, of equality. χαίροις, on the other hand, is more affectionate, more intimate and more cordial. It is an optative, a ‘wish’” (Farid 1981: 13). Letters with χαίροις that mainly deal with business affairs and not with intimate topics, are, for instance, P.Oxy. XX 2274 (TM 30488), P.Coll.Youtie I 54 verso (TM 26674) and SB XIV 12176 (TM 27526) and an official letter with χαίροις is SB V 8004 (TM 30793). This observation, supported by the attestation of letters with χαῖρε from ‘low to high’ such as P.Oxy. XIV 1664 (TM 21964), contradicts Farid's thesis. Reconstructing the opening formula on the basis of this assumption, as Farid did for P.Oxy. XIV 1680, is therefore impossible in my opinion.

⁶⁷ My new data adjust Koskeniemi's thesis that the optative replaced the imperative (Koskeniemi 1956: 167): both variants appear until the 4th or the 5th century AD.

⁶⁸ This basic formula is found in eleven private letters.

⁶⁹ The χαίροις formula with παρά is attested thirteen times; in P.Lond. III 899 (TM 29246) the variant ἀπό appears. Ἀπό instead of παρά is also attested in the opening formulas of some unedited ostraca from the Eastern Desert and seems to be a Latinism (Fournet 2003: 480).

⁷⁰ Προσαγορεύω is attested in P.Oxy. III 526 (TM 28366), P.Flor. II 140 recto (TM 10996) and PSI III 206 (TM 31222).

⁷¹ Ἀσπάζομαι is attested in P.Lond. II 144 (S. 253) (TM 28005), P.Princ. II 74 (TM 17367) and P.Princ. II 74 (TM 17367).

no less than sixteen of the 35 attestations were found in Oxyrhynchos⁷². Strictly speaking, we cannot assume that the finding place coincides with the place of sending, but letters did not often traveled long distances so that several of these sixteen letters may have been sent from within the Oxyrhynchite nome, or by people from that nome. Further, Koskenniemi did not realize that also the optative form χαίροις was relatively widely used in Oxyrhynchite region: nine of the 31 occurrences of this variant (almost 30%) are found in there, which is more than one would expect, considering that only 18.1% of all preserved opening formulas are found in letters from Oxyrhynchos (cf. footnote 72). Hence, the spread of the imperative and the optative is very similar, both in time and in place.

In conclusion, the χαῖρε and χαίροις opening formulas are certainly not restricted to Oxyrhynchos and surroundings —the χαῖρε opening is also found outside Egypt (cf. *supra*, footnote 57). Yet, the current data suggest that letter writers from this region may have used the χαῖρε and χαίροις opening formulas more often than senders elsewhere in Egypt.

3. Formulas without χαίρω

3.1. Τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος and variants

The phrase τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος and variants is typical of *hypomnemata* but has spread from there to the private papyrus letters (Ziemann 1910: 262-266)⁷³.

3.1.1. Τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος

Τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος appears in 23 letters: apart from one letter from the 2nd-1st century BC (i.e. SB XXII 15324; TM 43176), it is attested from the 2nd until the 6th-7th centuries AD. It is relatively often found in letters from the 3rd century AD, including in seven letters from the Heroninos archive. In this archive, it usually occurs when the *phrontistai* wrote to their superiors (Clarysse forthc.)⁷⁴: like in the χαίρειν phrases, the

⁷² This is 45% of all attestations, whereas the number of opening formulas in private letters found in Oxyrhynchos in relation to the total number of preserved opening formulae in my corpus is much lower: between the 2nd and the 4th centuries AD —roughly the period in which χαῖρε and χαίροις were used— 360 private letters from Oxyrhynchos preserve the opening formula, which is 18.1% of the total number of opening formulas in my corpus for the same period.

⁷³ For the difference between private letters and *hypomnemata*, see appendix II. Translation: “To Y (addressee), from X (sender)”.

⁷⁴ Letters from ‘low to high’ could also take the χαίρειν phrase, as did letters between equals in this archive (Clarysse forthc.). The phraseology in letters from ‘high to low’ in the Heroninos archive is discussed in § 3.1.2,

fronting of the addressee's name was a sign of respect. Five of the seven letters were (probably) sent from Heroninos to Alypios, e.g.:

“τῷ κυρίῳ μου Ἀλυπίῳ παρὰ Ἡρωνεῖνῳ (= Ἡρωνεῖνου) φροντιστοῦ Σαθρῶ”
(P.Prag. II 200 R; TM 12806; ll. 1-2)

Alypios is the ‘general manager’ of the Fayum estate and the direct superior of Heroninos, who himself was manager of one *phrontis* in the village of Theadelpheia (cf. *supra*, footnote 35). A similar hierarchical relationship is found in another attestation from the same archive, viz. P.Rein. II 113 (TM 12879), a letter from Aurelius (Aelius?) Epimachos to Antonius Philoxenos. Antonius Philoxenos was an imperial procurator and a landlord in the Arsinoite nome (Rathbone 1991: xviii). Aurelius (Aelius?) Epimachos was probably employed on the large estate of Posidonios —Appianus’ father-in-law (Rathbone 1991: 68):

“Ἡρωνεῖνῳ πατρὶ παρὰ Νεμεσεῖνου” (P.Gen. II 117; TM 30630; ll. 1-2)

The epithet *πατήρ* is in this case a respectful characterization, which seems to be in line with the fact that the addressee's name is politely put first.

3.1.2. Παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος

In the phrase *παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος* only the sender's name appears. This formula is attested twice in the 3rd century BC and in one letter dated between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD. The other attestations are dated between the 2nd-3rd and the 8th centuries AD, e.g.:

“παρὰ Ἀλυπίου” (SB XVI 12392; Heroninos archive; TM 14597 l. 1)

Like τῷ δεῖνι *παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος*, this phrase too is popular in the Heroninos archive: out of the total of 103 occurrences of this particular opening formula, no less than 94 come from the archive, mostly in letters from Alypios to Heroninos. Alypios also uses the same formula to other subordinate managers, such as Heronas —Heroninos’ son and successor—, Eirenaios —responsible for Euhemeria— or Palas —the estate manager at Philoteris— but also when he writes to the woodworker Olympiodoros, for instance. In fact, all preserved letters from Alypios start with this opening formula⁷⁵. This does not

and the characterizations of the correspondents in the opening and closing formulas of the archive are discussed in appendix I, § 3.1.1 and 3.1.2.

⁷⁵ Unfortunately, we do not have letters from Alypios to equals or to superiors. It is likely that Alypios would have adopted a different phraseology than when he wrote to his inferiors. Hopefully, the publication of the remaining hundreds of documents in the archive (cf. Rathbone 1991: 1) will shed new light on this matter.

mean that the phrase *παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος* is confined to Alypios' language use; in this archive it is typical of letters from 'high to low' (Clarysse forthc.): it is also attested in letters from Ophellios –Appianus' brother– to Heroninos, in communication from Appianus to Heroninos and to Eirenaios, and from Ischyriion, who was who was probably Alypios' right-hand man, to the same two addressees. The occurrence of this typical 'from high to low' phrase in P.Flor. II 182 (TM 11043), a letter to Heroninos from Harpalos⁷⁶ seems strange as Harpalos is one of the assistants and scribe of Alypios (Rathbone 1991: 61). Yet, in my opinion Harpalos could have communicated the message of Alypios⁷⁷, using his own name: the opening formula *παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος* might have reflect the hierarchical relationship between Alypios and Heroninos, rather than that of Harpalos himself to Heroninos⁷⁸.

Another novelty is the construction *παρ' ἐμοῦ* + the sender's name instead of *παρὰ* + the sender's name, which appears in the 8th century AD letter P.Ross.Georg. V 11 (TM 39723):

“† ἐν [ὀνόμα]τι τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ παντογράδωρος (= παντοκράτορος) παρ' ἐμοῦ Φοιβάμμω[νος] ὄφ(φικιαλίου)” (l. 1)

This opening formula reflects the growing use of the personal pronouns in the Late Antique period (cf. Gonis 2005: 43).

3.1.3. Παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος τῷ δεῖνι

The set expression *παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος τῷ δεῖνι* appears three times⁷⁹:

“παρ' Ἀντιλόχου Ζήνωνι” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59383; TM 1026; 3rd century BC; ll. 1-2)

“[π(αρά)] Σεουήρου Εὐπλόω” (P.Oxy. XII 1585; TM 29010; AD 175 – 225; l. 1)

“(παρὰ) Θωμᾶ γεούχ(ου) Ἰωάννη προνοητ(ῆ)” (P.Gen. IV 179; TM 129801; 6th-7th century AD; ll. 1-2)

⁷⁶ This attestation of *παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος* has not yet been discussed in previous studies.

⁷⁷ Alypios probably signed the letter by writing the closing formula in his own hand.

⁷⁸ Admittedly, this is only a hypothesis, which is impossible to prove. In another letter between those two correspondents, the opening formula is “[Ἄρπ]αλος Ἡρωνίνω [τῷ φ]ιλτάτω χαίρειν” (P.Flor. II 183; TM 11044; ll. 1-2). Since the sender's name is damaged and since only the first part of P.Flor. II 183 is preserved, hypothesizing the reasons for the two different variants is even more difficult.

⁷⁹ In P.Lond. V 1887 (TM 36988), *πρός* appears instead of *παρά*.

3.1.4. Παρά

In 33 letters from the 5th century AD onwards, the phrase is abbreviated: only παρά or even π(αρά). This is part of a general tendency in Late Antique letters to omit or to abbreviate the opening formula (cf. *infra*, § 5).

3.2. Τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα and variants⁸⁰

32 letters dating from the 3rd century BC until the 6th-7th century AD have the sender's and the addressee's name in the word order ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι, omitting χαίρειν⁸¹. Possibly, lack of space in some letters was the reason for the omission of χαίρειν in the early examples, especially those written on ostraca. Yet, this —and similar abbreviated formulas like τῷ δεῖνα ὁ δεῖνα— seem to have become more widespread from the 3rd century AD onwards. According to Fournet, this type of opening phrase is a transitional stage between the old formula with χαίρειν and the omission of the opening formula (Fournet 2009: 42).

In around a hundred letters, the reversed word order τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα appears. Apart from one letter from the 3rd century BC (P.Petr. III 53 (n); TM 7480), they date from the 3rd century AD onwards. In that period, the reversed word order became popular and the shortened phrases became more common (cf. *supra*).

In 29 private letters, only the addressee's name(s) appear(s)⁸², e.g.:

“Ἀμμωνίωι καὶ Μυριζμῶι” (P.Oxy. LVI 3856; TM 31655; ll. 1-2)

Some of these are drafts⁸³: perhaps the opening formula was more elaborate in the final version of the letter. Others were written on ostraca or on other small pieces of papyrus, where lack of space might have led the sender to abbreviate the opening formula. Nevertheless, such practical issues cannot account for the presence of the formula in the other documents: as in the examples of ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι and τῷ δεῖνα ὁ δεῖνα, the short phrase τῷ δεῖνι too seems to have been the intended opening formula, especially in the letters from the later Roman and Byzantine periods, such as P.Oxy. LVI 3856 quoted above.

⁸⁰ Translation: “To Y (addressee), X (sender)”.

⁸¹ In P.Sorb. III 138 (TM 121881; BC 220), the editor added <χαίρειν>. Since the phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι is attested in other 3rd century BC letters, such an addition is not necessary.

⁸² There are no certain attestations of the opening formula with the sender's name alone. In P.Amh. II 143 (TM 33623), the fact that only the sender's name Ploution is preserved (“----- Πλουτι[ω]γ” (ll. 0-1), is probably due to the lacuna at the top of the letter.

⁸³ E.g. BGU XVI 2634 (TM 23358), P.Cair.Zen. I 59015 verso (TM 2294), P.Cair.Zen. I 59023 (TM 683), P.Cair.Zen. III 59367 (TM 1010) and P.Cair.Zen. III 59386 (TM 1029).

3.3. Formulas with γράφω

The two formulas with γράφω date from the Byzantine period⁸⁴:

“† ἐγὼ γράφω σοι, ἄπα Θέων, Ἡρᾶς χρητιανὸς (= χριστιανὸς) ἐν κυ(ρίῳ) θ(ε)ῶ
χέρειν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Oxy. XLIII 3149; TM 34841; 5th century AD; ll. 1-5)
“[† ἐγὼ Γεώρ]γιος σιδηροχαλκεὺς τῆς μεγάλης ἐκκλησίας γράφων σοι Πέτρῳ
τέκτονι Ψίντε\ω/ [χαίρειν]” (SB XVI 12943; TM 36015; 7th century AD; ll. 1-3) (cf.
Gonis 2005: 41)

This opening phrase seems to be inspired by its Coptic counterpart (cf. Choat 2007: 672): the insertion of a personal pronoun before the sender’s name is also atypical of Greek, but common in Coptic (Gonis 2005: 43). Coptic letters also often have a verb with the meaning ‘to write’ in the introductory lines, which seems to be an internal Egyptian evolution and reconceptualization of the Demotic introductory phrase with ‘to say’ (cf. Choat 2007: 669-675; Choat 2010: 157-165; 176-177).

4. Extensions

4.1. Intensifiers and other extensions⁸⁵

In about 150 documents, the intensifier πολλά appears. The occurrences are dated between the 1st century BC and the 5th-6th century AD. Πλεῖστα seems to be more popular: it is found in almost 400 opening formulas from the 1st century BC until the 4th-5th century AD. The two intensifiers had the same evolution and they existed next to each other: they are not linked to different regions of Egypt and appear even side by side in letters from the same person: Eudaimonis, for instance, switches between πολλά and πλεῖστα in her letters to Apollonios *strategos*⁸⁶. Some letters even combine the two intensifiers in one single formula, e.g.:

⁸⁴ To Gonis, the basic formula is ἐγὼ ὁ δεῖνα γράφω τῶ δεῖνι, which is attested in official documents (Gonis 2005: 41-42). More common is the phrase in which γράφω is intertwined with the greetings, which Gonis also studied under the heading opening formulas with γράφω but which I discuss in the next chapter on salutations (cf. *infra*, chapter 3).

⁸⁵ Intensifiers stress the meaning of the message, e.g. ‘You did a very good job’. Such words have a social meaning as philophroneic devices: “the use of intensifiers (e.g. *very*, *so*) and other “boosting” devices (e.g. *love* rather than *like*) draws attention to the social move being made, to the courtesy that one enacts.” (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003: 153).

⁸⁶ For example, in P.Alex.Giss. 58 (TM 27580) and P.Giss. I 22 (TM 19424) πολλά is used, while P.Alex.Giss. 60 (TM 27582) and P.Giss. I 21 (TM 19423) have πλεῖστα.

“[. .]σεῖνος τῆ μητρὶ πλεῖστα πολλά χαίριν (= χαίρειν)” (BGU III 845; TM 28096; ll. 1-2)⁸⁷

The usual place of the intensifier is just before the verb χαίρειν. Since no opening formula with a different word order is attested, I doubt the reconstruction in SB VI 9487 (TM 27816):

“Γέμεινος Παυλ[εῖνω]ι τῶι ἀδελφῶι χαί[ρειν π]ολ[λά]” (ll. 1-2)

Perhaps, the remaining characters ολ did not belong to πολλά and to the opening formula, but were part of a word of the body of the letter —[Πτ]ολ[εμαῖος] perhaps? A further indication for this hypothesis is the fact that the intensifier πολλά does not occur elsewhere in the archive of Patron’s descendants, to which SB VI 9487 belongs.

Other intensifiers are far from common: σφόδρα is attested only in the opening formula of P.Ryl. IV 624 (TM 32762; 4th century AD). Similarly, ὑγιῶς and πάλιν occur once, viz. in P.Herm. 45 (TM 33480; 4th century AD) and in PSI III 226 (TM 33232; 4th century AD) respectively.

The popularity of intensifiers seems to drop after the 3rd century AD. Probably, this kind of positive politeness was thought of as typical of older letters, and did not suit the changing world view anymore: politeness was expressed differently, mainly by polite terms such as κύριος, extensions such as ἀγαπητός and kinship terms (cf. *infra*, appendix I).

Apart from the intensifiers, other adverbial extensions are attested. In P.Oxy. VIII 1162 (TM 33633), χαρᾶ is added to the opening formula⁸⁸, which is similar to the one in the Letter to the Ephesians of St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch (CPG 1025(1); Luiselli 2008: 695):

“Λέων πρεσβύτερος τοῖς κατὰ τόπον συ\ν\λιτουργοῖ[ς] πρεσβυτ[έ]ροις καὶ διακῶνοις ἀ[γ]απητοῖ[ς] ἀδελφοῖς ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ θ(ε)ῶ χαρᾶ χαί[ρειν]” (P.Oxy. VIII 1162; TM 33633; ll. 1-5)

⁸⁷ This is also attested in O.Claud. I 176 (TM 29820): “Νουμέρις Πρίσκος Λεων (= Λέωντι) Ἀπολῶ (= Ἀπόλλω) τῶ φιδατῶ (= φιλάτῶ) πλεῖστα πολλά \οις/ χαίρειν” (ll. 1-4). The editor remarks: “the scribe has perhaps been in doubt as to whether he should use πλεῖστα or πολλά, which is a frequent alternative. He may also have inserted οἰς above the line because he was not sure of which case to use or wishing to add something to the greetings with πολλοῖς, but in that case I do not see what he intended with that word.” (Bingen et al. 1992: 176).

⁸⁸ Χαρᾶ also seems to occur in the fragmentary opening formula of the Christian letter PUG I 26 (TM 32496): “[-ca.-? - τοῖς ἀ]γαπητοῖς ἀδελφοῖς . . . [-ca.-?] [-ca.-?]χαρᾶ χαίρειν” (ll. 3-4).

4.2. Reference to the gods

In almost a hundred letters dated from the second half of the 3rd century AD onwards, a reference to the Christian god is made, e.g.:

“Ἀρτεμεις Θεοδώρω τῷ κυρίῳ μου συμβίῳ ἐν θεῷ χαίρειν” (P.Grenf. I 53; TM 33767; ll. 1-2)

“κυρίῳ μου ἀδελφῷ Ἀέτιος ἐν κυρίῳ θεῷ πλεῖστα χαίρειν” (P.Abinn. 4; TM 10032; ll. 1-2)

“χαῖρε ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ ἀγαπητὲ πάπα Σώτα πρεσβ(ύτερε) Ἡρακλέους πολλά σε προσαγορεύομεν” (P.Oxy. XXXVI 2785; TM 32644; ll. 1-3)⁸⁹

As the examples show, the god’s name can be abbreviated as a *nomen sacrum*. Apart from the common variants listed above, other references to the gods are ἐν κυρίῳ θεῷ σωτηρίῳ (in P.Oxy. XVIII 2193; TM 35623), ἐν δεσπότη Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ (in P.Lond. VI 1917; TM 16855), ἐν Χριστῷ (in P.Lond. VI 1926; TM 32659), ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ σώματος (in P.Herm. 45; TM 33480) and ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ παντοκράτορος⁹⁰ (in P.Ross.Georg. V 11; TM 39723).

5. Letters without opening formula

Letters on potsherds such as O.Claud. I 120 (TM 24132) sometimes do not have an opening formula, probably because of the limited space available; but overall, until the 4th century AD, the number of letters without an opening formula —the damaged letters excluded— is limited. From the 5th century AD onwards, however, increasingly more letters lack an opening formula and start *ex abrupto* with the body of the text (cf. Fournet 2009: 37-42), e.g.:

“† ✕ γινώσκειν θέλομεν τὴν ὑμετέραν λαμπ[π]ρότητα ὅ[τι] ἀρτ[ί]ως μεμαθήκαμεν ἐνταῦθα ὡς ὅτι ἔφθασεν τὰ αὐτόθι ὁ μεγαλοπρεπέστατος Ἰωάννης ὁ ἐπίκλην Ψιχελατος, καὶ εἰ ἀληθές ἐστιν θελήσατε φροντίσα[ι] περὶ τῆς κατορθώσεως καθὼς ὑμῖν συνέθετο” (P.Rain.Cent. 74; TM 34779; ll. 1-5)

“Πέτρος ὁ προσφέρων τῇ σῇ ὀσιότητι ταῦτά μου τὰ γράμματα π[ρεσβύτερος] τυγχάνων τοῦ ἀγίου μαρτυρίου ἅπα Φοιβάμμωνος δέεται τῶν ἀ[ναγκαίων]” (P.Köln II 112; TM 35437; ll. 1-2)

⁸⁹ There are no references to god in the phrases with χαίροις. This is probably be due to selective preservation and to the fact that the phrase only remained in use until the 4th century AD; there are no indications that certain extensions were confined to one or more specific types of opening formulas.

⁹⁰ The invocation of the (Christian) god by means of ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ θεοῦ is a result of the influence from Arabic epistolography (cf. Luiselli 2008: 697).

Different hypotheses have been proposed to explain the disappearance of the opening formula with *χαίρειν* and of the opening formula in general. According to Koskenniemi, the disappearance of *χαίρειν* is probably one of the causes of the complete loss of the opening formula: according to him, the opening formula had something to add to the external address as long as it preserved the verb *χαίρειν*. When *χαίρειν* was increasingly omitted from the opening formula, and other variants such as *τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος* started to appear from the 3rd century AD onwards (cf. *supra*, § 3), the opening formula and the external address could be identical, since also in the external address the main verb *ἀποδίδωμι* or *ἐπιδίδωμι* was often left out: the external address' standard phraseology *ἀπόδος/ἐπίδος τῷ δεῖνι (παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος)* became *τῷ δεῖνι (παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος)* from the 3rd century AD onwards (Ziemann 1910: 278-280). Indeed, there are instances of very similar and even identical phraseologies in the two formulas, e.g.:

“τῷ δεσπότῃ μου καὶ διὰ πάντα αἰδεσιμωτάτῳ Τιμοθέῳ Μούσηλος”
 vs. “τῷ δεσπότῃ μου καὶ διὰ πάντα αἰδεσιμωτάτῳ Τιμοθέῳ Μούσηλος” (PSI VIII 887; TM 36162; ll. 1-2 and *verso*)

Not only the construction *τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα* is identical, but also the extensions (the kinship terms and other characterizations) are duplicated. It might have seemed superfluous to write the same formula twice. Since the external address is more important from a practical point of view to get the letter delivered, it seems a logical evolution that the opening formula was more and more omitted (Ziemann 1910: 284; Koskenniemi 1956: 157-158). Yet, Koskenniemi did not explain why *χαίρειν* was left out and only shifted the problem, according to Fournet (Fournet 2009: 42)⁹¹. To this scholar, the disappearance of the old formula *ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν* is symptomatic for the changed function of the letter. The phrase *ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν* did no longer meet with the expectations of the letter writers: the phrase was outmoded and no longer considered polite enough; it felt pretentious and archaic (cf. Fournet 2009: 37-41). To counter this, the word order was reversed and phrases with the addressee's name first, such as *τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν*, became popular (cf. *supra*, § 1.2); also new, polite characterizations were introduced (cf. *infra*, appendix I), but the process appeared unstoppable and eventually led to the disappearance of the phrase (Fournet 2009: 43).

⁹¹ Llewelyn also criticized Koskenniemi's hypothesis: he disagreed with the idea that the overlap of information between the opening formulas and the address led to the demise of the former. If that were true, then one would expect an increased use of addresses on the back of the letter, but the data do not show this (Llewelyn 1998: 125-126).

6. Conclusion

The standard opening formula ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν remained in use for a long time. During that period, a great many variants are attested. On the one hand, on a synchronic level, the phrase needed to fit the sociolinguistic context: writing from 'low to high' could result in the inversed word order τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν or τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα. In the Heroninos archive, the relationships between the sender and the addressee are clearly reflected in the opening formulas (cf. *supra*, § 3.1).

On the other hand, over time variants arose as the *topos* had to conform to the changing world views and the changing expectations from correspondents regarding politeness. First, the opening formula seems to have been adapted to the more direct tone of the rest of the letter: this was perhaps one of the reasons for the introduction of the formulas χαῖρε and χαίροις with vocative (cf. *supra*, § 2). These variants were probably not very widespread, and were possibly favored in the Oxyrhynchite region (cf. *supra*, § 2.3). Later, putting the sender's name first (both in the phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν and in other formulas) was more and more considered impolite, as it was at odds with the Byzantine philosophy of the sender's humble attitude (cf. *infra*, appendix I, § 3.2). A successful variant was the inversion of the sender's and the addressee's name, from the original phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν to τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν (cf. *supra*, § 1.2); also in other phrases, putting the addressee's name in front became more widespread from the 3rd century AD onwards (e.g. τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεινός and τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα; cf. *supra*, § 3.1.1 and § 3.2).

Despite these adaptations of the χαίρειν phrase to the new politeness expectations of the Late Antique period, the χαίρειν formula started to disappear: in the Late Roman and the Byzantine periods, opening formulas without the verb χαίρω gained popularity: although opening formulas with παρὰ were already attested in the Ptolemaic period, they became more common from the 3rd century AD onwards. The same trend is visible for the formula τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα. Finally, from the 5th century AD onwards, private letters increasingly lacked an opening formula and started *ex abrupto*.

Chapter 3 Salutations

The salutations in the Greek private papyrus letters are known to have had a social function: it is believed that the conveyance of greetings from illiterate third parties was an easy and convenient way for them to maintain correspondence and relationships with friends and family without having to send a letter themselves –which implied finding someone to pen down a letter for them (Fournet 2003: 461).

Yet, in the Ptolemaic papyrus letters, greetings between the sender, the addressee and their relatives and friends, rarely appear¹. In fact, “greetings to third parties are uncommon in Greek letters until the Roman period” (Depauw 2006: 296). Indeed, only twelve letters² from the Ptolemaic period have a salutation, against more than a thousand from the Roman period and later³. Since salutations were widespread in

¹ In previous studies, greetings were thought to appear after the early Ptolemaic period: Buzón, in discussing the Ptolemaic letters, did not mention the salutations. Koskenniemi and Exler saw greetings as a feature from the 2nd and the 1st centuries BC respectively (Koskenniemi 1956: 148; Exler 1923: 111). The earliest attestation that Ziemann could find dated back to 25 BC. He believed that greetings were first passed on orally and that the earliest attestations of the greetings dated from the early 1st century BC, even though he had no papyrological evidence for this (Ziemann 1910: 325-327). My data show that the earliest occurrences date back to the 2nd and (possibly) the 3rd centuries BC (cf. *infra*).

² I.e. SB XIV 11948 (TM 4278), P.Lips. I 104 (TM 83), SB VI 9564 (TM 6232), PSI XII 1242 (TM 78842), P.Köln V 226 (TM 3187), P.Dryton 36 (TM 290), P.Diosk. 16 (TM 44731), P.Diosk. 17 (TM 44732), P.Tebt. III.1 768 (TM 7848), P.Bad. IV 48 (TM 5830), PSI VI 615 (TM 2224) and BGU XIV 2418 (TM 4014).

³ In one letter, different types of greetings (cf. *infra*) can be combined: for instance, salutations from the sender to the addressee’s social circle are often followed by regards from the sender’s social circle to the addressee. The total number of salutations is thus higher than the number of letters in which they appear. Similarly, the total number of letters in which a certain verb form occurs is lower than the sum of the number of greeting formulas in which this verb form is attested.

Sometimes, these greetings form different main clauses, e.g.: “πρόσειπε τὰ ἀβάσκαντά σου παιδιά ἅμα τῇ συμβίῳ σου. προσαγορεύει σε ὁ ἀδελφὸς Ἄπυγχις” (P.Ryl. IV 604; TM 30583; ll. 25-28). In other cases, different *topoi* are combined into one sentence: since the greetings from sender to addressee and those from the sender to the addressee’s social circle are both written in the first person indicative, the following combinations appear: “ἀσπάζομαί σε λείαν καὶ Ἡρακλείδην” (P.Oxy. XXXI 2593; TM 26937; l. 2) and “πρὸ πάντων ἀσπάζομαί σε μεγάλως σὺν τοῖς σοῖς πᾶσιν” (SB XXVI 16608; TM 16846; ll. 3-6).

Demotic letters (Depauw 2006: 223-228), the increasing extent to which people forwarded greetings from the Roman period onwards may have been the result of Egyptian influence (Depauw 2006: 296): due to the fact that in the Roman period the use of Demotic became confined to only the religious spheres, many Egyptian-speaking people had to convey their message in Greek (cf. *supra*, chapter 1, § 1.2.1.1), which inevitably must have led to language change in Greek. One such aspect of language change may have been the salutations.

This chapter deals with four types of greetings⁴. Most commonly, the sender salutes the friends and relatives of the addressee (§ 1)⁵ and friends and relatives of the sender give their regards to the addressee (§ 2)⁶. These greetings are mainly found towards the end of the letter, just before the closing formula (and the final health wish)⁷. Other types

⁴ Apart from these four types, there are other ‘greeting *topoi*’ which are not discussed in this chapter, since these *topoi* do not reflect the social habit of different parties gathering at the moment of writing or receiving the letter, exchanging pleasantries and consequently maintaining their social networks. This is the case with the greeting phrases in the opening formula (e.g. ἀσπάζομαι and προσαγορεύω in the χαίροις and χαίρε opening formulas, discussed in chapter 2, § 2). Also the so-called ἀφορμή formula is not studied here: in that *topos*, the sender explains why he is sending a letter: he has found the time to write a letter, or an opportunity had occurred, such as someone traveling into the direction of the addressee, e.g.: “Ἀχιλλᾶτος καταπλέοντος ἀναγκαῖον ἔγγων διὰ γραπτοῦ σε ἀσπάσασθαι” (P.Oxy. XXXIII 2680; TM 26930; ll. 3-5) or “ἔσπευσα καὶ νῦν ὑμᾶς προσειπεῖν εὐκαιρίαν (= εὐκαιρίαν) εὐρών” (P.Oxy. LIX 4001; TM 33122; ll. 3-4) (for more information on this *topos*, see Koskenniemi 1956: 81-87). Such indirect greetings are not discussed as they are very different from the direct regards which are sent from the sender (and his social circle) to addressee (and his social circle). For the same reason indirect greeting phrases —which only express the desire, the order or the intention to salute someone— are omitted in this chapter, e.g.: “[...] βουλομένη σε ἀσπάζε[σ]θαι (= ἀσπάξε[σ]θαι) μετὰ τῆς μητρὸς σου” (P.Mich. III 214; TM 21344; ll. 15-17), “οὕτως δι’ εὐχῆς ἐστὶ μοι τό [σ]ε ἀσπάσασθαι” (P.Mich. VIII 494; TM 27104; ll. 5-7) and “καὶ αὐτῷ δὲ ἐνετειλάμην, φίλτατ[ε], φιλητά σοι φίλα ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ προσαγορε[ύειν]” (PSI XII 1246; TM 17410; ll. 5-7).

In Late Antique letters, specific body parts of the addressee (mostly the feet) are ‘greeted’, e.g.: “πρὸ μὲν πάντων ὄμμα προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομαι τὰ ἵχνη σου” (P.Ant. I 45; TM 36076; ll. 1-2). In other letters, the typical salutations refer to a physical meeting, and are not simply greeting phrases, e.g.: “θεῶν δὲ βουλομένων πάν[τ]ως μετὰ τὰ Σουχεῖα \σὲ/ ἀσπάζομαι” (BGU I 248; TM 25655; ll. 11-12) and “ἐπιμέλου δὲ σατοῦ, ἵνα ὑγιαίνονταί σε ἀσπάζωμαι” (P.Bad. IV 48; TM 5830; l. 13; cf. *infra* chapter 6, § 1.3). These phrases are not discussed in this chapter either. Also, greetings in the indicative aorist (only in P.Ryl. IV 691; TM 30590 and BGU IV 1208; TM 18658) are indirect salutations and do not really bear a message of greeting to the addressee’s relatives. As a consequence, they are not included in this study either.

⁵ E.g.: “ἀσπάζου τὴν [μ]ειτέρα (= μητέρα) μου καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς” (P.Köln V 226; TM 3187; ll. 9-10). Translation: “I greet my mother and brothers.”

⁶ E.g.: “ἐπισκοπίτε (= ἐπισκοπεῖται) σε Γάιος μεγάλως καὶ Θερμουθαῶς καὶ Εἰσίδωρος \καὶ Διογενᾶς/” (P.Col. VIII 215; TM 17627; ll. 31-32). Translation: “Gaius greets you warmly, and so do Thermouthas, Isidoros and Diogenas.”

⁷ Out of approximately a thousand greetings from sender to the addressee’s relatives and from the sender’s relatives to the addressee, about a hundred are found in the opening lines of the letters —for instance, immediately after the opening formula. E.g.: “ἀσπάζομέ (= ἀσπάζομαι) σε ἀδελφε” (P.Mert. I 28; TM 31542; l. 3). Translation: “I greet you, brother.”

Sometimes greetings appear in the margin or as a postscript after the closing formula. The sender might have

of greetings are those from the sender to the addressee (§ 3) which are regularly found at the beginning of the letter⁸, and those from friends and relatives of the sender to friends and relatives of the addressee (§ 4)⁹. These kinds of salutations are less common than regards from the sender to addressee's social circle or regards from the sender's social circle to the addressee.

In each of the four sections, I chronologically discuss the different verbs used in the greeting formulas. Ἐπισκοπέω¹⁰ (always attested in the middle form) appears in about thirty letters from the 2nd century BC until the 3rd century AD. The shift in the meaning of the verb –from the original meaning ‘to inspect’ to ‘to greet’– was influenced by the same semantic evolution of the Egyptian verb ‘to greet’ which was derived from the meaning ‘to ask, to examine someone’s face’ (Clarysse 1990: 105). The more popular verb ἀσπάζομαι¹¹ is found in about 900 letters from the 3rd century BC until the 8th century AD. The verbs ἀσπάζομαι and ἐπισκοπέω were thus for many centuries two coexisting variants, but it seems that the popularity of the former was one of the factors resulting in the disappearance of the latter. Some persons might have had a preference for one of the two verbs. In the 1st century AD archive of Pompeius Niger¹², two letters from Herennia to her father Pompeius Niger have been preserved, e.g.:

“ἐπισκοπούμεθά (= ἐπισκοπούμεθά) σε καὶ Χαριτοῦν καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆν (= αὐτῆς). καὶ Πονπηγίς (= Πομπήιος) ὦ (= ὁ) μικρὸς ἐπισκοπιῖται (= ἐπισκοπεῖται) ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς)” (P.Mert. II 63; TM 11913; ll. 24-27)

forgotten to send regards, and inserted them afterwards. In three letters of the archive of Epagathos, the estate manager of the veteran Lucius Bellienus Gemellus, the salutations are placed between the closing formula and the date: “ἔρρωσο. ἀσπάζου Ὀρσενοῦφιν καὶ Ἥρωνα καὶ τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ (= οἴκῳ) παντεῖς (= πάντα(ς)) (ἔτους) δ Τραιανοῦ τοῦ κυρίου, μηνὸς Καισαρίου κη.” (P.Fay. 115; TM 10780; ll. 10-14). The other occurrences are P.Fay. 112 (TM 10777; ll. 23-26) and P.Fay. 123 (TM 10788; ll. 25-28). Because only a portion of the letters from the archive have been published thus far, it is not clear if the phenomenon was more widespread in this collection. The forthcoming publication of the other texts by Ast and Azzarello will hopefully shed new light on this matter. For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/134 (accessed on April 22, 2015).

⁸ About 60% of the greetings from sender to addressee (i.e. about 150 attestations) are found at the beginning of the letter.

⁹ E.g.: “ἀσπάζεται σε Ἰσίδωρος καὶ Ὀρίωνα καὶ Ἀμμώνιον καὶ Διογένην” (P.Oxy. XLI 2981; TM 26861; ll. 25-27). Translation: “Isidoros greets you as well as Horion, Ammonios and Diogenes.”. This type of greetings was not mentioned in older studies (Ziemann 1910: 326-327; Koskenniemi 1956: 148-151; White 1986: 202).

¹⁰ This verb is mentioned by Koskenniemi and White (Koskenniemi 1956: 149; White 1986: 203), but not by Ziemann and Exler (Ziemann 1910: 325-333; Exler 1923: 110-111 and 115-116).

¹¹ The variant κατασπάζω appears in P.Berl.Zill. 14 (TM 36099). In an unedited ostrakon the variant ἀντασπάζω is found (Fournet 2003: 486).

¹² The 1st century AD bilingual archive of veteran Pompeius Niger is of a miscellaneous nature: besides private letters, it also contains, for instance, a petition, contracts, a census return and a loan. For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/195 (accessed on April 30, 2015).

“ἐπεισκ[ο]πεῖτε (= ἐπισκοπεῖται) ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς) Πομπῆς ὁ μικρός, των (= τὸν) πατέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν μητέρα” (SB VI 9122; TM 25289; ll. 11-12)

Herennia here prefers ἐπισκοπέω to the usual ἀσπάζομαι and is in fact the only person in the archive who does so: Charitous in SB VI 9120 (TM 25287) and Thoubas in P.Fouad I 75 (TM 11201) use ἀσπάζομαι. This might be a feature of Herennia’s epistolary idiolect¹³, which has been preserved both in the letter written by Herennia herself (P.Mert. II 63, cf. Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 127¹⁴) and in the one that she dictated to a scribe (SB VI 9122, cf. Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 132).

In about 150 letters greetings are expressed by the verb προσαγορεύω. This seems to be a later development (cf. Ziemann 1910: 327-328): προσαγορεύω is not attested before the 1st century AD and mainly appears from the 3rd century AD onwards —incidentally, it never became more popular than ἀσπάζομαι. Kim noticed a difference in the use of greeting verbs between Christians and pagans:

“The use of προσαγορεύω instead of ἀσπάζομαι is not uncommon even among non-Christian letters in the Roman period. But the word is used by Christians much more frequently than by others” (Kim 1972: 108)

My investigation based on Tibiletti’s list of Christian and pagan letters (cf. Tibiletti 1979: 5-22) confirms that Christians use the verb προσαγορεύω more often than pagans: of Tibiletti’s list of 59 salutations in Christian letters from the 3rd and the 4th-5th centuries AD, 27 have the verb προσαγορεύω (45.8%), thirty ἀσπάζομαι (50.8%) and two προσκυνέω (3.4%). In the 52 pagan letters of Tibiletti’s overview dated between the 2nd and the 4th centuries AD, only eight have προσαγορεύω (15.4%), whereas 44 express the salutations by means of ἀσπάζομαι (84.6%). Although this result could of course be biased by factors of preservation, it does seem to confirm the exact same Christian preference for προσαγορεύω that has already been suggested with respect to the opening formulas with χάρις (cf. *supra*, chapter 2, § 2).

Salutations with προσκυνέω are also a later development¹⁵, appearing in my corpus from the 3rd-4th century AD onwards¹⁶. The last letter with this verb —out of a total of

¹³ Admittedly, Herennia uses ἀσπάζομαι in the greetings at the beginning of SB VI 9122 (l. 2): “κα[ὶ] τὴν [μη]τέρα μου ἀσπάζομαι” and the number of occurrences is too low to draw certain conclusions.

¹⁴ This is not only hinted at by the handwriting, as Bagnall and Cribiore remarked, but as far as I am concerned also by the spelling: in P.Mert. II 63, the verb ἐπισκοπέω —which occurs twice— was spelled with a double sigma in both instances. In SB VI 9122, by contrast, this verb does not have a double sigma, and also the apposition ὁ μικρός is written correctly.

¹⁵ Older studies did not mention this greeting verb (Exler 1923: 111-113; Koskenniemi 1956: 149; Ziemann 1910: 327-328; White 1986: 203). This verb expresses respect and solidarity, and does not have a subordinate connotation (Papathomas 2007: 504).

about sixty documents— is dated to the 8th century AD. The verb προσκυνέω has clearly undergone a semantic change, from the original meaning ‘to make obeisance, to fall down and worship’ to its later meaning ‘to greet, to kiss’ —the latter being found in the greeting formula (cf. LSJ, s.v. προσκυνέω).

Further, προσφθέγγομαι is a minor variant¹⁷, and also βλέπω might be used to send best wishes (cf. *infra*, § 1.1.5). Some salutations do not have a main verb (cf. *infra*, § 1.1.7), whereas others combine multiple verbs: tautological constructions appear in 25 letters, in greetings from the sender to the addressee and to the addressee’s social circle. The occurrences date from the 3rd until the 8th centuries AD, but mainly from the 6th and 7th centuries AD, and seem to be typical of the more elaborate Byzantine writing style (cf. Zilliacus 1967: 31), e.g.:

“τοὺς ἡμῶν πάντας κατ’ ὄνομα προσαγόρευε καὶ ἄσπασε (= ἄσπασαι)” (P.Oxy. VII 1070; TM 31317; 3rd century AD; ll. 46-47)

“✠ πρὸ μὲν παντὸς λόγο(υ), προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομαι τὴν σὴν ἀδελφικὴν εὐδοκίμησιν” (P.Cair.Masp. I 67068; TM 36810; 6th century AD; l. 1)

Another Late Antique development in the greeting verbs are the salutations with γράφω. Such formulas are attested from the 2nd century AD onwards. In those early occurrences, the sender sums up his motivation and the reason(s) for writing to the addressee, one of which is to send his regards to the addressee and his family, e.g.:

“γράφω σοι, πρῶτον μὲν ἀσπαζομένη σ[ε], ἔπειτα (= ἔπειτα) εὐχομένη παρὰ πᾶσι θεοῖς ὑγιαίνον[τά] σε καὶ εὖ διάγοντα ἀπολαβεῖν μετὰ τῶν ἡμῶν πάντων” (P.Oxy. IX 1217; TM 31648; ll. 4-7)

Typically, such a formula is found at the beginning of the letter, just after the opening formula¹⁸. However, from the 6th century AD onwards, the salutations with γράφω are also found in the body of the letter (e.g. P.Gen. IV 168; TM 36013) or even at the end of the message (e.g. P.Oxy. VIII 1164; TM 37839). In those cases, the γράφω phrase has lost its function of explaining the reason for writing. Γράφω ἀσπαζόμενος seems to have the same meaning as the simple ἀσπάζομαι¹⁹. This is also clear from the fact that greeting

¹⁶ Yet, in some unedited ostraca from the Eastern Desert dated to the 2nd century AD, this verb also seems to be attested in the salutations (cf. Fournet 2003: 486). These new finds could thus possibly modify the current views, but the impact is hard to predict until the full texts are made available.

¹⁷ Of the older studies, only Ziemann mentioned προσφθέγγομαι (Ziemann 1910: 328).

¹⁸ When in the Late Antique period the opening formula disappears (cf. *supra*, chapter 2, § 5) and the letter opens *in medias res* with the main message, the greeting phrase with γράφω is often in the first lines of the letter.

¹⁹ It is therefore included in this study.

verbs such as ἀσπάζομαι are no longer subordinate to the main verb γράφω, but are increasingly used in a coordinate construction, e.g.:

“✠ διὰ τῶν παρόντων μου γραμμάτων γράφω·πολὰ (= πολλὰ) προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομε (= ἀσπάζομαι) τὴν ὑμετέραν γνισίαν (= γνησίαν) ἀδελφωτιταν (= ἀδελφότητα)” (P.Herm. 49; TM 37279; 6th century AD; ll. 1-3)

Overall, the complex phrasing with γράφω + greeting verb instead of a simple greeting verb is well in line with the elaborate writing style of the Byzantine period (cf. *infra*, appendix I, 3.2)²⁰.

1. Salutations from the sender to the addressee’s social circle

Regards from the sender to friends and relatives of the addressee are found in more than 800 private letters between the 2nd (or perhaps even the 3rd) century BC until the 8th century AD.

Mostly, this type of salutation is expressed in either the imperative or in the first person indicative. However, in eight letters the greeting verb is found in an infinitive construction dependent on a polite verb such as παρακαλέω or θέλω²¹, e.g.:

“καὶ καταξίωσον προσαγορευσαὶ ὡς ἐξ ἐμοῦ τ[ὸν ἀ]δελφὸν ἀββᾶ Δωρόθεον καὶ τὴν κυρίαν τὴν μητέρα α(ὐ)το(ῦ) καὶ τοὺς κυρίους Μακάριον καὶ Εὐσεβῆν” (P.Iand. VI 103; TM 36108; ll. 4-5)

“Θελήσῃ [...] προσκυνῆσαι ἐξ ἐμοῦ πάντας τοὺς φιλῖν (= φιλεῖν) ἀξιοῦντας, ἐξερέτως (= ἐξαιρέτως) τὸν δεσπ(ότην) μου τὸν κυριν (= κύριον) Φωσφόρον” (SB VI 9138; TM 36197; ll. 6-10)²²

²⁰ This evolution is similar to that observed in the opening formulas with γράφω and both might be influenced by Coptic epistolary phraseology as well (cf. *supra*, chapter 2, § 3.3).

²¹ Unlike indirect greetings expressing the desire or the intention to salute someone —which have been omitted from this investigation (cf. *supra*, footnote 4)— these type of greetings are direct regards, simply phrased in a different way, and are therefore included in this study.

²² The other occurrences are P.Oxy. XVI 1933 (TM 37885), P.Oxy. XVI 1872 (TM 35601), P.Oxy. XVI 1875 (TM 37873), CPR XXV 35 (TM 92466), PSI III 238 (TM 37076) and P.Petra III 26 (TM 112461). This construction is only preserved for the salutations from the sender to the addressee’s social circle. Two other infinitives have an uncertain construction. In P.Oxy. VIII 1162 (TM 33633), the editor suggested that a verb such as θέλομεν might be understood with the infinitive: “τὸν ἀδελφῶν (= ἀδελφὸν) ἡμῶν Ἀμμώνιον παραγινομένην πρὸς ὑμᾶς συνδέξασθαι (= συνδέξασθε) αὐτὸν ἐν ἰρήνῃ (= εἰρήνῃ), δι’ οὗ ὑμᾶς καὶ τοὺς σὺν ὑμῖν ἐγὼ δε καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ ἡδέως ὑμᾶς προσαγορευεσθαι κ(υρ)ίῳ” (ll. 6-12). The editor of P.Iand. VI 104 (TM 17332) did not comment upon the use of the infinitive: “[καὶ προσαγο]ρεύειν τὴν μητέρα καὶ Πλούταρχον τὸν [υἱὸν καὶ Σαρ]αποῦν τὴν μαικρὰν (= μικρὰν) καὶ τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ [πάντας.]” (ll. 11-13). If one accepts the reading of προσαγορεύειν, a *verbum volendi* may be understood here as well; otherwise these cases might use the infinitive for an imperative (Mandilaras 1973: 316).

Such a construction seems to be an indirect and more polite alternative to the more direct imperative construction. All occurrences are dated between the 5th and the 7th centuries AD. These elaborate and polite phrasings are illustrative of a more general diachronic evolution towards more polite wordings, which are characteristic of the Byzantine writing style (cf. Papathomas 2007: 500; cf. *infra*, appendix I, 3.2).

1.1. Verb forms

1.1.1. Ἐπισκοπέω

In 23 letters, from the 2nd century BC until the first half of the 3rd century AD, the sender greets relatives of the addressee by means of the middle imperative ἐπισκοποῦ or the middle first person indicative ἐπισκοποῦμαι and ἐπισκοπούμεθα, e.g.:

“ἐπισκωποῦ (= ἐπισκοποῦ) Δημητροῦ[ν] καὶ Δωρίωνα [τὸν πατ]έρα” (P.Oxy. II 294; TM 20565; ll. 31-32)

“ἐπισκοποῦμαι Καστωρᾶν καὶ Ἀπολινάρι καὶ Ἐρωνεῖον καὶ Διδυμάρι καὶ Λυσαν[-ca.?-]γνιαν καὶ Χρ[ο]νιῶναν (= Κρονίωνα) καὶ .[-ca.?-] . . . γ Λουρίου καὶ Θεωνᾶν [κ]αὶ Δημήτριον καὶ Λυσιμαχον καὶ Διδυμάριν καὶ .δον . . . καὶ . . ην καὶ Ροδ[-ca.?-]” (P.Horak 67; TM 78412; ll. 13-20)

The “imperative and first person singular are actually wholly synonymous, but the known examples suggest a chronological distinction: the Ptolemaic examples all have the imperative, the later texts the first person, with an overlap in the first century A.D.” (Clarysse 1990: 104; Koskeniemi 1956: 148-149). My data support this thesis: the imperative is found from the 2nd century BC until the 2nd century AD, and the first person singular is used from the 1st century AD onwards.

1.1.2. Ἀσπάζομαι²³

In about 700 greeting formulas, dated between the 2nd (or perhaps the 3rd) century BC and the 8th century AD, the sender sends his best wishes to relatives and friends of the addressee by means of the verb ἀσπάζομαι. This is thus by far the most common verb to salute the addressee’s social circle. Just like in the phrases with ἐπισκοπέω, the sender

²³ Greetings with the verb ἀσπάζομαι are probably also found in the following letters: SB VI 9164 (TM 27279; first half of the 2nd century AD): “ἀσπ[-ca.?-]ριν τὸν κουράτ(ορα) καὶ Νίγερα [-ca.?- κατ’ ὄ]νομα” (ll. 14-16), and P.Lund II 3 (TM 28117; dated to the 2nd or the 3rd century AD): “ἀσπας[-ca.?-] καὶ τὰς μητέ[ρας καὶ τοὺς] ἀδελφοὺς ὑμ[ῶν καὶ τὰ τέκνα] αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς [γυναῖκας]” (ll. 1-4). Since I am unable to supplement specific verb forms with an acceptable degree of probability, I do not include these phrases in appendix III.

mostly uses either the middle imperative (ἀσπάζου / ἀσπάζεσθε or ἄσπασαι²⁴ / ἀσπάσασθε²⁵), or the middle first person present indicative (ἀσπάζομαι²⁶ / ἀσπαζόμεθα)²⁷, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζου τὴν [μ]ειτέρα (= μητέρα) μου καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς” (P.Köln V 226; TM 3187; ll. 9-10)

“ἀσπάζομαι τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ὀρίωνα καὶ τὴν μητέρα (= μητέρα) μου Θαῆσιν καὶ τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ πάντας κατ’ ὄνο(μα)” (P.Oxy. LVI 3853; TM 31653; ll. 6-8)

Unlike with ἐπισκοπέω, there is no diachronic shift in which the imperative rather suddenly disappears when the first person indicative comes into use. The imperative appeared earlier than the first person indicative —just like with ἐπισκοπέω, incidentally—: the imperative was used from the 2nd century BC —or perhaps even the 3rd century BC²⁸— until the 8th century AD²⁹; the first person indicative started in the 1st

²⁴ In about 25 occurrences ἄσπασαι is spelled as ἄσπασε, owing to the common confusion between αι and ε (Gignac 1976: 191-192). In most cases, the editors have indicated that -αι is the correct reading, but not in O.Claud. I 137 (TM 24149): “ἄσπασε τὴν ἀδελφὴν σου” (ll. 19-21), in O.Claud. II 408 (TM 29807): “ἄ[σπασ]ε Σιγίλεν (= Σιγίλην) καὶ Ὀρ[νι]τιν (= Ὀρνίθιον)” (ll. 9-10) and in PSI IV 308 (TM 31135): “ἄσπασε Α . υν καὶ Ἰ[Ἀπόλλων] Ἀμμωνοῦν.” (ll. 7-9). In O.Claud. I 138 (TM 24150), the editors suggested that the verb in “ἄσπασε τὸν ἀδελφόν μου” (l. 18-19) should be read as ἄσπασε, but of course ἄσπασαι is the intended form. Given that the form ἄσπασε does not exist in Greek, the editors probably simply chose to not correct this common confusion between αι and ε. These forms have not been included in appendix III. In SB VI 9017 Nr. 11 (TM 25239), the editor is not sure how to interpret ἀσπάζαι (l. 6), viz. as ἀσπάζου or as ἄσπασαι; in my opinion it should be read as ἄσπασαι.

Some editors accent the word as if it were an aorist infinitive or optative (ἀσπάσαι), which is obviously an erroneous accentuation. This is the case in the following letters: P.Oxy. XXXI 2603 (TM 32694), P.Mert. II 93 (TM 33523), P.Laur. IV 187 (TM 28768), SB X 10277 (TM 16754), O.Florida 22 (TM 74516), P.Lond. II 479 (S. 255) (TM 31220), P.Oxy. LXVII 4626 (TM 78665), P.Oxy.Hels. 48 (TM 26658), P.Oxy.Hels. 50 (TM 30201), P.Tebt. II 418 *recto* (TM 31362). Other forms lack accentuation: P.Mich. VIII 514 (TM 30514), SB VI 9017 Nr. 31 (TM 25257), SB VI 9277 (TM 25297), BGU II 623 (TM 28193; l. 5) and P.Harr. I 103 (TM 28709).

²⁵ There is no diachronic evolution in the use of the tenses: present and aorist appear from the earliest documents onwards.

²⁶ In O.Claud. II 245 (TM 29665), ἀσπάζομε Κολοφονήν (ll. 7-8) should, of course, be read as ἀσπάζομαι.

²⁷ In five instances, the participle construction with γράφω is used: i.e. P.Oxy. XLII 3067 (TM 30334), P.Mich. VIII 503 (TM 27113), SB VI 9286 (TM 38723), P.Amh. II 136 (TM 21701) and P.Oxy. XII 1584 (TM 29009). In P.Princ. II 67 (TM 25169), the participle appears in the following construction: “ἔρρωσο ἀσπαζόμενός μου λείαν τὰ τέκνα” (ll. 5-6). Further, in P.Petra III 26 (TM 112461) the polite infinitive construction παρακαλῶ ἀσπάσασθαι appears (cf. *supra*, footnote 22).

²⁸ Ἀσπάζου might be attested as early as the 3rd century BC, but its first appearance is supplemented: “[-ca.?-ἀσπά]ζου” (BGU X 1913; TM 4972; l. 7). This attestation is unconvincing, especially since this is an official letter, and salutations seem to be linked to the private letters’ register (cf. *infra*, appendix II).

²⁹ My data can adjust Mandilaras’ date of the last occurrences of the imperatives ἄσπασαι and ἀσπάζου in the 3rd century AD (Mandilaras 1973: 304). Other scholars do not date this phenomenon.

century AD³⁰. It gradually became more popular: in the letters precisely dated to the 2nd century AD, 73 of them express the greetings with an indicative ἀσπάζομαι or ἀσπαζόμεθα, whereas 147 have an imperative. In the letters dated to the 3rd century AD, numbers start to shift: 65 indicatives against 68 imperatives; also in the letters from either the 3rd or the 4th century AD, both types are more or less equally frequent³¹. In the 4th century AD, the indicative seems to gain the upper hand with 56 attestations compared to eight imperatives.

The use of active forms seems to be a later development and attest to the general gradual loss of the middle forms (cf. Horrocks 2010: 138): the present active first person singular ἀσπάζω is attested twelve times³² between the 2nd and the 5th-6th centuries AD, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζω Ἄπαν προτέρου καὶ τοὺς ἡμῶν πάντας κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Laur. I 20; TM 31506; ll. 5-6)

Another occurrence of ἀσπάζω may be found in P.Col. VIII 225 (TM 27233), where ἀσπάζω (l. 24) is interpreted by the editor as ἀσπάζου; perhaps, ἀσπάζω could be the intended form, especially since this kind of confusion is extremely frequent in this letter. I sum up only some of the attestations —a full list would be too long: e.g. “τῶ (= τῷ) κυρίῳ (= κυρίῳ)” (ll. 4-5), “ἐδήλοσα (= ἐδήλωσα)” (l. 6), “μίνομεν (= μείνωμεν)” (l. 7), “ὄδε (= ὦδε)” (l. 7), “χιμόνναν (= χειμῶνα)” (ll. 7-8), “γινόσκειν (= γινώσκειν) δέ σε θέλω (= θέλω)” (l. 14), “ἐρῶσθέ (= ἐρῶσθαι)” (l. 26). The forms οὔτος (= οὔτως, l. 9 and l. 18) and υἱεῖοῦ (= υἱοῦ; l. 26) show that the writer did not experience the same difficulties for ου and ω.

The plural ἀσπάζομεν is found in five letters from the 1st-2nd until the 4th centuries AD³³, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζ[ο]μεν τὴν μητέρα (= μητέρα) ὑμῶν Θατρῆν καὶ Ἀχιλλᾶν καὶ Σαραπίων[α] καὶ Πτολεμαῖον (= Πτολεμαῖον) καὶ Κάστορα καὶ Τασουχάριον” (P.Mich. VIII 507; TM 27117; ll. 15-18)

In ten letters, dated between the 2nd and the 4th centuries AD, the imperative second person singular ἀσπαζε appears³⁴:

³⁰ Previously, the first person indicative was thought to have appeared only from the 2nd century AD onwards (Koskeniemi 1956: 149).

³¹ I.e. fifteen indicatives against thirteen imperatives.

³² Ἀσπάζω is supplemented in P.Oxy. XIV 1770 (TM 31812) and has not been included in the total number of attestations.

³³ The supplement in O.Ashm.Shelt. 43 (TM 70594) has not been taken into account.

“ἄσπαζε Δημήτρειν” (O.Claud. II 276; TM 29693; ll. 12-13)

The active imperative ἄσπασον is attested in nine letters dating between the 2nd and the 4th centuries AD³⁵, e.g.:

“ἄσπασον τοῦς ἡμῶν πάντας κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Oxy. LIX 4000; TM 33121; ll. 27-28)

The plural ἀσπάσατε occurs in P.Mich. III 211 (TM 28800), e.g.:

“ἀσπάσατε τοὺς οἰμῶν (= ὑμῶν) πάντας” (ll. 10-11)

In P.Bad. II 42 (TM 27859), the greetings seem to be expressed in the future tense:

“ἀσπάσω Μαρεῖν[ο]ν καὶ Σισοῦν τῆ(ν) μητέρα αὐτῶν” (ll. 20-21)

However, since a future tense does not fit the context of greetings and since the rest of the salutations are expressed in the present (“ἀσ[π]αζετι (= ἀσπάζεται) ὑμᾶς Ἀπολλώ[ν]ιος [. . .]”; ll. 21-22), it is more likely that the sender actually meant to write ἀσπάζω —this would then be the another occurrence of this verb form. The confusion between sibilants is a common phenomenon in Egyptian *koine* (Horrocks 2010: 111-112), and this kind of spelling errors have been corrected in the salutations of other letters (e.g. P.Got. 14; TM 38705; l. 6). I propose a similar interpretation of ἀσπάσομαι as ἀσπάζομαι in SB I 4317 (TM 23086; ll. 28-29). In PSI VIII 899 *verso* (TM 30708), the form ἀσπάσεσθε (l. 21) should probably be read as the present ἀσπάζεσθε, which is also attested in ll. 24-25 of the same letter: “ἀσπάζεσθε καὶ Ἐρέγ[νι]ο(ν) (?)”. Finally, in O.Claud. II 268 (TM 23996; l. 9) the form ἀσπάσου does not exist in Greek and should of course be interpreted as ἀσπάζου and similarly in P.Stras. VII 629 (TM 13417; l. 58), ἀσπασζου should be corrected into ἀσπάζου, not into ἀσπάσου as the editor suggests.

1.1.3. Προσαγορεύω

In more than a hundred letters from the 1st century AD onwards, προσαγορεύω is used for regards from the sender to the addressee’s social circle. The common verb forms are the present indicatives προσαγορεύω and προσαγορεύομεν, and the imperatives προσαγόρευε / προσαγορεύετε, προσαγόρευσον / προσαγορεύσατε, and πρόσειπε, e.g.:

³⁴ The form is supplemented in P.Lond. II 190 (S. 253) (TM 28020; “ἀσ[π]αζε” l. 25). In my opinion, the common middle imperative ἀσ[π]ασε (= ἄσπασαι) is a more plausible reconstruction. This occurrence has not been taken into account. The second person plural ἀσπάζετε is not attested.

³⁵ This particular form is completely supplemented in P.Vars. 26 (TM 32962; “[ἄσπασον]” l. 22). As the number of occurrences of this form is low, and as no other active forms of ἀσπάζομαι are attested in this letter, this conjecture is unconvincing.

“προσαγορεύω τὴν θυγατέρα μου καὶ πάντας τοὺς φιλοῦντας ἡμᾶς κατ’ ὄνομα”
(P.Oxy. XLVI 3314; TM 32498; ll. 20-21)

In three instances, a polite verb with an infinitive construction is used³⁶. In two letters, dated between the 4th and the 6th centuries AD, the form προσαγορεύομαι appears³⁷:

“πολλὰ προσαγορευβομε (= προσαγορεύομαι) Ἄρφατ, πολλὰ προσαγορευβομε (= προσαγορεύομαι) Γοῦνθον τὸν [ὕ]ον (= υἰόν) τῆς ἀδελ[φ]ῆς μου Σοφίας, προσαγορευβομε (= προσαγορεύομαι) τὸν ὑ[ο] (= υἰόν) μου Φ[. . .] καὶ Ψόειν καὶ Ταῶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν τῆς γυνυκός (= γυναικός) μ[ου], [πο]λλὰ προσαγορευβομε (= προσαγορεύομαι) Πασεν τὸν προσβύτερον (= πρεσβύτερον) καὶ [. . νεφρ]ιμμιν τὴν γυνεκαν (= γυναικῆ) Παφνουτίου καὶ τὰ πε[δία (= παιδία) αὐ]τῆς” (P.Ross.Georg. III 10 ; TM 32908; ll. 6-11)

The use of the middle form προσαγορεύομαι —as well as the middle forms of this verb cf. *infra*, § 2.1.3 and § 3.1.3— might have been influenced by the popular ἀσπάζομαι.

1.1.4. Προσκυνέω

In contrast to the regards expressed by ἐπισκοπέω, ἀσπάζομαι and προσαγορεύω, greetings from the sender to the addressee’s social circle expressed with προσκυνέω are not the most popular of greeting *topoi*: about two thirds of the προσκυνέω phrases deal with the recipient (cf. *infra*, § 3.1.4). Only 23 salutations with προσκυνέω, dated from the 5th-6th (or perhaps even the 4th) century AD onwards, are sent from the sender to friends and relatives of the addressee; with this verb, the greetings from sender to addressee are more common (cf. *infra*, § 3.1.4). The indicative προσκυνῶ or προσκυνοῦμεν³⁸ is more often attested than the imperative forms³⁹: the aorist προσκύνησον is found four times⁴⁰; and the present προσκύνει only seems to occur in P.Oxy. XVI 1837 (TM 37844)⁴¹:

“τὸν δὲ Μηνᾶν τὸν φλαγο() ἐξ ἐμοῦ προσκύνει” (l. 15)

³⁶ In a polite construction after καταξίωσον the infinitives προσαγορεύσαι (in P.Iand. VI 103; TM 36108; cf. *supra*) and προσειπεῖν (in P.Oxy. XVI 1875; TM 37873 and P.Oxy. XVI 1872; TM 35601) appear (cf. *supra*, footnote 22).

³⁷ The other attestation is P.Oxy. X 1350 (TM 35590).

³⁸ This form is only attested in P.Stras. VII 680 (TM 38675).

³⁹ This, to my mind, reflects the general diachronic evolution that salutations in the first person overrule the expression with imperative at the end of the Roman period/the beginning of the Late Antique period (cf. *supra*, § 1.1.2).

⁴⁰ I.e. in SB XVIII 13116 (TM 35164), P.Apoll. 62 (TM 39121), P.Bodl. I 116 (TM 38177) and P.Ness. 52 (TM 39297).

⁴¹ Also periphrased constructions are found: two letters (SB VI 9286; TM 38723 and CPR XXV 12; TM 92443) have a participle construction with γράφω; four letters have a polite verb followed by an infinitive form of προσκυνέω (cf. *supra*), i.e. SB VI 9138 (TM 36197), CPR XXV 35 (TM 92466), PSI III 238 (TM 37076) and P.Oxy. XVI 1933 (TM 37885).

1.1.5. Βλέπω

To my mind, βλέπω possibly carries the meaning of ‘to greet’ in two letters:

“τοίνυν οὖν βλέπεις (= βλέπης) τὴν μητέρα (= μητέρα) μου” (P.Kellis I 65; TM 33319; ll. 43-44)

“καὶ βλέπετε τὰ παιδιά καὶ τὰ εἰς οἶκον. βλέπε Εἰσιδώρα\ν/ τή\ν/ μαικρά\ν/” (P.Mil.Vogl. II 77; TM 28842; ll. 14-15)⁴²

Admittedly, this translation is not found in the LSJ *s.v.* βλέπω. Moreover, saluting things instead of people (τὰ εἰς οἶκον in P.Mil.Vogl. II 77) is uncommon in greetings⁴³. Yet, the place of the βλέπω phrase, just before the closing formula is identical to the standard place of the salutations, and the kinship terms and characterizations used in these two phrases are similar to the ones used in the greetings (cf. appendix I). Although the two examples are not unproblematic and the evidence is scarce, the possibility exists that βλέπω in some cases has undergone the same semantic shift as ἐπισκοπέω (cf. *supra*), and this hypothesis should perhaps be investigated further⁴⁴.

1.1.6. Προσφθέγγομαι

Greetings to third persons are formulated twice with the verb προσφθέγγομαι:

“✠ [-ca.?- πο]λλὰ προσκυνῶ καὶ προσφθέγγομαι (= προσφθέγγομαι; my remark) τ[-ca.?- τῷ ἀφ]θόνῳ αὐτῆς οἴκῳ κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.IFAO II 27; TM 35028; ll. 1-2)

“προσφθέγγομαι δὲ καὶ τὸν κύριόν μ[ου (?)-ca.?-] ἀδελφὸν Παῦλον” (P.Fouad I 83; TM 33387; ll. 9-10)

The occurrences are dated to the 5th-6th century AD.

1.1.7. Greeting formulas without a verb and elliptic constructions

In two instances, dated to the 6th-7th century AD⁴⁵, there is no verb in what appears to be the salutations⁴⁶:

⁴² Bagnall and Cribiore took βλέπω in its standard meaning: “watch (plu.) the children and things at home. Watch “little” Isidora.” (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 186).

⁴³ Another instance of the reference to things in salutations is P.Amh. II 145 (TM 33624).

⁴⁴ In my opinion it would be interesting to study the semantics of βλέπω in other *koine* texts (e.g. literary texts, the New Testament, ...). However, such an investigation would lead me too far from the research questions set for this thesis.

⁴⁵ Although the data seem to suggest that this is a Late Antique phenomenon, the low number of occurrences hinder such a conclusion.

“† [έξ] ἐμοῦ δὲ Φαῦστον τὸν μεγαλο(πρεπέστατον) κοινὸν ἀδελφόν, καὶ πάντας τοὺς <τοῦ> εὐλογημέ(νου) [ύ]μῶν οἴκῳ (= οἴκου), ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου, ἄχρι θεάς. †” (P.Oxy. LIX 4006; TM 36849; ll. 8-10)

“έξ ἐμοῦ δὲ τὴν κύραν (= κυρίαν; my remark⁴⁷) τὴν μητέραν (= μητέρα; my remark) ὑμῶν καὶ τὸν κύριον Ἐνώχ καὶ τὰ γλυκύτατα αὐτοῦ παιδία. †” (P.Oxy. XVI 1940; TM 37892; ll. 4-5)

In the first case, the greetings immediately follow other salutations with the verbs προσκυνέω and ἀσπάζομαι. In lines 8 to 10, the writer might have avoided repeating the greeting verbs, assuming that the addressee would understand this elliptic construction. In the second letter, there are no greeting verbs at all.

1.2. Persons greeted

In most cases the greeted persons appear in the accusative case⁴⁸; when multiple persons are greeted, they are usually syndetically listed by means of καί, e.g.:

“ἀπαδομαι (= ἀσπάζομαι) Εισθυρ καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν σου Σουσάννα” (P.Oxy. XXXI 2599; TM 30439; ll. 21-23)

This conjunction is used to refer to multiple persons in the salutations from the sender to the addressee’s relatives and friends, but also to refer to both the addressee and his social circle in one single construction, e.g.:

“πρὸ πάντων προσαγορεύω σε καὶ τὴν δέσποινάν μου νύμφην” (P.Ant. II 93; TM 32723; ll. 3-4)

A variant to the use of καί is the construction with the prepositions μετά, σύν or ἅμα, e.g.:

“Νόναν μετὰ τῆς ἀειπαρθένου θυγατρὸς [πο]λλὰ προσαγορεύω” (SB XVI 12620; TM 32818; ll. 7-9)

⁴⁶ The place of the phrases at the end of the letter (and close to other greetings in P.Oxy. LIX 4006), the characterizations and kinship terms such as ἀδελφός, μήτηρ, πάντες οἱ τοῦ ὑμῶν οἴκου which are often found in greetings (cf. *infra*, appendix I) and the extensions typical of greetings such as ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου and ἐξ ἐμοῦ (cf. *infra*) make me conclude that these are in fact salutations.

⁴⁷ Cf.: “An accented ι is very frequently omitted before a back vowel, especially after a liquid or a nasal. This indicates the change of /i/ to /j/ in this position, with concomitant shift of the accent to the final syllable.” (Gignac 1976: 302).

⁴⁸ The nominative, dative and genitive appear as well. I have not systematically studied this kind of case confusion, since it would lead me too far; only in the reference to the addressee, the variation σε/σοι and ὑμᾶς/ὑμῖν is investigated more thoroughly (cf. *infra*, § 2.2 and 3.2).

“πρὸ παντὸς πολλὰ σε ἀσπάζομαι μετὰ τῶν σῶν πάντων” (P.Kellis I 70; TM 33324; ll. 3-4)

“ἐπισκοποῦμαι Ταμύσθαν σὺν τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῆς” (P.Oslo III 153; TM 28914; ll. 26-27)

“πρόσειπε τὰ ἀβάσκαντά σου παιδιά ἅμα τῇ συμβίῳ σου” (P.Ryl. IV 604; TM 30583; ll. 25-27)

Μετά appears in about thirty greeting formulas between the 1st and the 6th centuries AD. The number of occurrences of σύν is about equally high; they occur from the 1st until the 8th centuries AD. Ἄμα is less common and is only found four times between the 1st-2nd and the 4th centuries AD⁴⁹. The three preposition constructions thus chronologically overlap. There are no general geographical preferences for each of the prepositions⁵⁰. Like καί, the construction with prepositions is used for referring to multiple members of the addressee’s social circle as well as for the salutations from the sender to the addressee and his family and friends.

Another variant, ὁμοίως, has a similar meaning:

“ἀσπάζου Ἰουλίαν τὴν κυρίαν μου ἀδελφὴν, ὁμοίως Σαραπιάδα καὶ τ[ῆ]ν μητέραν (= μητέρα), τὴν μάμαν Σαμβάθιον, Θερμοῦθιν καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς, τὸν πατέρα Πακκίου καὶ πάντας τοὺς κολλήγας σου κατ’ ὄνομα καὶ τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ” (P.Mich. VIII 466; TM 17240; ll. 43-45)

“ἀσπάζομαι Παχνοῦμι ὁμ[οίως] καὶ Παχνοῦμι νεωτερος (= νεώτερον)” (P.Paris 18; TM 32147; ll. 5-6)

1.3. Sender of the regards

In three letters dated between the 1st and the 3rd centuries AD, the personal pronoun σύ appears in combination with the imperative:

“ἄσπασαι σὺ Ἄμμωνᾶν τὸ[ν] ἀδελφόν μου κα[ὶ] .ραπ[.]ν καὶ [τ]ῆ[ν] ἀδε[λ]φὴν [.....]α[.....]” (P.Oxy. II 295; TM 20566; ll. 11-16)⁵¹

When the greetings to relatives and friends of the addressee are expressed in the first person indicative, the personal pronouns ἐγώ or ἡμεῖς are sometimes added. There are

⁴⁹ I.e. P.Ryl. IV 604 (TM 30583), P.Stras. VII 637 (TM 16493), P.Oxy. X 1350 (TM 35590) and SB V 7743 (TM 25303).

⁵⁰ Perhaps παρά was used in the same way in P.Harr. I 109 (TM 31474): “παρὰ τοὺς ἄλλους τοὺς κυρίους μου ἀδελφούς, αὐτὸν Ἄντᾶν Ἄμμώνιον τὸν ἀσύγκριτον προσαγορεύω” (ll. 10-13), which is translated as “besides my other lords and brethren, I salute especially the incomparable Antas Ammonios himself” (Powell and Harris 1974: 91).

⁵¹ The other occurrences are P.Oxy.Hels. 48 (TM 26658) and PSI VIII 943 (TM 27224).

different scenarios in which personal pronouns occur. In one letter, the personal pronoun ἡμεῖς seems to be superfluous⁵²:

“καὶ ἡ[μεῖ]ς ἀσπαζόμεθα [- ca.14 -] . . . [. . .] ν καὶ τὰ παιδιά” (P.Mich. VIII 474; TM 27087; early 2nd century AD ll. 11-12)⁵³

The unnecessary addition of personal pronouns is a later development which could probably be explained by Egyptian influence. In Egyptian epistolography, personal pronouns are often expressed (cf. Gonis 2005: 43).

In eleven instances, ἐγώ (ten times) and ἡμεῖς (only in P.Oxy. XXXVI 2785; TM 32644) are found in a specific construction, e.g.:

“τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν Ἡρακλῆν παράδεξαι [κ]ατὰ τὸ ἔθος, δι’ οὗ σὲ καὶ τοὺς σὺν σοὶ πάντας ἀδελφούς ἐγὼ καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ προσαγορεύομε(ν)” (PSI III 208; TM 33228; ll. 4-10)

“Ἡρώνα καὶ Ὀρίωνα καὶ Φιλάδελφον καὶ Πεκῦσιν καὶ Νααρωοῦν καθηγουμένους (= κατηγουμένους) τῶν συναγομένων καὶ Λέωνα καθηγουμένον (= κατηγουμένον) ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου πρόσδεξαι ὡς καθήκε[ι] δι’ ὧν σὲ καὶ τοὺς σὺν σοὶ ἐγὼ καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ προσαγορεύω” (PSI IX 1041; TM 30662; ll. 5-15)

“τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἡμῶν Ταίωνα παραγινόμενην πρὸς σὲ παράδεξε (= παράδεξαι) ἐν εἰρήνῃ, καὶ ἄν(θρωπ)ον καθηγουμένον (= κατηγουμένον) ἐν τῇ Γενέσει, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν παράδεξε (= παράδεξαι), δι’ ὧν σε καὶ τοὺς παρὰ σοὶ ἀδελφούς ἡμεῖς καὶ οἱ σὺν ἡμεῖν (= ἡμῖν) προσαγορεύομεν” (P.Oxy. XXXVI 2785; TM 32644; ll. 5-12)⁵⁴

The personal pronouns ἐγὼ and ἡμεῖς are combined with general references to the social circle of the sender by means of οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ and καὶ οἱ σὺν ἡμῖν⁵⁵. All eleven instances of this specific expression are dated between the 3rd-4th and the 6th centuries AD. This phraseology is a dense way of greeting; in one rather short formula all parties greet each other: the sender(s) (ἐγὼ / ἡμεῖς) and his/their social circle (οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ / καὶ οἱ σὺν ἡμῖν) salute the addressee (σε) and the addressee’s relatives and friends (τοὺς σὺν/παρὰ σοὶ πάντας ἀδελφούς / τοὺς σὺν σοὶ)⁵⁶.

⁵² This use is not attested for ἐγὼ.

⁵³ Given the early date of this letter and the fragmentary character of the phrase, I do not find the current supplement entirely convincing and I do not exclude other, more common alternatives such as “καὶ ἡ[μα]ς (= ὑμᾶς) ἀσπαζόμεθα”.

⁵⁴ The other occurrences are P.Oxy. LVI 3857 (TM 33598), P.Alex. 29 (TM 30466), SB XVI 12304 (TM 30267), P.Oxy. VIII 1162 (TM 33633), SB III 7269 (TM 33087), P.Giss. I 55 (TM 36870), P.NagHamm. 67 (TM 32409) and P.Got. 11 (TM 30693). The phrase in P.Got. 11 is damaged but was probably similar to the other instances.

⁵⁵ This and other ‘group references’ are discussed *infra*, in § 6.1.

⁵⁶ These phrases are thus not examples of the greetings from the sender to relatives and friends of the addressee, but also of regards from relatives of the sender to the addressee (cf. *infra*, § 2), of regards from

In eight of the eleven occurrences, the greetings are in a relative subclause connected to a phrase in the body of the letter by means of δι' ὧν, δι' ἧς or δι' οὗ⁵⁷ (cf. quotes above): the salutations—all eleven with the verb προσαγορεύω, cf. *infra*—are thus sent through a third person. Also the main clauses, to which the greetings are connected, are very similar: they all have imperative forms of the verbs παραδέχομαι, προσδέχομαι and συνδέχομαι. In fact, these eight letters are all letters of recommendation with a Christian background⁵⁸, and the greetings are sent via the person recommended. The letters have thus a remarkably uniform structure (cf. Kim 1972: 99-118; Treu 1973: 632), e.g.:

PSI III 208 (TM 33228)

χαῖρε ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ, ἀγαπητὲ [ἄδ]ελφε Πέτρε, Σώτ[ας] σε προσαγορεύω.	opening formula
τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν Ἑρακλῆν παράδεξαι [κ]ατὰ τὸ ἔθος ...	main message of the letter of recommendation
... δι' οὗ σὲ καὶ τοὺς σὺν σοὶ πάντας ἀδελφοὺς ἐγὼ καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ προσαγορεύομε(ν).	greetings sent through the person recommended and grammatically connected to the main message
ἔρρωσθαί σε ἐν θ(ε)ῶ εὐχόμεαι.	closing formula

This and three other letters⁵⁹ belong to the dossier of the 3rd century bishop of Oxyrhynchos, Sotas (Luijendijk 2008: 81-100).

One should evaluate the greetings in the light of their Christian context: the formulas acknowledge that “the sender and recipient both represent their whole community” (Luijendijk 2008: 112; cf. also Kim 1972: 103 and Treu 1973: 635-636). The salutations are thus an explicit exchange between two communities, not between two private persons.

The almost identical phraseology in the salutations of these Christian letters of recommendation requires an explanation: the verb προσαγορεύω is known to be favored

sender to addressee (cf. *infra*, § 3) and of regards from the sender’s social circle to the addressee’s social circle (cf. *infra*, § 4).

⁵⁷ The phrase is fragmentary in P.Got. 11 (TM 30693). In P.Giss. I 55 (TM 36870) and P.NagHamm. 67 (TM 32409), this phrase is found in the main clause.

⁵⁸ Further, also the damaged P.Got. 11, which probably also had a similar structure but is not included as one of the eight occurrences, is a Christian letter of recommendation.

⁵⁹ I.e. PSI IX 1041, P.Oxy. XXXVI 2785 and P.Alex. 29 (an uncertain document in the dossier) (Luijendijk 2008: 82; 87). PSI IX 1041 and PSI III 208 are letters from Sotas, P.Oxy. XXXVI 2785 was addressed to Sotas, not sent by him, and P.Alex. 29 was addressed to certain Maximus. The stylistic and linguistic uniformity in the dossier is thus not to be ascribed to the preference of one single sender or scribe.

by Christians, but that is not to say that they do not sometimes use other greeting verbs, such as ἀσπάζομαι (cf. *supra*). In other words, the Christian preference for the verb προσαγορεύω cannot explain its sheer omnipresence in the greetings of these letters of recommendation. There must be another reason for the total lack of variation in the choice of verbs and for the remarkable uniformity of the phrase ἐγὼ and οἱ σὺν ἐμοί / ἡμεῖς καὶ οἱ σὺν ἡμῖν. Kim proposed the idea that “the writers of these letters had a manual of their own” (Kim 1972: 99), or maybe even models or sample letters (Kim 1972: 118). Also Luijendijk believed that there were “ready-made letters into which they only needed to fill in the name of the traveler” (Luijendijk 2008: 111). In other words, “they copied from each other and imitated each other’s letters” (Luijendijk 2008: 110). Especially within the network of Sotas, Luijendijk’s thesis is plausible. In my view, there is even additional linguistic support for this: the same spelling mistake appears in PSI IX 1041 —a letter from Sotas to Paulus— and P.Oxy. XXXVI 2785 —a letter to Sotas— respectively:

“τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ἡμῶν Ἦρωνα καὶ Ὀρίωνα καὶ Φιλιάδελφον καὶ Πεκῦσιν καὶ Νααρωοῦν καθηχουμένους (= κατηχουμένους) τῶν συναγομένων καὶ Λέωνα καθηχούμενον (= κατηχούμενον) ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου πρόσδεξαι ὡς καθήκε[ι]” (ll. 4-12)

“τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἡμῶν Ταίωνα παραγινομένην πρὸς σὲ παράδεξε (= παράδεξαι) ἐν εἰρήνῃ, καὶ ἄν(θρωπ)ον καθηχούμενον (= κατηχούμενον) ἐν τῇ Γενέσει, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν παράδεξε (= παράδεξαι)” (ll. 4-10)

Writing τ instead of θ is common, especially with native Egyptians, but the inverse confusion which is attested here, occurs less often (Gignac 1976: 64; 86). This might be an indication supporting the hypothesis that received letters served as a model for new ones.

1.4. Extensions

1.4.1. Greetings and the closing formula

In twelve instances, regards from the sender to the addressee’s relatives and friends are connected to the closing formula by means of a relative subclause, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζου τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς σου μεθ’ ὧν καὶ ἔρρωσο” (P.Oxy. XXXVI 2786; TM 25100; ll. 7-9)

“προσα[γ]όρευε ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ πολλά τὴν σοὶ φιλτάτην σύνευνον μεθ’ ὧν ἐρρῶσθαί σε καὶ εὐανθοῦντα εὐχομαι, κύριέ μου υἱέ” (BGU IV 1080; TM 31016; ll. 22-25)⁶⁰

Similarly, a relative subclause added to the salutations introduces the initial health wish in P.Oxy. XIV 1772 (TM 31814):

“[ἄσπ]ασαι πολλά τὴν ἀγαθὴν σου σύμβιον καὶ Ἰουλίαν καὶ τὸν ἵππον καὶ [Τιβ]έριν, μεθ’ ὧν εὐχομαί σε ὀλόκληρον ἀπολαβεῖν” (ll. 2-3)⁶¹

1.4.2. *Dativus commodi*

In nine letters with greetings in the imperative⁶², dated between the 2nd and 4th-5th centuries AD, a dative is added, e.g.:

“ἄσπασόν μοι Σαδαλλαθην τὸν ἀδελφόν μου” (P.Euphrates 17; TM 44675; ll. 26-27)
“πολλά προσαγόρευέ μοι τὴν μητέρα μου καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ καὶ [- ca.20 -] καὶ τ[.]” (P.Herm. 43; TM 33478; ll. 5-8)⁶³

Only in P.Oxy. LXXIII 4965 (TM 118655), the plural ἡμῖν appears:

“καὶ αὐτός, κ[ύριέ] μου ἀδελφε, προσαγόρευε ἡμῖν τοὺς παρὰ σοὶ πάντας ἐκλεκτούς τε καὶ κατηχουμένους καθ’ ἕκαστον καὶ μάλιστα τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν Θε[ό]δωρον” (ll. 17-24)

⁶⁰ The other occurrences are P.Oxy. XX 2276 (TM 30489), P.Oxy. LIX 3992 (TM 27848), P.Tebt. II 418 *recto* (TM 31362), P.Oxy. XIV 1668 (TM 31779), P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2862 (TM 31832), P.Lips. I 110 (TM 31909), P.Rein. I 41 (TM 26149), P.Mich. VIII 498 (TM 27108), P.Mich. XVIII 790 (TM 29032) and PSI III 236 (TM 31228). In P.Princ. II 67 (TM 25169), the greetings and the closing formula are intertwined by means of a participle construction: “ἔρρωσο ἀσπαζόμενός μου λείαν τὰ τέκνα” (ll. 5-6) (cf. *supra*, footnote 27).

⁶¹ The specific phraseologies of the initial health wish and the closing formulas are discussed *infra* in, respectively, chapters 4 and 7.

⁶² P.Haun. II 18 (TM 30121) is not an attestation of a *dativus commodi*, as the editor suggested: “ἄσπασον traces τὴν ἀδελφὴν μοι καὶ” (ll. 25-26). The formula is damaged and μοι is in an uncommon place: mostly, the *dativus commodi* is found just after the greeting verb. Possibly, τὴν ἀδελφὴν μοι is to be interpreted as a *dativus possessoris*, i.e. as a variant to the common τὴν ἀδελφὴν μου (cf. *infra*, appendix I, footnote 11).

⁶³ The other attestations are P.Oxy. LVI 3862 (TM 33603), P.Oxy. XIV 1773 (TM 31815), P.Oslo III 161 (TM 31642), P.Kellis I 71 (TM 33325), P.Kellis I 72 (TM 33326), O.Claud. I 143 (TM 24155) and O.Claud. I 144 (TM 24156). The last two are letters by a certain Firmus to Exochos written by the same hand, presumably that of Firmus himself (Bingen et al. 1992: 131). These are the only preserved papyri sent by this person. It is possible, yet far from certain, that Firmus had a preference for inserting μοι in the greetings. Similarly, it is hard to judge the two attestations of this feature in the letters by different senders in archive of the family of Pamour (P.Kellis I 71 and 72; cf. also www.trismegistos.org/archive/508; accessed on May 21, 2015).

1.4.3. Ἄπ' ἐμοῦ and variants

Similar in meaning to the phrases with the *dativus commodi*, are the expressions ἄπ' ἐμοῦ and variants, e.g.:

“προσαγορεύω ἄπ' ἐμοῦ τοὺς κυρίους (= κυρίους) μου υἱοὺς καὶ τὴν κυρίαν αὐτῶν μητέραν” (P.Oxy. XXXI 2602; TM 32693; ll. 13-15)

Apart from ἄπ' ἐμοῦ, also variants with παρά and ἐκ appear:

variants	number of variants	chronological distribution
παρ' ἐμοῦ	nine	3 rd century BC until 6 th -7 th century AD
παρ' ἡμῶν	one (SB XX 14728; TM 164 ⁶⁴)	2 nd century BC
ἄπ' ἐμοῦ	sixteen ⁶⁵	2 nd -3 rd until 4 th -5 th centuries AD
ἄφ' ἡμῶν	four ⁶⁶	2 nd until 4 th -5 th centuries AD
ἐξ ἐμοῦ	fourteen	5 th -6 th until 7 th centuries AD
ἐξ ἡμῶν	one (SB XX 14188; TM 39981)	8 th century AD

The variant ἐξ ὀνόματός μου is found in P.Oxy. XIV 1677 (TM 31785):

“ἄσπασε (= ἄσπασαι) τοὺς σοὺς πάντας κατ' ὄνομα [ἐξ] ὀνόματός μου” (ll. 14-15)

1.4.4. Other extensions

In P.Fouad I 77 (TM 28602), the extension τοῖς ἐμοῖς λόγοις occurs:

⁶⁴ Further, it is supplemented in P.Lond. VI 1925 (TM 32658): “[πρόσ]ειπ[ε] τοὺς ἀδελφούς παρ' ἡ[μῶν(?).]” (ll. 13-14).

⁶⁵ In one of those, P.Oxy.Hels. 49 (TM 26658), the expression is enlarged by καὶ τῶν αὐτῶν, resulting in the phrase ἄπ' ἐμοῦ καὶ τῶν αὐτῶν: “ἀσπάζεται σε ἡ μήτηρ σου Πλουσίας καὶ ἡ ἀδελφή σου Ἑρμιόνη καὶ Ἀμοιτᾶς ὁ πατήρ σου καὶ Πατερμοῦθις ὁ ἀδελφός σου καὶ Παλλάς, ἄσπασαι σὺ τὸν πατέρα ἀπὸ τε ἐμοῦ καὶ τῶν αὐτῶν” (ll. 20-24). Αὐτῶν clearly refers to the sender's relatives who greeted the addressee in the previous sentence.

⁶⁶ Further, ἄφ' ἡμῶν is attested once in greetings from the sender's relatives to the addressee and his relatives, viz. in SB XIV 11666 (TM 32942): “ἄφ' ἡμῶν προσαγορεύει Ἡραϊσκος ἅμα τῇ συμβίῳ αὐτο(ῦ) καὶ των (= τῶ) τέκνῳ” (ll. 12-13).

“καὶ ἄσπασε (= ἄσπασαι) αὐτὸν πολλὰ τοῖς ἑμοῖς λόγοις” (ll. 28-29)

A parallel is found in Latin: Cicero’s letters as well as documentary letters (e.g. T.Vindol. II 509) regularly add the expression *meis/nostriis verbis* (Cugusi 2007: 144), which makes τοῖς ἑμοῖς λόγοις possibly a Latinism.

In one case, the imperative is completed by αὐτός:

“καὶ αὐτός, κ[ύριε] μου ἄδελφε, προσαγόρευε ἡμῖν τοὺς παρὰ σοὶ πάντα ἐκλεκτοὺς τε καὶ κατηχουμένους καθ’ ἕκαστον καὶ μάλιστα τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν Θε[ό]δωρον, εἰ ἐστὶν παρὰ σοί, καὶ τὸν” (P.Oxy. LXXIII 4965; TM 118655; ll. 17-25)

2. Salutations from the sender’s social circle to the addressee

Apart from the popular greetings from the sender to the relatives of the addressee (§ 1), regards from the sender’s social circle to the addressee are common as well⁶⁷. They appear in more than 350 private letters from the 2nd century BC until the 8th century AD. Usually, the greetings are expressed in the third person indicative⁶⁸. The verb’s subject is the sender’s relative(s) and the object is the addressee.

2.1. Verb forms

2.1.1. Ἐπισκοπέω

In nine letters, dated between the 2nd century BC and the 2nd century AD, the relatives and friends of the sender pass on their regards by means of the third person verb forms ἐπισκοπεῖται or ἐπισκοποῦνται:

“ἐπισκοποῦνταί σε οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες” (P.Berl.Möller 11; TM 17459; ll. 15-16)

The singular is also used when there are multiple subjects⁶⁹, e.g.:

“[ἐπ]ισκοπιτα (= ἐπισκοπεῖται) σ’ Ἰρήνη καὶ Πλουσία καὶ Δι[ογε]νίς ἡ θυγάτηρ αὐτῆς” (P.Giss.Bibl. III 19; TM 22115; ll. 11-12)

⁶⁷ The sender’s relatives and friends –who might have been illiterate, cf. *supra*– probably dictated their greetings in most cases and the sender (or his scribe) wrote them down; but in other instances, the sender of the greetings seems to have taken up the pen himself to personally write the regards, e.g.: “(hand 2) [προσα]γορεύει δὲ τῇ σῆ διαθέσει ὁ ἀγαπητὸς Παπνούθης” (P.Amh. II 145; TM 33624; l. 26). After this salutation, the ‘first hand’ takes over again.

⁶⁸ *Infra*, in § 3.3, I discuss a couple of attestations of an (elliptic) phraseology to express this *topos*.

⁶⁹ This is a general phenomenon, not linked to the verb ἐπισκοπέω, but also attested in the other greeting verbs (e.g. BGU XVI 2618 quoted *infra* in § 2.1.2).

In such cases, the verb agrees with one subject only. No doubt Irene said she wanted to give the best wishes to the addressee, and Plousia and Diogenis responded in the same way.

2.1.2. Ἀσπάζομαι

In more than 300 letters, salutations to the addressee by the sender's relatives and friends are conveyed in the third person indicatives ἀσπάζεται and ἀσπάζονται⁷⁰, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζεται ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς) Σωκράτης” (BGU XV 2493; TM 24898; ll. 19-20)

“ἀσ[πά]ζονται σε Σαραπιάς καὶ οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες” (P.Oxy. XLIX 3505; TM 26609; ll. 23-24)

“ἀσπάζεται σε Νάρδος καὶ Νεικᾶς καὶ οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες” (BGU XVI 2618; TM 23342; ll. 22-24)

The active third person singular ἀσπάζει appears three times, and its plural variant ἀσπάζουσι is preserved once, e.g.:

“ἀσπάδι (= ἀσπάζει) σε ὁ ἀδελφός σου Θεόδωρος” (SB XII 11153; TM 30324; l. 2)⁷¹

“ἀσπάζουσιν τὰς καρῶταθ. σα. ο. [. . .]” (SB XIV 12030; TM 34811; l. 1)

Like the active forms discussed above (cf. *supra*, § 1.1.2), the active is a later development: the occurrences of ἀσπάζει and ἀσπάζουσι are dated between the 3rd and the 5th-6th centuries AD.

A grammatically incorrect form appears in SB XVIII 13590 (TM 25383):

“ἀσπάζετό σε Τούρβων καὶ [A]μάραντος καὶ τὰ παιδιά” (ll. 21-22)

⁷⁰ As in the ἀσπάζομαι greetings from sender to the addressee's relatives (cf. *supra*, § 1.1.2), spelling mistakes — especially confusion between σ and ζ— occur: in O.Krok. I 97 (TM 88694) and (SB XXIV 16269), for instance, the editor corrected the form ἀσπάσεται into ἀσπάζεται. I would propose the same interpretation for ἀσπάσε[ται] in P.Bodl. I 61 f *verso* (TM 10267). Another common spelling mistake concerns αι and ε. Sometimes, ἀσπάσετε has not been corrected into ἀσπάζεται, whereas the context suggests that the salutations are sent from the friends and family of the sender to the addressee. This is the case in P.Mich. III 208 (TM 28797), O.Claud. II 283 (TM 29700) and SB VIII 9882 *verso* (TM 29273). In SB VI 9017 Nr. 48 (TM 25274), the editor is reluctant to supplement this verb form, but in my opinion, there is ample evidence to read ἀσπάζεται: “ἀσπάζετ[-ca.-?] [-ca.-?] . ἡρ μου καὶ ἡ μη. [-ca.-?]ου καὶ Διδυμ[-ca.-?]” (ll. 8-10): the form ἀσπάζεται is not only more common than the alternative ἀσπάσετε, also the nominatives “[-ca.-?] . ἡρ μου καὶ ἡ μη. [-ca.-?]” suggest salutations from friends of the sender to the addressee.

In the fragmentary SB VI 9017 Nr. 36 (TM 25262; “ἀσπασετε ικ. [-ca.-?]”, l. 3) the editor interpreted the form ἀσπασετε as ἀσπάσασθε. In my opinion, other readings are plausible as well (e.g. ἀσπάζεται or perhaps ἀσπάσετε, for which the spelling mistakes are more easily explicable than for the interpretation ἀσπάσασθε). The fragmentary nature of this greeting prevents any conclusion.

⁷¹ The other attestations are P.Oxy. XIV 1670 (TM 31781) and P.Oxy. XIV 1770 (TM 31812).

This form should probably be interpreted as ἀσπάζεται.

2.1.3. Προσαγορεύω

In about forty cases⁷², the third person indicatives προσαγορεύει and προσαγορεύουσι are used when the relatives of the sender want to salute the letter's recipient, e.g.:

“προσαγορεύει ὑμᾶς ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ Μηνᾶ καὶ Ἐπιφανίᾳ καὶ ἀμμάς μου Προσφορία, εἴτις (= ἦτις) καλῶς με ἀναπαύει, καὶ Πάλλας καὶ των (= οἱ) υἱων (= υἱοί) σου Ἰσαείας καὶ Δωρόθεος” (P.Oxy. LVI 3862; TM 33603; ll. 15-18)

“πάντες οἱ ἐνθάδε ἀδελφοὶ πρ[οσ]αγορεύουσιν ὑμᾶς” (P.Oxy. XXXI 2603; TM 32694; ll. 29-30)

One attestation has the middle form προσαγορεύεται:

“προσαγορεύεταί σαι (= σε) ἡ κύρα καὶ ἡ ἄλλη κύρα Οὐαλερ[ιάν]η οἷς περὶ Φιλοσόφ[ι]ον, Λουκίλα, Παν[σό]φιον” (SB VIII 9746; TM 33802; ll. 27-30)

2.1.4. Προσκυνέω

In eight letters, the third person indicatives προσκυνεῖ and προσκυνοῦσι are attested for greetings from relatives of the sender to the addressee, e.g.:

“Κύρα νύμφη πολλὰ ὑμᾶς προσκυνεῖ. προσκυνεῖ δὲ [ὑμᾶς] Β[ί]κτωρ ὁ παῖς καὶ τοὺς ἐτέρου[ς] αὐτοῦ Βίκτορα καὶ Σινοῦθιν” (SB XVIII 13762; TM 36300; ll. 30-31)

“πολλὰ δὲ προσκ[υν]οῦσιν τὴν σὴν ἐνάρετον θαυμασιότητα οἱ παῖδες αὐτῆς” (SB XX 15091; TM 38535; l. 14)

2.1.5. Προσφθέγγομαι

Only in P.Fouad I 83 (TM 33387), the verb προσφθέγγομαι is used to send best wishes from the sender's relatives to the addressee:

“προσφθέγγεται δὲ τὴν αὐτοῦ λαμ[πρότητα ὁ] κύριός μου Φοιβάμμων” (ll. 10-11)

2.1.6. Elliptic construction

Five other occurrences do not explicitly mention the verb in the greetings, but clearly convey regards from the relatives of the sender to the addressee:

⁷² This number includes the dense greetings of the Christian letters of recommendation, in which the sender's relatives salute the addressee in an uncommon phraseology (cf. *supra*, § 1.3).

“πολλὰ ὑμᾶς προσαγορεύω δὲ καὶ ὁ γλυκύτατος κοινὸς υἱὸς Θεῶν καὶ . . . γις”
(P.Oxy. LVIII 3932; TM 36210; ll. 12-13)

“ἀσπάζομαι σε πολλά, ἴσως καὶ Χαिरᾶς καὶ [Ἡρώδης]” (P.Giss. I 76; TM 19465; ll. 5-6)

“ἀσπάζομαι δὲ σὲ καὶ οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντε[ς] καὶ Θερμοῦθις καὶ τὰ παιδιά αὐτ[ῆς] -ca.-” (P.Köln IX 370; TM 78430; ll. 6-7)⁷³

“πρὸ παντός σε ἀσπάζομαι καὶ πάντες [σ]ε ὁμοίως οἱ κατ’ οἶκον” (SB V 7567; TM 30787; ll. 1-3)

“[-ca.-] προσκυνῶ σε καὶ Ὑπάτις” (SB XVI 12473; TM 35997; l. 8)

In these cases, the sender, as well as a third person, salute the addressee (cf. *infra*, § 3).

2.2. Addressee⁷⁴

Mostly, the addressee is referred to by the personal pronouns σε (more than 200 occurrences from the 2nd century BC until the 8th century AD) or ὑμᾶς (more than 100 occurrences from the 1st century BC until the 6th century AD)⁷⁵. In twenty letters dated between the 1st and the 4th centuries AD, ὑμᾶς πάντας appears⁷⁶, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζετε (= ἀσπάζεται) ὑμᾶς π[ά]ντας Πτολεμ[α]ῖος καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος” (P.Mich. VIII 508; TM 27118; l. 9)

In one letter, P.Oxy. XIV 1770 (TM 31812), the following variant appears:

“καὶ Ε[. . .] ἀσπάζει ὑμᾶς ὅλους” (ll. 32-33)

⁷³ The editor was not familiar with this kind of elliptic construction and added the alternative reading: “οὗς ἐν οἴκῳ πάντα[ς] καὶ Θερμοῦθιν (?)”. As far as I am concerned, it would lead us too far to suppose that the writer made these spelling mistakes, especially since the elliptic construction is attested elsewhere. In this case, however, we cannot know for sure if a greeting verb such as ἀσπάζονται is indeed absent due to the lacuna at the end.

⁷⁴ In appendix I, I focus on the representation of the addressee in the greetings (as well as in the opening and closing formulas). I also discuss the diachronic evolution in the description of the addressee: in the Byzantine period, the addressee is no longer (only) referred to by personal pronouns, but also by abstract nouns (cf. quote of P.Fouad I 83 above in § 2.1.5).

⁷⁵ Due to the widespread confusion between υ and η (Gignac 1976: 262-265), ἡμᾶς sometimes erroneously appears instead of ὑμᾶς, e.g.: “ἀσπάζεται ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς) Σωκράτης” (BGU XV 2493; TM 24898; ll. 19-20). Some editors have not commented on the writing error of ἡμᾶς for ὑμᾶς. In a number of damaged letters, we can add the reference to the addressee in the lacunae: this is the case in P.PalauRib. 36 (TM 32152), P.Haun. II 36 (TM 26605), P.Bodl. I 61 f verso (TM 10267) and O.Amst. 32 (TM 70379).

⁷⁶ The fact that ὑμᾶς πάντας only appears in combination with the verb ἀσπάζομαι, is probably a coincidence, since it is such a frequently used verb.

In P.Ryl. IV 695 (TM 30594) the curious combination of the singular and the plural reference to the addressee is found⁷⁷:

“ἀσπάζεται σε ὑμᾶς Σιλβανὸς ὁ ἀδελφός” (ll. 8-9)

About ten letters, however, do not refer to the addressee and omit σε/ὑμᾶς, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζεται ἡ μήτηρ σου καὶ Σινθοῶνις καὶ ὁ πατήρ σου” (P.Oxy. LIX 3991; TM 27847; ll. 18-21)

This probably did not pose a problem as the formula was well-known and the addressee definitely understood the meaning of the phrase.

In fifteen occurrences dated between the 2nd and 5th centuries AD, the accusative σε is replaced by the dative σοι, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζεται σοι (= σε) Δίδυμος καὶ Ἡλιόδ(ωρος)” (BGU II 601; TM 28189; l. 21)⁷⁸

In this letter, as well as in some others, the editor corrects σοι into σε.

Also in P.Oxy. LXII 4340 (TM 31664), the letter writer probably intended σοι and not σε, as the editor suggests:

“πολλά συ (= σε) ἀσπαζω καὶ τοὺς ὑμῶν πάντας. Ἡσεῖς πολλά συ (= σε) ἀσπ<α>ζετε (= ἀσπάζεται) καὶ Θεονίλλα (= Θεωνίλλα) καὶ Νιλ[ο]ῦς (= Νειλοῦς) Διδύμη” (ll. 28-32)

The confusion between υ and ε is far less common (Gignac 1976: 273-274) than that between υ and οι —Gignac described the confusion between υ and οι as “the most frequent interchange in the papyri next to the interchanges of εἰ with ι and of αἰ with ε” and refers to attestations of συ for σοι (Gignac 1976: 197). There are thus sixteen occurrences of σοι-for-σε confusion in the salutations from the sender’s social circle to the addressee. Further, as the quote above shows, in P.Oxy. LXII 4340 the use of the dative σοι for the accusative does not only appear in the salutations from friends and relatives of the sender to the addressee, but it also occurs in the salutations from the sender to the addressee. In the discussion of the latter *topos*, I will focus more deeply on this kind of case confusion and its possible causes (cf. *infra*, § 3.2).

⁷⁷ This curious feature is not commented upon in the edition.

⁷⁸ The other occurrences are O.Claud. II 279 (TM 29696), P.Giss.Bibl. III 26 (TM 31818), P.Gron. 19 A (TM 29212), P.Harr. I 103 (TM 28709), P.Mich. III 206 (TM 28795), P.Mich. III 209 (TM 28798), P.Oxy. X 1299 (TM 33637), PSI III 212 (TM 33231), SB V 8002 (TM 30792), P.Batav. 21 (TM 37506), P.Köln V 239 (TM 33497), O.Claud. I 143 (TM 24155), P.Mich. VIII 482 (TM 17241) and P.Herm. 13 (TM 33471).

2.3. Sender of the regards

Mostly, the sender of the regards, i.e. a friend or relative of the sender, appears in the nominative case and is the subject of the greeting verb. It is uncommon that the sender of the regards is not mentioned, as this is obviously essential information. Yet, in BGU I 261 (TM 41596), a letter from Thermouthas and Valeria to Apollinarios⁷⁹, such a formula appears:

“ἀσπάζεται σε καὶ Ζοιδᾶν τὴν ἀδελφὴν αὐτῆς” (ll. 29-31)

This letter was probably penned by Thermouthas herself (Bagnall, Criboire, and Ahtaridis 2006: 188) and phrases like “γεινώσκειν (= γίνωσκειν) σε θέλω ἐγὼ καὶ Οὐαλερία” (ll. 3-4) show that Thermouthas is the actual initiator of the letter and Valeria is only a co-author. Bearing this in mind, it is most plausible that it was Valeria, the second sender of this letter, who uttered the salutations in lines 29 to 31 (Bagnall, Criboire, and Ahtaridis 2006: 189).

Similar to the references to multiple relatives and friends of the addressee in the greetings from the sender to the addressee’s social circle, multiple senders of regards are commonly summed up by means of καί, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζεται σε Νάρδος καὶ Νεικᾶς καὶ οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες” (BGU XVI 2618; TM 23342; ll. 22-24)

In at least five letters⁸⁰, prepositional constructions are used when multiple people send their regards, e.g.:

“ἀφ’ ἡμῶν προσαγορεύει Ἡραίσκος ἅμα τῇ συμβίῳ αὐτοῦ(ῷ) καὶ τῶν (= τῶ) τέκνω” (SB XIV 11666; TM 32942; ll. 12-13)

“ἀσπ[ά]ζογῆ[αί] [σε οἱ ἐν Πμου]παμῶ ἐρρωμ[ένοι ἐν τῇ προ]νοίᾳ θεοῦ μετὰ τῶ[ν] τέκνων] αὐτῶν” (P.Sijp. 11 c; TM 110139; ll. 1-4)

“τὰ λαμπρότατα ὑμῶν τέκνα πολλὰ προσκυνοῦσιν ὑμᾶς ἅμα τῶ\ι/ κυρίω\ι/ Ζαχα[ρ]ία\ι/ τῶ\ι/ αὐτῶν μαθητῆ\ι/, κάγω ὁ ὑμέτερος δοῦλος” (P.Cair.Masp. I 67077; TM 36819; ll. 17-18)

⁷⁹ This letter belongs to the dossier of Thermouthas cf. www.trismegistos.org/archive/525 (accessed on April 30, 2015). In chapter 9, § 2, I discuss in depth the texts informing about Thermouthas and her family.

⁸⁰ It is not always easy to know whether the preposition refers to relatives of the sender who send their regards to the addressee, or relatives of the addressee who are greeted by the relatives of the sender, e.g. in P.Lond. VI 1919 (TM 16857), the place of the μετὰ phrase in the salutations suggests that the friends of the sender greet the addressee as well as the addressee’s friends: “κα[ί] οἱ σὺν ἡμῖν πάντες ἀδελφους (= ἀδελφοί) προσαγορεύου[σ]ι σε μετὰ καὶ πάντων τῶν σὺν σοὶ ἀδελφους (= ἀδελφῶν).” (ll. 26-28) This occurrence is studied in § 4.

“πολλὰ προσαγορεύουσιν ἢ σύμβιος καὶ ἡ ἀδελφή σου μετὰ τῶν ἀβασκάντων παίδων” (PSI VII 825; TM 17679; ll. 20-22).

“ἀσπάζετέ (= ἀσπάζεται) σε ὁ ὄστις σου Ἀλέξανδρος μετὰ τῆς συνβίου καὶ τέκνων” (P.Oxy. LVI 3860; TM 33601; ll. 42-43)

Similar is ὁμοίως in SB V 7567 (TM 30787)⁸¹:

“πρὸ παντός σε ἀσπάζομαι καὶ πάντες [σ]ε ὁμοίως οἱ κατ’ οἶκον” (ll. 1-3)

The adverb ἴσως has a similar function:

“ἀσπάζομαι σε πολλά, ἴσως καὶ Χαираῖ καὶ [Ἡρώδης]” (P.Giss. I 76; TM 19465; ll. 5-6)

2.4. Extensions

2.4.1. Greetings and information about one’s own health

In four letters, the salutations are intertwined with information about the health of the sender of the regards:

“ἀσπάζοντέ (= ἀσπάζονταί) σοι (= σε) πάντες ἐρρωμένοι” (P.Harr. I 103; TM 28709; ll. 12-13)

“[ἡ δὲ κ]υρία τεκοῦσα ἡμῶν ὀλοκληροῦσα [προ]σαγορεύι (= προσαγορεύει) ὑμᾶς ἅμα ταῖς συμβίοις [ὕμῶ]ν καὶ τοῖς γλυκυτάτοις τέκν[οις]” (P.Bas. 16; TM 30799; ll. 13-15)⁸²

3. Salutations from the sender to the addressee

The regards from sender to addressee often appear at the beginning of the letter (just behind the opening formula) and are usually expressed by the first person singular of the greeting verb⁸³ and the personal pronoun σε or ὑμᾶς⁸⁴. These phrases are less

⁸¹ The phrase is fragmentary in P.Gron. 19 B (TM 29213).

⁸² The other attestations are P.Giss.Bibl. III 32 (TM 31822) and P.Sijp. 11 c (TM 110139). In some other cases, two separate clauses express the same idea, e.g.: “οἱ σοὶ ἔρρωνται καὶ ἀσπάζονταί σε” (P.Haun. II 17; TM 26599; ll. 24-25).

⁸³ In fact, Koskeniemi suggested that the new first person singular variant was created in addition to the imperative form to accommodate the sender’s need to greet the addressee, which is grammatically impossible with an imperative form (Koskeniemi 1956: 148-149; Kortus 1999: 41). Subsequently, the use of the first person singular would have spread to the greetings that are sent from the sender to the addressee’s relatives.

⁸⁴ Choat linked the phrase (πρὸ μὲν πάντων) ἀσπάζομαι σε to the business letters (Choat 2010: 174). Apart from the fact that I do not support the division of private letters into ‘business’ and ‘family’ letters (cf. *supra*, chapter 1, § 1.3), Choat’s observation does not seem to be valid as (πρὸ μὲν πάντων) ἀσπάζομαι σε also

widespread than the two formulas discussed above and appear in about 250 letters dated from the 1st until the 8th centuries AD.

3.1. Verb forms

3.1.1. Ἐπισκοπέω

Regards from sender to addressee are only expressed twice by means of the verb ἐπισκοπέω:

“ἐπισκοπούμεθά (= ἐπισκοπούμεθα) σε καὶ Χαριτοῦν καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτὴν (= αὐτῆς)” (P.Mert. II 63; TM 11913; ll. 24-26)

“[-ca.?- ἐπ]ισκοπούμαι σε καὶ τὰ ἀβάσκαν[τά σου παιδία]” (P.Harr. I 106; TM 28712; ll. 9-10)

3.1.2. Ἀσπάζομαι

In about 150 letters dated from the 1st until the 7th centuries AD, the sender sends his regards to the addressee with the verb ἀσπάζομαι⁸⁵. Mostly the first person forms ἀσπάζομαι⁸⁶ and ἀσπαζόμεθα are used, but also the participle construction with γράφω is attested eight times⁸⁷, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζομαι σε, δέσποτα, καὶ τοὺς σ[ο]ὺς πάντας” (P.Oxy. XLII 3057; TM 25080; ll. 29-30)

“ἀσπαζόμεθά σε λείαν (= λίαν)” (P.Oxy. XXXI 2593; TM 26937; l. 25)

“γενόμενος τῆ κθ ἔωθεν ἐν τῆ Ἀλεξανδρεία γράφω σοι, τέκνον, ἀσπαζόμενός σε καὶ τὴν ἀδελφήν σου” (P.Amh. II 136; TM 21701; ll. 3-6)

appears in ‘family’ letters such as the intimate letters from the archive of Apollonios *strategos* –which the scholar even mentioned himself (Choat 2010: 174). For more information about the archive of Apollonios *strategos*, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/19 (accessed on May 21, 2015) and chapter 8, § 2.

⁸⁵ An incomprehensible construction is used in P.Mich. III 201 (TM 21340; ll. 3-4): “πρὸ μὲν πάντων σοι (= σε) ἀσπάσαιθε (= ἀσπάσατε) δι[ἄ] στωλῆς (= ἐπιστολῆς)”. Ἀσπάσαιθε is read as ἀσπάσατε by the editor but it can also be interpreted as ἀσπάσασθε; anyway, this does seem to be intended as an imperative. In the editor’s view, the writer may have had a construction like ἀσπάζεσθαί σε εὔχομαι in mind –according to this interpretation, the sender might have confused the salutations with the initial health wish of the type εὔχομαι with infinitive clause.

⁸⁶ In P.Sarap. 89 a (TM 17112) ἀσπάσομαι should be read as ἀσπάζομαι: “ὕγιαίνω[ν σε] ἄσπ[π]άσομαι (= ἀσπάζομαι; my remark)” (l. 11) (cf. *supra* § 1.1.2, confusion between σ and ζ).

⁸⁷ I.e. P.Oxy. XLII 3067 (TM 30334), P.Mich. VIII 503 (TM 27113), PSI XII 1247 *verso* (TM 30631), P.Stras. VII 658 (TM 36031), SB VI 9286 (TM 38723), P.Amh. II 136 (TM 21701), P.Oxy. VIII 1164 (TM 37839) and P.Oxy. IX 1217 (TM 31648). Also in PSI XV 1553 (TM 114331), a participle construction appears: “οἱ φίλοι γράφουσί σοι ἀσπαζόμενοί σε” (ll. 16-17).

The active form is attested in P.Lips. I 111 (TM 33705; 4th century AD):

“ἀσπάζ[ομ]έν σε πάντες (= πάντας) οἱ (= τοὺς) ἐν τῆ[ῃ] οἰκ]ίᾳ μικροὺς τε καὶ μεγάλους. [κατ’] ὄνομα” (ll. 18-19)

This phrase is rather difficult to interpret due to the spelling mistakes. According to the editor, both the addressee and all the people in the house are saluted and are the object of ἀσπάζομεν. Then, the two objects of ἀσπάζομεν would be asyndetically connected, which is rather uncommon. It therefore seems more plausible to me that “πάντες οἱ ἐν τῆ[ῃ] οἰκ]ίᾳ μικροὺς τε καὶ μεγάλους [κατ’] ὄνομα” was intended as an apposition to the subject of the verb ἀσπάζομεν. Then, we would read πάντες οἱ ἐν τῆ[ῃ] οἰκ]ίᾳ μικροὺς (= μικροῖ) τε καὶ μεγάλους (= μεγάλοι) [κατ’] ὄνομα —there is also no reason to add a full stop before κατ’ ὄνομα as this phrase is entirely part of the salutation (cf. *infra*, § 6.2). Such an extensive description of the sender of the greetings is found in other letters too (cf. *infra*, § 3.3). The confusion between nominative and accusative in the phrase μικροῖ τε καὶ μεγάλοι can be explained by the frequent appearance of this word group in the accusative case (cf. *infra*, § 6.2).

Also in P.Harr. I 158 (TM 35408), the active form ἀσπάζομεν seems to occur:

“ἐμ (= ἐν) μὲν πρώτοις προσκυνῶ καὶ αἰσπάζομεν (= ἀσπάζομεν, according to the editor) τὴν ὑμῶν φιλανθρωπίαν” (l. 1)

Yet, since προσκυνῶ is a singular form, ἀσπάζομεν should be read as ἀσπάζομαι as far as I am concerned. The confusion between ε and αι is very common (Gignac 1976: 191-192), and a final ν is frequently added, and is attested before a word beginning with a stop, as in this case (Gignac 1976: 111; 113). In this respect, my interpretation is similar to the one in the more or less contemporaneous P.Michael. 39 (TM 33541), where the editor reads ἀσπαζωμεν (l. 2) as ἀσπάζομαι.

The active form ἀσπάζω is attested three times between the 3rd and the 7th centuries AD⁸⁸.

3.1.3. Προσαγορεύω

The verb forms προσαγορεύω and προσαγορεύομεν are used in about fifty letters⁸⁹ — dated between the 3rd and the 7th centuries AD— to express greetings from sender to addressee, e.g.:

⁸⁸ I.e. P.Ness. 47 (TM 21484), P.Oxy. LXII 4340 (TM 31664) and SB XXII 15482 (TM 79057). The date of the active forms confirm my above-mentioned observations that this is a later development (cf. *supra*, § 1.1.2).

⁸⁹ This number includes the dense greetings of the Christian letters of recommendation, in which the sender’s relatives salute the addressee in an uncommon phraseology (cf. *supra*, § 1.3).

“προηγ[ο]υμένως πολλά σε προ[ο]σαγορεύω” (P.Erl. 118; TM 31409; ll. 4-5)

In P.Vind.Sijp. 28 (TM 32714), the middle προσαγορεύομαι appears⁹⁰:

“† ἐν μὲν πρότοις (= πρώτοις) πολλά προσαγορεύωμε (= προσαγορεύομαι) τὴν ὑμετέραν πατριοτιταν (= πατριότητα)” (l. 1)

3.1.4. Προσκυνέω

The majority of the ἐπισκοπέω, ἀσπάζομαι and προσαγορεύω greetings deals with the addressee’s relatives, and the salutations to the addressee are a minority; in the προσκυνέω greetings, however, the regards from sender to addressee are relatively well-attested⁹¹. In about forty letters from the 3rd-4th until the 7th or perhaps the 8th centuries AD, the sender sends his best wishes to the addressee by means of the verb προσκυνέω:

“† πρὸ μὲν πάντων (= πάντων) προσκυνῶ ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς) τέσποτα (= δεσπότα)” (SB XXVI 16586; TM 97091; ll. 1-5)

“† καὶ διὰ τῶν παρόντων γραμμάτων γράφ[ω] προσκυνῶν τὴν σὴν ἐνδιάθετ[ον] φιλίαν” (SB VI 9138; TM 36197; ll. 1-2)⁹²

3.1.5. Προσφθέγγομαι

In P.Fouad I 88 (TM 37233), the greetings consist of two verbs, προσκυνέω and προσφθέγγομαι:

“✠ καὶ νῦν τῆς εὐκαιρίας δραξάμενος τοῦ γραμματηφόρου μονάζοντος κατερχομένου μετὰ τῶν γραμμάτων τοῦ ὀσιοτάτου ἀββᾶ Ἀνδρέου πρὸς τὴν ὑμετέραν πατρικὴν ἀγιοσύνην, [γε . . . φ . .] γέγραφα πρῶτον μὲν προσκύνων καὶ προσφθεγγόμενος αὐτήν” (ll. 1-4)

⁹⁰ If one accepts the hypothesis that in P.Oxy. X 1350 (TM 35590) the sender greets the addressee without explicitly mentioning him (cf. *infra*, § 3.2), this is another occurrence of the middle προσαγορεύομαι in the greetings from sender to addressee: “✠ πρὸ μὲν πάντων πολλά προσαγορεύομαι ἅμα καὶ Ἄπα Δόμνη κ[α]ὶ πάντα τοὺς ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ ἀπὸ μικροῦς (= μικρῶν) ἕως μεγάλων κατὰ τὸ <ο>νομα” (ll. 1-3).

⁹¹ This may have something to do with the original meaning of the verb προσκυνέω, viz. ‘to fall down and worship someone’—an action which only involves two people: the one making obeisance and the worshipped person. In an epistolary context those two people are the sender and the addressee.

⁹² Apart from SB VI 9138, the (participle) construction with γράφω is found in P.Oxy. VIII 1164 (TM 37839), P.Cair.Masp. I 67068 (TM 36810), SB VI 9286 (TM 38723), SB VI 9397 (TM 36836) and P.Fouad I 88 (TM 37233). In some of these letters, προσκυνέω is not the only greeting verb, but multiple verbs are combined (cf. also *infra*, § 3.1.5).

This is the only attestation of the verb προσφθέγγομαι in the salutations from sender to addressee.

3.1.6. Elliptic constructions

In, respectively, P.Cair.Masp. I 67077 (TM 36819) and PSI III 212 (TM 33231), the verb which is used to send greetings from the sender to the addressee is not expressed:

“τὰ λαμπρότατα ὑμῶν τέκνα πολλὰ προσκυνοῦσιν ὑμᾶς ἅμα τῶ\ι/ κυρίω\ι/
Ζαχα[ρ]ία\ι/ τῶ\ι/ αὐτῶν μαθητῆ\ι/, κἀγὼ ὁ ὑμέτερος δοῦλος” (ll. 17-18)
“ἀσπάδετε (= ἀσπάζεται) σοι (= σε) ἢ συβιός (= σύμβιός) σου καὶ ἡμῖς (= ἡμεῖς)
πάντας (= πάντες) κατ’ ὄνομα” (ll. 3-4)

In both letters, one expects a first person verb to complete the greetings. In the first Late Antique letter, the sender describes himself as ὁ ὑμέτερος δοῦλος (cf. appendix I, 3.2.2). The second letter preserves the only attestation of ἡμεῖς in this *topos*. Obviously, the personal pronoun is indispensable here.

Another elliptic construction seems to appear in a letter from Kopheraëna and Zenon to Theodoulos. Despite the two senders, the letter is in the first person singular: it is clear from both the content and the grammatical forms (e.g. <ἐ>μαυτῆ, l. 19) that Kopheraëna is the main sender. In the salutations, one expects to find the greetings from Kopheraëna in the first person singular, but they appear in an elliptic way, amongst the greetings from third persons to the addressee:

“προσαγορεύει σε ἅμμα σ[ου] καὶ ἐγὼ Κοφήνα καὶ ὁ υἱός (= υἰός) σου Ζήνω[ν καὶ ἡ
ἀ]δελφή σου Κυρίλλα καὶ τὰ πεδία (= παιδία) αὐτῆς” (BGU III 948; TM 33251; ll. 15-
18)

3.2. Addressee⁹³

Mostly the addressee is referred to by σε or ὑμᾶς, but like in the greetings from the sender’s relatives to the addressee, the dative is sometimes found instead of the accusative case, e.g.:

“πολλὰ π[ρ]οσαγορεύω σοι (= σε)” (P.Neph. 12; TM 33565; ll. 4-5)
“[ἀσπ]άδωμαι (= ἀσπάζομαι) ὑμῖν (= ὑμᾶς)” (SB XII 10840; TM 32557; l. 17)

⁹³ In appendix I, I discuss the Byzantine letters in which the addressee is no longer (only) referred to by personal pronouns, but also by abstract nouns, e.g. ἡ σὴ ἀδελφότης.

The plural ὑμῖν —instead of ὑμᾶς— appears in one other letter, viz. P.Oxy. LVI 3859 (TM 33600), which is dated to the 4th century AD, just like SB XII 10840. In a total of eight letters —including P.Neph. 12 (cf. *supra*)— σοι appears⁹⁴.

In three letters —P.Oxy. XXXI 2599 (TM 30439), P.Oxy. LVI 3864 (TM 35475) and P.Oxy. LXII 4340 (TM 31664)— συ is read as σε, e.g.:

“ἀσπάδομαι (= ἀσπάζομαι) συ (= σε), Κύρα (= κυρία; my remark⁹⁵), καὶ τὴν ἀδελφήν σου καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν τῆς μητρὸς σου” (P.Oxy. XXXI 2599; ll. 26-29)

Apart from the above observation that οἱ is more commonly confused with οἰ than with εἰ (Gignac 1976: 197; 273-274, cf. *supra*, § 2.2), there are other reasons for favoring the interpretation of συ (= σοι): in other parts of the letters P.Oxy. XXXI 2599 and P.Oxy. LVI 3864, συ is interpreted as σοι, and not as σε, e.g.:

“καθὼς εἴρηκες (= εἴρηκας) οὖν, Κύρα (= κυρία; my remark), ὅτι πέμπω συ (= σοι) σαβακάτεια (= σαβακάθια), πέμψον, καὶ πέμ(πω) συ (= σοι) τὰ τῶν ἐγυπθείων (= Αἰγυπτίων)” (P.Oxy. XXXI 2599; ll. 23-26)

“εἶδου (= ἰδοὺ) προέγραψά συ (= σοι)” (P.Oxy. LVI 3864; l. 32)

“ἔρρισθε (= ἐρρώσθαί) συ (= σοι) εὐχομεν (= εὐχομαι) πολλοὶς (= πολλοῖς) χρόνης (= χρόνοις)” (P.Oxy. LVI 3864; ll. 36-37)

The senders thus seem to have orthographic difficulties with υ and οἰ. Therefore, I propose to read συ consistently as σοι in P.Oxy. XXXI 2599, P.Oxy. LVI 3864 and P.Oxy. LXII 4340.

In sum, it thus seems that the σοι-for-σε confusion is attested in twelve salutations from sender to addressee. Above, I have already discussed sixteen instances of similar substitution in the greetings from the sender’s social circle to the addressee (cf. *supra*, § 2.2)⁹⁶. There is no straightforward explanation for the use of the dative instead of the accusative; in different letters, different factors might have caused the confusion. Yet, in a recent study, my colleague Joanne Stolk (University of Oslo) and I have listed a number of possible causes (Stolk and Nachtergaele: submitted to *Symbolae Osloenses*). First of all, whereas phonetic similarity and orthographic uncertainty may have played a role, it cannot have been the only trigger for this kind of confusion, since the substitution appears in the singular σε/σοι as well as in the plural ὑμᾶς/ὑμῖν. What did

⁹⁴ I.e. P.Köln V 239 (TM 33497), SB XVIII 13593 (TM 30995), P.Mich. VIII 519 (TM 32728), SB XIV 11492 (TM 36254), P.Neph. 12 (TM 33565), P.Lond. VI 1918 (TM 16856), P.Dura 46 (TM 30498), O.Wilck. 1219 (TM 77619).

⁹⁵ As discussed above in footnote 47, a ι is frequently omitted.

⁹⁶ Given that two letters have the dative-for-accusative confusion in the salutations from the sender’s social circle to the addressee, as well as in the salutations from sender to addressee, the total number of letters with a dative-for-accusative substitution in one of the two greeting formulas is 26, not 28. I count two letters on one papyrus sheet as two different occurrences.

definitely not play a role is the verb expressing the salutations: one would perhaps expect that the dative was used because of the verbs προσαγορεύω, ἐπισκοπέω and προσκυνέω, which contain the prefixes προσ- and ἐπι-. However, the data show that the verb choice is not related to the confusion of cases: the σοι-for-σε substitution does not occur more frequently in salutations with προσαγορεύω, ἐπισκοπέω or προσκυνέω, and examples such as P.Neph. 12 (TM 33565) are illustrative:

“πολλὰ π[ρ]οσαγορεύω σοι (= σε)” (ll. 4-5)

“πολλὰ προσαγορεύω ὑμᾶς” (l. 13)

If προσαγορεύω had caused the use of the dative form σοι, then one would expect the same confusion for ὑμᾶς as well⁹⁷. Perhaps semantic and syntactic similarities might have played a role: the addressee is commonly referred to in a dative case in Greek (cf. after verbs of speaking, writing). By analogical extension this use of the dative case might have been transferred to other categories of verbs, including the category of greeting verbs.

Further, the explanation of this phenomenon cannot solely be based on these instances solely as the closing formula and the initial health wish attest to the same kind of case confusion (e.g. P.Oxy. LVI 3864, *supra*, cf. also chapter 4 and 7). Overall, different factors might have influenced each other and the instances of case confusion often show an inadequate knowledge of Greek in general (due to poor education, and perhaps the learning of Greek as a second language).

In ten letters, πᾶς is added to ὑμᾶς, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζομαι ὑμᾶς πάντας κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Meyer 23; TM 33283; ll. 12-13)

Other variant is ὑμᾶς κατ’ ὄνομα ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ σου in P.Oxy. LVI 3864 (TM 35475):

“πολλά σὺ (= σοι; cf. *supra*) προσαγορέω (= προσαγορεύω) ἡμᾶ[ς] (= ὑμᾶς) κατ’ ὄνομα ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ σου” (ll. 35-36)

⁹⁷ Also other types of phraseological variation, such as the influence of the *dativus commodi*, might have been a source of confusion. O.Claud. I 143 (TM 24155) has both the *dativus commodi* and the σοι-for-σε confusion in one letter: “ἀσπασσου (= ἀσπάζου) μοι Ἀμαρανθὸν πολλὰ καὶ Μεσκήνιογ καὶ Βαραθογ καὶ τοὺς συγκελλαρίους (= συγκελλαρίους) αὐτοῦ κατ’ ὄνομα καὶ Ἀμαρουραν καὶ Λοῦππον καὶ τὸν συμπολίτην ἡμῶν καὶ πάντες (= πάντας) τοὺς φιλοῦντες (= φιλοῦντας) ἡμᾶς. ἀσπάζεται σοι Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ Μεσκηνίω” (ll. 5-12). Perhaps, this very writer associated the verb ἀσπάζομαι with the dative, and transferred the use of a dative from the salutations to third parties to the salutations from his own social circle to the addressee. Yet, this is the only letter with the σοι-for-σε substitution that preserves the *dativus commodi*; all in all, it seems that μοι is too uncommon (cf. *supra*, § 1.4.2) to have been a general source of confusion.

Remarkable is that there are two references to the addressee: besides ὑμᾶς κατ' ὄνομα ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ σου, also σε appears. The editor translates this formula as: “Many greetings to you, all of you in your house by name”.

In P.Mil. II 81 (TM 33514), P.Oxy. X 1350 (TM 35590) and P.Oxy. XXXI 2596 (TM 30435), the addressee is not explicitly mentioned, but one is presumed to intuitively suppose an ellipsis of the reference to the addressee, respectively⁹⁸:

“πρὸ παντὸς πολλοῦ ἀσπάζομαι εὐχόμενος υἰαίνειν (= υγιαίνειν) ἐπὶ μηκιστᾶ (= μήκιστον) χρόνον, μετὰ τὴν κυρ[ί]αν σου ἀδελφὴν Χαρίτην πο. μητέρα Εἰρήνην” (ll. 4-10)

“✠ πρὸ μὲν πάντων πολλὰ προσαγορεύομαι ἅμα καὶ Ἄπα Δόμνη κ[α]ὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ ἀπὸ μικροῦς (= μικρῶν) ἕως μεγάλων κατὰ τὸ <ο>νομα” (ll. 1-3)

“πολλὰ προσαγ[ό]ρευε μετὰ καὶ τῶν ἡμῶ[.]ν πάντω(ν)” (l. 22)

At the other end of the spectrum of identifying the addressee, there are occurrences that mention the addressee's name by means of a vocative (cf. *infra*, § 3.4.1).

3.3. Sender

The sender of the greetings is simply the sender of the letter and he is usually not explicitly mentioned (cf. § 1.3)⁹⁹. In P.Sarap. 85 (TM 17107), however, ἐγὼ is superfluously added:

“ἐγὼ δὲ αἰεὶ (= αἰεὶ) δι' ὧν ἄν εὐρῶ ἀναπλεόντων χαίρων σε ἀσπάζομαι” (ll. 5-6)

Ἐγὼ also appears in P.Kellis I 71 (TM 33325), to explain the plural verb προσαγορεύομεν:

“προηγουμένως πολλὰ τὴν σὴν εὐλάβειαν προσαγορεύομεν ἐγὼ καὶ ἡ σύμβιος καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ κατ' ὄνομα, εὖ ἔχοντες τρέως προνοία τοῦ θεοῦ” (ll. 4-8)

In this salutation, the addressee is not only greeted by the sender, but also by the sender's wife and sons. Its phraseology, however, is different from that discussed in § 2. The same phenomenon can be observed in P.Lond. VI 1929 (TM 32662):

⁹⁸ P.Haun. II 18 (TM 30121) has a kind of elliptic construction in which σε is mentioned in the phrase before the greetings and functions as the object of the ἀσπάζομαι greetings as well: “πρὸ τῶν ὄλων εὐχομαί σε υγιαίνειν (= υγιαίνειν) καὶ ἀσπάζομαι” (ll. 4-6).

⁹⁹ In PSI III 212 (TM 33231), the personal pronoun ἡμεῖς appears because the salutations have an elliptic construction (cf. *supra*, § 3.1.6): “ἀσπάδετε (= ἀσπάζεται) σοι (= σε) ἡ συμβίος (= σύμβιος) σου καὶ ἡμῖς (= ἡμεῖς) πάντας (= πάντες) κατ' ὄνομα” (ll. 3-4).

“Θεοδόσιος, [. . .]σθ.[.], Ἀντίοχος, Δι[δ]ύμη, ἡ μήτηρ, πάντες οἱ τ]οῦ ἡμετέρου οἴκου π[ολλά] σε καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν καὶ προσαγορεύομεν, [τιμι]ώτατε ἀγαπητὲ πά[τερ]” (ll. 17-19)

Also in BGU III 923 (TM 25641), unusual phraseology is employed:

“καὶ ἡμεῖς σοι πάντες ἀσπαζονται (= ἀσπαζόμεθα) ὑμᾶς” (ll. 27-28)

This, too, seems to be a dense way for the sender and his social circle to greet the addressee. Similar examples of greetings which do not only come from the sender himself, are the following¹⁰⁰:

“ἡδέως σε ἀσπαζόμεθα πάντες οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ καὶ τοὺς μετ’ ἐσοῦ πάντας” (P.Oxy. III 531; TM 28371; ll. 3-4)

“ἀσπαζ[ό]μεθα σε πάντες κύριε πά[τερ . . .]” (P.Ryl. IV 624; TM 32762; ll. 31-32)

In P.Oxy. XX 2275 (TM 32726), the sender states his name in the dative case and the greeting formula functions as opening formula. This phrase is clearly a contamination of, on the one hand, the opening formula with *χαίρειν* —which has the sender’s name in the nominative and the addressee’s name in the dative— and, on the other hand, the *προσαγορεύω* greetings, in which one expects the reference to the addressee to be in the vocative:

“[κυρίῳ μου] ἀδελφῶ Τιμοθέῳ Θεωνᾶς [πολλά σε π]ροσαγορεύω” (ll. 1-2)¹⁰¹

3.4. Extensions

3.4.1. Vocative

In 25 letters from the 1st-2nd until the 7th centuries AD, the sender addresses the recipient in a direct way by means of a vocative. The use of vocatives seems to be a development under Latin influence (Dickey 2004a: 527). Mostly, the addressee is referred to by kinship and polite terms¹⁰², e.g.:

¹⁰⁰ This is also attested in the greetings of the Christian letters of recommendation discussed above (cf. *supra*, § 1.3). As discussed in § 3.1.2, P.Lips. I 111 (TM 33705) is possibly also a similar attestation.

¹⁰¹ A similar phrase is the greeting/opening formula of P.Lond. VI 1927 (TM 32660): “τῶ τιμιωτάτῳ ἀδελφῶ καὶ θε[ο]φιλ[ε]ῖ. Δωρόθεος ὁ Ὁξ[υ]ρυγγεῖτης ὁ ἄχριος (= ἄχρειος) δοῦλος προσαγορεύει σε ἐν πν(εύματ)ι καὶ ἐν ἀγάπῃ Χ(ριστο)ῦ” (ll. 1-4). One expects *προσαγορεύω* in the first person singular, but the verb seems to be adapted to the impersonal phraseology of the *χαίρειν* opening formulas.

¹⁰² The specific phraseology of these vocatives —i.e. polite terms, kinship terms and other characterizations appearing in the vocative— are discussed in appendix I. The vocative is completely supplemented in P.Vars. 25 (TM 27538); this attestation has not been taken into account.

“ἀσπάζομαί σε, δέσποτα, καὶ τοὺς σ[ο]ὺς πάντας” (P.Oxy. XLII 3057; TM 25080; ll. 29-30)

In only three occurrences, the addressee is referred to by his name¹⁰³:

“ἀσπάζομαί σε, ἀδελφε Νεικῆτα” (P.Wash.Univ. I 30; TM 30253; ll. 32-33)

“ἀσπάζομα[ί] σαῖ (= σε), μακά[ριε] ἄπα Παι[ηοῦ, - ca.11]” (P.Lond. VI 1917 TM 16855; l. 26)

“ἀσπάζομαί σε ἡδιστ[α, γ]λυκύτατε Σαραπίων” (SB IV 7335; TM 14010; ll. 3-4)

3.4.2. Greetings and the initial health wish¹⁰⁴

In sixteen letters¹⁰⁵ dating from the 3rd-4th until the 6th-7th centuries AD, an initial health wish is added to the greetings at the beginning of the letter and the verb of the health wish, εὐχόμεαι, is put in the participle¹⁰⁶, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζομαί σε πολλὰ εὐχόμενος ὑγιαίνειν” (P.Kellis I 64; TM 33318; ll. 4-5)

This feature seems to be especially popular in the letters found in Kellis: half of the occurrences were found in this region¹⁰⁷.

Apart from the vocatives in greetings from sender to addressee, but they also appear thrice in other greeting *topoi*: in P.Batav. 21 (TM 37506), the vocative is found in greetings from a third person taking up the pen: “[ἐ]γὼ ἢ γρῦα (= γρηῖα) ἀσπάζομαί σοι (= σε) κυρία μου θυγάτηρ καὶ του (= τὸν) κυρίου (= κύριον) μου υἱὸν (= υἰὸν) Πέτρου (= Πέτρον) καὶ τῆς (= τὴν) θυγατρος (= θυγατέρα) σου καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ κατ’ ὄνομα” (ll. 16-20) (cf. *infra*, § 5). In P.Oxy. LXXIII 4965 (TM 118655), it is attested in the greetings from the sender to the addressee’s relatives and friends (cf. *supra*, § 1.1.4): “αὐτός, κ[ύριε] μου ἀδελφε, προσαγόρευε ἡμῖν τοὺς παρὰ σοὶ πάντας ἐκλεκτοὺς τε καὶ κατηχουμένους καθ’ ἕκαστον καὶ μάλιστα τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν Θε[ό]δωρον, εἰ ἐστὶν παρὰ σοί, καὶ ὄν σιον Θεόγνωστον καὶ ἐπαφροδιτικῶς του .[. .] δ[. .] Ἀ]θανασίου ὡς ἰ. .[. .] . μ. [.] . δι’ ἐτέρας [- ca.12 -]” (ll. 18-29). In P.Oxy. XII 1593 (TM 33662), the vocative occurs in an additional remark to the greetings: “ἀσπάζομαι τὸν πατέρα ἡμῶν, τουτέστιν (=τοῦτό ἐστιν) σόν, ἀδελφε” (l. 16).

¹⁰³ In P.Oxy. XXXI 2599 (TM 30439) the capital of the word Κύρα seems to suggest that this is a personal name: “ἀσπάδομαι (= ἀσπάζομαι) συ (= σοι; my remark, cf. *supra*, § 3.2), Κύρα, καὶ τὴν ἀδελφήν/ σου καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν τῆς μητρὸς σου” (ll. 26-29). Yet, since the letter is sent by a certain Tauris to her Vater Apitheon, this is not a reference to the addressee. Κύρα should probably be read as κύρια (cf. *supra*, footnote 47 and § 3.2; cf. it is translated as ‘lady’, Bagnall, Criore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 400-401). Hence, this occurrence is in my opinion not an attestation of the addressee’s name in the vocative.

¹⁰⁴ Ziemann already acknowledged the confusion between the greetings and the health wish: he quoted the overlapping intensifiers, such as πρὸ πάντων and the paratactical or hypotactical intertwining of the two formulas (Ziemann 1910: 332-333).

¹⁰⁵ I.e. P.Phil. 34 (TM 25215), SB XXVI 16706 (TM 97219), SB XXIV 16204 (TM 32720), SB XVI 12496 (TM 30278), P.Mil. II 81 (TM 33514), O.Kellis 142 (TM 74670), P.Kellis I 5 (TM 33297), P.Kellis I 7 (TM 33299), P.Kellis I 12 (TM 33302), P.Kellis I 64 (TM 33318), P.Kellis I 68 (TM 33322), P.Kellis I 72 (TM 33326), P.Kellis I 75 (TM 33329), P.Oxy. XVI 1860 (TM 37866), SB VI 9138 (TM 36197) and P.Oxy. XIV 1679 (TM 31787).

¹⁰⁶ The specific phraseology of the health wish is discussed in chapter 4.

¹⁰⁷ The editor did not comment on this peculiarity in this collection.

In P.Oxy. LVI 3863 (TM 35474), a purpose clause is added to the salutations:

“ἐν πρώτοις μὲν προσαγορεύομεν τη (= τήν) ση (= σήν) χρηστοτητι (= χρηστότητα)
ὅπως ὑγιαίνοντός σου καὶ εὐθυμοῦντος ἀπολάβῃς (= ἀπολάβῃς) τὰ παρ’ ἡμῶν
γράμματα” (ll. 5-8)

Such purpose clauses usually occur after the main verb εὔχομαι, and express the *topos* that the addressee will receive the letter in good health (cf. *infra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.3).

In P.Giss. I 18 (TM 19420), perhaps the wish for the addressee’s well-being is added to the regards at the end of the letter:

“ἀσπάζεται σε [ὕγι]αίγ[ον]τᾶ” (ll. 12-13)

3.4.3. Greetings and information about one’s own health

In three letters, the sender of the greetings also gives information about his own health (cf. *supra*, § 2.4.1):

“ἐρωμένος (= ἐρρωμένος) ὑμᾶς ἀσπάζομε (= ἀσπάζομαι) [ματὰ (= μετὰ) τῶν τέκνων
σου] (hand 2) \καὶ τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ πάντας/” (P.Euphrates 16; TM 44674; ll. 1-2)

“ἐρωμένος (= ἐρρωμένος) σοι (= σε; my remark, cf. *supra*) ἀσπάζομαι ἀπὸ
Ἄντριοχέϊας” (P.Dura 46; TM 30498; l. 2)

“ὕγιαίνω[ν σε] ἀσπάζομαι (= ἀσπάζομαι; my remark, cf. *supra*)” (P.Sarap. 89 a; TM
17112; l. 11)

4. Salutations from the sender’s social circle to the addressee’s social circle

The salutations from relatives of the sender to relatives of the addressee are not widespread: in my corpus, they only appear in 47 occurrences dated between the end of the 1st century BC and the 6th century AD. The greetings can be divided into three categories: in nine letters, an acquaintance of the sender only gives his best wishes to a third person instead of to the addressee as we would expect (cf. *supra*, § 2), e.g.:

“ἀσπάζεται Ζοῖδᾶ Οὐαλερίᾳ” (BGU III 822; TM 28093; l. 23)¹⁰⁸

In seventeen other instances, the sender’s relative salutes both the addressee —as usual— and a relative of the addressee, e.g.:

¹⁰⁸ The other occurrences are BGU XIII 2349 (TM 29230), P.Köln II 108 (TM 31494), SB VI 9017, Nr. 11 (TM 25239), BGU II 601 (TM 28189), P.Oxy. I 114 (TM 28406), P.Oxy. LIX 3997 (TM 31129), P.Fouad I 83 (TM 33387) and P.Oxy. XVI 1837 (TM 38744).

“ἀσπάζεται σε Φεράγαθος καὶ Ταῆσιν καὶ Λῦσιν” (P.Bad. II 35; TM 19330; ll. 22-23)
 “ἐπισκ[ο]πεῖτε (= ἐπισκοπεῖται) ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς) Πομπῆις ὁ μικρός, των (= τὸν) πατέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν μητέρα” (SB VI 9122; TM 25289; ll. 11-12)
 “ἀσπάδι (= ἀσπάζει) ὑμᾶς πάντας ἢ μήτηρ ὑμῶν Σαραπᾶς, Φιλουμένην συ (= σὺν) τοῖς τέκνοις καὶ Ὀριγένην καὶ Χινθῶνι(ν) καὶ Μασκουλῖνον καὶ τὴν σύνβιον αὐτοῦ καὶ Ἡράκλειαν καὶ Αἴαν καὶ Πτολεμῖν[ο]ν καὶ τὴν σύνβιον αὐτοῦ.” (P.Oxy. XIV 1670; TM 31781; ll. 24-31)¹⁰⁹

Finally, apart from the ten dense greeting formulas of the type “δι’ ἧς ὑμᾶς καὶ τοὺς σὺν ὑμῖν ἐγὼ τε καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ προσαγορεύομεν” (P.Oxy. LVI 3857; TM 33598; ll. 9-13)” mostly found in Christian letters of recommendation (cf. *supra*, § 1.3), in other eleven occurrences¹¹⁰, the third person greets a group of people in general, not a specific relative or friend of the addressee, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζεται σε Ἀπολλῶς ὁ υἱός μου καὶ τοὺς σοὺς πάντας” (P.Mert. II 83; TM 28785; ll. 15-16)
 “καὶ ὁ μακάριος Παῦλος προσαγορεύει σε καὶ τοὺς σὺν σοὶ ἀδελφούς, κα[ὶ] οἱ σὺν ἡμῖν πάντες ἀδελφους (= ἀδελφοί) προσαγορεύου[σιν] σε μετὰ καὶ πάντων τῶν σὺν σοὶ ἀδελφους (= ἀδελφῶν)” (P.Lond. VI 1919; TM 16857; ll. 25-28)¹¹¹
 “[ἢ δὲ κ]υρία τεκοῦσα ἡμῶν ὀλοκληροῦσα [προ]σαγορεύει (= προσαγορεύει) ὑμᾶς ἅμα ταῖς συμβίοις [ὑμῶ]ν καὶ τοῖς γλυκυτάτοις τέκν[οις]” (P.Bas. 16; TM 30799; ll. 13-15)¹¹²
 “ἀσπάζεται σε ἢ σύμβιός μου Χαιρημονίς καὶ Πόλλιττα ἢ καὶ Σαραπίας ὁμοίως ἀσπάζεται ἀμφοτέρους” (P.Mil.Vogl. I 24; TM 12344; ll. 62-66)¹¹³

5. Salutations from third persons in the first person perspective

As said in the introduction (cf. *supra*, chapter 1, § 1.2.2), writing a letter is studied in this thesis as a social activity involving other members of the community, not as a mere

¹⁰⁹ P.Oxy. XIV 1670 preserves the only attestation of the preposition construction with σὺν in this *topos*. The other attestations are P.Oxy. XLI 2981 (TM 26861), P.Mich. VIII 477 (TM 27090), SB XVIII 13864 (TM 27678), P.Wisc. II 69 (TM 13725), P.Mil. II 74 (TM 28775), BGU I 261 (TM 41596), O.Claud. I 143 (TM 24155), P.Giss. I 21 (TM 19423), P.Oxy. XII 1581 (TM 29006), P.Berl.Cohen 15 (TM 110057), P.Giss.Bibl. III 26 (TM 31818), P.Oxy. XVII 2156 (TM 32837), P.Mich. VIII 482 (TM 17241) and P.Oxy. XII 1479 (TM 78571).

¹¹⁰ In addition to the four following quotes, seven other examples are P.Oxy. II 293 (TM 20564), P.Giss.Bibl. III 20 (TM 22116), P.Mich. III 206 (TM 28795), P.Oxy. III 531 (TM 28371), P.Oxy. XIV 1761 (TM 29024), P.Tebt. II 413 (TM 28426) and SB V 8002 (TM 30792).

¹¹¹ In this *topos*, this is the sole occurrence of a preposition construction with μετὰ.

¹¹² Only in this letter, the ἅμα construction is attested in this *topos*.

¹¹³ This is the only attestation of ὁμοίως in this type of greetings.

product of sender and addressee. It is thought of as a dynamic process, in which other individuals, who are present when the letter is written, can actively take part (e.g. salutations from friends and relatives of the sender to the addressee (cf. *supra*, § 2) and to the addressee's social circle (cf. *supra*, § 4)). In those phrases, bystanders contribute from a third person perspective. In the greeting phrases discussed in this section, this will be different as someone other than the sender sends his regards in the first person perspective. Regards from a third person in the first person perspective are found in fourteen letters, dated from the 1st until the 5th centuries AD. In seven of those occurrences, the pronoun ἐγώ is followed by a personal name:

“ἐγὼ Μαρία προσαγορεύω τὴν κυρίαν μου τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν μετὰ τέκνων” (P.Kellis I 71; TM 33325; ll. 52-53)

“[ἐ]γὼ ἢ γρυα (= γρηΐα) ἀσπάζομαί σοι (= σε) κυρία μου θυγάτηρ καὶ του (= τὸν) κυρίου (= κύριον) μου υἱοῦ (= υἱὸν) Πέτρου (= Πέτρον) καὶ τῆς (= τὴν) θυγατρὸς (= θυγάτερα) σου καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ κατ’ ὄνομα. ἐγὼ Ἑρμῆς ἀσπάζομαί σε κυρία (= κυρίαν) μου καὶ τ[ου] (= τὸν) κυρίου (= κύριον) μου καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Batav. 21; TM 37506; ll. 16-24)

“ἀσπάζο[μαί] σοι (= σε) ἐγὼ Νιλάμμων ὁ γρ[άψα]ς τὴν ἐπιστολὴν καὶ [πάντ]ας τοὺς ἀδελφούς κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Herm. 13; TM 33471; ll. 13-16)¹¹⁴

In P.Herm. 13 the addition ὁ γρ[άψα]ς τὴν ἐπιστολὴν indicates that the sender of the regards is the scribe¹¹⁵. Yet, from this occurrence and from the fact that none of the greeting formulas contain a change in handwriting, one cannot simply deduce that the scribe is always responsible for this type of salutations. P.Batav. 21, quoted above, argues against such a hypothesis: two persons —ἢ γρυα (= γρηΐα) and a certain Hermes— send greetings in their own name, without a change in handwriting. Probably, the writer of this letter literally penned down what these people had said.

¹¹⁴ The other occurrences are SB XII 10840 (TM 32557), O.Douch V 630 (TM 74186), P.Lond. VI 1925 (TM 32658) and P.Oxy. VII 1067 (TM 31314). The opening formula of SB XII 10840 indicates that this letter was sent by Euthalios and Mike to their mother. Yet, the actual situation seems to be different, as Euthalios writes in the first person singular and refers to Mike in the third person. Only in the greetings, Mike states her name and actively takes up the role of sender: “καὶ ἐγὼ Μίκη ἀσ[π]άδωμαι (= ἀσπάζομαι) τὸν αἰπιστάτην (= ἐπιστάτην) σὺ (= σὺν) τοῖς τέκνυς (= τέκνοις) καὶ τὴν (= τῇ) συβίῳ (= συμβίῳ) αὐτοῦ.” (ll. 22-25). This is, by the way, also the only occurrence of a prepositional construction with σύν in this *topos*.

¹¹⁵ This is not to say that whenever scribes added greetings, they wrote them from a first person perspective; there are also attestations of the scribe sending his greetings from a third person perspective, in the same way as the sender's social circle (cf. *supra*, § 2): “προσαγορεύει σε ὁ σὸς δο(ῦ)λος Λυκάτος ὁ καὶ γράψας” (P.Iand. VI 103; TM 36108; l. 26) and “Πετεεὺς ὁ γρά[φω]ν μοι τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἀσπά[ζε]τε (= ἀσπάζεται) σοι (= σε) λίαν λίαν καὶ τὴν γυναι[κ]α[ν] (= γυναικᾶ) σου καὶ τὴν θυγατέραν (= θυγάτερα) σοι (= σου) [καὶ] Βάσσον τὸν ἵππον σοι (= σου)” (P.Mich. VIII 482; TM 17241; ll. 8-12).

In the seven other occurrences, we simply find the verb in the first person extended with a personal name in the nominative case:

“ἀσπάζομαι σε πολλά [Μ]άξιμος ὁ γράψας [-ca.?-]. ικες τοὺς παρὰ σέ” (O.Claud. II 264; TM 29684; ll. 8-10)

“ἀσπάσομέ (= ἀσπάζομαι) σε Διονύσιος” (P.Oxy. XLIX 3505; TM 26609; ll. 24-25)

“(hand 3) Ἰερακίων ἀσπάζομαι σε, γλυκύτατε” (P.Brem. 48; TM 19632; l. 35)¹¹⁶

The phraseology in O.Claud. II 264 shows —like P.Herm. 13 above— that Maximus was the scribe of the letter —and not the sender, as the editor suggested; in other instances, such as P.Brem. 48, the sender of the greetings is not the same person as the scribe, since the greetings are written in a different handwriting.

As the examples show, mostly the addressee is saluted, sometimes in combination with friends or relatives of his. In a limited number of cases, only relatives of the addressee are greeted.

6. General extensions

Whereas some extensions which are (mainly) linked to one specific greeting *topos* have already been studied above, others appear in different *topoi* and are discussed in this section.

¹¹⁶ The other occurrences are P.Köln V 239 (TM 33497), P.Oxy. XLII 3062 (TM 25082), P.Giss. I 85 (TM 19472) and P.Mert. II 82 (TM 28784). In P.Giss. I 85, the sender’s name is lost. Based on the salutations “Ἑρμαῖος [ὁμοί]ως σε ἀσπάζομαι” (ll. 11-12), Hermaios is thought to be the sender: the uncommon phraseology of the greetings was ascribed to Hermaios’ supposed inexperience in letter-writing due to his presumed young age (Kortus 1999: 184). Yet, my investigation shows that this type of greetings does not hint at a lack of experience, but that it is actually another, less common type of greetings, which suggests that he is not the sender. Further, P.Giss. I 85 is the only attestation in this *topos* which seems to preserve ὁμοίως. However, I am not convinced that the supplement is correct: usually, ὁμοίως introduces a second (group of) person(s) that are greeted or that send greetings (cf. *supra*, e.g. “ἀσπάζου Ἰουλίαν τὴν κυρίαν μου ἀδελφήν, ὁμοίως Σαραπίάδα ...” (P.Mich. VIII 466; TM 17240; ll. 43-44)). It is more or less synonymous with καί. In P.Giss. I 85, on the other hand, that is not the case; perhaps, instead of ὁμοίως an intensifier was originally added (θερμῶς, or one of the other similar adverbs ending on -ως). Yet, given the low number of occurrences of those type of intensifiers, I cannot propose a probable conjecture.

In P.Mert. II 82 (ll. 19-20): “{Σαραπάμμων} [ο] σὲ ἀσπάζομαι”, the name Σαραπάμμων can in my opinion not be deleted, as is done by the editors. They stated that “it is impossible to make sense of these lines as they stand. Possibly the writer began to write a sentence with the words Σαραπάμμων ὁ, and then erased ὁ but neglected to erase Σαραπάμμων too. Omission of these words gives good sense. Otherwise it would be necessary to treat ἀσπάζομαι as an error for ἀσπάζεται” (Rees, Bell, and Barns 1959: 113). Seemingly, the fact that the editors were not familiar with greetings by third persons from a first person perspective, led them to alter the salutations in P.Mert. II 82. My investigation has revealed that the phrase in P.Mert. II 82 is not without parallels, and should thus be read as it was written.

6.1. References to groups

The third persons greeted and —to a minor extent, the third persons who are sending regards— are not always mentioned as individuals; they can also be referred to as a group —and this is rather typical of the salutations. These ‘group references’ are often found at the end of the list of persons who send or receive regards¹¹⁷.

6.1.1. Οἱ πάντες

In fourteen letters from the 1st until the 7th centuries AD, the persons sending regards or the persons saluted are referred to by (οἱ) πάντες¹¹⁸:

“ἀσπάζετε (= ἀσπάζεται) ὑμᾶς Οὔλιπς καὶ Τιτιανὸς καὶ πάντες” (O.Claud. II 260; TM 29680; ll. 8-10)

“ἀσπάσασθε πάντας κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Kellis I 66; TM 33320; ll. 12-13)

Οἱ πάντες is duplicated in P.Apoll. 62 (TM 39121):

“καὶ πολὰ (= πολλὰ) προσκύνησον τὴν Σάραν τὴν δεσποινα<v> σου, καὶ π[-ca.?-] καὶ πολὰ (= πολλὰ) ἐξ ἐμοῦ τὴν ἀδελφὴν [[α]] Φιβίου καὶ πάντας πάντας” (ll 3-4)

6.1.2. Οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες and variants

A common reference to a group refers to all people in the house, i.e. οἱ ἐν (τῷ) οἴκῳ (σου) (πάντες):

“ἀσπάζεται σε Νάρδος καὶ Νεικᾶς καὶ οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες” (BGU XVI 2618; TM 23342; ll. 22-24)

“ἀσπάζομαι Μαξενθία (= Μαξενθία<v>) καὶ Κυρακος (= Κυρακὸν) καὶ Σαμπάθια (= Σαμπαθία<v>) καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ ὅλους κατ’ ὄνομα.” (P.Abinn. 25; TM 10023; ll. 13-15)

“πάντας τ[ο]ῦ[ς] ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ σου ἅπαντ[ας] προσαγόρευε” (P.Oxy. XII 1492; TM 31748; ll. 15-17)

¹¹⁷ Also the addressee of the salutations can be a group, referred to by ὑμᾶς (πάντας/ὅλους) (cf. *supra*).

In P.Neph. 11 (TM 33564), a group of people is even generally referred to as “all the rest”: “πάνυ προσαγορεύω τὸν πατέρα Πεσανς καὶ πάντας τοὺς στρατιώτας τοῦ Χρηστοῦ τοὺς σὺν ἡμῖν (= ὑμῖν) ὄντας καὶ πάντας τοὺς λοιποὺς κατ’ ὄνομα” (ll. 11-16). Λοιπός is only attested two more times, both in combination with ἀδελφός (viz. P.Neph. 1; TM 33555 and P.Neph. 7; TM 33561); all occurrences are from the Nepheros archive (cf. www.trismegistos.org/archive/150; accessed on May 21, 2015).

¹¹⁸ In O.Claud. I 126 (TM 24138), οἱ πάντες is the object of the greeting formula, and should be in the accusative: “ἀσπάζου Σαβεῖνον τὸν [ἀδ]ελφόν μου καὶ πάντες (= πάντας; my remark)” (ll. 11-12).

“ἡδέως σε ἀσπάζομεθα πάντες οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ καὶ τοὺς μετ’ ἐσοῦ πάντα” (P.Oxy. III 531; TM 28371; ll. 3-4)

This and variants of the formula are attested in different types of salutations, i.e. in greetings from the sender to the addressee’s relatives (cf. P.Abinn. 25), in regards from the sender’s relatives (cf. BGU XVI 2618) and in the reference to the sender of the regards (cf. P.Oxy. III 531). In total, the references to all people in the house are found about a hundred times in private letters from the end of the 2nd century BC until the 6th century AD.

Different parts of the expression, such as the article of οἶκος¹¹⁹, the genitive of the personal pronoun (cf. σου in P.Oxy. XII 1492)¹²⁰ and the adjective πᾶς can either be left out or included¹²¹. Οἶκος is replaced by οἰκία in sixteen greetings¹²², and the preposition

¹¹⁹ From a grammatical point of view the greeting formula in P.Haun. II 25 (TM 32377) is incorrectly supplemented: “[-ca.?- ἀσπάζομαι πάντα] ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ// κατ’ ὄνομα †” (ll. 19-20). Since one expects an article, a more plausible formula would be “[-ca.?- πάντα τοῦ] ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ// κατ’ ὄνομα †”. In my opinion, it is too speculative to supplement a verb form.

¹²⁰ Like in P.Oxy. XII 1492 (quoted above), σου is added to the salutations from the sender to the addressee’s social circle in six other letters. In BGU III 814 (TM 31238), the following supplement appears: “ἀσπάζομαι τοὺς ἐν οἰκί[α] πάντες (= πάντα) [τοὺς σοὺς]” (ll. 36-37). The possessive pronoun is rare: the sole more or less similar phrase is found in P.Oxy. IX 1218 (TM 31649): “[ἀσπάζοντέ (= ἀσπάζονται) σε οἱ σοὶ πάντα οἱ οἰκίῳ (= οἰκεῖοί) σου [καὶ] τὰ παιδία σου” (ll. 13-14) —which makes the reconstruction in BGU III 814 also questionable; since the phrase without a personal pronoun (or a possessive pronoun) is most common, the addition of [τοὺς σοὺς] is unnecessary.

In P.Ant. II 93 (TM 32723), ὑμῶν is supplemented in the greetings from the sender to the addressee’s friends and relatives. It is logical that the second person pronoun is found in salutations from the sender to the addressee’s relatives. Similarly, we expect the first person pronoun to appear in greetings from the sender’s social circle to the addressee. Indeed, the one attestation of ἡμῶν in P.Herm. 5 (TM 21124) occurs in this context. However, it is possible to imagine a situation where the sender sends regards to the addressee’s relatives and uses a first person pronoun. For instance, if the sender is a husband away from home, writing to his wife and saluting the rest of his family, he will probably not refer to them as “the people of your household” but as “the people of my/our household”. Whereas this poses no problems with the singular personal pronouns (μου/σου), the interpretation of ὑμῶν/ἡμῶν is more difficult since they are often confused due to itacism (Gignac 1976: 262-265): for example, in BGU III 874 (TM 33246; cf. *infra*), the editor reads τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἀφθονημῶν οἴκῳ as τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἀφθονήτῳ ὑμῶν οἴκῳ. So, I observe that μου and σου follow the general rules described above (second person pronoun in salutations from the sender to the addressee’s relatives, and first person pronoun in greetings from the sender’s social circle to the addressee), but that there is much more variation with the plural pronouns. Yet, since the historical context is often unclear, one cannot —with an acceptable degree of probability— correct ὑμῶν into ἡμῶν, and *vice versa*. This problem does not only affect the expression οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες, but also other references to groups (cf. *infra*, § 6.1.2 and 6.1.4).

Αὐτοῦ appears in P.Abinn. 8 (TM 10065) and refers to the household of a person saluted: “ἀσπάζομαι Σῦρον καὶ πάντα τοὺς ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ” (l. 30).

¹²¹ Πᾶς is omitted in P.Oxy. XXXVI 2787 (TM 26871), for example. Variants of πᾶς are ἅπας, (cf. P.Oxy. XII 1492, quoted above) or ὅλος (e.g. P.Oxy. LVI 3862; TM 33603; ll. 35-37). In P.Abinn. 25 (quoted above), for instance, both πᾶς and ὅλος occur.

έν can be substituted by κατά¹²³. In two (or perhaps three) letters, the house is called “free from envy” by means of the extension ἄφθονος or perhaps ἀφθονήτος¹²⁴, e.g.:

“πολλά δὲ προσαγόρευσον τὴν κυρίαν τὴν ὑμῶν μητέρα (= μητέρα) καὶ Ἥλιαν καὶ Ῥωμᾶνον τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἀφθονημῶν (= ἀφθονήτω ὑμῶν — or ἀφθόνω ὑμῶν; my remark) οἴκῳ καὶ τὸν κύριον Εὐφρόντιον καὶ τὰ γλυκύτατα αὐτοῦ παιδία” (BGU III 874; TM 33246; ll. 8-11)

In my opinion, it is more likely that ἀφθονημῶν is the result of the contraction of ἀφθόνω ὑμῶν, rather than ἀφθονήτω ὑμῶν. With regard to the latter suggestion, one should explain why the entire last syllable of ἀφθονήτω was omitted; in ἀφθόνω ὑμῶν, the succeeding vowels seem to have merged.

Overall, the most common variant is the expression οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες. This phrase should probably be read in BGU XV 2492 (TM 26497), where in my opinion π[αντα]ς is a possible supplement:

“ἄσπασο(ν) Οὐαλέριον καὶ Ἑρμανι . . . ν καὶ τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ τ[. . .]. σ . . μαα . [-ca.?-]”
(ll. 21-23)

A τ might have been confused with a π; the number of missing characters matches the proposed new reading —supposedly, the second leg of the π was read as a separate missing character.

Further, there are many phrases similar to the type οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες which have more or less the same meaning:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων γράφω προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομαι τὴν ὑμετέραν γνησίαν ἀδελφ(ότητα) καὶ τὰ παιδία αὐτῆς καὶ τῆς (= τὴν) ἐλευθέρ[α]ν καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἡμῶν καὶ ὄλους τοῦ οἴκου ἡμῶν ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου” (P.Vind.Worp 14; TM 36053; ll. 1-3)¹²⁵

¹²² In P.Mich. VIII 481 (TM 27094), συνοικία (“community”, cf. LSJ, s.v. συνοικία) appears: and “ἀσπάζονται σε οἱ ἐν τῇ συνοικίᾳ πάντες - ca.9 -ι κατ’ ὄνομα” (ll. 34-35).

¹²³ E.g. “ἀσπάζεται σε πολλά [ή] ἀδελφή σου καὶ τὰ παιδία ἡμῶν [κ]αὶ πάντ[ε]ς οἱ κατὰ τὸν οἶκον ἡμῶν” (P.Herm. 5; TM 21124; ll. 22-24). This instance and the three other ones (i.e. PSI IX 1042, TM 30663; SB V 7567, TM 30787 and PSI IV 299, TM 31133) are dated to the 3rd and 4th centuries AD.

¹²⁴ In SB XXII 15482 (TM 79057), the phrase is as follows: “ἀσπάζω πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἀφθόνῳ σου οἴκῳ ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου” (ll. 21-23). A similar formula is perhaps lost in a lacuna: “✠ [-ca.?- πο]λλὰ προσκυνῶ καὶ προφθέγγομαι τ[-ca.?- τῷ ἀφ]θόνῳ αὐτῆς οἴκῳ κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.IFAO II 27; TM 35028; ll. 1-2). Further, ἄφθονος οἶκος is also attested in a similar group reference in P.Flor. III 303 (cf. *infra*, footnote 126).

¹²⁵ A variant with πᾶς instead of ὄλος is supplemented in P.Ant. III 192 (TM 32647): “ἀσπάζονται σε οἱ τῆς οἰκίας [μου πάντες καὶ -ca.?-] καὶ τὸν πατέρα” (ll. 17-18). In P.Mich. VIII 481 (TM 27094), the greetings are as follows: “ἄσπασαι Π. . . . [.] . κράτην σὺν ὄλω τοῦ οἴκου [αὐτοῦ]” (ll. 29-30). P.Oxy. LIX 4006 (TM 36849) extends this variant: “† vac.? ἔξ ἐμοῦ δὲ Φαῦστον τὸν μεγαλοπρεπέστατον κοινὸν ἀδελφόν, καὶ πάντας τοὺς τοῦ εὐλογημένου ὑμῶν οἴκου (= οἴκου), ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου, ἄχρι θέας †” (ll. 8-10). In P.Lond. VI 1929 (TM

“ἄσπασε (= ἄσπασαι) Οὐετίαν καὶ Οὐαλεριανὸν καὶ τοὺς ἐνοίκους πάντες (= πάντας)” (SB XIV 11851; TM 27507; ll. 13-15)¹²⁶

“ἀσπάζομαι τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ πάντας τοὺς οἰκείους” (SPP XX 24; TM 27759; ll. 9-11)¹²⁷

Sometimes not “the people (living) in/of the house(hold)” are greeted, but the house itself, for instance, with the phrase (ὄλος/πᾶς) (σου) ὁ οἶκος —which again has a great many variants:

“καὶ τὴν σύμβιον σου καὶ τὰ ἀβάσκαντά σου τέκνα καὶ ὄλον σου τὸν οἶκον ἀσπάζομαι” (SB XIV 11906; TM 26552; ll. 3-5)¹²⁸

“ἄσπασε (= ἄσπασαι) τὸν κύριόν μου ἀδελφὸν Σύρον σὺν τῷ οἴκῳ, μεθ’ ὧν ἐρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι” (PSI III 236; TM 31228; l. 38)

“πᾶσα ἡ οἰκία προσαγορεύουσιν ὑμᾶς” (SB XIV 11532; TM 32935; ll. 10-11)

“προσαγορεύω (= προσαγορεύω) καὶ τη (= τὴν) μητρει (= μητέρα) μου Θερμούτει (= Θερμούτιν) καὶ [τ]ου (= τὸν) ἀβ[άσκ]αντάν (= ἀβάσκαντόν) σου οἴκου (= οἶκον) κατὰ ὄν[ομα]” (P.Mich. VIII 519; TM 32728; ll. 4-7)¹²⁹

“ἄσπασε (= ἄσπασαι) Παυλῖνον [-ca.?-] καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτ[-ca.?-]ναν τὴν συνεικία[ν (= συνοικίαν) -ca.?-]” (SB XXVI 16822 ; TM 97161; ll. 6-8)

A somewhat different variant are greetings to ἡ τύχη τῆς οἰκίας found in P.Mich. III 213 (TM 31546):

“ἄσπασε (= ἄσπασαι) πολλὰ τοὺς ἡμῶν πάντας \κατ’ ὄνομα/ καὶ Ἐπαγαθῶν καὶ Σιλβανὸν καὶ τὴν τύχην τῆς οἰκίας” (ll. 17-20)

32662), the possessive pronoun ἡμέτερος appears instead of the genitive of the personal pronoun: “Θεοδόσιος, [. . .]σθ[. . .], Ἀντίοχος, Δι[δ]ύμη, ἡ μήτηρ, πάντες οἱ [τ]οῦ ἡμετέρου οἴκου π[ολλά] σε καὶ προσκυνούμεν καὶ προσαγορεύομεν, [τιμι]ώτατε ἀγαπητὲ πά[τερ]” (ll. 17-19).

¹²⁶ The four other attestations are BGU II 523 (TM 40747), P.Fay. 126 (TM 28619), P.Tebt. II 415 (TM 28428) and P.Tebt. II 422 (TM 31366). In P.Flor. III 303 (TM 36865), the following variant appears: “πολλὰ πολλὰ πολλὰ προσαγορεύω τὴν σὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐνοικοῦντας ἐν τῷ ἀφθόνῳ σου οἴκῳ, ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλων, τὸ κατ’ ὄνομα” (ll. 8-10).

¹²⁷ The οἱ οἰκεῖοι (σου) (πάντες) also appears in P.Stras. VI 531 (TM 26903), P.Oxy. IX 1218 (TM 31649) and P.Iand. VI 98 (TM 30600).

¹²⁸ The other occurrences are P.Leipz. 2 (TM 31669), P.Oxy. LIX 3992 (TM 27848) and P.Princ. II 73 (TM 30618). In P.Oxy. LV 3816 (TM 31917), πᾶς is used instead of ὄλος. In P.Lond. VI 1926 (TM 32659) and P.Oxy. LXVII 4629 (TM 78668), the possessive pronoun μου is added. In P.Oxy. X 1299 (TM 33637) and P.Oxy. XX 2273 (TM 30487), αὐτοῦ appears to refer to the household of a person greeted, respectively: “ἀσπάζομαι Κάμορον καὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ” (l. 15) and “πολλὰ ἄσπασε (= ἄσπασαι) τὸν ἀξιολογώτατον κ[ύριόν μου] πατέρα Σιλβανὸν σὺν τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ ὄλω” (ll. 24-27). A similar construction is supplemented in P.Ryl. II 244 (TM 31173): “ἄσπα[σ]αι τ[-ca.13 -] . συ. .[. . .] . π[ο]λ[. . .] . [-ca.11 -]ω καὶ [τὸν] υἱὸν [-ca.11 -]α καὶ τὴν ἀδε[λφ]ήν] τὸν Πεκῦσιγ [καὶ τὸν οἶκον α]ὐτοῦ ὄλω[ν . . .]” (ll. 19-24), but in my opinion this is highly speculative.

¹²⁹ A similar example is found in P.Abinn. 30 (TM 32672). In P.Iand. VI 102 (TM 36107), the adjective εὐφρων appears in combination with οἶκος.

And, if one accepts that βλέπω could express salutations, the phrase in P.Mil.Vogl. II 77 (TM 28842), has another reference to the house(hold):

“καὶ βλέπετε τὰ παιδιά καὶ τὰ εἰς οἶκον” (ll. 14-15)

In P.Mich. VIII 476 (TM 27089), the adverb πανοικί expresses more or less the same idea as οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες and similar phrases:

“ἄσπασ[αι] Δίδυμον τὸν νομικὸν πανοικί” (l. 24)

6.1.3. Οἱ φιλοῦντές σε πάντες and variants

The phrase οἱ φιλοῦντες σε πάντες appears about 65 times, from the 1st to the 5th centuries AD¹³⁰, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζου τοὺς φιλουτάς (= φιλοῦντάς) σε πάντα[ς]” (O.Claud. II 283; TM 29700; ll. 1-15)

“ἀσπάζω πολλὰ τοὺς ἡμῶν πάντας κατ’ ὄνομα σὺν τοῖς φιλοῦντι (= φιλοῦσιν) ἡμᾶς” (SB III 6262; TM 31055; ll. 20-22)¹³¹

“πάντες ἀσ[π]άζοντ[α]ί σε οἱ φιλοῦντές [σε (?)]” (BGU III 822; TM 28093; ll. 26-27)¹³²

As the quotes show, the elements in this phrase are liable to variation: πᾶς can be omitted¹³³ and the object of the phrase is not always σε. Yet, some writers, such as Terentianus whose letters are preserved in the archive of Claudius Tiberianus, used the exact same expression consistently (cf. *infra*, chapter 10, § 3).

Besides σε, in two greeting phrases, με appears:

¹³⁰ It also appears quite regularly in unedited ostraca from the Eastern Desert (Fournet 2003: 486), and it is attested twice in the ostraca from Didymoi which are not part of my corpus (O.Did. 404; TM 144965 and O.Did. 446; TM 145007). This phrase is also found in a letter from Paul (Paul. ad Tit 3,15) (Ziemann 1910: 329). A similar phrase occurs in the Latin letter P.Mich. VIII 469 (TM 27082): “*et tu nos saluta qui nos [a]mant*” (l. 21). This letter by Claudius Terentianus is preserved in the bilingual archive of Claudius Tiberianus (cf. *infra*, chapter 10, § 3). It is thought that Terentianus’ knowledge of Greek interfered with his Latin, resulting in this greeting formula. This Latin phrase is regarded as the result of Greek interference (Halla-aho 2009: 53).

¹³¹ This is the only occurrence of this group reference in a preposition construction.

¹³² Only in this letter, the phrase is found in salutations from the sender’s relatives to the addressee; in other letters, οἱ φιλοῦντες σε πάντες appears in greetings from the sender to the addressee’s social circle.

¹³³ The adjective πᾶς belongs to the word group τοὺς φιλοῦντας as a whole, not to ὑμᾶς/ἡμᾶς. This is shown by the word order in other examples (e.g. πάντας τοὺς ὑμᾶς φιλοῦντας in P.Oxy. XLII 3065, cf. *supra*) and by the fact that πᾶς also appears in combination with σε, e.g. τοὺς φιλουτάς (= φιλοῦντάς) σε πάντα[ς] in O.Claud. II 283 (*supra*).

“ἀσπάζομαι πολλὰ Θασᾶριν καὶ Ἡρωνιανὸν καὶ Ἀφροδίτην καὶ Γερμανὸν καὶ πάντας τοὺς φιλοῦντάς μαι (= με) κατ’ ἄνομα” (SB XXIV 16335; TM 28710; ll. 23-25)¹³⁴

And in SB III 6222 (TM 31054), the object is the sender as well:

“ἀσπάζομαι τὸν κύριόν μου πατέρα κα[ὶ πάντας] τοὺς φιλοῦντας [τὴν ἐμὴν] ψυχὴν” (ll. 39-40)

Ἡμᾶς appears in 22 phrases (and is supplemented in two others), e.g.:

“ἄσπαζε τοὺς φιλοῦντας ἡμᾶς π[ά]ντες (= πάντας) καθ’ (= κατ’) ὄνομα” (P.IFAO II 40; TM 30353; ll. 10-12)

The variant with ὑμᾶς appears three times, e.g.:

“ἄσπασαι πρὸς ὄνομα πάντας τοὺς ὑμᾶς φιλοῦντας πολλά” (P.Oxy. XLII 3065; TM 30332; ll. 19-20)¹³⁵

In the greetings of P.Herm. 9 (TM 33468), the personal pronoun is replaced by a religious formula:

“ἀσπάζομαι τοὺς ἀγαπητοὺς καὶ τοὺς φιλοῦντας τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ κυρί[ο]υ μου” (ll. 16-20)

A similar phrase, attested three times between the 1st and the 4th centuries AD, is οἱ ἀγαπῶντές σε πάντες:

“προσαγορεύω τὰ [τέκνα σ]ου καὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ ἡμῶν [. . . .]ο() καὶ Ἀσάειν τὸν συνεπιθέτην [αὐτοῦ] καὶ Πετίριν τὸν σύσκηνον αὐ[τοῦ καὶ] πάντας τοὺς ἡμᾶς ἀγαποῦντας (= ἀγαπῶντας; my remark) [φιλιτά(?)]τους (?) εἰδίους (= ιδίους)” (BGU III 984; TM 33256; ll. 21-26)¹³⁶

¹³⁴ The other attestation is P.David 16 (TM 27545).

¹³⁵ The other two occurrences are CPR V 23 (TM 34843) and P.Warr. 18 (TM 30705). Ἡμᾶς is supplemented in P.Lund II 3 (TM 28117). In BGU III 814 (TM 31238), ἡμᾶς is suggested to be interpreted as ὑμᾶς (cf. *BL* 1, p. 69). Similarly, some scholars suggested that ἡμᾶς should usually be read as ὑμᾶς (Wilcken 1920a: 379; Zilliacus 1943: 32-33 —although Zilliacus acknowledged that the first person με is attested as well, so that ἡμᾶς is a plausible variant in this phrase too): they probably based this interpretation on the fact that the second person singular σε is most common in this phrase. In my opinion, we cannot determine with certainty whether the writer intended a first or a second person plural when he penned ἡμᾶς and ὑμᾶς (cf. *supra*, footnote 120). Interpretations as proposed for BGU III 814 (cf. *supra*) seem tentative to me.

¹³⁶ The other two occurrences are O.Berenike II 129 (TM 89155), where the phrase is damaged, and PSI VII 827 (TM 32873), where the adverb ἀπλῶς is added: “ἀσπάζου πολλὰ Ἀγαθὸν Δήμονα (= Δαίμονα) καὶ πάντας ἀπλῶς τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ἡμᾶς” (ll. 26-29). A similar variant is “ἀσπάζομαι πρὸ πάντων τὴν σὴν ἀδελφικὴν θεοφιλίαν

Similar in meaning is the phrase οὖς ἠδέως ἔχεις (and variants), which appears in four letters from the 2nd until the 4th-5th centuries AD¹³⁷:

“ἄσπαζε πολλὰ τὸν φίλτατον Φούλλωνα καὶ τὰ ἀβάσκαντα αὐτοῦ παιδία καὶ τὴν σύμβι[ο]ν καὶ οὖς ἠδέως ἔχομεν κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Oxy. IX 1218; TM 31649; ll. 9-12)
“προσαγορεύω πάντας τοὺς ἠδέως ὑμᾶς ἔχοντας κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Oxy. XXXIV 2731; TM 32646; ll. 20-21)¹³⁸

The phrase πάντες οἱ φιλεῖν ἀξιοῦντες is only found in SB VI 9138 (TM 36197)¹³⁹:

“θελήση οὖν [...] προσκυνῆσαι ἐξ ἐμοῦ πάντας τοὺς φιλῖν (= φιλεῖν) ἀξιοῦντας, ἐξερέτως (= ἐξαιρέτως) τὸν δεσπ(ότην) μου τὸν κυριν (= κύριον) Φωσφόρον” (ll. 6-10)

Finally, in P.Mil.Vogl. I 11 (TM 78532) one encounters the following expression:

“ἄσπασαι [δ’ ο]ῦς προσήκει” (l. 10)

6.1.4. Πάντες οἱ σοί and variants

The expressions with the meaning “our/my/your people” can be voiced in different ways: with a possessive pronoun (οἱ σοί, οἱ ἡμέτεροι, etc.), with the genitive of the personal pronoun (οἱ ἡμῶν, οἱ σου, etc.) or with a prepositional phrase (οἱ παρ’ ἡμῶν, οἱ σὺν σοι, etc.).

6.1.4.1. Possessive pronouns

The phrase (πάντες)¹⁴⁰ οἱ σοί¹⁴¹ is attested 65 times between the 1st century BC and the 5th century AD¹⁴², e.g.:

ἐν Κυρίῳ, μετὰ πάντων τῶν {των} σὺν αὐτῇ καὶ ἀγαπούντω(ν) (= ἀγαπώντω(ν)) αὐτὴν ἀδελφῶν” (P.Fouad I 87; TM 37232; ll. 30-32).

¹³⁷ The phrase is also found in unedited ostraca from the Eastern Desert (Fournet 2003: 486).

¹³⁸ The other occurrences are “ἀσπάζομ[αι πάντας] οὖς ἠδέως ἔχεις [-ca.?-]” (P.Oxy. XIV 1758; TM 29021; ll. 19-20) and “πολλὰ ἀπ’ ἐμο(ῦ) προσαγόρευε καὶ ὅσους ἠδέως ἔχεις” (SB XIV 11666; TM 32942; ll. 14-15).

¹³⁹ This letter is dated to the 6th century AD. The long and often complex descriptions are typical of the Byzantine writing style (cf. *infra*, appendix I).

¹⁴⁰ Πᾶς is omitted in a few instances, e.g. P.Berl.Cohen 14 (TM 110056). This is also applicable to the references πάντες οἱ ἐμοί, πάντες οἱ ὑμέτεροι and πάντες οἱ ἡμέτερος discussed *infra*.

¹⁴¹ In P.Oxy.Hels. 49 (TM 30200), the following phrase appears: “τοὺς φίλους προσαγόρευε κα[ὶ] τοὺς σ[ο]ύς, [ὄ]σοι ἐμέτεροι” (ll. 10-12).

¹⁴² Πάντες οἱ σοί is mostly the object of the salutations from the sender to the addressee’s relatives (cf. *supra*, footnote 120). It also occurs sometimes in regards from the sender’s relatives to the addressee. Therefore, the following correction is not desirable: “ἀσπάζοντέ (= ἀσπάζονταί) σε οἱ σοί (= ἐμοί) πάντ[ε]ς κατ’ ὄνομα” (BGU II 615; TM 28191; ll. 13-14).

“ἐπισκοπ(οῦ) τοὺς σοὺς παντε (= πάντας)” (P.Oxy. IV 743; TM 20441; l. 43)
“τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἅμα τοῖς [π]αιδί[οις] ἡμῶν καὶ τοῖς σοῖς πᾶσι προσ[αγόρ]ευσον” (SB V 7743; TM 25303; ll. 23-25)

The phrase (πάντες) οἱ ἐμοί appears in ten 2nd and 3rd century AD letters¹⁴³, e.g.:

“οἱ ἐμοὶ πάντες σε προσαγορεύουσιν” (P.Oxy. XII 1586; TM 31768; ll. 14-15)¹⁴⁴

(Πάντες) οἱ ἡμέτεροι is attested eleven times from the 2nd until the 4th centuries AD, e.g.:

“οἱ ἡμέτεροι πάντες [ὕ]μᾶς ἀσπάζονται” (P.Haun. II 16; TM 26598; ll. 17-18)¹⁴⁵

6.1.4.2. Personal pronouns in the genitive

Another type of variant is the phrase οἱ ἡμῶν/ὕμῶν/σου/ἐμοῦ/αὐτοῦ (παντες/ὄλος). Οἱ ἡμῶν (πάντες/ὄλος) has about fifty occurrences, ranging from the 1st-2nd to the 5th centuries AD, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζεται σε τὰ τεκνία ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ ἡμῶν πάντες” (P.Oxy. XLIX 3507; TM 15656; ll. 39-40)¹⁴⁶

The variant with ὕμῶν appears six times between the 2nd and the 4th centuries AD, e.g.:

“προσαγορεύω ὄρους (= ὄλους) τοὺς ὕμῶν κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Berl.Zill. 12; TM 30581; ll. 21-22)¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ The phrase is supplemented in SB XIV 11665 (TM 30859).

¹⁴⁴ It is mostly found in the salutations from the sender’s relatives to the addressee (cf. *supra*, footnote 120), but also sometimes in the regards from the sender to the addressee’s relatives (e.g. P.Mil.Vogl. II 76; TM 15188).

¹⁴⁵ Contrary to what one would expect (cf. *supra*, footnote 120), this variant appears only slightly more frequently in salutations from the sender’s relatives to the addressee (six times), than in those from the sender to the addressee’s relatives (five times). Given that the variants with singular possessive pronouns answer our expectations (cf. *supra*, footnote 120), but those with plural possessive pronouns do not, we can assume that the common confusion between η and υ (ἡμέτερος and ὕμέτερος) might have played a role. The fact that (πάντες) οἱ ὕμέτεροι is not preserved in my corpus is probably due to this confusion, as well as to coincidence and factors of preservation.

¹⁴⁶ In contrast to the quote above—which follows the general observation that οἱ ἡμῶν (πάντες) is expected in salutations from the sender’s social circle to the addressee (cf. *supra*, footnote 120)—the phrase mostly appears in greetings from the sender to the addressee’s social circle, e.g. “ἀσπάζομαι πάντα τοὺς ἡμῶν κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Oxy. XXXI 2601; TM 32692; l. 33). The situation here is thus similar to that described for the phrase (πάντες) οἱ ἡμέτεροι, and also here, I suspect itacistic confusion between ὕμῶν and ἡμῶν.

¹⁴⁷ As expected, the phrase appears in greetings from the sender to the addressee’s social circle (cf. *supra*, footnote 120). In PSI XIV 1423 (TM 17158), PSI XII 1259 (TM 27174), SB V 8002 (TM 30792) and P.Giss.Bibl. III 26 (TM 31818) the phrase τοὺς ἡμῶν πάντα appears in salutations to the addressee’s relatives and is interpreted as τοὺς ὕμῶν πάντες by the editors. Indeed, the greetings in PSI XII 1259 do not make sense if one does not read ἡμῶν as ὕμῶν: “ἄσπασαι τὴν κυρίαν Ἰσα[ρο]ῦν καὶ Σαραπάμμωνα καὶ Σερῆνον καὶ τοὺς ἡμῶν (= ὕμῶν)

Οἱ σοῦ (πάντες) appears —as expected— in the greetings from the sender to the addressee’s relatives in P.Bon. 44 (TM 27068) and P.Abinn. 7 (TM 10058), e.g.:

“ἀσπάζου τὴν μητέρα σου καὶ τοὺς σου πάντας” (P.Bon. 44; l. 8)

A third attestation is, in my opinion, P.Oslo II 49 (TM 28898): its salutations “ἀσπάζου τοὺς σου πάντας” (ll. 9-10) are interpreted “ἀσπάζου τοὺς σου (= σοὺς) πάντας”, but this correction is superfluous.

Οἱ ἐμοῦ only occurs in SB XVI 12570 (TM 26735):

“ἀσπάζονται σε οἱ ἐμοῦ πολλά” (l. 28)

The phrases οἱ αὐτοῦ (πάντες) and οἱ αὐτῆς (πάντες) are used in respectively eight and three instances to salute a certain person and his/her whole household¹⁴⁸, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζετέ (= ἀσπάζεται) σε Κέλερ καὶ οἱ αὐτοῦ πάντας (= πάντες)” (BGU II 615; TM 28191; ll. 15-16)

“ἀσπάζομε (= ἀσπάζομαι) Σαραπίδα [καὶ το]ὺς αὐτῆς πάντας” (BGU III 843; TM 25639; ll. 15-16)

6.1.4.3. Prepositions¹⁴⁹

Other phrases use prepositions to express more or less the same idea. Παρά is widely used in this construction: οἱ παρ’ ἡμῶν πάντες¹⁵⁰ and οἱ παρ’ ἡμῖν πάντες appear, respectively, fourteen¹⁵¹ and two times¹⁵², e.g.:

πάντας. ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Πλουτάρχη καὶ Τύραννος καὶ οἱ ἡμῶν πάντες.” (ll. 22-25). Otherwise, οἱ ἡμῶν πάντες would be both the people sending regards and those being greeted. Since these are interpretations rather than certain attestations, they have not been included in the total number of attestations of the phrase οἱ ὑμῶν πάντες.

¹⁴⁸ In SB XIV 12173 (TM 32954) ὁ αὐτῶν is supplemented: “ἀσπάζωμαι (= ἀσπάζομαι) ἅμα Χ. . . . [. . . καὶ] ἅπα Γάνειν (= Γάνιν) σὺν τοῖς αὐτῶν” (ll. 24-26).

¹⁴⁹ In P.Oxy. III 530 (TM 28370), a reference appears to the social circle of a certain person: “ἀσπάζου [...] τοὺς περὶ Τααμόιν” (ll. 23 and 28).

¹⁵⁰ In P.Mich. VIII 497 (TM 27107), the variant “οἱ παρ’ ἡμῶν πάντες καὶ αἱ παρ’ ἡμῶν πᾶσαι” (ll. 23-25) appears.

¹⁵¹ The supplemented in P.Oxy. XIV 1767 (TM 31809) has not been taken into account.

¹⁵² Οἱ παρ’ ἡμῶν πάντες and οἱ παρ’ ἡμῖν πάντες occur more often in the greetings from the sender to the addressee’s relatives, than in its expected contexts (cf. *supra*, footnote 120), viz. in salutations from the sender’s social circle to the addressee, cf.: “ἅσπασαι Ἐλέγην καὶ Θαῖσ[1]ν [καὶ] Πτολέμαν καὶ Μηνᾶν καὶ τοὺς παρ’ ἡμῶν πάντας” (P.Laur. IV 187; TM 28768; ll. 29-30). This uncommon situation is also attested for (πάντες) οἱ ἡμέτεροι and οἱ ἡμῶν (πάντες/ὄλος) (cf. *supra*).

“ἀσπάζεται (= ἀσπάζονται) σε οἱ παρ’ ἡμῖν πάντας (= πάντες) καὶ τ[ὴν] μητέρα (= μητέρα) σου Ἐλ[. .]στιλειαν καὶ τοὺς ἀ[δελ]φούς σου” (P.Mil. II 74; TM 28775; ll. 10-14)¹⁵³

Οἱ παρ’ ὑμῶν πάντες is only preserved in P.Wisc. II 71 (TM 26686), and οἱ παρ’ ὑμῖν πάντες only occurs in SB XIV 11901 (TM 30092):

“ἄσπασαι πολλ[άκις] Διονύσιον καὶ τοὺς παρ’ ὑμῖν [πάντας]” (ll. 8-10)

The phrase “ἀσπάζου Ἄπω[-ca.?-] αριανον καὶ [-ca.?-] τοὺς παρ’ ἡμῖν πάντες” (ll. 12-15) in SB VI 9017 Nr. 21 (TM 25248) is interpreted as τοὺς παρ’ ὑμῶν πάντες by the editor, but the interpretation of ἡμῖν as ὑμῶν in my opinion problematic: the confusion between ω and η is not common (cf. this confusion is not mentioned by Gignac 1976); far more confusion exists between η and ι (iotacism) (Gignac 1976: 238-239). Consequently, the reading ὑμῖν —or ἡμῖν— is more plausible than ὑμῶν —or ἡμῶν¹⁵⁴.

In PSI VIII 943 (TM 27224), the expression οἱ παρὰ σοῦ πάντες appears, and P.Mich. VIII 473 (TM 27086) preserves the variant οἱ παρὰ ἐσοῦ πάντες —as expected, the phrases are both found in the greetings from the sender to the addressee’s relatives. Further, the dative σοι is only encountered in P.Yale I 83 (TM 16848):

“ἀσπ[άζου -ca.?-]ν τὸν φίλον καὶ Ἀπολιν[ᾶριν καὶ τ]οὺς παρὰ σοι πάντας” (ll. 24-26)

Finally, the variant οἱ παρ’ αὐτοῦ¹⁵⁵ is attested in BGU II 385 (TM 28133) and PSI IX 1054 (TM 30664), e.g.:

“καὶ ἀσπάζομαι τὴν μητέρα μου καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ Σεμπρῶνιν καὶ τοὺς παρ’ αὐτοῦ” (BGU II 385; ll. 8-10)

Just like in the formula οἱ αὐτοῦ (πάντες), the word αὐτοῦ is used in the phrase οἱ παρ’ αὐτοῦ to refer to a third person mentioned earlier in the salutation. In other words, the expression οἱ παρ’ αὐτοῦ is also a way of greeting someone together with his entire household¹⁵⁶.

Another preposition is σύν: the variants (πάντες) οἱ σύν σοί/ἐμοί/ὑμῖν/ἡμῖν are part of the relatively fixed phraseology of the greetings in the Christian letters of recommendation (cf. *supra*, § 1.3), e.g.:

¹⁵³ The other occurrence of παρ’ ἡμῖν is SB XVI 12606 (TM 30293).

¹⁵⁴ As argued above, I deem it speculative to reinterpret forms of ὑμᾶς as ἡμᾶς, and *vice versa*.

¹⁵⁵ The fact that both occurrences do not contain πᾶς is probably a coincidence.

¹⁵⁶ Variants with the personal pronoun ἐγώ are not attested. Also οἱ παρ’ αὐτῶ, οἱ παρ’ αὐτῆς and οἱ παρ’ αὐτῆ have not been preserved.

“τὴν θυγατέρα ἡμῶν Γερμανίαν, ἐπικουρίας δεομένην, π[αραγι]νομένην πρὸς ὑμᾶς προσδέξασθε ἐν εἰρήνῃ, δι’ ἧς ὑμᾶς καὶ τοὺς σὺν ὑμῖν ἐγὼ τε καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ προσαγορεύομεν” (P.Oxy. LVI 3857; TM 33598; ll. 4-13)¹⁵⁷

“τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἡμῶν Ταίωνα παραγινομένην πρὸς σὲ παράδεξε (= παράδεξαι) ἐν εἰρήνῃ, καὶ ἄν(θρωπ)ογ κατηχούμενον (= κατηχούμενον) ἐν τῇ Γενέσει, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν παράδεξε (= παράδεξαι), δι’ ὧν σε καὶ τοὺς παρὰ σοὶ ἀδελφούς ἡμεῖς καὶ οἱ σὺν ἡμεῖν (= ἡμῖν) προσαγορεύομεν” (P.Oxy. XXXVI 2785; TM 32644; ll. 4-12)¹⁵⁸

“[τ]ὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶ[ν] Δ[ίφ]ιλον ἐρχόμενον π[ρὸς] σε προσδ[έξ]αι ἐν [ε]ἰρήνῃ δι’ [οὔ] σὲ κ[αὶ] τοὺς σὺν σοὶ ἐγ[ώ] καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ προσαγορεύομεν” (P.Alex. 29; TM 30466; ll. 5-11)¹⁵⁹

Apart from the occurrences in the Christian letters of recommendation, the phrase οἱ σὺν σοὶ (πάντες) and variants also appear to describe the addressee’s relatives and the sender’s social circle. Οἱ σὺν σοὶ πάντες (in P.Herm. 6; TM 21125) and οἱ σὺν ὑμῖν πάντες (in P.Fouad I 88; TM 37233¹⁶⁰) occur, as expected, in salutations from the sender to the addressee’s friends; οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ is found in the greetings from the sender’s social circle in the letters PSI VII 834 (TM 32876) and P.Fouad I 87 (TM 37232), e.g.:

“ἀσπάζομαί σε πολλ[άκις], ἀδελφε ψυχῆ[ς] ὡς ἀληθῶς, καὶ πάντας τοὺς σὺν σοὶ κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Herm. 6; ll. 31-32)

“† ἀσπάζομαι δὲ τόν τε θεοφιλέστατον κοινὸν πατέρα, καὶ τὴν κοσμιωτάτην κοινὴν μητέρα, καὶ πάντας τοὺς σὺν ὑμῖν ἐν Κ(υρί)ῳ, δέσπο(τα) θεοφιλέστατέ μου πάτερ. †” (P.Fouad I 88; ll. 11-13)

“τὰ παιδιά σε προσαγορεύει καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ” (PSI VII 834; ll. 6-7)¹⁶¹

Not only the Christian letters of recommendation, but also the other occurrences are dated from the 3rd-4th until the 6th centuries AD. Given the relatively low number of occurrences, it is not clear whether the use of these phrases was indeed a later development, and whether the fixed phraseology of the salutations in the Christian

¹⁵⁷ The variant οἱ σὺν ὑμῖν (πάντες) also occurs in this specific phrase in the Christian letters of recommendation P.Oxy. VIII 1162 (TM 33633) and SB XVI 12304 (TM 30267; here the expression is supplemented). Οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ is found in ten Christian letters of recommendation, always without πᾶς.

¹⁵⁸ This is the only attestation of the phrase οἱ σὺν ἡμῖν (πάντες) in this specific phrase in the Christian letters of recommendation.

¹⁵⁹ Οἱ σὺν σοὶ (πάντες) is also attested in a similar phrase in the Christian letter of recommendation PSI IX 1041 (TM 30662).

¹⁶⁰ In P.Lond. VI 1918 (TM 16856), ὑμῖν has been corrected into ἡμῖν: “ἀσπα[ζ]ε[τ]ε (= ἀσπάζεται) {ται} Πσαλιοῦς καὶ οἱ σὺν ὑμῖν (= ἡμῖν) πάντας” (ll. 18-19). Whereas ἡμῖν indeed fits the expectations, I ground my study on actual attestations, not on interpretations and I therefore do not take this letter into account.

¹⁶¹ In SB III 6823 (TM 18827) οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ has been supplemented entirely and is thus far from certain: “ἀ[σπ]ά[ζ]ε[τ]αί σε Σεπτῶρις καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ” (ll. 26-27).

letters of recommendation might have stimulated the use of these expressions in other contexts.

The last preposition μετά appears in two letters:

“ἡδέως σε ἀσπαζόμεθα πάντες οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ καὶ τοὺς μετ’ ἐσοῦ πάντα” (P.Oxy. III 531; TM 28371; ll. 3-4)

“ἀσπάζονται (= ἀσπάζονται) ὑμᾶς πάντες οἱ μετ’ ἐμοῦ” (SB XXVI 16687; TM 77998; ll. 27-29)

6.1.5. Πάντες οἱ ἐνθάδε

In SB XVI 12606 (TM 30293) and BGU I 332 (TM 28252), the expression (πάντες) οἱ ἐνθάδε appears:

“ἀσπάζεται ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς) Κυρίλλα καὶ ἡ θυγάτηρ Ἑρμίας Ἑρμίας, Ἑρ[μ]ανουῖβις ἡ τροφός, Ἀθηναίς ἡ δέσκαλος, Κυρίλλα, Κασία, [. . .]μ . . νις, Σ[. . .]ανος, Ἐμπις, οἱ ἐνθάδε πάντες” (BGU I 332; ll. 8-10)

6.2. Κατ’ ὄνομα and other extensions to greetings from or to a group of people

As discussed in the previous section, greetings are often sent to, or sent by, a group of people who are not named individually¹⁶². Yet, in over 150 letters, from the 1st until the 7th centuries AD, the expression κατ’ ὄνομα appears, which nevertheless adds the idea that every single person of such a group is saluted individually or sends his greetings individually, e.g.:

“προσαγορεύω πάντα τοὺς ἡδέως ὑμᾶς ἔχοντας κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Oxy. XXXIV 2731; TM 32646; ll. 20-21)

“ἀσπάζομαι ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς) πάντα κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Abinn. 22; TM 10022; ll. 26-27)

“ἀσπάζεται σε Σιτέλκας καὶ τὰ παιδιά ἀ[ύ]τοῦ κατ’ [ὄ]νομα” (P.Mich. VIII 500; TM 27110; ll. 21-22)

“ἀσπάζεται σε πολλὰ ὁ πατήρ σου Ὀρίων καὶ ἡ μήτηρ σου Ἑρμιόνη καὶ Σπάρθος καὶ ἡ σύμβιος αὐτοῦ καὶ Ὀριγενία καὶ Ἰουλιανὸς καὶ Ἀσκληπιάδης καὶ Διονύσιος καὶ ἡ σύμβιος αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ παιδιά Κᾶ . . ισεῦς καὶ Ἑρμαίων καὶ τὰ ἀβάσκαντά σου θρεπτάρια, κατ’ ὄνομα πάντες” (P.Paris 18 *quater*; TM 26155; ll. 8-14)

In P.Flor. III 303 (TM 36865), τό is added to the expression:

¹⁶² The addition κατ’ ὄνομα mostly occurs in regards from the sender to relatives of the addressee, but is found in other greeting *topoi* as well, as the following quotes show.

“πολλὰ πολλὰ πολλὰ προσαγορεύω τὴν σὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐνοικοῦντας ἐν τῷ ἀφθόνῳ σου οἴκῳ, ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλων, τὸ κατ’ ὄνομα” (ll. 8-10)

In PSI VII 836 (TM 36190), the plural κατὰ τὰ ὀνόματα occurs. Πρὸς ὄνομα appears in P.Vars. 26 (TM 32962) and P.Oxy. XLII 3065 (TM 30332); κατ’ ἄνδρα is attested in P.Oxy. LVI 3855 *recto* (TM 21598).

Quite similar are two intensifiers that express the idea that everybody is saluted — both the young and the older ones: ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου and variants ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλων and ἀπὸ μικρῶν ἕως μεγάλων have thirteen attestations¹⁶³, and μικροὶ τε καὶ μεγάλοι has three occurrences. Both variants are attested from the 4th until the 7th centuries AD, and thus seem to be a Late Antique development. Probably they are an expression of the so-called Byzantine *polare Ausdrucksweise*, in which a pair of opposite ideas is combined to create precision as well as universality (Zilliacus 1967: 32-33).

By contrast, sometimes a hierarchy is introduced between different persons who are saluted individually. Ἐξαιρέτως is found at the end of a list of people greeted and indicates the person who is saluted in the first place, e.g.:

“[π]ρόσειπε δ’ ἐξ ἐμοῦ καὶ τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἀδελφούς, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τοὺς τῆς σῆς θαυμασιότητος †” (SB VI 9396; TM 36835; l. 10)

“καὶ ἀσπάζομαι ἐκθύμως τὴν ὑμέτεραν πατρικὴν διάθεσιν μετὰ τῷ[ν] σὺν αὐτῇ πατέρων τε καὶ ἀδελφῶν, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τὸν ἐλλογιμώτ(ατον) σχολαστικὸ[ν] ὑμῶν υἱὸν Διόσκορον ἐμόν τε δεσπότην” (P.Cair.Masp. I 67064; TM 19015; ll. 12-14)

This adverb is found six times in the 6th and 7th centuries AD. Similar in meaning is μάλιστα, which occurs three times between the 4th and the 7th centuries AD, e.g.:

“πολλὰ οὖν προσαγόρευσον τὴν κοινὴν ἀδελφί[ν] μου Θεοδώτην μάλιστα τὴν κυραν (= κυρίαν) τὴν μητέραν (= μητέρα) σου” (SB XIV 11492; TM 36254; ll. 16-17)

6.3. Reference to gods

In twenty letters dated between the 3rd and the 7th centuries AD, gods are mentioned¹⁶⁴. There are three different constructions. In eighteen cases, the construction ἐν + the god’s name is used: there are five different variants of which ἐν κυρίῳ is the most popular:

“πλεῖστα ὑμᾶς ἀσπάζομαι ἐν κυρίῳ” (PSI XIV 1429; TM 36074; l. 8)¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ In SB VI 9158 (TM 35103), only the beginning of the expression ἀπὸ μικροῦ has been preserved.

¹⁶⁴ Further, in CPR V 19 (TM 24981), the gods are said to greet the addressee: “ἀσπάζονταί σε οἱ ἐνθάδε θεοὶ πάντες καὶ πᾶσαι” (ll. 20-22).

¹⁶⁵ Ἐν κυρίῳ is also attested in twelve other letters.

“ἀσπάζομαι πάντας τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ἐν κυρίῳ θεῶ” (P.Köln II 109; TM 33492; ll. 21-22)¹⁶⁶

“πρὸ τῶν ὄλων πολλά σε ἀσπάζομαι καὶ τοὺς παρὰ σοὶ πάντας ἀ[δ]ελφοὺς ἐν θ(ε)ῶ” (P.Grenf. II 73; TM 31940; ll. 4-6)

“ἀσπ[ά]ζογῆ[ι] [σε οἱ ἐν Πιμουν]παμὼ ἔρρωμ[έ]νοι ἐν τῇ προ]νοίᾳ θεοῦ μετὰ τῶ[ν] τέκνων] αὐτῶν” (P.Sijp. 11 c; TM 110139; ll. 1-4)

“τῶ τιμιωτάτῳ ἀδελφῶ καὶ θε[ο]φιλ[ε]ῖ. Δωρόθεος ὁ Ὁξ[υ]ρρυγγεΐτης ὁ ἄχριος (= ἄχρειος) δοῦλος προσαγορεύει σε ἐν πν(εύματ)ι καὶ ἐν ἀγάπῃ Χ(ριστο)ῦ.” (P.Lond. VI 1927; TM 32660; ll. 1-4)

Παρά + the divinity’s name is attested twice:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων ἀσπάζομέ (= ἀσπάζομαί) σοι (= σε) παρὰ τοῖς πατρῷοις θεοῖς κ[αὶ] τὰ ἀσπικαντά (= ἀβάσκαντά) σοι πεδία (= παιδία)” (SB XVIII 13593; TM 30995; ll. 3-5)

“ἄσπασον Φίρμον καὶ Τεκοῦσαν καὶ τοὺς ἡμῶν πάντας παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς τῆς πόλεως τῶν Ἀντινοαίων (= Ἀντινοέων)” (P.Oxy. XII 1489; TM 31746; ll. 1-2)

The phraseology of these greetings, found at the beginning of the two letters, is probably influenced by the *proskynema* formula in which the construction παρά + god(s)’s name in the dative case is standard (cf. *infra*, chapter 5, § 2.1). P.Oxy. XII 1489 illustrates that a reference to the god(s) does not only appear in Christian texts.

The plain dative occurs in P.Lond. III 1244 (S. 244) (TM 33790) and in P.Oxy. VIII 1162 (TM 33633), respectively:

“προηκουμένως (= προηγουμένως) πολλά σε [π]ροσαγορεύω νυκτὸς [κ]αὶ ἡμέραις (= ἡμέρας) τῶ ὑψίστῳ θεῶ καὶ παρὰ πᾶσι ἀνθρώποις προσκυνῆσαί (= προσκυνῆσαί) σοι (= σου) τὸ [ε]ὔμορφον καὶ ἰλαρὸν πρόσωπον προτ[οτ]ύπως (= πρωτοτύπως)” (ll. 3-4)¹⁶⁷

“τὸν ἀδελφὸν (= ἀδελφὸν) ἡμῶν Ἀμμώνιον παραγινόμενον πρὸς ὑμᾶς συνδέξασθαι (= συνδέξασθε) αὐτὸν ἐν εἰρήνῃ (= εἰρήνῃ), δι’ οὗ ὑμᾶς καὶ τοὺς σὺν ὑμῖν ἐγὼ δε (= τε) καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοὶ ἡδέως ὑμᾶς προσαγορεύεσθαι κ(υρί)ῳ” (ll. 6-12)

Apart from reference to god(s), the religious expression ἐν εἰρήνῃ is attested in P.Oxy. XVII 2156 (TM 32837):

“πολλά σε ἀσπάζεται Αὐρήλιος καὶ τὸν κύριόν μου ἀδελφὸν Ἑρμῆιν καὶ Λέοντα καὶ τοὺς ἡμῶν πάντας ἐν εἰρήνῃ” (ll. 21-23)

¹⁶⁶ This variant also appears in P.Wisc. II 76 (TM 32548).

¹⁶⁷ Note the interesting παρά τοῖς ἀνθρώποις in this phrase.

6.4. Reference to the mailman

In five letters, the regards are said to be passed on via a third person, who was probably the mailman¹⁶⁸:

“ἀσπάζομαι[αί] σ[ε] διὰ Κάστορος τοῦ [α]ναδιδού[ν]τος (= ἀναδιδόντος) [τὴν] ἐπιστολὴν καὶ τὰ ἀβ[ά]σκαντά σου πα[ι]δία” (P.Stras. IV 187; TM 26973; ll. 3-5)
“διὰ Ἐρμίου [. . .] ου ἀναπλέοντος ἤδιστα σε ἀσπάζομαι” (P.Sarap. 103 *ter*; TM 17147; ll. 3-4)¹⁶⁹

It is not always explicitly mentioned that this person was the letter carrier:

“ἀσπάζεσθε Σαραπιάδα διὰ Ἰσιδώρας” (O.Claud. I 152; TM 24163; ll. 13-14)

6.5. Δι' ἐπιστολῆς and variants

Self-referential expressions such as δι' ἐπιστολῆς are mostly found in salutations at the beginning of the letter. They occur in nineteen letters. These are dated from the late 1st until the 7th or perhaps the 8th centuries AD, but most occurrences are from the Late Antique period¹⁷⁰:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων σοι (= σε) ἀσπασαίθε (= ἀσπάσατε) δι[ὰ] στωλῆς (= ἐπιστολῆς)” (P.Mich. III 201; TM 21340; AD 99; ll. 3-4)
“✠ διὰ τῶν παρόντων μου γραμμάτων γράφω πολὰ (= πολλὰ) προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομαι (= ἀσπάζομαι) τὴν ὑμετέραν γνισίαν (= γνήσιαν) ἀδελφωτιαν (= ἀδελφότητα)” (P.Herm. 49; TM 37279; 6th century AD; ll. 1-3)¹⁷¹
“† διὰ τῆ[ς] παρουσίας μου ἐπιστολῆς γράφω προσκυνούσα τὴν θεοφύλακτον ὑμῶν θεοφιλίαν” (SB VI 9397; TM 36836; late 6th-early 7th century AD; l. 1)¹⁷²
“καὶ νῦν σε ἀσπάζομαι διὰ τούτων μου τῶν γραμμάτων” (PSI XII 1259; TM 27174; 2nd-early 3rd century AD; ll. 3-4)¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ Also in the Christian letters of recommendation, discussed above (cf. *supra*, § 1.3), the greetings are sent through the person who delivered the letter —and who was in these cases also the recommended person. These instances have not been included in the total number of occurrences.

¹⁶⁹ The other occurrences are O.Claud. I 152 (TM 24163), P.Brem. 52 (TM 19636) and P.Sarap. 85 (TM 17107).

¹⁷⁰ Word groups such as δι' ἐπιστολῆς occur more often in greeting formulas that express the need to salute the addressee. These are not discussed in this chapter (cf. *supra*, footnote 4). In those formulas, the word group appears more often in Ptolemaic and Roman letters, e.g. “ἀναγκαῖον ἔγνω διὰ γραπτοῦ σε ἀσπασασθαι” (P.Oxy. XIV 1756; TM 25932; 1st century AD; ll. 3-4).

¹⁷¹ The variant διὰ τῶν παρόντων (μου) γραμμάτων is also found in the greetings of P.Bru.x.Bawit 36 (TM 111785; 6th-7th century AD) and SB VI 9138 (TM 36197; late 6th century AD). A variant is the phrase διὰ τοῦ παρόντος ἡμετέρου γράμματος, found in greetings of SB XVI 12980 (TM 36016; late 6th-early 7th century AD).

¹⁷² In CPR XXV 30 (TM 92461; first half of the 7th century AD) διὰ τὴν παροῦσάν μου ἐπιστολὴν occurs.

“[-ca.?- διὰ τ]α[ύτ]ης μου ἐπιστολῆς γράφ[ων] πολλά προσκυν\[\ω\]//”
(P.Ross.Georg. III 13; TM 36212; 6th century AD; l. 12)

“ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς . . . διὰ πο]λλῶν ἐπιστολῶ[ν] καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν [καὶ τοὺς ἐν τῶ]ι οἴκῳ πάντας” (SB X 10557; TM 30640; middle of the 3rd century AD; ll. 13-14)

“διὰ παντὸς τοῦ γράμματος πλεῖστα προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομαι τὴν ὑμετέραν μεγαλοπρε(πῆ) ἀδελφ(ότητα)” (P.Grenf. II 92; TM 38223; 6th-7th century AD; ll. 9-10)¹⁷⁴

“διὰ τοῦ γράμματος ἀσπάζομαι αὐτὴν καὶ δι’ αὐτῆς τὰ θεοφύλ(ακτα) κοιγὰ παιδία καὶ τὴν μητέ[ρα -ca.?-]” (CPR XXV 21; TM 92452; second half of the 6th century AD; l. 8)¹⁷⁵

“† διὰ τοῦ μετρίου μου γράμματος τ . . . φι . [- ca.9 - ἀ]σπάζομαι” (P.Berl.Sarisch. 17; TM 39331; 7th century AD; l. 1)¹⁷⁶

6.6. Intensifiers

In about 300 greeting formulas, dating from the 1st century BC until the 8th century AD, one or more intensifiers appear.

6.6.1. Intensifiers of mode

Several intensifiers emphasize the idea that one sends many greetings. The most popular adverb by far is πολλά with almost 200 attestations from the 1st until the 7th centuries AD, e.g.:

“ἄσπασαι πρὸς ὄνομα πάντας τοὺς ὑμᾶς φιλοῦντας πολλά” (P.Oxy. XLII 3065; TM 30332; ll. 19-20)

P.Mich. III 201 (TM 21340) has the duplication πολλά πολλά. P.Flor. III 303 (TM 36865) even has the expression πολλά πολλά πολλά. A variant is πάμπολλα (only in P.NagHamm. 67; TM 32409). Πλεῖστα is attested twelve times between the 5th-6th and the 7th or perhaps the 8th centuries AD, e.g.:

¹⁷³ The variant διὰ τούτων (μου) τῶν γραμμάτων is also found in the greetings of P.Oslo II 62 (TM 33593; first half of the 4th century AD), P.Oxy. IX 1217 (TM 31648; 3rd century AD), P.Oxy. VI 963 (TM 28344; 2nd-3rd century AD), and P.Herm. 8 (TM 33467; late 4th century AD).

¹⁷⁴ A similar word string is διὰ ἀπάσης τῆς ἐπιστολῆς attested in P.Oxy. LVI 3867 (TM 37467; 6th century AD).

¹⁷⁵ This variant also appears in CPR XXX 21 (TM 129778; ca. AD 640-700).

¹⁷⁶ Διὰ τῶν ἐλαχίστων μου γραμμάτων is perhaps found in the fragmentary SB XXVI 16469 (TM 97114; 7th century AD): “† διὰ τον (= τῶν) ἐλαχ[ίστων μου γραμμάτων -ca.?-] προσκυνῆσαι(?) -ca.?-]” (ll. 2-3). Another similar example might be the opening formula of P.Herm. 45 (TM 33480; 4th century AD): “[.] ἐλαχίστου μου ῥήματος, ἀσπάζομαι τὴν σὴν λαμπρὰν ἀδελφότητ[α] [ὡς καὶ ἀσπ]άσομαι αὐτὴν πάλιν ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ σώματος ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ χαῖρε” (ll. 1-2). The lacuna at the beginning of the letter probably held the words διὰ τοῦ. These three supplemented or fragmentary attestations have not been included in the total number of occurrences.

“διὰ παντὸς τοῦ γράμματος πλεῖστα προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομαι τὴν ὑμετέραν μεγαλοπρε(πῆ) ἀδελφ(ότητα). †” (P.Grenf. II 92; TM 38223; ll. 9-10)

It seems that the use of πλεῖστα in the salutations was a later development¹⁷⁷. Given this chronology, the supplement of πλεῖστα in the 2nd century AD letter P.Iand. II 9 (TM 28201) is not plausible:

“[ἀσ]πά[ζ]ου [Λο]γγεινίαν καὶ Νεμεσιανὸν καὶ Σεραπίο[ν]α καὶ τὴν μητέρα (= μητέρα) σου καὶ Ῥοῦφον τὸν ἀδελφόν σου καὶ Κ[υρι]λλοῦν κα[ὶ π(?)]άντας [το]ὺς ἐν οἴκῳ κατ’ [ὄ]νομα [πλεῖσ]τα” (ll. 36-40)

Also the place of the intensifier at the very end of the letter is at odds with normal phraseology: usually the intensifier is found (immediately) before the greeting verb (cf. P.Grenf. II 92, quoted above).

Μεγάλως is encountered in five letters from the 1st century BC until the 3rd century AD, e.g.:

“ἐπισκοπίτε (= ἐπισκοπεῖται) σε Γάιος μέγਾਲως καὶ Θερμουθᾶς καὶ Εἰσίδωρος \καὶ Διογενᾶς/” (P.Col. VIII 215; TM 17627; ll. 31-32)

Also in other phrases of the body of this letter, the uncommon adverb μέγਾਲως¹⁷⁸ appears: “ἔρωτῶ σε μέγਾਲως καὶ παρακαλῶ ...” (ll. 8-9). Μέγα occurs in P.Giss.Bibl. III 30 (TM 22119). Πανύ is attested three times and παντελῶς¹⁷⁹ occurs in P.Mich. VIII 477 (TM 27090).

Different terms express that the sender of the greetings salutes the (family and friends of the) addressee warmly and with all his heart. Ἠδιστα is found in P.Sarap. 103 *ter* (TM 17147) and SB IV 7335 (TM 14010), and ἡδέως appears in four letters¹⁸⁰. Ἐξ ἀληθείας is attested in P.Mich. VIII 477 (TM 27090) of the Claudius Tiberianus and in P.Yale I 80 (TM 26923). The two attestations of πρὸς ἀλήθειαν —P.Fay. 118 (TM 10783) and P.Fay. 119 (TM 10784)— are letters from Lucius Bellienus Gemellus that are preserved in the archive of Epagathos, the estate manager of Lucius Bellienus Gemellus¹⁸¹. Λίαν has been preserved four times, and in one of these instances (P.Mich.

¹⁷⁷ However, chances are that our picture is skewed by factors of preservation.

¹⁷⁸ This adverb attested in only 45 papyri in total, most of them private letters.

¹⁷⁹ The similar πάντως was—in my opinion unconvincingly—supplemented in P.Giss. I 103 (TM 33138): the intensifier is thought to be found at the very end of the greeting formula, whereas intensifiers usually appear at the beginning of the phrase, before the greeting verb (cf. *supra*).

¹⁸⁰ I.e. SB XVI 12304 (TM 30267), P.Oxy. III 531 (TM 28371), P.Oxy. VIII 1162 (TM 33633) and CPR V 23 (TM 34843).

¹⁸¹ Since many documents of this archive still need to be published, it is too soon to investigate whether this element is preferred in the archive (cf. *supra*, footnote 7).

VIII 482; TM 17241) it appears as λίαν λίαν. Γνησίως only seems to be used in later periods: it is attested four times from the 6th century AD onwards, e.g.:

“ὁ καλόγηρ(ός) μου \γνησίως σε [[ας]] ἀσπάζεται/” (SB XX 14188; TM 39981; l. 9)

The following intensifiers are attested only once: εὐτυχῶς in P.Berl.Zill. 14 (TM 36099), θερμῶς in BGU III 822 (TM 28093), ἀδελφικῶς in P.Brem. 61 (TM 19646), ἐκθύμως in P.Cair.Masp. I 67064 (TM 19015), κατὰ δύναμιν in P.Ammon I 3 (TM 23631) and ἐκ πάσης μου ψυχῆς in P.Cair.Masp. I 67068 (TM 36810). Perhaps the intensifier ἐπαφροδιτικῶς appears in P.Oxy. LXXIII 4965 (TM 118655), but the phrase is too damaged to be sure.

6.6.2. Intensifiers of duration and frequency

Πολλάκις is found three times. Ἄει appears in P.Sarap. 85 (TM 17107) and εἰς ἅπαντα τὸν χρόνον in P.Ryl. IV 624 (TM 32762). Συνεχῶς is supplemented in P.Sarap. 98 (TM 17123). Νυκτός καὶ ἡμέρας is only preserved in P.Lond. III 1244 (TM 33790) and similarly, καθ’ ἕκαστον occurs in P.Oxy. LXXIII 4965 (TM 118655). Πάλιν is preserved in SB XVIII 13303 (TM 25345) and P.Cair.Masp. I 67068 (TM 36810).

6.6.3. Structuring intensifiers

A number of intensifiers structure the letter. These intensifiers are often found in salutations at the beginning of the letter and are identical to, or inspired by, the intensifiers of the initial health wish (cf. *infra*, chapter 4 § 3.3.5), e.g. πρὸ (μὲν) πάντων (in almost fifty attestations from the 1st until the 7th centuries AD), προηγουμένως (thirteen attestations from the 3rd until the early 5th centuries AD), πρὸ (μὲν) παντός (nine attestations from the 1st-2nd until the 5th centuries AD)¹⁸², πρὸ τῶν ὅλων (six attestations from the 1st until the 3rd-4th centuries AD)¹⁸³, ἐν πρώτοις (four attestations from the 4th until the 5th-6th centuries AD) and τὸ κεφάλαιον τῆς ἐπιστολῆς (in P.Oxy. XVI 1865; TM 37868 and P.Oxy. XVI 1829; TM 22007)¹⁸⁴.

¹⁸² Further, πρὸ μὲν παντός λόγου is attested in four letters from the 6th and 7th centuries AD: SB XX 14241 (TM 23699), P.Cair.Masp. I 67068 (TM 36810), PUG I 38 (TM 35930) and PSI VIII 973 (TM 36173). In P.Mil. II 81 (TM 33514) πρὸ παντός πολλοῦ appears.

¹⁸³ Further, in SB V 7600 (TM 17990), the variant πρὸ μὲν πάντων ὅλων occurs.

¹⁸⁴ Some other intensifiers are attested only once: πρὸ τῶν πάντων ὅλων (SB V 7600; TM 17990), πρὶν πάντων (SB XXII 15736; TM 79200), πάντων πρότερον (P.Ness. 47; TM 21484), πρὸ πᾶν (O.Wilck. 1219; TM 77619), πρὸ πᾶσης ῥήσεως (SB XXII 15482; TM 79057), πρὸ (μὲν) πάντων τῆς ἐπιστολῆς (P.Michael. 39; TM 33541) and ἐν μὲν προοιμίῳ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς (P.Oxy. XVI 1860; TM 37866).

6.7. Minor extensions

In P.Sarap. 84 a (TM 17106), the extension *ὡς ἐν στενωῷ* appears:

“Ἄρειον ὡς ἐν στενωῷ καθ’ ἡμέραν ἐν τοῖς τοῦ ἡγεμόνος ἀσπάζομαι” (ll. 15-17)

The editor of this text admits that “*le sens précis de la comparaison ἐν στενωῷ échappe*” (Schwartz 1961: 228); he translates the phrase as follows: “*Chaque jour, immanquablement (?), je salue Areios dans l’entourage du préfet*” (Schwartz 1961: 227).

In five letters, *ὡς παρών* is attested, e.g.:

“† διὰ τοῦ παρόντος ἡμετέρου γράμματος πλεῖστα ὡς παρῶν προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομαι τὴν ὑμετέραν θεοφιλ(εστάτην) ἀδελφότητα” (SB XVI 12980; TM 36016; l. 1)

The letters date from the 3rd-4th to the 7th centuries AD. In P.Oxy. XVI 1860 (TM 37866) the extension *ἄχρι θεάς* is found:

“ταῦτα γράψας πλεῖστα προσκυνῶ κ[αί] ἀσπάζομαι τὴν ὑμετέραν περίβλε(πτον) ἀδελφ(ότητα) ἄχρει (= ἄχρι) θεάς †” (ll. 14-15)

By means of these two extensions, the written communication is presented as similar to real-life communication.

7. Conclusion

Sending regards is more widespread than previously thought: although it only becomes a more or less standard part of the private letter in the Roman period, the first occurrences date back to the beginning of the Ptolemaic period. Mostly greetings are sent from the sender to the addressee’s relatives and friends (§ 1), and from the sender’s social circle to the addressee himself (§ 2), but I also discussed some less common greeting *topoi*, which have been neglected in previous studies, such as the greetings from the sender’s social circle to the addressee’s friends and relatives.

The phraseology of the salutation shows a great deal of variety: within one single letter, sometimes even multiple verbs are used to express the greetings. Only rarely individuals seem to have consistently used one specific verb form (Herennia), a specific intensifier (perhaps Lucius Bellienus Gemellus) or a specific expression in the group references (Terentianus). There is no geographical, chronological or semantic division between the verbs. The number of variants among the verbs is larger than previously described: in older studies, *προσκυνέω* was not discussed as one of the verbs that are used in greeting formulas. My investigation also suggested that the verb *βλέπω* could possibly express greetings as well: in a limited number of cases, it might have undergone the same semantic shift as *ἐπισκοπέω*.

B. Health wishes

One of the main topics in private communication –and one of the key motives for writing a letter– is to pray for, and to ask about the addressee’s health. In times of alienation, correspondents often got worried about the well-being of their loved ones. The *topos* of praying for the addressee’s health is therefore found in different places in the private letter. Just after the opening formula, an initial health wish expresses the idea (chapter 4). From the Roman period onwards, the initial health wish is sometimes extended with a *proskynema* formula, which has a more or less similar meaning (chapter 5). In the Ptolemaic period, another health wish is found just before the closing formula (chapter 6). Finally, also the closing formula expresses a wish for the addressee’s well-being (chapter 7).

Chapter 4 Initial health wish

It was customary and polite to wish the addressee good health at the beginning of the letter, immediately after the opening formula. In total, an initial health wish is attested in more than 700 private letters, which is approximately 15% of all private letters. In ostraca the percentage of initial health wishes is lower (about 10%), no doubt due to lack of space. The absence of an initial health wish may also have to do with the personal preference or cultural background of the sender. Evans remarked that in the Zenon archive “there is a link between the extended type of formula [which is found in letters with initial health wish; DN] and authors with Greek names. [...] the Egyptian peasants of the Fayum do not, as far as we can tell, ever employ the extended greeting” (Evans 2007: 303). Another factor is the disappearance of the *topos* in the Late Antique letters. Of the 611 private letters from the 5th century AD onwards, only 39 (6.4%) have such an initial health wish. The phrase remained in use until the 6th-7th century AD, but was only sporadically used in the last centuries of the papyrological millennium¹. This is probably due to a change in writing style:

“Les formules stéréotypées par lesquelles l'épistolier souhaitait une bonne santé à son correspondant (formula valetudinis) [...] ont désormais fait place à des introductions très travaillées où, sur un mode généralisant, on développe des thèmes tournant, selon les circonstances, autour de la philia, la philanthropia et du rôle que la lettre joue dans ces relations entre individus.” (Fournet 2009: 48)

During this long period, it underwent of course major changes. This chapter is organized according to the different formulas which were successively in use.

¹ From the 5th century AD onwards, the standard formulas become rather uncommon: “Ab dem 6. Jh. wird das Motiv des Gebets zu Gott für die Gesundheit des Empfängers viel seltener” (Papathomas 2007: 501). Either no initial health wish is inserted or the old phrases are replaced by “una equivalente frase affettiva, di simpatia o di lode” (O'Callaghan 1961: 28).

1. Εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον and variants

In our earliest examples, the health wish is mostly expressed in the following way:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι ὑγίαινον δὲ καὶ ἐγώ” (P.Cair.Zen. I 59029; TM 689; l. 1)²

In its basic structure, a conditional clause is followed by a main clause. After that, there is a phrase in which the sender gives information about his own health³. In total, this structure is found in about 160 letters, mainly dating from the 3rd and the 2nd centuries BC⁴.

In contrast to the fossilized Latin initial health wish *si vales, bene est ego valeo* (SVBEEV)⁵, the Greek counterpart has a great deal of variation, which makes the wish more real, more personal and less stereotyped (Exler 1923: 106) —however, this variation has not yet been described in detail.

1.1. Conditional clause εἰ ἔρρωσαι and variants⁶

1.1.1. Verbs expressing a health wish

1.1.1.1. Ἔρρωσαι and variants

In about 120 private letters, mainly dated to the 3rd century BC⁷, the conditional clause has the second person singular ἔρρωσαι (cf. P.Cair.Zen. I 59029, quoted above). The

² Translation: “If you are well, it would be good. And I am well too myself”.

³ For practical reasons, in the discussion of the conditional clause and the main clause, I will only quote those two parts of the phrase, and not the information formula, even if the initial health wish is extended with such a phrase.

⁴ BGU VI 1301 (TM 7340) is dated to the 2nd or the 1st century BC; P.Athen. 60 (TM 77953) in the 1st century BC (cf. Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 374). In nine letters, only the last part of the formula about the sender’s well-being has been preserved, but presumably these letters originally had an initial health wish preceding this phrase.

⁵ In contrast to Spiegelberg’s idea (Spiegelberg 1905: 53), the *communis opinio* is that the Romans borrowed the initial health wish from Greek (Ziemann 1910: 302); the universal Greek formula, also attested in the letters from and to the Hellenistic kings (Cf. Ziemann 1910: 303; Welles 1934: 242-246) and in a 3rd century BC lead letter from Marseille (cf. Ceccarelli 2013: 349), influenced the Latin phraseology (Exler 1923: 106; Koskeniemi 1956: 131). This feature of language contact must have occurred early in the Hellenistic period, since a similar formula was already used by Plautus (Koskeniemi 1956: 131).

⁶ The following overview does not imply that the different verbs used in the health wish cannot occur side by side. In several letters, a bipartite conditional clause is found, e.g.: “εἰ τῶι τε σώματι ὑγιαίνεις καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις κατὰ λόγον ἀπαλλάσσεις εἴη ἂν ὡς εὔχομαι.” (P.Köln VI 266; TM 3196; ll. 1-3). Hence, the different verb forms do not seem to belong to different geographical or social contexts.

⁷ Ten are from the 2nd century BC and three from the 2nd or 3rd century BC.

plural variant ἔρρωσθε appears in twelve letters, which are addressed to multiple addressees⁸.

In eight letters, the verb ἔρρωμαι⁹ appears as a participle, almost always subordinate to σοι or ὑμῖν¹⁰ (cf. *infra*, § 1.1.2.4), e.g.:

“εἰ ἔρρωμένω σοι τᾶλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) κατὰ λόγον ἀπαντᾷ, εἴη ἄν ὡς βούλομαι”
(UPZ I 60; TM 3451; ll. 2-3)

This formula is clearly a merger of the ἔρρωσαι phrase with the formula the idea “if things are otherwise according to your wish” (cf. *infra*, § 1.1.2). Whereas these two phrases mostly appear in a paratactic construction, the hypotactic construction with the participle of ἔρρωμαι being subordinate to σοι or ὑμῖν is a more dense expression and is probably a later development: all instances date to the 2nd century BC¹¹.

1.1.1.2. Ὑγιαίνεις and variants

In twelve letters from the 3rd century BC, the conditional clause has the form ὑγιαίνεις¹². Most of these come from the Zenon archive and two from the archive of Kleon and Theodoros, viz. P.Petr. I 30 (1) (TM 7670) and P.Petr. III 42 H (7) (TM 7673). In the two letters to his father Kleon, Philonides seems to use slightly different formulas:

“καλῶς ποεῖς εἰ ὑγιάνεις (= ὑγιαίνεις)” (P.Petr. I 30 (1); l. 1)

⁸ Ἐρρωσαι should probably also be read in the quoted initial health wish of the private letter P.Diosk. 15 (TM 44730; ll. 3-5): “λέγω δέ σοι 'εἰ ἔρρω[-ca.?-] οἱ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ π[ά]ντα κα[τὰ] λόγον ἐστί.’”

⁸ In UPZ I 66 (TM 3457), ἔρρωσθαι should of course be read as ἔρρωσθε: “εἰ ἔρρωσθαι (= ἔρρωσθε)” (l. 1).

⁹ In this thesis I will refer to the verb as ἔρρωμαι, and not as ῥώννυμι, since the passive perfect form ἔρρωμαι has a (specific) present meaning in these formulas.

¹⁰ Perhaps, another similar occurrence was written in PSI VIII 983 (TM 78838; l. 2): “[-ca.?-] εἰ ἔρρωμέ[νω]ς (?) -ca.?-]”. Instead of the current reading εἰ ἔρρωμένως, I would then suggest εἰ ἔρρωμένω or εἰ ἔρρωμένοις. In P.Ryl. IV 592 (TM 7707), the participle ἔρρωμένοι takes over the function of the ruling verb in the conditional clause: “εἰ ἔρρωμένοι οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες καὶ Βάκχιος εἴη ἄν ὡς βούλομαι” (ll. 1-2). The conditional subclause is not only uncommon for not having an inflected verb, but also because only third persons are mentioned, and not the addressee.

¹¹ Only P.Ryl. IV 592 with its uncommon participle construction (cf. previous footnote) is dated to the 3rd century BC.

¹² I.e. P.Köln VI 266 (TM 3196), P.Lond. VII 1979 (TM 1542), P.Cair.Zen. II 59161 (TM 809), P.Cair.Zen. II 59250 (TM 895), P.Cair.Zen. III 59426 (TM 1066), P.Col. III 10 (TM 1731), P.Col. IV 74 (TM 1788), P.Petr. I 29 (TM 7475), P.Petr. I 30 (1) (TM 7670), P.Petr. III 42 H (7) (TM 7673), PSI VI 601 (TM 2211) and P.Zen.Pestm. 42 (TM 1873). The plural ὑγιαίνετε is not attested. In P.Petr. II 2 (4) (TM 7409), ὑγιαίνουσι is supplemented: “[εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ ἡ θυγάτηρ σου καὶ τὰ παιδιά [ὑγιαίνουσι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα σοι κατὰ λόγον χ]ωρεῖ, εἴη ἄν ὡς ἡμεῖς τοῖς θεοῖς [εὐχόμενοι διατελοῦμεν]” (ll. 1-3). As I will show *infra*, this conjecture is far from certain and has not been taken into account. The health wish in this case does not only concern the addressee, but also his children (see also *infra*, § 1.1.4).

“εἰ ὑγιαίνεις καὶ τὰ λοιπ[ά σοι κατὰ γνώμην ἐστίν, καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι]” (P.Petr. III 42 H (7); l. 1)

As the letters are written in the same hand (cf. Van Beek 2006: 44-50), Philonides was responsible for the variation.

In P.Cair.Zen. IV 59593 (TM 1226), the verb ὑγιαίνω is attested in the participle:

“καλῶς ποιεῖς ὑγιαίνων” (l. 1)

1.1.2. Verbs expressing the idea “if things are otherwise according to your wish”¹³

1.1.2.1. Variation with regard to the verb

Εἰμί is attested in a total of 56 letters dated between the 3rd and the 2nd-1st centuries BC, e.g.:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τᾶλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) σοὶ κατὰ νοῦν ἐστίν, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι” (P.Hamb. II 191; TM 4343; ll. 1-2)

Like in the above case, in most other letters the εἰμί phrase comes as a second health wish after the phrase with ἔρρωσαι or variants. In some instances, εἰμί is the only verb in the conditional clause, e.g.:

“<εἰ> τᾶλλ’ ἐστίν ἐν τῇ ἀρίστη διαθέσει, εἴη ἂν ὡς αἰροῦμαι” (P.Diosk. 17; TM 44732; ll. 2-3)

The verb ἀπαλλάσσω occurs thirteen times in the conditional clauses of the initial health wish¹⁴. All occurrences date to the 3rd century BC and eleven instances are from the Zenon archive¹⁵, e.g.:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἀπαλλάσσεις κατὰ νοῦν, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59148; TM 796; l. 1)

¹³ The health wishes in which the sender wishes success to the addressee, might be influenced by Egyptian phraseology, although this is not certain (Depauw 2006: 190-191). In the past, these phrases —like many other variants which did not fit into a standard scheme— were treated in a stepmotherly way: Buzón, for example, considered letters with such a formula as drafts or as texts from an unskilled author (Buzón 1984: 16). Also P.Cair.Zen. V 59818 (TM 1442) is an example of this kind of phrase, but we can only guess the exact wordings of the original: “[-ca.?- ἔ]ρρωσαι καὶ τὰ ἄλλ[α -ca.?-]” (l. 1). It is, however, sure that this formula started with εἰ as [εἰ -ca.?- ἔ]ρρωσαι.

¹⁴ The phrase is supplemented in P.Cair.Zen. I 59098 (TM 750) and PSI XIII 1351 (TM 2450); these occurrences have not been taken into account.

¹⁵ The two other attestations are P.Köln VI 266 (cf. *supra*) and P.Petr. II 2 (3) (TM 7408).

This is a quote from a letter by Hierokles, the director of a παλαίστρα in Alexandria. No less than six of the eleven occurrences in the Zenon archive, come from this very person¹⁶: Hierokles had a clear preference for this verb (Evans 2007: 305). There is an almost precise match between the use of the formula with ἀπαλλάσσω and the autographs: five of the six letters were written in the same hand, probably that of Hierokles¹⁷; only P.Zen.Pestm. 51 was penned by another hand. In P.Cair.Zen. II 59285 (TM 929), another autograph from Hierokles the following phrase appears:

“εἰ ἔρ[ρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπά σοί ἐστιν κ]ατὰ λόγον, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι” (l. 1)

The supplement is, to my mind, not convincing: the expression καὶ τὰ λοιπά σοί ἐστιν (κατὰ λόγον) is not attested elsewhere in Hierokles’ letters. Since we do not know how many characters are missing in the middle of the formula, it is possible to bring the addition in line with Hierokles’ other autographs, e.g. “εἰ ἔρ[ρωσαι καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἀπαλλάσσεις κ]ατὰ λόγον”. So, P.Cair.Zen. II 59285 might be another attestation of ἀπαλλάσσω in the initial health wish of Hierokles’ letters¹⁸.

In five letters, all dated to the 2nd century BC, the conditional phrase has the verb ἀπαντάω, i.e. UPZ I 59 (TM 3450), 60 (TM 3451), 68 (TM 3459), 69 (TM 3460) and P.Tebt. III.1 755 (TM 7842). The first four are from the archive of the *katochoi* of the Serapeion¹⁹. The related verb συναντάω is attested in the 3rd century BC letter PSI IV 392 (TM 2076):

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τᾶλλά (= τὰ ἄλλα) σοι κατὰ τρόπον συναντᾷ, εἴη ἂν τὸ δεῖον” (l. 1)²⁰

Γίγνομαι is attested only in P.Cair.Zen. III 59426 (TM 1066):

“τοῖς θεοῖς πᾶσιν χάριν ἔχομεν, εἰ αὐτός τε ὑγιαίνει καὶ τὰ λοιπά σοι κατὰ λόγον γέγονεν” (l. 1-2)

Also χωρέω appears only once, in P.Petr. II 2 (4) (TM 7409), but even this attestation is uncertain due to a lacuna:

¹⁶ I.e. P.Lond. VII 1941 (TM 2384), P.Lond. VII 1946 (TM 2380), P.Zen.Pestm. 51 (TM 1882), P.Cair.Zen. I 59061 (TM 719), P.Cair.Zen. II 59148 (TM 796) and PSI VI 645 (TM 2247). Also P.Cair.Zen. I 59098 (TM 750), in which the verb was supplemented, is a letter from Hierokles.

¹⁷ The possibility that those letters were written by a regular scribe, is refuted by Evans, “as the dated letters in the usual hand range over a period of almost seven years” (Evans 2005: 155).

¹⁸ Although many letters from Hierokles have a uniform initial health wish with ἀπαλλάσσω, his language is thought to be a combination of uniformity and variation (Evans 2005: 307): his other letters express the initial health wish in other wordings or do not have such a formula. In chapter 10, I try to find some motives for this variation (cf. *infra*, chapter 10 § 2).

¹⁹ For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/119 (accessed on May 21, 2015).

²⁰ The verb is supplemented in PSI VI 651 (TM 2252), a letter from the Zenon archive. As this verb is uncommon in the initial health wish, the conjecture is far from certain.

“[εἰ ἔρρωσαι κ]αὶ ἡ θυγάτηρ σου καὶ τὰ παιδιά [ύγιαίνουσι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα σοι κατὰ λόγον χ]ωρεῖ, εἴη ἂν ὡς ἡμεῖς τοῖς θεοῖς [εὐχόμενοι διατελοῦμεν]” (ll. 1-3)

Πράσσω is preserved in P.Cair.Zen. II 59160 (TM 808)²¹:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ κατὰ νοῦν πράσσεις, εἰ (= εἴη) ἂν πολλή χάρις τοῖς θεοῖς” (ll. 1-2)

In UPZ I 71 (TM 3462), χρηματίζω is found:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν κατὰ λόγον σοι χρηματίζεται, εἴη ἂν ὡς βούλομαι” (ll. 2-4)

1.1.2.2. Variation with regard to the subject

Whereas the verb ἀπαλλάσσω, for instance, always appears in the second person singular, some of the other verbs listed above are in the third person singular and need a subject. This is mostly expressed in general terms by τὰ ἄλλα or τὰ λοιπά. The former appears in 28 letters²², the latter in 25 letters²³. Τὰ λοιπά seems to be almost exclusively confined to the 3rd century BC, whereas τὰ ἄλλα is found both in the 3rd and the 2nd centuries BC —and perhaps even the 1st century BC²⁴. In P.Diosk. 16 (TM 44731) τὰ ἄλλα is extended to τὰ ἄλλα ἅπαντα. There are four other variants:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν κατὰ λόγον σοι χρηματίζεται, εἴη ἂν ὡς βούλομαι” (UPZ I 71; TM 3462; ll. 2-4)

“εἰ σύ τε ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ σὰ πάντα καὶ τὰ λοιπά σο[ι κατὰ νοῦν ἐστίν, πο]λλή χάρις τοῖς θεοῖς” (P.Cair.Zen. I 59076; TM 731; ll. 1-2)

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ ὧν πρόνοιαν ποιεῖ καὶ τᾶλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) σοι κατὰ λόγον ἐστίν εἰ (= εἴη) ἂν ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς πολλή χά[ρι]ς” (P.Hib. I 79; TM 8228; ll. 2-6)

“[εἰ αὐτός τε ἔρρωσαι] καὶ τᾶλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) περὶ σὲ κατὰ γνώμην ἐστίν, ἔχοι ἂν εὔ” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59217; TM 862; ll. 1-2)

In the phrases with ἀπαλλάσσω, there is a similar division between ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς and ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις²⁵, e.g.:

²¹ Although the verb is attested only once in the private papyrus letters, it also appears in other health wishes (cf. Ziemann 1910: 303; Welles 1934: 41-45).

²² Further, the phrase is supplemented in five other letters.

²³ In addition, the phrase is supplemented in six other letters.

²⁴ BGU VI 1301 (TM 7340) is dated to the 2nd or the 1st century BC. Given the low number of occurrences, definite conclusions about the distribution are impossible. However, in chapter 6, § 1.4.3 and chapter 7, § 4.7, we will return to this discussion.

²⁵ Four letters have the word string ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις, whereas ten have ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς.

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἀπαλλάσσεις κατὰ νοῦν, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59148; TM 796; ll. 1-2)

P.Cair.Zen. III 59405 (TM 1047) and P.Petr. II 2 (3) (TM 7408) add the adverb ἀλύπως to ἀπαλλάσσω, e.g.:

“καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι εἰ αὐτός τε ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ εἰ ἀλύπως ἀπαλλάττεις, [. . .] ἂν ἔχοι ὡς ἡ[μεῖς] βουλόμε[θα]” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59405; ll. 2-6)²⁶

According to a search in de Papyrological Navigator, this adverb appears in only one other document, the private letter P.Bad. IV 51 (TM 80106) where it is similarly part of the initial health wish: “Θεοφίλα Διογνήτῳ τῷ ἀδελφῷ χαίριν (= χαίρειν) καὶ διὰ παντὸς ἐρρωμένον ζῆν ἀλύπως” (ll. 1-3) (cf. *infra*, § 2.1.3).

1.1.2.3. Κατὰ λόγον and variants

Κατὰ λόγον appears in 27 letters dated to the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC²⁷, κατὰ γνώμην is attested eighteen times between the 3rd and the 2nd or perhaps the 1st centuries AD²⁸, and κατὰ νοῦν is preserved in twelve letters from the 3rd century BC²⁹. Κατὰ τρόπον occurs in PSI IV 392 (TM 2076; 240 BC) and in P.Diosk. 16 (TM 44731; 151 BC)³⁰.

The phrase κατὰ νοῦν seems to be an integral part of Hierokles' preferred health wish³¹: of the total of twelve occurrences, three are found in letters from this very person (i.e. P.Zen.Pestm. 51 (TM 1882), P.Cair.Zen. I 59061 (TM 750) and P.Cair.Zen. II 59148 (TM 796)); and of the eight other letters in which κατὰ νοῦν was supplemented, three are from Hierokles (i.e. P.Lond. VII 1941 (TM 2384), P.Lond. VII 1946 (TM 2380) and P.Cair.Zen. I 59061 (TM 719)). In all these instances, Hierokles combines κατὰ νοῦν with the verb ἀπαλλάσσω. The phrase κατὰ νοῦν ἀπαλλάσσω only appears six times, all in

²⁶ This is also the only letter with ἀπαλλάσσω having τὰ λοιπά as a Greek accusative. Also P.Cair.Zen. II 59160 with the verb πράσσω preserves τὰ λοιπά as a Greek accusative.

²⁷ The phrase is supplemented in three other letters.

²⁸ The latest occurrence, BGU VI 1301 (TM 7340), is dated to the 2nd or 1st century BC. Κατὰ γνώμην is restored in five other letters. Kiessling also supplemented γνώμην in P.Cair.Zen. I 59073 (TM 728) (cf. *BL* III, p. 37), but this attestation has not been taken into account as λόγον and νοῦν are plausible supplements as well.

²⁹ It is supplemented in eight other initial health wishes.

³⁰ In PSI VI 651 (TM 2252) and PSI V 520 (TM 2142) the passage was damaged and κατὰ τρόπον is largely supplemented. Especially in the latter, the conjecture κατὰ τρόπον is speculative, since the phrase is largely supplemented and not one letter of the word string κατὰ τρόπον is readable: “[εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ] . η. [. . .] κ[ατὰ τ]ρ[όπον] ἐστίν, εὖ ἂν] ἔχοι” (ll. 1-3). The editor probably based this conjecture on the analogy with the last sentence of the letter: “καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις παραγενόμενος εἰς Φιλαδέλφειαν κατὰ πάντα τρόπον” (ll. 15-16). But since often different phrases are used in different parts of the texts, there is no guarantee that the sender would have used the same expression.

³¹ This is not to say that Hierokles did not use other phrases: κατὰ λόγον is attested in P.Cair.Zen. II 59285 (TM 929), another autograph from Hierokles: “εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπά σοί ἐστιν κ[ατὰ] λόγον, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι” (l. 1).

letters with ἀπαλλάσσω by Hierokles³². Given the relative uniformity in Hierokles' letters —especially in his autographs— and given the preference for the word string κατὰ νοῦν, that phrase would be a more plausible conjecture for PSI VI 645 (TM 2247) — Hierokles' seventh letter with ἀπαλλάσσω— than κατὰ λόγον: “[εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἀπαλλάσσεις [κατὰ λόγον (?) -ca.?-]” (ll. 1-2).

In P.Diosk. 17 (TM 44732), the following extension appears:

“<εἰ> τᾶλλ' ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ ἀρίστη διαθέσει, εἴη ἄν ὡς αἰροῦμαι” (ll. 2-3)

1.1.2.4. Reference to the addressee

The addressee is mentioned in this *topos* by means of the dative σοι (in 46 private letters³³) or the plural ὑμῖν (in SB XVI 12619; TM 4140 and P.Cair.Zen. IV 59579; TM 1213), e.g.:

“εἰ τῷ τε σώματι ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπά σοι κατὰ νοῦν ἐστὶν, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι”
(P.Cair.Zen. III 59416; TM 1056; ll. 1-3)

“εἰ ἐρρωμένω σοι τὰ ταλλὰ (= τὰ ἄλλα) κατὰ λόγον ἀπαντᾷ, εἴη ἄν ὡς βούλομαι”
(UPZ I 60; TM 3451; ll. 1-2)

“εἰ [ἔρρ]ωσθε καὶ τὰ τάλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) ὑμῖν κατὰ γνώμ[ην] ἐστίν, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι[]”
(P.Cair.Zen. IV 59579; ll. 1-2)

However, in PSI VI 651 (TM 2252), the editor reads the genitive σου:

“[-ca.?- εἰ ἔ]ρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπά σου κατὰ τ[ρόπον] συναντᾷ (?) -ca.?-]” (l. 1)

Yet, a photograph of the papyrus³⁴ clearly shows that the letter has in fact the expected dative σοι. Since the genitive is thus unattested, the supplement in P.Mil. II 21 b (TM 6221) seems unconvincing:

“εἰ [ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπά σου κατὰ] λόγον ἐστίν, εἴη ἄν ὡ[ς] εὐ[χο]μαι” (ll. 1-2)

Daris did not explain why he supplemented the genitive instead of the dative (Daris 1958: 30). There seem to be no reasons for an atypical phraseology. Also the rest of the conjecture is tentative as there are no indications for this wording.

³² The phrase is also supplemented in P.Col. III 9 (TM 1730), a letter from Alexandros to Zenon: “εἰ ἔρρωσαί τε καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς [κατὰ νοῦν] ἀπαλλάσσεις, εἴη ἄν ὡς ἡμεῖς βουλόμεθα” (l. 1).

³³ In nine other letters, σοι was supplemented. In UPZ I 59 (TM 3450), σοι was added by the editor: “εἰ ἐρρωμένω <σοι> τᾶλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) κατὰ λόγον ἀπαντᾷ, εἴη ἄν ὡς τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχομένη διατελῶ” (ll. 1-3).

³⁴ The image is digitally available at <http://www.psi-online.it/documents/psi;6;651> (accessed on April 8, 2015).

1.1.3. Other variations with regard to the verb

Epistolary formulas are by definition clichéd, but in some letters the phrases seem to be adapted to the context: in P.Cair.Zen. III 59527 (TM 1164), Philoxenos asks Zenon to give Exakon two jars full of pressed grapes and pips to make sour wine. The health wish is in line with this message:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ οἶνον πολὺν ποεῖς (= ποιεῖς), καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι” (ll. 2-3)

In PSI IV 342 (TM 2030), εὐκαιρέω expresses the hope that the addressee prospers:

“εἰ εὐκαιρεῖς, καλῶς ποιή[σεις (= ποιήσεις)-ca.?-]” (l. 2)

1.1.4. Health wish for third persons

In seventeen letters, the sender not only wishes the addressee luck, but also expresses the same hope for other persons in the recipient’s social circle. Sometimes, these third persons are referred to by a kinship term³⁵, e.g.:

“εἰ ἔρρωσθε μετὰ τῶν παιδίων, εἴη ἂν ὡς ἐγὼ βούλομαι” (P.Tebt. III.2 948; TM 7984; ll. 4-6)

“[ἔρρ]ωσαι καὶ [ὁ ἀ]δελφὸς [καὶ] τὸ θυγάτριον καὶ ο[ἱ ἄ]λλ[λοι] πάντες εὖ ἂν ἔχοι” (P.Petr. III 53 (r); TM 7484; ll. 2-4)

“[εἰ ἔρρωσαι κ]αὶ ἡ θυγάτηρ σου καὶ τὰ παιδιά [ὕγαινον]οι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα σοι κατὰ λόγον χ[ωρεῖ], εἴη ἂν ὡς ἡμεῖς τοῖς θεοῖς [εὐχόμενοι διατελοῦμεν]” (P.Petr. II 2 (4); TM 7409; ll. 1-3)³⁶

In some cases, the sender only gives a vague description to a group of people, e.g.:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ οὖς σὺ β[ο]ύλει, ἔχοι ἂν εὖ” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59365; TM 1008; ll. 2-3)³⁷

“[εἰ ἔ]ρρωσαι σὺ τε καὶ οὖς προαιρεῖ καὶ τ[ὰ λοιπά] σοι κατὰ νοῦν ἐστίν, εἴη ἂν ὡς τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχομαι” (P.Col. IV 64; TM 1779; ll. 1-2)

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι αὐτός τε καὶ οὖς θέλεις, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι” (P.Mich. I 55; TM 1955; ll. 1-2)

“[εἰ ἔ]ρρωσαι μεθ’ ὧν προαιρηῖ καὶ τ[ὰ λοιπ]ά σοι κατὰ γνώμην ἐστίν, [ἔχοι] ἂν εὖ” (P.Petr. III 53 (q); TM 7483; ll. 2-4)

In other letters, however, the third persons are mentioned by name, e.g.:

³⁵ The kinship terms in the initial health wish are not discussed in appendix I (which only deals with the opening and closing formulas and the salutations), but are similar to those summed up there, as the following quotes show.

³⁶ The supplement ὕγαινονοι is far from certain, as examples like P.Petr. III 53 (r) (cf. *supra*), show that a second verb is not necessary.

³⁷ A similar phrase is supplemented in P.Cair.Zen. IV 59596 (TM 1229) and PSI VI 590 (TM 2200).

“εἰ ἔρρωμένω σοι μετὰ Βερε[νίκης καὶ τ]ῶν παιδίων τ’ ἄλλα κατὰ γνώμη ἐστίν,
εἴη ἂν ὡς τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχόμενοι διατελοῦμεν ἐν παντὶ καιρῶι μεμνημέ[ν]οι
ὕ[μῶν]” (BGU X 2006; TM 8330; ll. 1-3)
“εἰ αὐτὸς τε ἔρρωσαι καὶ Ἀπολλώνιος, τοῖς [θεοῖς πᾶσιν] ἔχο[μ]εν πολλὴν χάριν”
(P.Cair.Zen. I 59032; TM 692; ll. 1-2)

The explicit mention of Apollonios *dioiketes* as in the last letter, is also found in two other letters from the Zenon archive by different senders (P.Mich. I 13; TM 1918 and P.Cair.Zen. IV 59575; TM 1209). In fact, in those two other occurrences, the reference to Apollonios precedes the health wish for the addressee. This similar element should be ascribed to the high social status of the *dioiketes* (cf. Koskeniemi 1956: 132).

In P.Ryl. IV 592 (TM 7707; 3rd century BC), the addressee is not mentioned in the health wish, which only involves third persons:

“εἰ ἔρρωμέγοι οἱ ἐν οἴκωι πάντες καὶ Βάκχιος εἴη ἂν ὡς βούλομαι” (ll. 2-3)

1.1.5. Extensions to the conditional clause

In five letters, dated to the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, the personal pronoun σύ is added to the conditional clause. Σύ appears in P.Mich. I 13 and P.Cair.Zen. IV 59575, the two health wishes that mainly involve Apollonios, e.g.:

“εὖ ἂν ἔχοι εἰ ἔρρωται Ἀπ[ολλ]ώνιός τε καὶ σὺ [ἔ]ρρω[σαι]” (P.Mich. I 13; TM 1918;
ll. 1-3)

In combination with a health wish for third persons, it is quite logical that there is emphasis on the addressee³⁸. Yet, in P.Cair.Zen. I 59076 (TM 731), σύ is added to the simple standard phrase εἰ ἔρρωσαι:

“εἰ σύ τε ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ σὰ πάντα καὶ τὰ λοιπά σο[ι] κατὰ νοῦν ἐστίν, πο]λλὴ χάρις
τοῖς θεοῖς” (ll. 1-2)

Of a similar meaning is the extension αὐτός. It appears in fourteen letters, all from the 3rd century BC³⁹, e.g.:

“εἰ αὐτὸς τε ἔρρωσαι καὶ Ἀπολλώνιος, τοῖς [θεοῖς πᾶσιν] ἔχο[μ]εν πολλὴν χάριν”
(P.Cair.Zen. I 59032; TM 692; ll. 1-2)

“τοῖς θεοῖς πᾶσιν χάριν ἔχομεν, εἰ αὐτὸς τε ὑγιαίνει καὶ τὰ λοιπά σοι κατὰ λόγον
γέγονεν” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59426; TM 1066; ll. 1-2)

³⁸ This is also the case in P.Col. IV 64 (TM 1779) and P.Diosk. 16 (TM 44731).

³⁹ Further, αὐτός is completely supplemented in five other 3rd century BC letters, which have not been taken into account.

As in the cases with *σύ*, *αὐτός* is not confined to a specific context and appears in health wishes for the addressee only, as well as in wishes for the addressee and for third persons. The observation that *αὐτός* is usually found immediately after the conjunction *εἰ*⁴⁰, enables us perhaps to reconsider the supplement in P.Cair.Zen. IV 59580 (TM 1214):

“εἰ αὐτ[οί τε -ca.?-] κατὰ γνώμην ἐστίν, εὖ ἂν ἔχο[ι -ca.?-]” (ll. 1-2)

Since the letter is probably only addressed to Zenon, *αὐτός* is perhaps a better alternative.

In four 3rd century BC letters, the extension *τῷ σώματι* occurs⁴¹, e.g.:

“εἰ τῷ τε σώματι ὑγιαίνεις καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις κατὰ λόγον ἀπαλλάσσεις εἴη ἂν ὡς εὐχομαι” (P.Köln VI 266; ll. 1-4)

1.2. Main clause *εὖ ἂν ἔχοι* and variants

In most cases, the conditional clause is combined with a main clause, as is expected from a grammatical point of view⁴².

1.2.1. *Εὖ ἂν ἔχοι* and variants

In 63 letters⁴³, chiefly from the 3rd century BC⁴⁴, the construction is the present potential *ἔχοι ἂν*, e.g.:

⁴⁰ Only in P.Cair.Zen. IV 59596 (TM 1229) and P.Mich. I 55 (TM 1955), the following word order appears, respectively: “καλῶς ποιεῖς εἰ ἔρρωσαι αὐτός τε [καὶ οὐς βούλει, -ca.?-]” (l. 1) and “εἰ ἔρρωσαι αὐτός τε καὶ οὐς θέλεις, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι” (ll. 1-2).

⁴¹ I.e. in P.Köln VI 266 (TM 3196), P.Lond. VII 1979 (TM 1542), P.Cair.Zen. I 59098 (TM 750) and P.Cair.Zen. III 59416 (TM 1056). The phrase is completely supplemented in P.Col. III 10 (TM 1731). This conjecture does not fully convince me “καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ ὑγιαί[νεις τῷ σώματι]” (ll. 1-2): in the four other letters, *τῷ σώματι* precedes the verb of the health wish. Yet, the number of occurrences is too low to accept or reject this supplement with certainty.

⁴² However, in some health wishes, the main clause does not correspond to the conditional subclause; it is a separate phrase, e.g.: “[εἰ] ἔρρωσαι, ἐρρώμεθα δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ καὶ {καὶ} [A]φροδισία καὶ ἡ θυγάτηρ καὶ ἡ παιδίσκη καὶ ἡ [θ]υγάτηρ αὐτῆς” (P.Grenf. I 43; TM 267; ll. 2-4). The elaborate information about the sender’s health might have led to the omission of the main clause in this specific formula; but in other cases, it is not clear why there is no main clause. The bipartite structure of the conditional subclause and the main clause was apparently so familiar, that one could drop the main clause, without confusing the addressee. In other cases, different main clauses are combined, e.g.: “εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ ὧν πρόνοιαν ποιεῖ καὶ τᾶλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) σοὶ κατὰ λόγον ἐστίν εἰ (= εἴη) ἂν ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς πολλὴ χά[ρις]” (P.Hib. I 79; TM 8228; ll. 2-6).

⁴³ This verb form is supplemented in twelve other letters; in P.Mich. I 23 (TM 1925), *καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι* was deleted by the editor since also another main clause was added: “{καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι} εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ σοὶ ἐστὶ πάντα κατὰ γνώμην, ἔχοιμι ἂν τοῖς θεοῖς πολλὴν χάριν” (ll. 1-2). As this is what the writer intended, this occurrence has nevertheless been taken into account.

⁴⁴ Only P.Mil. II 22 (TM 6226) and SB III 7267 (TM 5686) are dated to the 2nd century BC.

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι, ἔχοι ἄν καλῶς” (P.Lond. VII 1982; TM 1544; l. 1)

The adverbs in this phrase are either εὖ (35 letters⁴⁵) or καλῶς (25 letters⁴⁶). Some writers alternately use both adverbs⁴⁷, others have a preference for one adverb in particular. Artemidoros —the doctor in the Zenon archive— uses the phrase εὖ ἄν ἔχοι in all five letters with an initial health wish, never καλῶς ἄν ἔχοι (Evans 2007: 305).

1.2.2. Καλῶς ποιεῖς and variants

In fifteen letters, all from the 3rd century BC, the main sentence is made up by the phrase καλῶς ποιεῖς⁴⁸, e.g.:

“καλῶς ποιεῖς εἰ ἔρρωσαι” (P.Col. IV 66; TM 1781; l. 1)

All but one of the letters use the present form ποιεῖς: only in PSI IV 342 (TM 2030) the future ποιήσεις is supplemented:

“εἰ εὐκαιρεῖς, καλῶς ποιή[σεις (= ποιήσεις) -ca.?-]” (l. 2)

Given the fact that the η is uncertain and that confusion between η and ι is common (Mayser 1970a: 50-51), I wonder whether PSI IV 342, too, did not have the present ποιεῖς.

1.2.3. Εἴη ἄν τὸ δέον

In five letters from the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC⁴⁹, the main clause consists of the phrase εἴη ἄν τὸ δέον, e.g.:

“εἰ ἔρρωσθε, τὸ δέον ἄν εἴη” (BGU VI 1296; ll. 2-3)

This formula does not have any variants except in word order.

⁴⁵ In P.Athen. 60 (77953) an abbreviated variant seems to appear: “εἰ ἔρρωσθε ε[ὖ]” (l. 3). Εὖ (ἔχοι) is completely supplemented in four other letters, which have not been taken into account; the damaged phrases in P.Mich. I 10 (TM 1916) and P.Petr. III 53 (q) (TM 7483) have been included in this number.

⁴⁶ Καλῶς (ἔχοι) is supplemented in eleven other letters. The occurrence in P.Mich. I 23 has been included in this number (cf. *supra*, footnote 43).

⁴⁷ Only in exceptional cases two or more letters from the same sender have been preserved. This makes it hard to draw firm conclusions about the use of one specific adverb.

⁴⁸ The expression καλῶς ποιήσεις and variants are widely attested in the body of the letter where they have the function of a polite order (cf. *infra*, chapter 10, § 1).

⁴⁹ I.e. BGU VI 1296 (TM 4558), PSI VI 590 (TM 2200), PSI VI 606 (TM 2215), PSI IV 392 (TM 2076) and UPZ I 64 (TM 3455). The phrase is partly supplemented in PSI VI 606. Since the phrase is completely restored in PSI VI 570 (TM 2184), this occurrence has not been taken into account.

1.2.4. Main clause extended with a comparative subclause

In 43 private letters, dated mainly to the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, the main clause of the initial health wish is extended with a comparative subclause⁵⁰ with the idea “as I wish, pray, want,...”. In those cases, the main clause usually consists only of the potential phrase εἴη ἄν, e.g.:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν κατὰ λόγον σοι χρηματίζεται, εἴη ἄν ὡς βούλομαι” (UPZ I 71; TM 3462; ll. 2-4)

In one instance, γίγνομαι is the verb of the main clause:

“εἰ Ἀπ[ολλωνίος τε ἔρρωται κ]αὶ σὺ καὶ οὓς βούλει καὶ τὰ λοιπ[ὰ κατὰ νοῦν ἐστίν], γ[έ]νοιτ’ ἄν ὡς ἡμε[ῖ]ς θέλομεν” (P.Cair.Zen. IV 59575; TM 1209; ll. 1-3)

In the main clause εἴη ἄν εὔ of P.Sijp. 57 (TM 110222), there seems to be a contamination between the main clause εἴη ἄν with comparative subclause, and the phrase εὔ ἄν ἔχοι:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ Ἀρσινόη καὶ τὰ παιδιά καὶ τὰ ἄλλα σοι κ[α]τ[ὰ] γνώμην ἐστίν, εἴη ἄν εὔ ὡς βούλο[μ]αι καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί μου καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι πάντε[ς]” (ll. 2-5)

Given the attestation of such contaminated phrases, εὔ is a possible supplement to the initial health wish of P.Cair.Zen. III 59405 (TM 1047):

“καλῶς ἄν ἔχοι εἰ αὐτός τε ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ εἰ ἀλύπως ἀπαλλάττεις, [.] ἄν ἔχοι ὡς ἡ[μεῖς] βουλόμε[θα]” (ll. 2-6)

Also the comparative subclauses take many different verbs⁵¹:

“εἰ ἔρρωσθε μετὰ τῶν παιδίων, εἴη ἄν ὡς ἐγὼ βούλομαι” (P.Tebt. III.2 948; TM 7984; ll. 4-6)

“<εἰ> τᾶλλ’ ἐστίν ἐν τῇ ἀρίστη διαθέσει, εἴη ἄν ὡς αἰροῦμαι” (P.Diosk. 17; TM 44732; ll. 2-3)

“εἰ τῶι τε σώματι ὑγιαίνεις καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις κατὰ λόγον ἀπαλλάσσεις εἴη ἄν ὡς εὔχομαι” (P.Köln VI 266; TM 3196; ll. 1-4)

“εἰ ἔρρωμένω <σοι> τᾶλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) κατὰ λόγον ἀπαντᾷ, εἴη ἄν ὡς τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχομένη διατελῶ” (UPZ I 59; TM 3450; ll. 2-4)

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς κατὰ λόγον ἀπαλλάσσεις, εἴη ἄν ὡς ἡμεῖς θέλομεν” (PSI V 502; TM 2443; ll. 1-2)

⁵⁰ Further, health wishes with a comparative subclause are also attested in official letters. The feature perhaps even appears in one fragmentary initial health wish of letter from a Hellenistic king, viz. Welles no. 72: “[εἰ ἔρρωσθε ὑμεῖς καὶ ἡ πόλις, εἴη ἄν] ὡς βουλόμε[θα]” (ll. 3-4) (Welles 1934: 290).

⁵¹ In all instances, the conjunction ὡς was used.

Βούλομαι is the most common variant (seventeen occurrences from the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC⁵²), whereas αἰρέομαι is only found in P.Diosk. 17 (cf. *supra*) and in P.Cair.Goodspeed 4 (TM 78157).

Εὔχομαι occurs in total seven times from the 3rd until the 2nd or perhaps the 1st centuries BC⁵³. The main verb of the Roman health wish εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν is thus attested as early as the Zenon archive. Of those seven occurrences, εὔχομαι is also found four times in a periphrastic construction, as in UPZ I 59, quoted above. In the three other occurrences, P.Petr. II 2 (3) (TM 7408), P.Petr. II 2 (4) (TM 7409) and BGU X 2006 (TM 8330), the periphrastic construction is largely supplemented⁵⁴. P.Petr. II 2 (3) and (4) are preserved in the archive of Diophanes *strategos*⁵⁵.

Θέλω is with twelve occurrences from the 3rd century BC (or perhaps the early 2nd century BC) the most popular verb in the comparative subclause⁵⁶; in the 2nd century BC, the verb is only found in two editorial supplements:

“εἰ ἐρρωμενως (= ἐρρωμένοις) ὑμῖν τᾶλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) κατὰ λόγον ἐστίν, εἴ<η> ἄν
ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω>” (SB XVI 12619; TM 4140; ll. 3-5)
“εἰ ἔρρωσθε, ἦ (= εἶη) ἄν, ὡς <θέλω>. τοῖς θεοῖς εὔχομαι εἰδῖν (= ἰδεῖν) ὑμᾶς
ὑγιαίνοντας” (P.Münch. III 57; TM 78543; l. 3-5)

In the second case there is no grammatical need to add θέλω: εὔχομαι may well be the intended verb in the comparative clause. Further, τοῖς θεοῖς seems to be in a strange place as proposed in the current edition: as reference material I refer to the sole two other Ptolemaic letters where εὔχομαι is the verb of the main clause of the initial health wish, as the editor proposed for P.Münch. III 57⁵⁷. In those letters εὔχομαι is followed — not preceded— by a reference to the gods:

⁵² This variant is relatively often used in the archive of the *katochoi* of the Serapeion (cf. *supra*, footnote 19).

⁵³ Further, this verb is supplemented in P.Mil. II 21 b (TM 6221).

⁵⁴ The editor probably based his reconstruction on UPZ I 59, which is the only certain attestation of the periphrastic use of εὔχομαι in the comparative subclause and which uses διατελέω. There are, however, other attestations of the periphrastic use of εὔχομαι, e.g.: “οὐ διαλίπομεν (= διαλείπομεν) καθ’ ἡμέρ[α]ν ἐκάστην εὐχόμενοι ὑπὲρ τε σοῦ καὶ τῶν τέκνων τὰς τε θυσίας καὶ σπονδὰς καὶ λυχνοκαΐας” (BGU VIII 1835; TM 4914; ll. 5-9; dated to BC 50-49).

⁵⁵ For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/71 (accessed on May 21, 2015).

⁵⁶ The verb is supplemented in two other 3rd century BC letters, viz. P.Congr.XV 6 (TM 78816) and PSI VI 610 (TM 2219).

⁵⁷ Admittedly, the word string τοῖς θεοῖς is found at the beginning of the sentence further in the same text: “τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχόμεν καθ’ ἡμέραν ὑπὲρ σοῦ” (ll. 8-9). And in the mid-3rd century AD letter P.Euphrates 17 (TM 44675), θεοῖς is at the very beginning of the new sentence: “θεοῖς εὔχομε (= εὔχομαι) ἀπολαβῖν (ἀπολαβεῖν) σε ἐρρω\μένον/” (ll. 1-2).

“εὔχομαι δὲ τοῖς θεοῖς, ἵν’ ὑγιαίνοντά σε ὑποδέξωμαι κατὰ πολλοὺς τρόπους, ὅτι καὶ ἐκ πολεμίων ἡμᾶς ἔρυσαι (= εἴρυσαι) καὶ πάλι εἰς πολεμίους ἡμᾶς ἀφείς ἀπελήλυθας” (P.Bad. IV 48; TM 5830; ll. 2-3)

“εὔχομαι πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς ὑγείαν (= ὑγίειάν) [σο]ἰ δῶναι (= δοῦναι) καὶ εὐημερίαν (= εὐημερίαν) καὶ εὐπραξίαν ἀεὶ μίζονα (= μείζονα) παρὰ τοῖς βασιλεῦσι” (SB XX 15324; TM 43176; ll. 3-5)

Therefore the reconstruction “τοῖς θεοῖς εὔχομαι εἰδῖν (= ἰδεῖν) ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνοντας” with the mention of the gods preceding εὔχομαι is not convincing. On the other hand, if we do not add θέλω in P.Münch. III 57 and analyze the phrase “ὡς τοῖς θεοῖς εὔχομαι εἰδῖν (= ἰδεῖν) ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνοντας”, the position of τοῖς θεοῖς does not pose a problem. In all five other occurrences of references to gods in the comparative subclause⁵⁸, the mention of the gods immediately precedes the verb in the comparative subclause, as in P.Col. IV 64: “[εἴη ἂν] ὡς τοῖς θεοῖς εὔχομαι” (l. 2). I therefore propose to delete the addition <θέλω> in the edition. The editor presumably projected his familiarity with the grammatically separate health wish of the later Roman formula. In other words, P.Münch. III 57 can be regarded as the eighth occurrence of εὔχομαι in the comparative subclause.

Apart from the discussion about whether θέλω should be deleted, P.Münch. III 57 is also important from another point of view: this is the first occurrence of εὔχομαι with an infinitive clause expressing a health wish. This phrase seems to anticipate the later Roman formula πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν⁵⁹.

Further, a personal pronoun was sometimes added to the verbs in the comparative subclause: ἐγὼ is attested in seven letters (e.g. P.Tebt. III.2 948; quoted above) and supplemented in one other; ἡμεῖς occurs eleven times (e.g. PSI V 502; quoted *supra*) and αὐτός only appears in PSI VI 610 (TM 2219):

“εἰ αὐτός τε ἔρρωσαι καὶ οὐς αὐτὸς βούλει, εἴη ἂν ὡς αὐτὸς [θέλω]” (ll. 1-2)

All instances are dated to the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC.

1.2.5. Thanks to the gods

In eleven occurrences, all from the 3rd century BC⁶⁰, the main clause expresses gratitude to the gods, e.g.:

⁵⁸ I.e. BGU X 2006 (TM 8330), P.Col. IV 64 (TM 1779), P.Petr. II 2 (3) (TM 7408), P.Petr. II 2 (4) (TM 7409) and UPZ I 59 (TM 3450).

⁵⁹ For other attestations of the infinitive construction in (*ad hoc*) health wishes in Ptolemaic letters, see *infra* footnote 111.

⁶⁰ I.e. P.Cair.Zen. I 59032 (TM 692), P.Cair.Zen. I 59073 (TM 728), P.Cair.Zen. I 59076 (TM 731), P.Cair.Zen. II 59160 (TM 808), P.Cair.Zen. III 59426 (TM 1066), P.Cair.Zen. III 59526 (TM 1163), P.Hib. I 79 (TM 8228), P.Mich. I 23 (TM 1925), P.Petr. I 29 (TM 7475), P.Petr. III 53 (o) (TM 7481) and SB XXII 15557 (TM 43006).

“χάρις τοῖς θεοῖς πολλή εἰ ὑγιαίνεις” (P.Petr. I 29; TM 7475; ll. 2-3)

In this and four other examples, the main verb is not expressed. In others, a form of εἶμι is added, as is the case in P.Cair.Zen. II 59160 (TM 808):

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ κατὰ νοῦν πράσσεις, εἰ (= εἴη) ἄν πολλή χάρις τοῖς θεοῖς”
(P.Cair.Zen. II 59160; ll. 1-2)

In four other cases, the verb ἔχω is used⁶¹, e.g.:

“τοῖς θεοῖς πᾶσιν χάριν ἔχομεν, εἰ αὐτός τε ὑγιαίνεις καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ σοι κατὰ λόγον γέγονεν” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59426; TM 1066; ll. 1-2)
“{καλῶς ἄν ἔχοι} εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ σοί ἐστι πάντα κατὰ γνώμην, ἔχοιμι ἄν τοῖς θεοῖς πολλήν χάριν” (P.Mich. I 23; TM 1925; ll. 1-2)⁶²

As these instances show, πολὺς is most frequently added to the substantive χάρις. Yet, in P.Petr. III 53 (o) (TM 7481) πλεῖστος appears and in P.Cair.Zen. III 59426 (TM 1066), no such adjective is found.

“The gods” or “all gods” (οἱ θεοὶ or πάντες οἱ θεοί) in general, are usually thanked⁶³. In P.Petr. III 53 (o), θεός appears in the singular. This is not an expression from a monotheistic context; the sender probably refers to the most important local deity or to ‘god’ in general (cf. Versnel 2011: 267 and 273).

1.2.6. Other phrases

In P.Tebt. III.1 755 (TM 7842), a grammatically incorrect main clause appears:

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τᾶλλά (= τὰ ἄλλα) σοι κατὰ λόγον ἀπαντᾷ, εὖ {ἄν} ἐστίν” (ll. 2-4)

According to the editors, the writer mixed different constructions⁶⁴.

1.3. Information about the sender’s health

In the third and last part of the health wish the sender gives information about his own well-being⁶⁵. This formula appears in about 150 private letters, usually expressed by

⁶¹ ἔχω is supplemented in a fifth occurrence: SB XXII 15557 (TM 43006).

⁶² This is the only attestation of the potential construction in this phrase.

⁶³ In P.Cair.Zen. I 59073 (TM 728), the reference to the gods probably was written in the lacuna: “εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ τᾶλλα (= ἄλλα) σοί ἐστιν κ[ατὰ -ca.-? -], . πολλήν χάριν ἔχομεν· ὑγιαί[νομεν δὲ -ca.-? -]” (ll. 1-2).

⁶⁴ A similar phrase is supplemented in BGU X 2007 (TM 5013): “[εἰ δ’] ἔρρωσ[αι καλῶς ἐστίν]” (l. 3). In my opinion, this conjecture is not convincing; the phrase is not attested elsewhere and there are no indications for this expression —also the editor doubted his conjecture and added a question mark to the translation of this supplement.

ὕγιαίνω or ἔρρωμαι. The choice for the verb is mostly unconnected to the verb in the conditional clause: a phrase with ἔρρωσαι in the conditional clause, does not necessarily have ἔρρωμαι in the phrase of giving information about the sender's health.

1.3.1. Verbs expressing the reassurance about the sender's health

The most popular form of the verb ὕγιαίνω is the imperfect⁶⁶ ὕγιαίνων (45 attestations⁶⁷). The present form ὕγιαίνω occurs in twelve letters only⁶⁸. In my opinion, Hierokles also seems to have had a preference for this verb: whereas it is correct that the expression “I am well too” is not identical in all his letters (Evans 2007: 303-304), Hierokles uses the uncommon verb form ὕγιαίνω in six of his letters⁶⁹ and he never uses the more widespread ὕγιαίνων.

The plural ὕγιαίνομεν is found in 27 letters⁷⁰. In some letters there are indeed two senders; in other occurrences, only one sender is mentioned. The plural possibly refers to relatives or close friends of the sender (cf. Zilliacus 1953: 46)⁷¹, who were perhaps present when the letter was written, e.g.:

“ὕγιαίνομεν δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ παρ' ἐμοὶ πάντες” (P.Heid. III 228; TM 78314; ll. 5-6)

⁶⁵ An unusual order is sometimes found, where the information formula follows the conditional subclause: “εἰ ἔρρωσαι, ἔρρωμαι δὲ καὶ καυτός (= αὐτός), εἶε (= εἶη) ἂν ὡς βούλομαι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα σοι κατὰ (= κατὰ) λό[γ]ον ἀπαντᾷ”; UPZ I 68 (TM 3459; ll. 1-2).

In a few cases, this phrase appears without a preceding initial health wish; but in that case the formula is not at the beginning, but in the body of the letter. These occurrences have not been taken into account in this overview.

⁶⁶ By using the imperfect the sender adopts the point of view of the addressee at the moment of receiving the letter (Koskeniemi 1956: 189-191; Horrocks 2010: 91).

⁶⁷ The expression is supplemented in ten other letters. In PSI XIII 1312 (TM 42992), the sender gives a personal touch to the phrase: “καὶ ἐγὼ δὲ ὕγιαίνων ἐκ πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων κινδύνων διασεσωμένος σὺν τῇ τῶν θεῶν βουλήσει” (ll. 3-5). This phrase is the only reference to the gods in this *topos*.

⁶⁸ In four other letters, the form ὕγιαίνω is supplemented, viz. in P.Mil. II 21b, P.Mil. II 22, P.Petr. I 30 (1) and P.Petr. III 42 H (7). The two last instances are letters from Philonides to his father Kleon. The form ὕγιαίνω is probably reconstructed by analogy with P.Petr. II 42 (c), where ὕγιαίνω probably must be read. However, we have shown *supra* (§ 1.1.1.2) that Philonides varied his phraseology. The first two attestations are preserved in the archive of Spemminis (cf. www.trismegistos.org/archive/227; accessed on May 21, 2015). I do not see any reason why the uncommon ὕγιαίνω should be reconstructed here instead of the common ὕγιαίνων: in none of the other documents of the archive, the form appears. Since the four reconstructions are not very plausible, I have not included them in the total number of attestations of ὕγιαίνω.

⁶⁹ I.e. P.Lond. VII 1941, P.Lond. VII 1946, P.Cair.Zen. I 59061, P.Cair.Zen. II 59148, P.Cair.Zen. II 59285 and P.Cair.Zen. III 59452.

⁷⁰ The phrase is supplemented in eight other letters. Whereas the supplement is very plausible in most cases, these letters have not been included in the total number of occurrences.

⁷¹ In the Ptolemaic period, the *pluralis maiestatis* was not attested in private letters; the plural is thus probably a *pluralis sociativus* (Zilliacus 1953: 45).

With the verb ἔρρωμαι the perfect form (with present meaning) is more common than the pluperfect ἐρώμην (with past meaning) (twenty⁷² vs. two attestations, viz. P.Mich. I 55 (TM 1955) and P.Petr. III 53 (q) (TM 7483)). The doctor Artemidoros had a preference for the verb form ἔρρωμαι and uses it in four of the five letters to Zenon which preserve the initial health wish (Evans 2007: 305-306), e.g.:

“ἔρρωμαι δὲ καὶ ἐγὼ” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59311; TM 955; l. 1)

“ἔρρωμαι δὲ καὶ ἐγὼ καὶ Ἀπολλώνιος ὑγίαιεν καὶ τὰ τάλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) ἦν κατὰ γνώμην” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59251; TM 896; ll. 1-2)⁷³

The expression in P.Cair.Zen. II 59251 consists of three parts, the ἔρρωμαι part, the ὑγιάινω part and the third part “καὶ τὰ τάλλα ἦν κατὰ γνώμην”. That last phrase is reminiscent of the conditional subclause (cf. *supra*, § 1.1.2), but a similar phrase does not occur elsewhere in the formula where the sender gives information about his health⁷⁴. Also in this aspect, Artemidoros’ writing style seems to be idiosyncratic.

The plural ἐρώμεθα is attested in sixteen letters. As expected, this phrase usually appears in letters from one sender.

In sum, whereas ἔρρωμαι is the most popular verb in the conditional subclause which expresses the health wish, it is far less frequently used than ὑγιάινω in the formula with information about the sender’s health. Buzón ascribed this to the verbs’ difference in meaning: ἔρρωμαι would refer to the physical and psychological health, whereas ὑγιάινω would only denote the condition of not being ill. In his view, the senders wish the addressee good health, whereas they are rather modest about their own situation and they are happy if they are not ill (Buzón 1984: 16-17). I cannot see a marked difference between the two verbs.

In P.Tebt.III.1.755 (TM 7842) and UPZ I 71 (TM 3462) the verb ἐπανάγω is used in combination with the adverb μετρίως, respectively:

“καὶ καυτὸς (= αὐτὸς) δὲ μετρίως ἐπανάγω” (ll. 5-6)

“καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ μετρίως ἐπ[α]νῆ[γο]ν” (ll. 4-5)

⁷² The verb form is supplemented in three other letters.

⁷³ A similar formula is found in another letter by Artemidoros: “ἔρρωμαι δὲ καὶ ἐγὼ καὶ Ἀπολλώνιος ὑγίαιεν καὶ τὰ ταλλ (= ἄλλα) ἦν κατὰ γνώμην” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59225; TM 870; ll. 1-2).

⁷⁴ It is not attested in private letters. A comparable phrase is found in the official letter UPZ I 110 (TM 3502): “ἔρρωται μὲν βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος καὶ βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος ὁ ἀδελφὸς κ[αί] βασίλισσα Κλεοπάτρα ἡ ἀδελφή καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τὰ πράγματ’ {ατ} αὐτοῖς ἔχει κατὰ τρόπον” (ll. 1-4).

Both letters are dated to the 2nd century BC and the verb continues to be used in the 1st century BC (cf. *infra*, § 2.1.3). Possibly, the introduction of ἐπανάγω is a later development.

The phrase ἰκανῶς ἔχω is attested in P.Petr. III 53 (n) (TM 7480), and probably also in P.Cair.Zen. IV 59575 (TM 1209), respectively:

“κἀγὼ (= καὶ ἐγὼ) δ’ ἰκανῶς εἶχον” (l. 3).

“ἰκανῶς δὲ [καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔχομεν]” (l. 3)

1.3.2. Personal pronouns and appositions

In most cases, the verb form is combined with either a personal pronoun ἐγὼ (sixteen attestations⁷⁵) or ἡμεῖς (nine attestations) or a predicative adjunct (αὐτός, αὐτή, αὐτοί, or αὐταί with respectively 64, three, 35 and one occurrence(s)⁷⁶), e.g.:

“ὕγιανον δὲ καὶ ἐγὼ” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59363; TM 1006; ll. 3-4)

“ἔρρωμεθα δὲ καὶ ἡμεῖς” (P.Petr. II 11 (1); TM 7667; ll. 1-2)

“καὶ καυτὸς (= αὐτὸς) δὲ μετρίως ἐπανάγω” (P.Tebt.III.1.755; TM 7842; ll. 5-6)

“ὕγιανον δὲ καὶ αὐτὴ καὶ ἡ μήτηρ καὶ οἱ παρ’ ἡμῶν πάντες” (BGU VI 1300; TM 4560; ll. 4-5)

“ὕγειαίνομεν (= ὑγιαίνομεν) δὲ καὶ αὐτοί” (SB XIV 11639; TM 2100; ll. 2-3)

“[ἔρ]ρωμεθα δὲ καὶ αὐταί” (P.Athen. 60; TM 77953; ll. 3-4)

Confusion between plural and singular is attested in P.Cair.Zen. III 59426 (TM 1066) and UPZ I 66 (TM 3457), respectively:

“ἔρρωμεθα δὲ καὶ αὐτός” (l. 3)

“ἔρρωμαι δὲ καὶ καυτοι (= αὐτός)” (ll. 1-2)⁷⁷

Above I referred to Evans’ observation that the doctor Artemidoros had a preference for the verb form ἔρρωμαι. Yet, my investigation has revealed that the idiolectic character of his letters is even stronger: considering that αὐτός and variants are far more popular than personal pronouns, it is remarkable that Artemidoros consistently uses ἐγὼ. In fact, the combination of ἔρρωμαι and ἐγὼ does not occur elsewhere.

The consistency in Artemidoros’ initial health wishes makes me reconsider the supplement of the formula in the fifth document by the same sender, viz. P.Lond. VII 1968 (TM 1531):

⁷⁵ Ἐγὼ occurs as a supplement in three other letters.

⁷⁶ Αὐτός is supplemented in eleven other letters, αὐτοί in five other letters.

⁷⁷ Since it is not clear which form was intended, these attestations have not been taken into account in the total number of attestations of αὐτός and αὐτοί.

“[εἰ ἔρρω]σαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι. [τῆς παρ’ Ἀπολλωνίου -ca.?- ἐπιστολῆ]ς ἐγράψαμέν [σοι τὸ ἀντίγραφον]” (ll. 1-3)

Since the number of lost characters is unknown, it is possible that this letter too had [ἔρρωμαι δὲ καὶ ἐγὼ], but this is of course beyond retrieval.

1.3.3. Information about the health of third persons

In thirteen letters, the sender not only informs the addressee that he himself is ok, but he also gives information about the well-being of others. Sometimes the other persons' names are mentioned; in other cases there is only an indirect reference to third persons. Mostly, the third persons are referred to in an elliptic construction, as some kind of afterthought after the information about the sender's health, e.g.:

“ὕγαινον δὲ καὶ αὐτὴ καὶ ἡ μήτηρ καὶ οἱ παρ’ ἡμῶν πάντες” (BGU VI 1300; TM 4560; ll. 4-5)

“ὕγαιίνω δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ Ἐφάρμοστος” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59148; TM 796; ll. 1-2)

This thus leads to grammatically incorrect sentences, with plural subjects and singular verb forms. In P.Heid. III 228 (TM 78314), on the other hand, the verb form is made to agree with the subject and is put in the plural:

“ὕγαιίνομεν δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ παρ’ ἐμοὶ πάντες” (ll. 5-6)

In three letters, a separate verb form is added for the information about the health of third persons: apart from the extended formula in the two letters Artemidoros to Zenon (cf. *supra*), this is also found in P.Cair.Zen. IV 59614 (TM 1247):

“ὕγαιίνω [δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς, καὶ τὰ π]αιδάρια πάντα ἔρρωται καὶ ἐν ἐπιμελείᾳ ἐστί[v. - ca.?-]” (ll. 1-2)

Apart from those thirteen occurrences which also refer to the sender's health, in two cases, only information about a third person is provided:

“ὕγαιίνει δὲ καὶ Πλείσταρχος” (BGU XIV 2417; TM 4013; ll. 3-4)

“ὕγαι[νε]ν δὲ καὶ Ἐφάρμοσ(τος) καὶ τὰ π[αρά σο]ῦ παιδάρια” (P.Zen.Pestm. 51; TM 1882; ll. 3-4)

2. Ὁ δεῖνα τῶ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν and variants

The combined opening formula and initial health wish of the type ὁ δεῖνα τῶ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν⁷⁸ is preserved about 140 times between the 2nd (or perhaps the late 3rd) century BC⁷⁹ and the 3rd-4th century AD⁸⁰.

2.1. Verbs expressing a health wish

2.1.1. Ἐρρῶσθαι

The infinitive ἐρρῶσθαι appears approximately thirty times between the 2nd (or perhaps the late 3rd) century BC and the 2nd – 3rd century AD in the combined opening formula and health wish, e.g.:

“Ἡλιόδωρος Ἀρβήχει χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι” (P.Oxf. 17; TM 42960; ll. 1-2)

P.Diosk. 17 (TM 44732) does not only contain an initial health wish of the type εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον, but ἐρρῶσθαι is also added to the opening formula:

“Διοσκουρίδης τῶι πατρὶ χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι. <εἰ> τᾶλλ’ ἐστιν ἐν τῇ ἀρίστη διαθέσει, εἴη ἂν ὡς αἰροῦμαι. καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον καὶ ἡ μήτηρ καὶ τὰ ἀδέλφια καὶ οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ πάντες” (ll. 1-5)

This 2nd century BC letter is clearly a transitional form: the old phrase εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον is gradually disappearing, and the new health wish of the type ὁ δεῖνα τῶ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι is increasingly being used.

⁷⁸ Translation: “X (sender) to Y (addressee), greetings and health.”. The discussion of the specific wordings (and word order) of the first part of this formula (ὁ δεῖνα τῶ δεῖνι χαίρειν) is included in chapter 2.

⁷⁹ The three occurrences of the 3rd century BC (SB XVIII 13273; TM 2542, P.Lond. VII 2073, TM 1634 and P.Haun. I 10; TM 6217) are problematic: linguistic elements suggest that SB XVIII 13273, now dated vaguely between the 4th and the 1st centuries BC, can be dated to the 1st century BC (cf. *infra*, footnote 81). Further, the HGV metadata of P.Lond. VII 2073 date this document in the late 3rd century BC, but on the basis of palaeography this letter must be dated later than the Zenon archive. So, this document is from the very end of the 3rd century BC, or most probably, the 2nd century BC. Also P.Haun. I 10 should be dated to the 2nd, rather than the 3rd century BC (private communication with prof.dr.em. W. Clarysse).

⁸⁰ The formula remained in use for a longer time than previously thought: Ziemann suggested that the phrase disappeared around AD 100 (Ziemann 1910: 317).

2.1.2. Ὑγιαίνειν

Whereas the phrase with ἐρρῶσθαι is already attested from the 3rd century BC onwards, the variant with ὑγιαίνειν does not appear before the 1st century BC. Its occurrence in SB XVIII 13273 (TM 2542), a letter only vaguely dated between 399 and 1 BC, implies that this document was written in the 1st century BC⁸¹.

In total, the verb ὑγιαίνω occurs about eighty times in this expression, mostly in letters from the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD, but the formula remains in use until the 3rd or the 4rd century AD.

PSI Com. 18 (TM 78849) deviates from standard phraseology as the word order is reversed; usually χαίρειν precedes the verb of the health wish:

“τῆ κυρ[ί]α μο]υ μη[τρὶ . .]. . . ν.[.]ς παρὰ Ἀττίων[ο]ς ὑγια[ίνειν καὶ] χαίρειν” (ll. 1-2)

This letter is dated to the 3rd or the 4th century AD, and is thus a late attestation of our formula. Most documents from that period have the phrase εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν, and I would tentatively suggest that the sender was no longer very familiar with the phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν.

2.1.2.1. Origin of the phrases χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν and χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι

Two formulas have always been regarded as resulting from the shortened combination of the earliest health wish with the conditional clause, and the opening formula (e.g. Koskenniemi 1956: 133; Parsons 1980-1981: 7; Buzón 1984: 18). However, formulas of the type ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν are already attested in 4th century BC Athens (cf. Crönert 1910: 157; Eidinow and Taylor 2010: 33; Ceccarelli 2013: 352-353). Exler realized that these early texts are a problem for the accepted view. He suggested a different evolution for the two formulas: ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι would be the result of the contraction of the opening formula and the initial health wish. In the case of ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν, however, the initial health wish with the conditional clause is a subsequent development of the original ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν: “the opening formula χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν resolved itself into the opening formula χαίρειν and the separate ὑγιαίνειν wish” (Exler 1923: 107). Exler’s hypothesis is, however, contradicted by the chronology of our data: the initial health wish with the conditional clause εἰ ὑγιαίνεις is attested from the 3rd century BC onwards (cf. *supra*, § 1.1.1.2). This would mean that somewhere in the 4rd or 3rd century BC, the

⁸¹ Alongside the initial health wish, the appearance of a vocative (ἄδελφε in line 6) also points to a 1st century BC date (cf. Dickey 2004a: 500-509).

phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν was expanded to the phrase with εἰ ὑγιαίνεις. But this hypothesis cannot explain why the phrase χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν only appears in the private letters from the 1st century BC onwards⁸². Therefore I do not deem it plausible that the expression ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν, after having resolved itself into the health wish with the conditional clause, did not remain in use and (re-)emerged only centuries later.

Since both εἰ ἔρρωσαι εὖ ἂν ἔχοι καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον and ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν are attested from the early Ptolemaic period onwards, it is improbable that the two phrases display subsequent steps in a diachronic evolution, as is the *communis opinio* at this moment. If the two variants were in use at the same moment, they might, in my opinion, have been co-existing variants without functional distinction⁸³ or they have perhaps belonged to different registers. There are perhaps some indications for the latter⁸⁴: given the sociolinguistic universalism that longer phrases are more polite⁸⁵, the longer phrase with the conditional subclause would have been used in a higher, more formal and more polite register, for example by correspondents with a large social distance. The sender then puts in more effort in the message –or to put it in pragmatic terms: the sender has more attention for ‘face’– which results in the use of longer phrases (Brown and Levinson 1987: 71-84). For instance, the variation in social distance is reflected in the language of the following examples:

Excuse me, would you by any chance have the time?
Got the time, mate? (Brown and Levinson 1987: 80)

This hypothesis seems to be supported by some letters from and to Hellenistic kings which have an initial health wish with a conditional subclause, e.g. in the 2nd century BC letters from Eumenes II and Attalos II to Attis, the priest of Cybele at Pessinus (Welles 1934: 241-253):

⁸² In my opinion, this cannot be due to factors of preservation.

⁸³ Cf.: “for example, in Finnish, which is extremely rich in nominal morphology, competing and idiolectally chosen morphological variants abound in the dialects and standard language. In standard language it is possible to say and write *vuohia* or *vuohia* (partitive sing. of *vuohi* 'goat') as well as *nukkejen* or *nukkien* (gen. plural of *nukke* 'doll') without an accurate social or dialectal stance” (Leiwo 2005: 4).

⁸⁴ What follows is thus only a mere hypothesis, based on the admittedly limited preserved evidence; the origins of the different formulas lay probably too far in the past and certain answers to this question are presumably beyond retrieval.

⁸⁵ This principle does no longer apply when the phrase is too long; then the message becomes unclear and the hearer needs to make an effort to understand the message. There always needs to be a balance between pragmatic clarity and politeness (cf. Blum-Kulka 1987: 131).

“εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι. κἀγὼ δὲ ὑγίαινον” (letter 58 from Attalos to Attis; Welles 1934: 243)

Whereas initial health wish with a conditional subclause is found five times in Welles’ corpus of 75 letters, the phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιάειν/ἔρρωσθαι is not found in the letters of the Hellenistic kings.

The short phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιάειν/ἔρρωσθαι might have been inspired by the longer variant, but the formula might have belonged to a lower register from the beginning: in practical private papyrus letters, one might not have always felt the need to insert elaborate health wishes. The short variant may have been the most popular phrase in the private letters, as the lead tablets from Athens suggest⁸⁶. Similarly, ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιάειν/ἔρρωσθαι is not attested in the Zenon letters: as mentioned *supra*, only the letters from the Greek elite have an initial health wish (Evans 2007: 303, cf. *supra*). The fact that these writers chose the long variant with conditional subclause might be a further hint that this phrase belongs to the language of the (Greek) elite.

2.1.3. Other variation with regard to the verb

In some letters, the initial health wish is not expressed with the infinitives ἔρρωσθαι or ὑγιάειν, but with another verb⁸⁷. The variant εὐτυχέω is attested in four initial health wishes dated between the 2nd century BC and the 2nd century AD⁸⁸, and διευτυχέω is found in eleven letters dating between the 2nd century BC and the Augustan period⁸⁹, e.g.:

⁸⁶ This thesis runs counter to Welles’ statement that the εἰ ἔρρωσαι formula was taken over from the private letters’ register (Welles 1934: 291). Welles’ hypothesis, however, is incorrect: the scholar did not seem to take into account that the εἰ ἔρρωσαι phrase was already attested in the official letter’s register as early as the early 3rd century BC, viz. in a letter from the city of Priene to king Lusimachos (cf. Ziemann 1910: 303).

⁸⁷ In older studies, ἔρρωσθαι and ὑγιάειν were thought to be the only variants in this formula (e.g. Kortus 1999: 34).

⁸⁸ I.e. BGU XVI 2617 (TM 23341), P.Fay. 117 (TM 10782), P.Oxy. II 396 (TM 25686), SB IV 7354 (TM 27385), of which the first is preserved in the Athenodoros archive (for more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/26; this archive is discussed in detail in chapter 9, § 1). In BGU XIV 2418 (TM 4014), another letter from this archive, the verb is supplemented. Εὐτυχέω is often used in the imperative εὐτύχει at the end of polite letters and petitions. In chapter 7, § 2.2, I discuss the use of this verb as a variant of ἔρρωσθαι the closing formula ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι.

⁸⁹ I.e. BGU VIII 1875 (TM 4954), SB XXIV 16069 (TM 161), P.Grenf. II 38 (TM 43916), P.Köln IX 365 (TM 47499), BGU XVI 2604 (TM 23327), 2615 (TM 23339), 2616 (TM 23340), 2626 (TM 23350), 2628 (TM 23352), 2629 (TM 23353) and 2630 (TM 23354). The seven last occurrences belong to the archive of Athenodoros, and the four last attestations are all letters from Eurylochos to Athenodoros. The verb is supplemented in BGU XVI 2627 (TM 23351) and 2658 (TM 23382), two other letter from the same archive: given the preference of Eurylochos

“Εὐρύλοχος Ἀθηνοδώρωι τῷ φιλάτῳ χαίρειν καὶ ἔρρωμένῳ διευτυχεῖν” (BGU XVI 2628; TM 23352; ll. 1-2)

Seven of the occurrences of διευτυχέω, including BGU XVI 2628, belong to the archive of Athenodoros (cf. *supra*, footnote 89). Since these attestations appear in letters from different senders, the use of διευτυχέω might be an element of shared language. Although factors of preservation might have influenced the picture, the fact that also one of the four attestations of the similar εὐτυχέω is preserved in this archive, suggests, in my opinion, a pattern of shared language, rather than coincidence⁹⁰. Moreover, four of the eleven attestations of διευτυχέω are found in letters from Eurylochos (cf. *supra*, footnote 89). Given that the letters were written in different hands (cf. Brashear 1995: 117-127), this uniformity should not be attributed to the preference of a scribe; it seems that Eurylochos has a clear preference for the phrase with διευτυχέω: in every single one of his letters preserved, he uses this particular phrase, as Brashear pointed out (cf. Brashear 1995: 119).

The infinitives διευτυχεῖν and εὐτυχεῖν are often complemented with the participle ἔρρωμένῳ in the dative case in most occurrences. Given this observation, the form ἔρρωμένων should be interpreted as ἔρρωμένῳ in P.Grenf. II 38 (TM 43916)⁹¹:

“Πασίων Νίκ[ωνι τ]ῷ πατρὶ πολλὰ χαίρειν καὶ [διὰ παντὸς ἔρρ(?)ωμένων(?) διευτυχεῖν]” (ll. 1-3)⁹²

The confusion between -ωι and -ων is attested in other examples as well (Mayser 1970a: 172-173). The participle ἔρρωμένῳ is also attested in combination with the verb ἐπανάγω in five private letters from the 1st century BC Athenodoros archive⁹³:

(cf. *infra*), who is the sender of BGU XVI 2627, this conjecture is very plausible, but these two attestations have not been taken into account.

⁹⁰ In his edition of the Athenodoros archive, Brashear referred to most (but not all) of the occurrences of the verb διευτυχέω, but he did not elaborate on this, nor did he compare the use of this verb to other initial health wishes of private papyrus letters. My study is thus the first to point to this element of shared language. The linguistic unity in this archive even goes beyond the boundaries of text types: apart from in the private letters, the verb διευτυχέω is also attested in the initial health wish of two official letters (BGU XVI 2624 (TM 23348) and 2631 (TM 23355)). There is thus an overlap between the language of the private letters and the official ones, which makes the delineation of private letters in this archive rather difficult. I have adopted a pragmatic position and take into account all documents that are possibly private letters. In doing so, some of the letters that are considered ‘private’ in this study, would be regarded as official letters or petitions by other scholars.

⁹¹ Similarly, van Minnen altered the original edition of the health wish “τῷ ἀδελφ[ῶι χαίρειν] καὶ ἔρρωμένῳ εὐτυχεῖν” in BGU XIV 2418 (TM 4014; ll. 1-2) to ἔρρωμένῳ; in SB IV 7354 (TM 27385) “Σεμ[π]ρώ[ν]ιος Γαίῳι τῷ υἱῷ μο[υ] πλεῖστα χαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντὸς ἐρώμ[ενον (= ἔρρωμένον) ε]ὐτυχεῖν” (ll. 1-3), he suggested ἐρωμ[ένῳ] (= ἔρρωμένῳ) (van Minnen 1998: 129-130).

⁹² The participle ἔρρωμένον in the accusative is attested, viz. CPR V 19 (TM 24981) in a phrase with the verb διαμένειν and P.Bad. IV 51 (TM 80106) with the verb ζῆν (cf. *infra*). Perhaps the editors were confused by these similar occurrences.

“Φαῖδρος Ἀθηνοδώρωι τῶι ἀδελφῶι χαίρειν κα[ὶ] ἐρρωμένωι ἄριστ’ ἐπανάγειν ὡς βούλομαι” (BGU XVI 2623; TM 23347; ll. 1-2)

The verb ἐπανάγω is attested as well in the formula in which the sender gives information about his own health (cf. *supra*, § 1.3.1), but the combination of this verb with χαίρειν in the initial health wish has been exclusively preserved in the Athenodoros archive⁹⁴. Furthermore, the verb ἐπανάγω appears in all instances of the initial health wish as a set expression ἄριστ’ ἐπανάγειν: even though the verb can be used with a number of adverbs, such as μετρίως (cf. *supra*, § 1.3.1), in this archive, ἐπανάγω is consistently combined with ἄριστα. This and the fact that this rather uncommon verb was employed by different senders in the Athenodoros archive, implies that the use of this word string was an element of shared language in the archive⁹⁵.

Finally, there are five infinitives, which are each used only once, viz. εὐημερεῖν in SB XX 14728 (TM 164), ἐπιτυγχάνειν in P.Amst. I 88 (TM 5020), ζῆν in P.Bad. IV 51 (TM 80106), διαμένειν in CPR V 19 (TM 24981) and εὖ πράσσειν in P.Iand. VI 115 (TM 30602). With exception of the last one, they are all combined with the participle of ἔρρωμαι, e.g.:

“Πτολεμαῖος Μεμελάωι τῶι ἀδελφῶι χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρωμένωι διὰ παντὸς ἐπιτυγχάνειν” (P.Amst. I 88; ll. 1-3)

Εὖ πράσσειν is a special case, since it also appears as the sole verb in the opening formula (cf. *supra*, chapter 2, § 1.6)⁹⁶.

⁹³ I.e. BGU XVI 2614 (TM 23338), 2623 (TM 23347), 2642 (TM 23366), 2644 (TM 23368) and 2649 (TM 23373). In two of the five letters, BGU XVI 2644 2649, the phrase is partly supplemented: ἐρρωμένωι ἄριστα is (convincingly) restored by the editor. The verb is further attested in two official letters from the same archive, i.e. BGU XVI 2622 (TM 23346) and 2631 (TM 23355), where Athenodoros is addressed in his capacity as *dioiketes*; here too, the set expression ἄριστ’ ἐπανάγω appears (cf. *infra*). Like with διευτυχέω, there is a linguistic overlap between the text types.

⁹⁴ Brashear observed that this phrase was frequent in the archive (Brashear 1995: 103), but did not remark that only this collection preserves ἐπανάγω as an infinitive in the initial health wish of the type ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν. Here too, my study is the first to describe this element of shared language.

⁹⁵ Scribal influence cannot explain this pattern: BGU XVI 2614 and 2642 were written in the same hand (cf. Brashear 1995: 91), but the other letters are penned by different hands.

⁹⁶ Admittedly, the division between the opening formula and the initial health wish is rather artificial in this respect.

2.2. Extensions

2.2.1. Information about the sender's health

In eleven letters, the sender adds information about his own well-being. This topos is far less common here than in combination with the formula εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι (cf. *supra*, § 1.3). According to Ziemann, the information of the sender's health *de facto* belongs to the phrase εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι, and not to the formula ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι. In his view, the occurrences of expressions such as αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον in a handful of documents with the health wish ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι/ὑγιαίνειν are remnants of the old phrase εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον. In general, Ziemann thought that the expression αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον had disappeared along with the health wish of the type εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι (Ziemann 1910: 312). My data, however, shed new light on this matter (cf. also *infra*, § 3.3.1): whereas phrases like αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον indeed mostly appear in the Ptolemaic period, they continued to be used until the Roman period: O.Claud. II 268 (TM 23996) was written around AD 140 and SB XVIII 13614 (TM 27702) is dated to the 2nd or the 3rd century AD, respectively⁹⁷:

“Νωρβανὸς Ταυρίνῳ τῷ ἀδελφῷ πλεῖστα χαίριν (= χαίρειν) καὶ διὰ παντὸς εὖ ὑγιένων (= ὑγιαίνειν) καὶ ἐγὼ αὐτὸς ὑγιένω (= ὑγιαίνω)” (ll. 1-4)

“Θωνᾶς καὶ Καλαλᾶς Δι[ονυσίῳ] τῷ πατρὶ χαίρειν καὶ ἐρ[ρῶσθαι] ἔρωμαί (= ἔρωμαι)” (ll. 1-3)

2.2.2. Health wish for third persons

On one occasion the health wish is extended with a wish for third ‘persons’:

“Πούπλις Α[. . .]ω[ι] τῷ υἱῷ πλεῖστα χαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὑγιαίν[ει]ν μετὰ τοῦ ἀβασκάντου σου ἵππου” (O.Florida 15; TM 74509; ll. 1-3)

Here, the sender does in fact not wish for the health of a third person, but he refers to an animal⁹⁸. This phrase is to be evaluated in its (military) context.

⁹⁷ Further, it is attested in the ostraca from Didymoi, cf. in O.Did. 399 (TM 144960) and 423 (TM 144984). In O.Did. 384 (TM 144945; AD 110-115), not only information is given about the sender's health but also third persons are mentioned: “ὑγιένω (= ὑγιαίνω) δὲ κα[ὶ] ἐγὼ αὐτὸς] μετὰ τοῦ παιδίῳ (= παιδίου) ἡμ[ῶν]” (ll. 3-4).

⁹⁸ *Infra* I discuss other references to horses, which appear in combination with the formula εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν (e.g. O.Krok. I 72; TM 88663). Further, two similar occurrences are found in the ostraca collection from Didymoi (viz. in O.Did. 375 and 399 (TM 144960)). According to Fournet, μετὰ τοῦ ἀβασκάντου τοῦ ἵππου and variants appear seven times in the unedited ostraca from Krokodilo and are equally frequent in those from Maximianon. Yet, it is not clear from Fournet's description whether those occurrences are found in the

2.2.3. Comparative subclause

Like to the formula εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι, also to the phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ἔρρωσθαι/ὕγιαίνειν, a comparative subclause could be attached⁹⁹: all 23 instances¹⁰⁰ belong to the archives of Asklepiades¹⁰¹ and Athenodoros of the 1st century BC or early 1st century AD, e.g.:

“[Ἰ]σιδώρα (= Ἰσιδώρα) Ἀσκληᾶτι τῷ ἀδελφῶι [χαίρειν] καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὕγιαί[ν]ειν καθάπερ [ε]ὔχομαι” (BGU IV 1205; TM 18655; ll. 2-4; Asklepiades archive)

“Σώτασ Ἀθηνοδώρωι τῷ ἀδελφῶ χαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὕγιαίνειν ὡς βούλομαι” (BGU XVI 2607; TM 23330; ll. 1-2; Athenodoros archive)

This phraseology seems to be shared by the two archives, and is one of the linguistic elements that connects the two collections (cf. *infra*, chapter 9, § 1.1).

In contrast to the comparative clauses which were attached to the initial health wish of the type εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι (cf. *supra*, § 1.2.4), only two verbs occur in the subordinate clause under discussion here: εὕχομαι and βούλομαι. Βούλομαι, which had long been the most popular verb in the comparative subclause (cf. *supra*, § 1.2.4), is now outranked by εὕχομαι (five attestations of βούλομαι vs. fifteen of εὕχομαι, and three supplements of the latter).

While in the comparative subclause attached to the initial health wish of the type εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι, the subordinating conjunction had always been ὡς (cf. *supra*, footnote 51), other conjunctions appear in the comparative subclauses added to the

health wish ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὕγιαίνειν/ἔρρωσθαι (discussed here) or in the phrase πρὸ πάντων εὕχομαί σε ὕγιαίνειν (cf. *infra*, § 3) (Fournet 2003: 482).

⁹⁹ Ziemann and Olsson linked the comparative clause to the Augustan period and to the initial health wish of the type πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὕχομαί σε ὕγιαίνειν (Ziemann 1910: 318; Olsson 1925: 26). This is, however, only the last step in the long evolution of the comparative subclause in the initial health wish to the new formula (cf. *supra*).

Comparative subclauses are not added to the formula πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὕχομαί σε ὕγιαίνειν (discussed in § 3), except in one case: “εὕχομένη ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς) ὕγιαίνοντες (= ὕγιαίνοντας) ἀπολαβεῖν, ὡς εὕχομαι ἐπιτετευχότας (= ἐπιτετευχότας)” (BGU I 332; TM 28252; ll. 5-6).

¹⁰⁰ I.e. BGU IV 1203 (TM 18653), 1205 ll. 2-4 and p. 347 (TM 18655) and 1206 (TM 18656) come from the Asklepiades archive, and the rest belongs to the Athenodoros archive: BGU XVI 2607 (TM 23330), 2608 (TM 23331), 2610 (TM 23333), 2611 (TM 23334), 2614 (TM 23338), 2615 (TM 23339), 2617 (TM 23341), 2620 (TM 23344), 2623 (TM 23347), 2625 (TM 23349), 2635 (TM 23359), 2642 (TM 23366), 2643 (TM 23367), 2644 (TM 23368), 2649 (TM 23373), 2650 (TM 23374), 2656 (TM 23380), 2659 (TM 23383) and 2600 (TM 23323). Further, the comparative subclause is added to two official letters in the Athenodoros archive, i.e. BGU XVI 2622 (TM 23346) and 2651 (TM 23375). As discussed above (cf. footnotes 90 and 93), also in this respect, the language of the private and official letters in this archive shows similarities.

¹⁰¹ For more information on this archive see www.trismegistos.org/archive/111. This collection, and the use of the comparative subclause, especially in the letter by Isidora, are studied in detail in chapter 9, § 1.

expression ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρωσθαι/ὕγιαίνειν¹⁰². In BGU XVI 2656 one finds ὡσπερ. Καθάπερ is attested five times. Καθῶς only appears in an emendation in BGU IV 1203, a letter from the Asklepiades archive (ll. 1-2): “[Ἀσκληπιάδης Τρύφ]ωνι τῷ ἀδελφῶ[ι χαίρ]ειν [καὶ ὕγιαίνειν καθῶς] [εἰ]ῤχομαι”. In a previous study, I suggested that the simple ὡς is perhaps more likely than the unique καθῶς (Nachtergaele 2013: 275-276).

2.2.4. Intensifiers

The initial health wish is often extended with an intensifier. In 66 cases dating from the 2nd century BC onwards, διὰ παντός is used¹⁰³, e.g.:

“Σώτας Ἀθηνοδώρωι τῷ ἐπιστάτῃ χαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντός ὕγιαίνειν” (BGU XVI 2606; TM 23329; ll. 1-2)¹⁰⁴

In BGU XVI 2615 (TM 23339), διὰ παντός is combined with αἰεῖ:

“Μενέλαος καὶ Ἡράκλεια Ἀθηνοδώρωι τῷ υἱῷ πλεῖστα χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρωμένωι διευτυχεῖν αἰεὶ καὶ διὰ παντός κ[α]θάπερ εὐχόμεθα” (ll. 1-4)

In CPR V 19 (TM 24981), dated to the 1st or 2nd century AD, the intensifier εἰς μακροὺς χρόνους appears¹⁰⁵:

“Ἐρμ. [- ca.15 -]. [. . . -ca.?-] καὶ ξ[- ca.13 -] χ[α]ίρειν καὶ διὰ παν[τὸς ἐρρωμ]ένον διαμένειν ὅλω [τῷ] σώματι ἰς (= εἰς) μακροὺς χρόνους” (ll. 1-5)

In this phrase, also the addition of ὅλω τῷ σώματι is uncommon, although a similar extension is attested in a few health wishes of the type εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι as well (cf. *supra*, § 1.1.5).

O.Claud. II 268 (TM 23996) adds the unexpected adverb εὖ to the infinitive ὕγιαίνειν:

“Νωρβανὸς Ταυρίνωι τῷ ἀδελφῷ πλεῖστα χαίριν (= χαίρειν) καὶ διὰ παντός εὖ ὑγιένων (= ὕγιαίνειν)” (ll. 1-3)

¹⁰² I do not wish to imply a diachronic evolution; this might also be due to coincidence and factors of preservation.

¹⁰³ Further, this intensifier is supplemented in two other letters.

¹⁰⁴ Like in this letter, the intensifier precedes the verb of the health wish in most cases.

¹⁰⁵ This intensifier also appears once in the initial health wish of the type πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὕγιαίνειν (cf. *infra* § 3.3.5) and several times in the closing formulas (cf. *infra*, chapter 7, § 4.1).

3. Πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν and variants¹⁰⁶

From as early as the 2nd century BC, but mostly in the first centuries of our era¹⁰⁷, the initial health wish increasingly began to be expressed with the formula πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν (ἐρρῶσθαι)¹⁰⁸. The latest of the more than 400 attestations date to the 6th or 7th century AD. Yet, the number of letters with an initial health wish after the 4th century AD is limited to some 25 occurrences, which is due to the general disappearance of the formulaic initial health wish.

The earliest examples are the following:

“εὐχομαι δὲ τοῖς θεοῖς, ἴν’ ὑγιαίνοντά σε ὑποδέξωμαι κατὰ πολλοὺς τρόπους, ὅτι καὶ ἐκ πολέμιων ἡμᾶς ἔρυσαι (= εἴρυσαι) καὶ πάλι εἰς πολέμιους ἡμᾶς ἀφείς ἀπελήλυθας” (P.Bad. IV 48; TM 5830; 127 BC; ll. 2-3)

“εὐχομαι πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς ὑγείαν (= ὑγίαν) [σο]ι δῶναι (= δοῦναι) καὶ εὐημερίαν (= εὐημερίαν) καὶ εὐπραξίαν ἀεὶ μίζονα (= μείζονα) παρὰ τοῖς βασιλεῦσι” (SB XXII 15324; TM 43176; 2nd or 1st century BC; ll. 3-5)

The question arises whether the phraseology of this new ‘Roman’ health wish is based on its Ptolemaic predecessor and developed independently. Parsons suggested that formula was a loan translation of its Latin counterpart *opto te bene valere* (Parsons 1983: 483; 488-489). Other scholars expressed doubts about the Latin origin of the new Greek initial health wish and suggested that the borrowing went the other way around. Ziemann had already argued that the Greek came first (Ziemann 1910: 339), and this is the now the *communis opinio*¹⁰⁹, e.g.:

“Now we can make explicit the notion that *opto (ut) valeas* and the imperative *vale* were native Latin closings at this time and *opto te bene valere* was a translation from Greek, though perfectly in accord with Latin grammar” (Halla-aho 2003a: 30)
“[...] the infinitive formula originated in Greek, was taken over by Latin” (Adams 2003: 507)

¹⁰⁶ Translation: “Before everything I pray that you are well.”.

¹⁰⁷ Exler, Ziemann and Koskenniemi dated the rise of this new formula between the early 1st and the early 2nd centuries AD —according to Exler, the phrase originated in the beginning of the 1st century AD; according to Ziemann it came into use at the end of this very same century and Koskenniemi dated it as late as the beginning of the 2nd century AD (Ziemann 1910: 317; Exler 1923: 110; Koskenniemi 1956: 134).

¹⁰⁸ The phrase was thus already in use and well established when the infinitive construction began to fall out of use; analytical constructions mainly make their appearance in the Roman period (cf. Mandilaras 1973: 329). It is only in the beginning of the 2nd century AD that non-finite complements, such as *AcI*'s, were thought to be no longer productive and were confined to formulaic phrases as εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν (cf. Halla-aho 2003a: 29).

¹⁰⁹ This view is followed by present-day scholars (e.g. Dickey 2004a: 506).

Halla-aho summed up a number of arguments to support her view, including the observation that there is “a distinct geographical variation between papyri and ostraca from Egypt on one hand and wooden tablets from Vindolanda on the other” (Halla-aho 2003a: 30): the fact that the infinitive clause *opto te bene valere* only occurs in the material from Egypt, makes interference from Greek probable. My study follows Halla-aho’s and Adams’ view that the Greek phrase was an internal evolution and that it was later borrowed by Latin. It further provides new evidence for the internal Greek development of the infinitive formula in the initial health wish: the infinitive clause is already attested in the health wish as early as the 2nd century BC, as I have shown in the discussion of the comparative subclause added to the *formula valetudinis initialis* (cf. *supra*, § 1.2.4; P.Münch. III 57). Moreover, there are other Ptolemaic Greek letters with an infinitive constructions, such as SB XXII 15324 (quoted above)¹¹⁰. Further, εὔχομαι was already well attested as a verb in the health wishes of the Ptolemaic period, viz. in the comparative subclauses (cf. *supra*, § 1.2.4 and § 2.3.3). In other words, in the comparative subclause we find both the verb εὔχομαι and the infinitive construction. Moreover, there is a continuity of the comparative subclause itself, from the 3rd century BC until the beginning of the Roman period. This continuity¹¹¹ hints that the new initial health wish πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν (ἐρρῶσθαι) is likely to be the result of an internal Greek evolution¹¹²: the formula probably arose as a comparative subclause and became the main sentence in the health wish.

3.1. Main verb

In most cases, the main verb of the formula is εὔχομαι (or εὐχόμεθα)¹¹³. The variant ἐπεύχομαι appears in P.Iand. II 15 (TM 33276). In SB VI 9017 Nr. 31 (TM 25257) θέλω is the main verb:

¹¹⁰ Similarly, in P.Col. IV 66 (TM 1781; mid-3rd century BC), the infinitive construction appears in the final health wish: “ἐγὼ δὲ εὔχομαι πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ τῷ δαίμονι τοῦ βασιλέως σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ ἐλθεῖν τὸ τάχος πρὸς ἡμᾶς ὅπως αὐτὸς ἰδῆς ὅτι ἀνέγκλητός εἰμι” (ll. 22-24). Also in PSI V 495 (TM 2123; 258 BC) an *ad hoc* wish with an infinitive construction is found just after the final health wish, “βουλόμεθα γὰρ σε τῷ τε σώματι ἐρρῶσθ[αι -ca.-?]” (l. 22) appears.

¹¹¹ Also the position of the reference to gods stays the same: as in the Ptolemaic letters (cf. *supra*, § 1.2.4), such a reference is usually found just behind εὔχομαι, e.g.: “προηγουμένως εὔχομαι τῇ θίᾳ (= θεία) προνοία περι τῆς ὑγίας (= ὑγείας) σου καὶ ὀλοκληρίας” (P.Abinn. 25; TM 10023; ll. 3-4).

¹¹² Also Gerhard believed that the initial health wish of the Roman period was an internal Greek development. According to the scholar, people analyzed the phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι as a shortened form of the formula ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι εὔχεται. This presumed underlying formula with εὔχεται would then have been the starting point for the new initial health wish of the Roman period (Gerhard 1905: 38). But there are no textual indications for this hypothesis.

¹¹³ In P.Münch. III 57 (TM 78543), εὔχομαι is found in the past tense, as the sender reports that she has prayed for the addressee daily: “τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχόμεν καθ’ ἡμέραν ὑπὲρ σοῦ” (ll. 8-9).

“διὰ παντὸς ἐρρῶσθαί σε θέλω μετὰ τῶν ἀβασκάντων σου παιδίων” (ll. 3-5)¹¹⁴

In P.Lond. VI 1927 (TM 32660), the phraseology is adapted to the Christian ideology¹¹⁵:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων παρακαλῶ τὸ(ν) θεὸν καὶ πατέρα τοῦ σωτῆρος Ἰη(σο)ῦ Χ(ριστο)ῦ ὅπως καταξιώσῃ με τοῦ εὐρεῖ(ν) χάριν ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ δέξασθέ (= δέξασθαί) σαι (= σε) τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (ll. 5-9)

The health wish is clearly based on the standard formulas with εὔχομαι as the main verb and κατα-/ἀπολαμβάνω in the subclause (cf. *infra*, § 3.2.3).

In BGU XVI 2612 (TM 23335; 25 BC), the main verb is προκεχειρίσμαι:

“Σέλευκος Ἀθηνοδώρωι τῶι ἀδελφῶι πλεῖστα χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι ἐπὶ πάντα προκεχειρίσμαι” (ll. 1-2)

This early example illustrates, once again, that the new phrase was an internal Greek evolution, connected with the earlier health wishes: apparently, the sender wanted to write χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι and then altered the structure of his sentence into the separate health wish ἐρρῶσθαι ἐπὶ πάντα προκεχειρίσμαι without including a reference to addressee.

In some letters the initial health wish is intertwined with other formulas such as the salutations or the *proskynema* formula: the initial health wish is then not a main clause, but a participle; this εὔχομαι construction appears in 48 letters, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχόμεθα ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνειν καὶ τὸ προσκύνημα ὑμῶν ποιούμεν παρὰ τρεῖς πατρώοις θεοῖς εὐχόμενοι ὑμεῖν (= ὑμῖν) τὰ κάλλιστα” (SB XVIII 13591; TM 30980; ll. 3-6)

“ἀσπάζομαί σε πολλὰ εὐχόμενος ὑγιαίνειν” (P.Kellis I 64; TM 33318; ll. 4-5)¹¹⁶

“ἀναγκαῖον ἡγησάμεθα προσαγορευῆσαι σε διὰ γραμμάτων, εὐχόμενοι ὑγιαίνοντί σοι καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν εὐθυμοῦντι δοθῆναι τὴν ἐπιστολήν” (P.Herm. 4; TM 21123; ll. 3-6)¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ Θέλω is probably also the main verb in the initial health wish of P.Alex.Giss. 61 (TM 27583): “[-ca.?- θ]έλω εὐρρωστεῖν εὐτυχοῦντα [-ca.?-]ν σου πάντων” (ll. 3-4). Perhaps, one can read the phrase as “[-ca.?- θ]έλω εὐρρωστεῖν εὐτυχοῦντα [-ca.?- μετὰ τῶ]ν σου πάντων”. This suggestion is too uncertain to be included in appendix III. It is also unclear if there was a reference to the addressee, and where in the phrase this reference was written.

¹¹⁵ The same is perhaps true for SB XVIII 13111 (TM 35159) where the standard main verb εὔχομαι seems to be replaced by ἐλπίζω, if one accepts the conjecture: “ἐλπίζω γὰρ εἰς (τὸν) θεὸν ὅτι ὑμᾶς ὑγιεῖς] καταλ[αμ]βανο (= καταλαμβάνω)” (ll. 2-3).

¹¹⁶ This and many other examples of the initial health wish linked to the salutations come from Kellis (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 3.4.2).

¹¹⁷ In three instances, the initial health wish has completely merged with another formula. As there is no verb like εὔχομαι (or variants), we can hardly speak of health wishes. These formulas are left out of the present

In five letters, the main clause is a periphrastic description that has a similar function as εὔχομαι¹¹⁸, e.g.:

“[πρὸ παν]τὸς [ἐ]στ[ί]ν μοι δι’ εὐχῆς τὸ [ὕγιαίνειν] σε” (SB V 8002; TM 30792; ll. 3-4)

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχὰς καὶ δεήσις (= δεήσεις) ἀναπέμπω πρὸς τὸν Θεόν μου καὶ σωτηριαν (= σωτήρα) ἡμῶν τὸν [Χρ]ιστὸν ὅπως ὑγιένοντας (= ὑγιαίνοντας) ὑμᾶς καὶ εὐθυμοῦντάς μοι συνήθως διατηρησιν (= διατηρῶσιν)” (P.Grenf. I 61; TM 38215; ll. 7-12)

“[-ca.?-] καὶ οὐ παύομε (= παύομαι) εὐχὰς ἀναπεμπόμε[νος ὑπὲρ] σωτηρίας τῆς ὑμετέρας μεγαλοπρεποῦς δό[ξης -ca.?-]” (P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 216; TM 36902; ll. 2-3)

“[[πρὸ]] πάντων τῶν εὐχῶν μου ἀναγκαιοτάτην ἔχω τὴν τῆς ὑ\γ/είας σου καὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου Ἀπολλωνίου καὶ τῶν ἀβασκάντων ὑμῶν” (P.Giss. I 23; TM 19425; ll. 4-10)

“καθ’ ἣν (= ἐκάστην) ἡμέραν καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας <σου> εὐχὰς ποιῶμαι παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ζώσζεσθαί (= σώζεσθαί) σε ἰς (= εἰς) μακροὺς χρόνους” (P.Mich. VIII 499; TM 27109; ll. 4-7)

In the last letter, the phraseology of the initial health wish overlaps that of the *proskynema* phrase: not only the intensifier καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν —if this interpretation is correct— (cf. *infra*, § 3.3.5) but also the reference to the gods with the expression παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς (cf. *infra*, § 3.3.4), are typical of the wordings in the *proskynema*. In P.Grenf. I 61, the Christian background is reflected in the wordings.

discussion: “ἐν πρώτοις μὲν προσαγορεύομεν τη (= τὴν) ση (= σὴν) χρηστοτητι (= χρηστότητα) ὅπως ὑγιαίνοντος σου καὶ εὐθυμοῦντος ἀπολάβης (= ἀπολάβης) τὰ παρ’ ἡμῶν γράμματα” (P.Oxy. LVI 3863; TM 35474; ll. 5-8), “τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῷ δεσπότη θεῷ ὅπως ὀλόκληρόν σε ἀπολάβω” (P.Oxy. XIV 1775; TM 33677; ll. 3-5) and “τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἡκάστην (= ἐκάστην) ἡμέρ[αν] παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ ὅπως υἰαίνων (= ὑγιαίνοντι) καὶ εὐθυμοῦν[τι] ἀποδοθῆῖ σοι τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (PSI VII 825; TM 17679; ll. 3-5). These examples are discussed in the chapters on the greetings and the *proskynema* formulas.

¹¹⁸ In P.Neph. 18 (TM 33569), the main verb εὔχομαι is combined with the somewhat tautological addition ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς μου: “προηγουμένως εὔχομαι ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς (= προσευχαῖς) μου ὑμᾶς(ς) ἀπολαβῖν (= ἀπολαβεῖν) ω() ὑγιαίνο(ν) υγιεινοτας (= ὑγιαίνοντας) καὶ εὐθυμοῦντας ἀπολαβῖν (= ἀπολαβεῖν) δια εντα.” (ll. 5-9).

3.2. Words and constructions expressing the health wish¹¹⁹

There is variation in the *topoi* conveyed in the health wish. Besides the common hope that the addressee is well (§ 3.2.2), also the wish that the addressee will receive the sender's letter in good health (§ 3.2.3), is found.

Further, there are different grammatical constructions: alongside the usual infinitive construction—which occurs in more than 300 letters—a direct object such as ἡ σωτηρία, or a purpose subclause convey the wish¹²⁰: about seventy health wishes, dated between the 1st and the 6th-7th centuries AD, are completed with a substantive¹²¹. The purpose clause is found as the sole supplement of εὔχομαι in about thirty letters; the earliest example is P.Bad. IV 48 (TM 5830), written in 127 BC:

“εὔχομαι δὲ τοῖς θεοῖς, ἵν’ ὑγιαίνοντά σε ὑποδέξωμαι κατὰ πολλοὺς τρόπους, ὅτι καὶ ἐκ πολεμίων ἡμᾶς ἔρυσαι (= εἴρυσαι) καὶ πάλι εἰς πολεμίους ἡμᾶς ἀφείς ἀπελήλυθας” (ll. 2-3)

This is an *ad hoc* wish rather than a formulaic health wish. The wish to see the addressee again, here expressed with the verb ὑποδέχομαι, will later appear in a standard formula with ἀπολαμβάνω (cf. *infra*, § 3.2.3).

The three different constructions sometimes overlap: eight letters expand the construction of the type εὔχομαι περὶ τῆς ὀλοκληρίας with a purpose clause¹²², e.g.:

¹¹⁹ Some phrases seem to be *ad hoc* innovations, e.g. in P.Oxy. XIV 1759 (TM 29022) the sender Demetrios adapts his language to the context as the addressee Theon is an athlete: “πρὸ [τ]ῶν ὅλων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν [καὶ νικᾶν πάντοτε” (ll. 3-4). In P.Oslo III 156 (TM 28917), initial health wish is intertwined with a courtesy formula: “πρὸ πάντων εὔχομαί σε ἐρρῶσθαι σὺν τοῖς σοῖς καὶ ἐπιτρέπειν μοι περὶ ὧν βούλει” (ll. 3-5). Ἀκούω is linked to the context of praying in the health wish of SB VI 9138 (TM 36197) and means “hear a prayer”: “καὶ διὰ τῶν παρόντων γραμμάτων γράφ[ω] προσκυνῶν τὴν σὴν ἐνδιάθετ[ον] φιλίαν εὐχόμενος τὸν ὕψιστον καὶ ἐλεημονέστατον θεὸν ἀκούειν τὰ περὶ τῆς σῆς ὑγίας (= ὑγείας) καὶ εὐδαιμονίας (= εὐδαιμονίας)” (ll. 1-3). Finally, several *ad hoc* phrases are found in the letters of the archive of Apollonios *strategos*. Those and other peculiar epistolary phrases in the Apollonios archive are discussed *infra*, in chapter 8, § 2.

¹²⁰ In a few cases, however, the sender only says that he is praying for the addressee, e.g.: “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σοι” (PUG I 49; TM 30188; l. 3), “εὔχομαι οὖν τῷ ἀει[μνήστῳ] θ(ε)ῷ π[ά]σαις ὥραις περὶ σοῦ καὶ περὶ [τῶν ἀδελφῶ]ν ἐν Χ(ριστῷ)” (P.Lond. VI 1919; TM 16857; ll. 12-14) and “τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχόμεν καθ’ ἡμέραν ὑπὲρ σοῦ” (P.Münch. III 57; TM 78543; ll. 7-8). Apparently, this is an abbreviation of the standard phrases. Other similar abbreviated formulas are O.Buch. 108 S. 77 (TM 24384), P.Fouad I 77 (TM 28602), SB VI 9251 (TM 27296), P.Brem. 56 (TM 19640) and P.Oxy. IX 1216 (TM 28935).

¹²¹ As far as I know, the formulas with a noun completing εὔχομαι have not been discussed in past studies.

¹²² Probably also P.Laur. IV 191 (TM 35446) is an example of this, but this occurrence has not been taken into account: “[-ca.-? - εὐ]χόμεθα τῇ θείᾳ προνοίᾳ περὶ τῆς[-ca.-?] [-ca.-?] τὰ παρ’ ἡμῶν γράμματα” (ll. 3-4). Even though the phrase is only fragmentarily preserved, περὶ τῆς was certainly followed by a substantive like ὀλοκληρίας. After this part of the sentence, the purpose subclause probably begins: perhaps a phrase like ὅπως ἀπολαβῆς completes the lacuna.

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαι τῇ θεῖα προνοίᾳ περὶ τῆς ὀλοκληρίας σου ὅπως ὑγιαίνουντι (= ὑγιαίνοντα) καὶ εὐθυμοῦντα καὶ ἀπολαβεῖν τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα, κύριέ μου ἄδελφε” (P.Oxy. LVI 3859; TM 33600; ll. 3-5)

And P.Col. X 292 (TM 35704) and P.Lund II 4 (TM 31250) combine an infinitive construction with a substantive¹²³, e.g.:

“π[ρὸ] μὲν πάντων εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) τῷ θεῷ περὶ τῆς σ[ῆ]ς ὀλ[οκλ]ηρ[ί]ας ὑ[γ]ιαίν[ο]υσ[αν] ἀπολαβ[εῖν]” (P.Lund II 4; ll. 3-6)

Whereas the above cases combine different constructions in one phrase, other letters have more than one initial health wish, e.g.:

“πρ[ὸ] μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά [σο]υ [π]οιῶ παρὰ τοῖς πατρώοις ἡμῶν θεοῖς εὐχόμενος περὶ σοῦ τὰ κάλλιστα” (P.Mich. III 212; TM 28801; ll. 3-6).

Here, the first wish has an infinitive construction, whereas a substantive (τὰ κάλλιστα) completes the verb εὐχομαι in the second phrase.

3.2.1. Constructions

3.2.1.1. Infinitive construction

In the infinitive construction, the addressee is usually referred to by σε (in about 250 attestations)¹²⁴. The plural ὑμᾶς is found in a minority of about thirty letters, dated between the 1st-2nd and the 6th-7th centuries AD¹²⁵. Most of these letters are addressed to multiple addressees, e.g.:

“Μάξιμος Χαιρήμονι καὶ Εὐδαίμονι τοῖς γλυκυτάτ(οις) [-ca.?-] χαίρειν. [πρὸ μ]ὲν πάντων εὐχο[μ]αι ὑ]μᾶς ὑγιαίνειν” (PSI XII 1241; TM 17409; ll. 1-5)

¹²³ Given a lacuna in the middle of the formula of P.Col. X 292, this is however not certain. In P.Brem. 56 (TM 19640), the initial health wish is compact: “Ἀσίννις σε ἀσπάζομαι σὺν τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἐρρωμένος καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ εὐχόμενός σε” (ll. 2-5).

¹²⁴ In some initial health wishes, for instance those with the verb ὑπάρχω, the subject of this infinitive is not the addressee, but τὰ ἐν βίῳ (σοι) κάλλιστα and variants. These occurrences will be discussed *infra*.

In two Late Antique letters, dated to the 6th or 7th century AD, the addressee is referred to by means of an abstract noun (cf. appendix I): “ἐν μὲν προοιμίῳ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς πλεῖστα προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομαι τ[ῆ]ν ὑμετέραν περιβλεπτον ἀδελφότητα, εὐχόμενος εἰς τὸν δεσπότην θεὸν διαφ[υ]λά[ξαι] αὐτήν καὶ εὐπραγεῖν (= εὐπρακτεῖν)” (P.Oxy. XVI 1860; TM 37866; ll. 1-3). A similar occurrence is P.Grenf. II 91 (TM 38222).

¹²⁵ Ὑμᾶς πάντες is only found in a supplement in P.Lund II 1 (TM 28115). It has been remark that πάντας could be omitted, and this thesis confirms this.

In seven letters¹²⁶, however, ὑμᾶς appears with a single addressee. In two of these, third persons other than the addressee are mentioned after the opening formula and before the initial health wish. Hence, the plural form ὑμᾶς is probably used to include these persons in the health wish—a *pluralis sociativus*:

“[κυρί]ω μου ἀδελφῶ Διονυσίω Μέρ[σις] χαίρειν. πρὸ πάν[των] πολλά σε ἀσπάζομαι καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα σου Ἴσιν μετὰ τοῦ [υἱοῦ] Ἄμμωνος. Τβῆκικς καὶ οἱ ἡμῶν πάντ[ε]ς πολλά ὑμᾶς [ἀ]σπά[ζ]εται εὐχομενος (= εὐχομένη) ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνειν” (SB XVI 12496; ll. 1-4)

“κυρία μου μητρει (= μητρι) Μοιροῦτι πλεῖστα χέρειν (= χαίρειν). τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ κάτ’ (= καθ’) ἐκάστην ἡμέραν καὶ τοῦ κυρίου μου ἀδελφοῦ Ἀφρεινγίου καὶ τῆς συνβίου αὐτοῦ τῆς ἀδελφῆς μου Ζηνοβία (= Ζηνοβίας). εὐχομαι ὑμᾶς ἀμφοτέρους¹²⁷ ὀλοκλη[ρ]εῖν.” (SB XIV 12173; ll. 1-8)

However, it is not clear who is referred to by the plural ὑμᾶς in the five other letters, and why ὑμᾶς is used instead of σε. A possible explanation involves the sociohistorical background of letter-writing. It is known that letters were often read out loud — especially when the addressee was not literate himself. The senders were of course familiar with this situation, and may —consciously or unconsciously— have adapted their phraseology, knowing that probably not only the addressee, but the also other persons would be listening to the message.

In eleven letters, there is no subject in the infinitive clause, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχ[ο]μαι ὑγιαίνειν (= ὑγιαίνειν)” (SB X 10725; TM 17430; l. 3)

“π[ρὸ] μὲν πάντων εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) τῷ θεῷ περὶ τῆς σ[ῆ]ς ὀλ[οκλ]ηρ[ίας] ὑ]γιαίν[ο]υσ[αν] ἀπολαβ[εῖν]” (P.Lund II 4; TM 31250; ll. 3-6)

“καὶ ὑγιαίνειν εὐχομαι” (P.Kellis I 74; TM 33328; l. 4)

“... εὐχόμενος ὀλοκληρεῖν διὰ παντός” (P.Kellis I 5; TM 33297; ll. 7-8)¹²⁸

In P.Lund II 4, the infinitive clause is combined with a substantive construction in which a reference to the addressee (περὶ τῆς σ[ῆ]ς ὀλ[οκλ]ηρ[ίας]) is made. Referring to the addressee once more in the infinitive clause might have felt superfluous. The same motive might be behind the omission of a reference to the addressee in the phrases that combine salutations to the addressee and the initial health wish: cases in point are, for

¹²⁶ I.e. P.Oxy. XXXI 2601 (TM 32692), P.Col. VIII 216 (TM 17628), P.Phil. 35 (TM 27218), P.Oxy. XIV 1773 (TM 31815), SB XVI 12496 (TM 30278), SB XIV 12173 (TM 32954), P.Rein. II 118 (TM 32063).

¹²⁷ This is the only occurrence of the variant ὑμᾶς ἀμφοτέρους.

¹²⁸ The other occurrences are SB VI 9139 (TM 36198), P.Mil. II 81 (TM 33514), P.Kellis I 7 (TM 33299), P.Kellis I 64 (TM 33318), P.Kellis I 68 (TM 33322) and P.Kellis I 72 (TM 33326). The infinitive clauses in P.Alex.Giss. 61 (TM 27583) and P.Col. X 292 (TM 35704) seem to lack a subject, but the fragmentary state of the papyrus prevents a definitive conclusion.

example, P.Kellis I 74 and P.Kellis I 5, where the full context of the initial health wish is as follows, respectively:

“ἀσπάζομαι σε πολλά τὸ πρὸ πάντων καὶ ὑγιαίνειν εὔχομαι” (ll. 3-4)
“πρ[ο]ηγο]υμέν[ως] πολ[λὰ τήν] εὐ[γένειάν σ]ου προσαγορεύω [μετὰ τῆς κυρ]ίως
μου Ἰαμοῦ [καὶ τ]ῶν υἱῶν εὐχόμενος ὀλοκληρεῖν διὰ παντός” (ll. 3-8)

The same phenomenon also occurs in six other letters¹²⁹. Especially in the health wishes expressed with a participle, such as P.Kellis I 5, brachylogy might have been the reason for the absence of σε (or ὑμᾶς). But in general, the omission of a reference to the addressee did not pose a problem: the intended subject (the addressee) is so obvious that it could easily be omitted.

Further, the reference to the addressee is not always in the expected case: in my corpus, the dative σοι¹³⁰ appears instead of the accusative in nine letters —corrected or not by the editor, e.g.:

“πρ[ὸ μ]ὲν πάντων εὔχομέ (= εὔχομαι) σοι [ύ]γιαίν\ειν/” (BGU III 815; TM 9366; ll. 1-2)
“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομέ (= εὔχομαι) σοι (= σε) ὑγιαίνειν” (BGU II 384; TM 28132; ll. 3-4)¹³¹

Like in the salutations (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 3.2), the reason for the confusion between σοι and σε could lie at various levels of the language organization —factors such as phonetic similarity, changes in the pronunciation and difficulties with the spelling of the two vowels might have influenced someone to write σοι instead of σε, especially since this personal pronoun often appears before a word starting with a vowel (cf.

¹²⁹ I.e. P.Mil. II 81 (TM 33514), P.Kellis I 7 (TM 33299), P.Kellis I 64 (TM 33318), P.Kellis I 68 (TM 33322) and P.Kellis I 72 (TM 33326).

¹³⁰ Contrary to the salutations, the plural ὑμῖν for ὑμᾶς is not attested.

¹³¹ The other attestations are P.Mich. III 206 (TM 28795), O.Claud. II 224 (TM 29647), P.Oxy. X 1299 (TM 33637), P.Leid.Inst. 42 ll. 1-19 (TM 27729), P.Leid.Inst. 42 ll. 20-28 (TM 43134), P.Abinn. 31 (TM 10028) and SB IV 7354 (TM 27385). Further, the σοι-for-σε substitution is also found in an ostrakon from Didymoi (a collection which is not part of my corpus, cf. *supra*, chapter 1), viz. in O.Did. 350 (TM 144911). Perhaps PSI VIII 943 (TM 27224) is another occurrence of this phenomenon, but σοι is not a certain reading in this letter and it has therefore been left out of this discussion: “πρὸ μὲν παντὸς εὔχομα[ί] σοι εἰσχύειν (= ἰσχύειν) καὶ ὑγιαίνειν μετὰ τῶν σῶν πάντων” (ll. 3-5). Also the attestation in P.Alex. 30 (TM 32705) is too uncertain to be included. Here, the infinitive construction is supplemented: “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομέ (= εὔχομαι) σοι ὑγ[ιαίνειν]” (l. 4). Another possible conjecture is ὑγ[ίειαν]. In this construction, σοι is frequently added (cf. *infra*, § 3.2.1.2) and the noun is attested without article, e.g.: “καὶ ἐνθάδε ὄντες εὐχόμεθα σοι ὑγείαν (= ὑγίειαν) ἀξίω ὄντι” (P.Mich. VIII 497; TM 27107; ll. 8-9). In P.Köln X 418 (TM 47279), the phrase is too fragmentary to know what construction was used; perhaps an infinitive clause with σοι but this is far from certain. The reference to the addressee is lost in P.Mich. VIII 509 (TM 27119): “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαι . . . οἱ ὑγίειν” (ll. 3-4). If only one letter were missing, I would have proposed σοι, and this would have been another attestation of σοι-for-σε substitution.

quotes above). But also confusion between variant formulations of formulaic phrases with a similar meaning may have played a part: perhaps the writers (and editors) were confused since σοι is the correct addition to a number of other infinitive clauses, e.g.: “... εὐχόμενοι ὑγιαίνοντί σοι καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν εὐθυμοῦντι δοθῆναι τὴν ἐπιστολήν” (P.Herm. 4; TM 21123; ll. 4-6) and “πρὸ μὲν παντὸς εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς τὰ ἐν βίῳ σοι κάλλιστα ὑπαρχθῆναι” (P.Oxy. XXXVI 2783; TM 30385; ll. 2-3); further, σοι also frequently appears in substantive constructions, e.g.: “πρὸ μὲν π[ά]ντων εὐχομαί σοι τὴν ὀλοκλήριαν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ θαιῶ (= θεῶ)” (P.Lond. VI 1917; TM 16855; ll. 2-3) (cf. *infra*, § 3.2.1.2). Moreover, the scribal context should be taken into account as well: for instance, P.Leid.Inst. 42 contains two letters on one sheet. The first letter (ll. 1–19; TM 27729), was sent by Heras to her sister Taphes and had an initial health wish with σοι. The second letter (ll. 20–28; TM 43134), is the response from Taphes to her sister. It was written in the same hand, probably by the same person who had also carried the letter, and it contains an almost identical health wish with the same σοι-for-σε substitution. Other uncommon spelling mistakes are identical too. It is possible that this scribe had learnt this phrase with its (spelling and other) deviations and that he would write this very same initial health wish every time he wrote a letter. Yet, it seems more likely that the scribe chose the easy option of simply looking at what he had written in the first letter. In this way, variations like σοι-for-σε might not only spread in the language of one single writer, but might also affect the writing of others. The syntax of the construction is relevant as well: εὐχομαι is often followed by a dative and easily induces the dative case. The reference to the addressee might have been analyzed as the dative of the beneficiary of the prayer for good health (as a grammatical prolepsis), rather than as the subject of the infinitive clause. As is well-known, the infinitive clause was no longer productive after the 2nd century AD (cf. Halla-aho 2003a: 29), and this might have caused confusion. In sum, the possible causes for the σοι-for-σε variation are attested at several levels: morphology, syntax and phraseology, but especially orthography. The spellings of phrases that sound similar in pronunciation possibly show us that at the basis of the confusion is a mixture of the scribe’s grammatical intuition and his memory of previous encounters with these phrases. This applies also, or perhaps especially, to the construction of formulaic phrases which —due to their conservative nature— might have been more difficult for the scribe to understand and remember in their correct forms, visually or audibly (cf. Stolk and Nachtergaele: article submitted to *Symbolae Osloenses*).

The genitive erroneously appears in two letters as well:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σου (= σε) ὑγιαίνειν (= ὑγιαίνειν)” (P.Mich. VIII 492; TM 27102; ll. 1-2)

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομα<ι> ὑμων (= ὑμαῶ) υγιαίνων (= ὑγιαίνειν)” (O.Claud. II 238; TM 29661; ll. 2-3)

The reason why the addressee is referred to in P.Mich. VIII 492 might also have something to do with phraseological variation, and confusion about which case the reference to the addressee should be in. As mentioned before, in the substantive constructions the reference to the addressee can be expressed by the dative (cf. P.Lond. VI 1917, quoted above and *infra*, § 3.2.1.2); also a genitive can be used in that construction: “εὐχομαι τοῖς θεοῖς ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας σου” (P.Harr. I 103; TM 28709; ll. 4-5; cf. *infra*, § 3.2.1.2). Overall, the variation in the cases used in different constructions to refer to the addressee, might have caused confusion and led not only to the σοι-for-σε confusion, but also to the accidental σου-for-σε substitution. The explanation for the occurrence of ὑμων for ὑμᾶς is probably different: in O.Claud. II 238 (TM 29661) the writer probably transferred the ending -ων of πάντων to the other words in the sentence, leading to the erroneous spellings ὑμων and ὑγιαίνων¹³² (cf. Stolk and Nachtergaele: article submitted to Symbolae Osloenses).

3.2.1.2. Substantive construction

Two main constructions appear: either the noun is in the genitive case following περί¹³³, or in the plain accusative, e.g.:

“πρὸ παντὸς εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ περὶ τῆς ὀλοκληρίας σου καὶ τῶν φιλάτων σου” (P.Oxy. X 1298; TM 21805; ll. 3-6)

“πρὸ μὲν πάντ[ω]ν εὐχομαί σοι τὰ κάλλιστα” (PSI IX 1042; TM 30663; ll. 3-4)

As in the example above, τὰ κάλλιστα and its variant τὰ κάλλιστα ἐν βίῳ are always in the plain accusative. Other constructions are the following:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) τὸν παντοκρατοραν (= παντοκράτορα) θεὸν τὰ περὶ τῆς ὑγίας (= ὑγείας) σου καὶ ὀλοκληρίας σου χαίριν (= χάριν)” (BGU III 948; TM 33251; ll. 2-4)

“[[πρὸ]] πάντων τῶν εὐχῶν μου ἀναγκαιοτάτην ἔχω τὴν τῆς ὑγείας σου καὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου Ἀπολλωνίου καὶ τῶν ἀβασκάντων ὑμων” (P.Giss. I 23; TM 19425; ll. 4-10)

“εὐχομαι τοῖς θεοῖς ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας σου” (P.Harr. I 103; TM 28709; ll. 4-5)¹³⁴

¹³² A similar error seems to appear in O.Claud. II 226 (TM 29649): “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομε ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνων (= ὑγαίνειν)” (O.Claud. II 226; ll. 6-7).

¹³³ In PUG I 37 (TM 35929), the fragmentary initial health wish “εὐχο[μαι -ca.?-] σωτηρίας” (ll. 2-3) perhaps also had a περί construction, but its exact phraseology is beyond retrieval.

¹³⁴ Ὑπέρ is also attested in P.Mich. VIII 499 (TM 27109): “καθ’ ἣν (= ἐκάστην) ἡμέραν καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας <σου> εὐχὰς ποιοῦμαι παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ζώσζεσθαί (= σώζεσθαί) σε ἰς (= εἰς) μακροῦς χρόνου” (ll. 4-7) and in P.Col. X 292 (TM 35704): “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχόμενος ὑπὲρ τῆς σῆ[ς] ὑγία[ς] Traces ca. 21 characters καὶ καλῶς διάγιν (= διάγειν)” (ll. 1-2). Further, this pronoun is supplemented in another letter:

There is also variation regarding the reference to the addressee¹³⁵. As in the quotes above, the addressee is often referred to by the genitive σου or by the plural ὑμῶν, e.g.:

“πρὸ πάντων εὐχομαι τῷ θεῷ[ῶ] περὶ τῆς ὀλοκληρίας ὑμῶν” (P.Iand. VI 100; TM 32789; ll. 4-5)

The possessive adjective σός expresses the same idea, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν [πά]ντων εὐχομαι τῷ ὑψίστῳ θεῷ[ῶ] περὶ τῆς σῆς ὑγίας (= ὑγείας) καὶ ὀλοκληρίας, ἵνα ὑγιένοντα (= ὑγείας) σε καὶ εὐθυμοῦντα ἀπολάβῃ τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (P.Lips. I 111; TM 33705; ll.3-5)

In other cases, the addressee is in the dative of the personal pronoun (σοι or ὑμῖν), e.g.:

“... <ε>ὑχομένη σοι τὴν ὑγίαν (= ὑγείαν)” (P.Tebt. II 413; TM 28426; l. 3)

As in the quote of PSI IX 1042 above, τὰ κάλλιστα and its variant τὰ κάλλιστα ἐν βίῳ are always combined with the dative of the personal pronoun. Therefore, the following phrase is uncommon:

“... εὐχομένη σου τὰ κάλλιστα ἐμ (= ἐν) βίῳ” (SB XIV 11901; TM 30092; ll. 4-5)

The photograph of the papyrus, however, shows that the text in fact does not have σου but σοι¹³⁶.

Only in one other letter a different construction appears for the reference to the addressee¹³⁷:

“... εὐχόμενος περὶ σοῦ τὰ κάλλιστα” (P.Mich. III 212; TM 28801; ll. 5-6)

Given this large variation in the references to the addressee, there is—in my opinion—no reason to read σου as σοι, as the editor of SB X 10279 (TM 32650) does:

“πρὸ μὲν παντῶς (= παντός) εὐχομέ (= εὐχομαι) σου (= σοι according to the editor) τη (= τὴν) ὀλοκληρίαν (= ὀλοκληρίαν) παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ” (ll. 2-4)

“καὶ οὐ παύομε (= παύομαι) εὐχὰς ἀναπεμπόμε[νος ὑπὲρ] σωτηρίας τῆς ὑμετέρας μεγαλοπρεποῦς δό[ξης]” (P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 216; TM 36902; ll. 2-3).

¹³⁵ A remarkable extension to this substantive occurs in P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 216 (TM 36902): “καὶ οὐ παύομε (= παύομαι) εὐχὰς ἀναπεμπόμε[νος ὑπὲρ] σωτηρίας τῆς ὑμετέρας μεγαλοπρεποῦς δό[ξης]” (ll. 2-3). In this 6th century AD letter, the addressee is referred to by an abstract noun (cf. *infra*, appendix I).

¹³⁶ Cf. <http://wwwapp.cc.columbia.edu/ldpd/apis/item?mode=item&key=yale.apis.0006600000> (accessed on May 11, 2015). I am grateful to Joanne Stolk who has palaeographically examined this papyrus.

¹³⁷ In P.Oslo III 159 (TM 31640), ὑμῖν seems to appear in combination with ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, but the latter is supplemented.

Perhaps a combination of those references to the addressee was used in SB XII 10840 (TM 32557): possibly we can supplement the health wish by adding the missing letter [σ]¹³⁸:

“πρὸ μὲν πατων (= πάντων) εὐχομαι τὴν .ην ὀλοκκληρία]ν σου παρὰ το (= τῶ) κυ(ρίω) θε(ῶ)” (ll. 3-5)

In SB III 6222 (TM 31054; 4th century AD), the noun ὀλοκληρία seems to be extended with the adjective πᾶς:

“[πρὸ μὲν πάντων]ν εὐχομαι π[ερί] ὀλοκληρία[ς] πά[σης] τῶ . .]μ . [θ]εῶ ἔπιτα (= ἔπειτα) καὶ τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστά σοι [ὑ]παρχθῆ]ναι” (ll. 2-4)

Since such an extension is not attested elsewhere, I suggest to consider the characters πα in combination with the following word and I propose a new reading *infra* (§ 3.3.4).

3.2.2. Topos ‘be well’, ‘be successful’ and variants¹³⁹

3.2.2.1. Ὑγιαίνω

The verb ὑγιαίνω is used in about 200 letters¹⁴⁰, ranging from the 1st until the 6th and 7th centuries AD, e.g:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν” (BGU II 602; TM 28190; ll. 2-3)

The predominance of this verb in the initial health wish is in line with the observation that ὑγιαίνειν outnumbered all other verbs in the health wish of the type ὁ δεῖνα τῶ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν (cf. *supra*, § 2.1.2). This continuity supports the hypothesis that the formula πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν is Greek in origin.

The verb ὑγιαίνω also appears in the purpose clause of the damaged initial health wish of O.Claud. II 303 (TM 29716):

“εὐκ[ομαι (= εὐχομαι) (?)] ἵνα σε ὑγια[ίνης]” (ll. 2-3)

The substantive ὑγίεια is attested thirteen times¹⁴¹, e.g.:

¹³⁸ The editor saw { . ην} as an erroneous duplication of the article and proposed to delete it.

¹³⁹ As the quotes *infra* show, multiple verbs can be combined in one health wish.

¹⁴⁰ The infinitive is supplemented in about thirty other letters. In BGU III 845 (TM 28096), the infinitive clause with ὑγιαίνειν is even used twice: “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομέ (= εὐχομαι)σαι (= σε) ὑγειαίνιν (= ὑγιαίνειν) καὶ τὸ προσκύνη[μ]ά σου ποιῶ [κα]θ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέ[ρ]αν παρὰ τῶ κυ[ρ]ίῳ Σαράπιδι καὶ τοῖς συννάοις θεοῖ[ς]/εὐχόμενός σοι (= σε) ὑγειαίνιν (= ὑγιαίνειν)” (ll. 3-8).

¹⁴¹ Perhaps this type of initial health wish is also found in P.Alex.Giss. 51 (TM 27573): “. . [. . τῆς σ]ῆς ὑγείας κ[- ca.?-]” (l. 3). Its place just after the opening formula and right before the *proskynema* phrase suggests that this

“πρὸ (= πρὸ) μὲν πάντων εὐχόμεαι (= εὐχομαι) τῷ πανελεήμονι θεῷ περὶ τῆς υἰγίας (= υἰγείας) σ[ο]ϛ” (P.Col. XI 299; TM 34018; ll. 3-4)
 “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχόμεαι τὴν υἰγύαν (= υἰγείαν) ὑμῶν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ” (P.Köln II 109; TM 33492; ll. 3-4)

As generally described above (cf. *supra*, § 3.2.1.2), there is variation regarding the construction of the nouns (περὶ with genitive or plain accusative, cf. quotes above), but also regarding the reference to the addressee. Besides the genitives of the personal pronouns σου and ὑμῶν (cf. the quotes above), the following variants appear, e.g.:

“[πρὸ μ]ὲν πάντων εὐχόμεαι τῷ πανελεήμονι (= πανελεήμονι) θεῷ περὶ τῆς σῆς υἰγίας (= υἰγείας)” (P.Oxy. LVI 3865; TM 35476; ll. 5-8)
 “... <ε>ύχομένη σοι τὴν υἰγίαν (= υἰγείαν)” (P.Tebt. II 413; TM 28426; l. 3)

3.2.2.2. Ὀλοκληρέω

The variant ὀλοκληρέω is attested in 27 letters¹⁴². My investigation has revealed that the use of this verb is likely a later development: the letters in question are dated from the 3rd century AD onwards¹⁴³, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὀλοκληρεῖν (= ὀλοκληρεῖν) ἅμα τῇ συνβίῳ σου καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις σου” (P.Laur. I 20; TM 31506; ll. 3-5)

Ὀλοκληρία is with 31 attestations¹⁴⁴ the most common variant of all substantive constructions, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σοι τὴν ὀλοκληρίαν παρὰ τῷ κ(υρι)ῷ θ(ε)ῷ” (P.Oxy. XII 1495; TM 33650; ll. 3-5)

Like the verb ὀλοκληρέω, also the noun ὀλοκληρία only appears from the 3rd century AD onwards; it seems to confirm my hypothesis about the verb appearing later. Then, it

was an initial health wish, but the phrase is too fragmentary to include it in our overview. Another possible attestation is found in the fragmentary P.Alex. 30 (TM 32705; cf. *supra*, footnote 131).

¹⁴² The phrase has been supplemented in five other letters, including O.Claud. I 165 (TM 24172): “[πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐ]χομαί σε υἰγαίνειν [καὶ ὀλοκληρεῖν, ἄδε]λφε καὶ κύριε” (ll. 2-3). Yet, according to Fournet, ἐρρῶσθαι or ἰσχύειν are more plausible conjectures (Fournet 2003: 482). Also, this 2nd century AD letter does not quite match the chronology of the attestations.

¹⁴³ Since the low number of occurrences could have skewed the chronological picture, I return to the chronological distribution of this verb in the chapter on the closing formula (cf. *infra*, chapter 7, § 4.2.2). As far as I know, past studies did not discuss the verb’s chronology.

¹⁴⁴ The substantive is supplemented in three other letters. Further, there are two fragmentary letters which might also have had ὀλοκληρία: P.Giss.Bibl. III 30 (TM 22119: “[.]ωστιαν [.] . . . εὐχομαι τ[ῷ θ]εῷ υ[- ca.18 -] ὀλοκληρί[ας]”; ll. 2-3) and P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 627 (TM 25575: “[-ca.-? -]σου τὴν ὀλοκληρίαν [-ca.-? -], καὶ τοῖς σου τέκνο[ις -ca.-? -]”; ll. 4-5). These occurrences have not been taken into account.

rapidly seems to become the dominant variant. As described above (cf. § 3.2.1.2), the reference to the addressee can be expressed by the genitive or the dative of the second person personal pronoun or the possessive adjective.

3.2.2.3. Ἐρρωμαι

The infinitive ἐρρῶσθαι was common in the closing formula of the Roman period, ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι, which is similar to the initial health wish (cf. *infra*, chapter 7, § 2.2). Yet, in the *formula valetudinis initialis*, the verb is found in nineteen letters only¹⁴⁵, and all occurrences date before the 3rd century AD. Besides in the closing formula, ἔρρωμαι has of course long been connected to the initial health wish, and is popular in different phrases (viz. εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγίαινον, cf. *supra*, § 1.1.1.1 and ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι, cf. *supra*, § 2.1.1). Yet, it seems that especially the closing formula was the source of inspiration for the verb choice in the initial health wishes with the infinitive ἐρρῶσθαι. This is suggested by the word order of the initial health wish: in no less than fourteen of the nineteen letters, the common word order of the initial health wish (εὔχομαί followed by an infinitive construction) is reversed and is identical to the word order of the closing formula¹⁴⁶, e.g.:

“πρὸ τῶν ὄλων ἐρῶσθε (= ἐρρῶσθαι) σοι (= σε) εὔχομε (= εὔχομαι) μετὰ κ[αί] τῶν σῶν πάντων” (P.Mich. III 206; TM 28795; ll. 3-4)

Let me now investigate the occurrences with the verb ἔρρωμαι in the initial health wish. Seven of the nineteen occurrences are from the archive of Saturnila¹⁴⁷. In fact, seven of the eight¹⁴⁸ initial health wishes in this archive are expressed with the verb ἔρρωμαι

¹⁴⁵ The verb is supplemented in BGU II 530 (TM 25647). Perhaps, P.FuadUniv. App. II 139 (TM 78239) is another attestation, but given its very fragmentary nature and its early date, this is far from certain. Further, in P.Mich. III 208 (TM 28797), the AcP construction appears: “[πρὸ μὲν πάντων ἐρρωμένον σε εὔχομαι” (l. 2). This letter has not been counted in the total number of occurrences. The infinitive ἐρρῶσθαι also appears in nine unedited ostraca from Krokodilo and Maximianon. Yet, from the description of these occurrences, it is not clear whether all nine occurrences appear in the health wish of the type πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγίαινειν; in some cases, the formula might have been ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι (Fournet 2003: 482).

¹⁴⁶ Adapting the initial health wish to make it resemble the closing formula was, by the way, not a feature confined to the form ἐρρῶσθαι. For instance, in P.Yale I 42 (TM 6206) and P.Mich. VIII 490 (TM 27100), ἔρρωσο is used as the initial health wish and in P.Oxy. VIII 1154 (TM 25928), the final health wish ἐπιμέλου σεαυτῆς ἵνα μοι ὑγιάινης is used as the initial health wish. It is thus a more widespread phenomenon, which should not be treated stepmotherly by calling it a mistake, as Buzón did (Buzón 1984: 15-16) (see also *infra*, § 3.2.2.6, on προκόπτω).

¹⁴⁷ For more information on this archive, a list of the papyri preserved in this collection and a link to the digital texts, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/212 (accessed on March 17, 2014). Other epistolary phrases of this archive are discussed in chapter 8, § 1.

¹⁴⁸ I.e. P.Mich. XV 751 (TM 28820), P.Mich. XV 752 ll. 3-4 and ll. 28-29 (TM 28821), P.Heid. VII 400 (TM 28976), SB III 6263 ll. 3-4 and ll. 19-20 (TM 27792) and P.Mich. III 206 (TM 28795). Saturnilos, the writer of P.Mich. III 209

instead of the common ὑγιαίνω. This collection is dated to the late 2nd century AD and probably came from (the region around) Karanis. It contains information about a family of Roman citizens; also their social circle mainly seems to involve people who bear Roman names (cf. the persons mentioned in the letters, especially in the salutations¹⁴⁹). The archive only consists of Greek private letters, mainly sent by Sempronios. This man, who was —as the eldest son— the most important member of the family, seems to have been away from home for a while: his letters were probably sent from Alexandria to his hometown Karanis. Perhaps he was a public servant working in the city (cf. Papathomas 1996: 118; 120). Whenever Sempronios used an initial health wish, he seemingly consistently chose the phrase ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι¹⁵⁰. However, Sempronios was not the only one in the Saturnila archive who used this formula: P.Mich. III 206, quoted above, was written by Longinus Celer¹⁵¹.

Two other attestations, P.Mich. VIII 465 (TM 17239) and 466 (TM 17240), have a similar sociohistorical background: these two letters from Apollinaris are preserved in the archive of the soldiers Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris¹⁵², which was found in Karanis, just like the Saturnila archive probably was. The family of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris was of Egyptian origin (Alston 1995: 135), but Sabinus obtained Roman citizenship through his service in the legions and passed on citizenship to his son, who also joined the army¹⁵³. Not only the names of the archive's protagonists are Latin, also many senders of other letters in the archive and many persons saluted in the letters bear Latin names. In this letter the Latin loanwords κοντουβερνάλιος and κολλήγας are found in the salutations. The first word is a loan translation of *contubernalis* which is found in the Vindolanda tablets and the Latin letters of the Claudius Tiberianus archive (cf. *infra*, chapter 10, § 3). Of course, this does not imply anything conclusive. More telling is perhaps the function Apollinaris held in the army: he rose to the position of *frumentarius*, which had little to do with food supply in this period; rather, *frumentarii* were detailed for a variety of special projects and missions, especially the conveyance of

(TM 28798), used the following formula: “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχ[ο]μέ (= εὔχομαί) σοι (= σε) ὑγειένειν (= ὑγιαίνειν) καὶ προκόπτειν” (ll. 3-4); the other letters in this archive do not have an initial health wish.

¹⁴⁹ Especially in P.Mich. III 209 the number of Roman names in the greetings is striking.

¹⁵⁰ In chapter 8 (§ 1), the writing style of Sempronios and his (possible) epistolary preferences are further investigated.

¹⁵¹ Longinus Celer's phrase, however, differed from that of Sempronios in that he used the dative σοι instead of the expected σε.

¹⁵² For more information on this archive, a list of the papyri preserved in this collection and a link to the digital texts see www.trismegistos.org/archive/116 (accessed on April 23, 2015).

¹⁵³ This is not the only aspect in which the Saturnila archive and the archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris show similarities; other elements will be discussed *infra*, in chapter 8, § 1.

messages between the provinces and Rome¹⁵⁴ (Rankov 1990: 180; 182). This seems to imply to me that Apollinaris probably knew Latin.

Although the linguistic background of the members of those two archives is hard to retrieve—the fact that they are Roman citizens does not necessarily imply that they knew Latin—there is a potential link between the use of ἐρρῶσθαι in the initial health wish, which in this way resembles the closing formula, and the Latin epistolary phraseology. In the Latin private letters, the verb expressing the health wish in the *formula valetudinis initialis* and in the closing formula was identical (*valeo*, cf. *supra*, *opto te bene valere*). Perhaps, some of the writers using ἐρρῶσθαι in the initial health wish, followed this Latin tradition of using one and the same verb for both the initial health wish and the closing formula. Since the latter is commonly expressed by the verb ἔρρωμαι in the Greek letters—viz. ἔρρωσο or ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὐχομαι—and not by ὑγιαίνειν, they may have chosen the verb ἔρρωμαι in the initial health wish as well. Admittedly, in other letters, there might have been different triggers to use the infinitive ἐρρῶσθαι in the initial health wish; the fact that the letter writer was familiar with this verb from the closing formula, might in itself have been the cause for using it in the initial health wish as well; there is no way of ascertaining whether there was a deliberate desire to make the two phrases look similar. In sum, what is clear is that influence from the phraseology of the closing formula, might have led letter writers to write the infinitive ἐρρῶσθαι in the initial health wish as well. Perhaps in some letters the use of ἐρρῶσθαι is due interference from the Latin epistolary phraseology.

3.2.2.4. Εὐτυχέω

In ten letters, the variant εὐτυχέω is used¹⁵⁵. Two of them come from the archive of the soldier Claudius Tiberianus (P.Mich. VIII 476 and 479)¹⁵⁶. Also in BGU II 423, P.Mich. III 203 and P.Lund II 1 with this variant, the sender is a military man. Since other letters are not linked to the military and since this verb is also frequently attested as the closing formula εὐτύχει, one cannot ascribe the use of εὐτυχέω to the army. The verb usually appears in combination with another verb; only in PSI III 206 εὐτυχέω is the sole verb of the initial health wish.

¹⁵⁴ Apollinaris' travels to Rome are documented in the papyrus material.

¹⁵⁵ I.e. P.Mich. VIII 476 (TM 27089), P.Mich. VIII 479 (TM 27092), BGU I 164 (TM 28228), BGU II 423 (TM 28137), P.Gron. 19 A (TM 29212), P.Lund II 1 (TM 28115), P.Mich. III 203 (TM 21342), P.Mil.Vogl. I 24 (TM 12344), P.Würzb. 21 (TM 27172) and PSI III 206 (TM 31222). Further, the occurrence is (almost) completely supplemented in P.Mich. VIII 477 (TM 27090), P.Mich. VIII 510 (TM 27120) and PSI IV 308 (TM 31135). Like P.Mich. VIII 476 and 479, P.Mich. VIII 477 and P.Mich. VIII 510 belong to the Claudius Tiberianus archive. In the former, the verb is completely supplemented; in the latter, the attestation of εὐτυχέω is more certain.

¹⁵⁶ In two other letters from this archive this variant is supplemented (P.Mich. VIII 477 and 510).

3.2.2.5. Ἴσχύω

The variant ἰσχύω, meaning ‘to be strong, to prevail’, is attested in O.Claud. II 386 (TM 29785) and PSI VIII 943 (TM 27224), and supplemented in O.Claud. II 267 (TM 23995). The addressee of O.Claud. II 386 is clearly a military man, and PSI VIII 943 might come from the context of the army as well. Further, it occurs in three ostraca from the Didymoi collection¹⁵⁷, which is not included in my corpus, and it is reported to be found in a handful of unedited ostraca from Krokodilo and Maximianon (cf. Fournet 2003: 482). The verb might originally have been used as an *ad hoc* innovation by a sender who wanted to tailor his health wish to the context and to the activities of the addressee¹⁵⁸; later, it might have become part of a military register. Tempting as this hypothesis might be, I want to emphasize that the data are too limited to draw firm conclusions¹⁵⁹.

3.2.2.6. Προκόπτω

The variant προκόπτω only appears in P.Gen. I (2e éd.) 74 (TM 32144), P.Mich. III 209 (TM 28798) and SB XXII 15380 (TM 78969), each time in combination with ὑγιαίνω. In the last letter, the initial health wish and the closing formula are made to resemble each other:

initial health wish (ll. 3-4): “πρὸ πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιένιν (= ὑγαίνειν) καὶ προκόπτειν”

closing formula (ll. 12-13): “ἔρρωσ[θαί] σε εὐχομ[αι καὶ] προκόπτειν”

All three letters were written in the 2nd century AD: P.Gen. I (2e éd.) 74 is part of the Latin and Greek bilingual archive of Gaius Iulius Agrippinus¹⁶⁰, which was found in Karanis, and P.Mich. III 209 belongs to the Saturnila archive (cf. *supra*). Perhaps the use of this verb was a short-lived fashion confined to this period, but given the limited number of preserved attestations, this hypothesis would be highly speculative.

Another shared feature is the possible Latin background: not only in the letters from the two Karanis archives, but also in SB XXII 15380 the correspondents might have known Latin. SB XXII 15380, a letter from Psasteinos (perhaps Faustinus?) to Niger, was found in the Eastern Desert, and forms a small dossier with two letters from a certain

¹⁵⁷ I.e. O.Did. 356 (TM 144917), O.Did. 402 (TM 144963) and O.Did. 428 (TM 144989).

¹⁵⁸ This verb is already attested in Xenophon (Cyp. VI 1,24), but the letter writers would not have known this literary parallel when they wrote their health wish. Hence, I deem it more plausible that the use of this uncommon verb was inspired by the circumstances rather than by literary *imitatio*.

¹⁵⁹ The phrase also occurs in the body of P.Mil.Vogl. I 24 (TM 12344): “εὐχομαι σε εἰσχύιν (= ἰσχύειν)” (ll. 31-32).

¹⁶⁰ Cf. www.trismegistos.org/archive/91 (accessed on April 22, 2015). Gaius Iulius Agrippinus is a soldier of the legio II Traiana Fortis, who lived in Karanis. A large part of the archive deals with a lawsuit against Drusilla, the wife of a deceased fellow-soldier. Also one Latin letter, ChLA X 434, an official letter to Agrippinus, has been preserved in the archive.

Constans to Niger, the addressee of SB XXII 15380¹⁶¹. Not only the names of (some of the) correspondents are Latin; also in the body texts people with Latin names are mentioned (cf. Bagnall and Sheridan 1994: 116-119): in the body of SB XXII 15380, a certain Petronius is mentioned (l. 5 and l. 8), and in the two other letters, a certain Lucius is referred to. Since a Latin letter addressed to Lucius was found in the same archaeological environment, it is tempting to assume that the name in both the Latin and the Greek documents refers to one and the same person —however, this would be too speculative. Yet, the Latin names and the fact that these Greek letters were found in the same archaeological context with Latin texts, seem to hint at a bilingual background of these ostraca. If this hypothesis is accepted, the fact that the initial health wish is made to resemble the closing formula in SB XXII 15380 supports my hypothesis that using the same verb in the initial health wish and in the closing formula might have been triggered by the similar habits in the Latin letter’s phraseology (cf. *supra*, § 3.2.2.3).

Yet, προκόπτω appears in the closing formula outside Latin contexts as well (cf. *infra*, chapter 7, § 2.2). Considering this element, and the fact that the number of occurrences is low, no firm conclusions can be drawn about the linguistic context in which this verb was used.

3.2.2.7. Εὖ διάγω

The word group εὖ διάγω appears in three letters, viz. SB XIV 11645 (TM 27499), P.Col. X 292 (TM 35704) and P.Oxy. XIV 1664 (TM 21964). In the fragmentary P.Col. X 292 the adverb καλῶς appears instead of εὖ¹⁶². In P.Oxy. XIV 1664, διάγειν is not the only infinitive in the health wish:

“... εὐχόμενός σε σώζεσθαι πανοικησίᾳ καὶ εὖ διάγειν” (ll. 2-3)

3.2.2.8. Εὖ πράσσω

Quite similar to the previous verb with regard to content, is the word string εὖ πράσσω:

“προηγου[μένως] εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) ὑμᾶς ὑγι[αίνειν] καὶ εὖ πράττειν” (P.Oxy. XIV 1770; TM 31812; ll. 4-6)

Its variant τὰ μεγάλα πράσσω perhaps appears in CPR VII 55 (TM 26668), but the phrase is damaged:

¹⁶¹ I.e. SB XXII 15378 (TM 78967) and SB XXII 15379 (TM 78968). These letters do not have an initial health wish with προκόπτω.

¹⁶² However, due to a lacuna, it is not certain if the expression καὶ καλῶς διάγειν is still part of the initial health wish.

“πρὸ μ[ε]ν τῶν ὄλων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν κα[ί] τὰ μ[ε]γ[α]λά[λ]α πράττειν” (ll. 2-3)

3.2.2.9. Διαφυλάσσω

In the Christian letters P.Oxy. XVII 2156 (TM 32837) and P.Oxy. XVI 1860 (TM 37866), the health wish is expressed with the verb διαφυλάσσω, respectively:

“... ὁμοῦ τῇ θεία τοῦ θεοῦ προνοία εὐχόμενος ἀεὶ διαφυλάξαι σε ἡμῖν” (ll. 5-7)

“... εὐχόμενος εἰς τὸν δεσπότην θεὸν διαφ[υ]λά[ξαι] αὐτὴν καὶ εὐπραγεῖν (= εὐπρακτεῖν)” (ll. 2-3)

In both cases, the addressee is the object of διαφυλάσσω, and not the subject as in other infinitive clauses. The subject changes in the infinitive clause of P.Oxy. XVI 1860 as there are two verbs in the health wish: the addressee is the subject of εὐπρακτεῖν¹⁶³.

Διαφυλάσσω is also attested twice (or perhaps three times) in the purpose clause¹⁶⁴:

“εὐκαιρίαν εὐρῶν τοῦ πρὸς σὲ ἐρχομένου ἐχάρην, ἵνα σὲ ἀσπάζομαι (= ἀσπάζωμαι) καὶ εὐχομαι (= εὐχώμαι) τοῖς θεοῖς ὑπέ[ρ] σοῦ, ἵνα σὲ διαφυλά[ξ]ωσι” (BGU IV 1081; TM 27750; ll. 2-4)

3.2.2.10. Σώζω

P.Oxy. XIV 1664 (TM 21964) is the only letter in which σώζω is used in the infinitive construction¹⁶⁵:

“... εὐχόμενός σε σώζεσθαι πανοικησίᾳ καὶ εὖ διάγειν” (ll. 2-3)

In P.Alex.Giss. 59 (TM 27581), a letter from the Apollonios *strategos* archive, Eudaimonis deviates from the standard phraseology by choosing the infinitive διασώζεσθαι:

“πρὸ τῶν [ὄ]λων εὐχομαί σε διασώζεσθαι ἅμα τῇ συμβίῳ σου Ἀλινῆι καὶ ἀβασκάντοις \σ/ου παιδίῳ” (ll. 3-6)

The verb does not appear elsewhere in the *formula valetudinis initialis*, and seems to be adapted to the circumstances. This letter is to be seen against the dangerous situation of

¹⁶³ P.Oxy. XVI 1860 preserves the only attestation of the verb εὐπρακτέω in the initial health wish.

¹⁶⁴ The verb also occurs in the purpose clause of P.Harr. I 107 (TM 31473). We should probably also read διαφυλάσσω in P.Alex.Giss. 58 (TM 27580) (cf. Kortus 1999: 127 and 129), and not διασυλλαβῶσι as the editor suggests (cf. Zeev 2005: 28): “ο . ω . . τὰς παρ’ ἡμεῖν ταρχ[ᾶς] οὐ καρτε[ρ]ῶ νυκτ[ὸς] ἡμέρας ε[ὐ]χ[ο]μ[έ]νη τοῖς θεο[ῖ]ς πᾶσι καὶ π[ά]σαις [δ]π[ω]ς [σε] δ[ι]αφυλάξωσι” (ll. 3-6). The verb διαφυλάσσω is also popular in a Late Antique closing formula (cf. *infra*, chapter 7, § 3.1).

¹⁶⁵ In P.Mich. VIII 499 (TM 27109), a variant to this appears: “καθ’ ἣν (= ἐκάστην) ἡμέραν καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας <σου> εὐχὰς ποιῶμαι παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ζῶζεσθαί (= σώζεσθαί) σε ἰς (= εἰς) μακροῦς χρόνους” (ll. 4-6).

the Jewish revolt: Eudaimonis hopes that Apollonios will come safely through the perilous events.

Σωτηρία is attested eleven times from the 1st-2nd until the 6th-7th centuries AD¹⁶⁶, e.g.:

“πρὸ τον (= τῶν) πάντων εὐχομαι τῷ θε(ε)ῷ περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου” (P.Abinn. 8; TM 10065; ll. 3-4)

Like other substantives, σωτηρία is often combined with σός, σου or ὑμῶν or σοι (cf. *supra*, § 3.2.1.2). In CPR V 19 (TM 24981), the noun construction is enlarged as follows:

“εὐχομαί σοι τὴν σωτηρίαν τοῦ παντὸς βίου καὶ τὴν ὑγίαν τῶν τέκνων σου καὶ τοῦ παντὸς οἴκου σου” (ll. 14-17)

3.2.2.11. Τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ὑπάρχω

The phrase τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ὑπάρχω and variants is attested in fourteen letters, dated between the 2nd and the 4th centuries AD¹⁶⁷, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν παντὸς εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς τὰ ἐν βίῳ σοι κάλλιστα ὑπαρχθῆναι” (P.Oxy. XXXVI 2783; TM 30385; ll. 2-3)

“... εὐχομένη σοὶ τὰ ἐν βίῳ ἀγαθὰ ὑπαρχ[θῆ]ναι” (P.Mert. II 82; TM 28784; ll. 5-7)

In P.Mert. II 82, the phrase τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ὑπάρχω is dependent on the health wish, which is a participle construction itself (cf. εὐχομένη). Such a construction (participle of εὐχομαι + τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ὑπάρχω) is attested in seven of the fourteen attestations of τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ὑπάρχω¹⁶⁸. This is remarkably high, considering that the total number of initial health wishes with participles of εὐχομαι is only 48 (cf. *supra*, § 3.1): the construction participle of εὐχομαι + τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ὑπάρχω thus constitutes about 15% of all health wishes expressed by participles. In all seven cases where τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ὑπάρχω is dependent on the participle of εὐχομαι, this health wish comes after the *proskynema* phrase. Before the *proskynema*, another initial health wish is found—this time a health wish constructed as a main clause:

¹⁶⁶ Further, the verb is supplemented in P.Oxy. VI 933 (TM 31322).

¹⁶⁷ I.e. P.Oslo III 159 (TM 31640), PSI XIV 1415 (TM 27056), SB XXIV 16334 (TM 28708), PSI III 206 (TM 31222), P.Oxy. XXXVI 2783 (TM 30385), P.Oxy. XX 2275 (TM 32726), P.Berl.Zill. 11 (TM 30580), PSI XII 1247 *verso* (TM 30631), P.Oxy.Hels. 50 (TM 30201), P.Tebt. II 418 *recto* (TM 31362), P.Bas. 16 (TM 30799), P.Mert. II 82 (TM 28784), SB III 6222 (TM 31054) and SB XXIV 16077 (TM 27058).

¹⁶⁸ Besides P.Mert. II 82, the other attestations are PSI XIV 1415, SB XXIV 16077 (however, this phrase is partly supplemented), P.Oslo III 159 (also supplemented), P.Oxy.Hels. 50, P.Tebt. II 418 *recto* and SB XXIV 16334. In P.Bas. 16, the phrase appears in a participle construction, but this is the only initial health wish in this letter. Since it deviates from the other occurrences, it has not been included in the total number of attestations.

“πρὸ μὲν πά[ν]των εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ ὑ[π]έρ σου τὸ προσκύνημα ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς] ἐνθάδε θεοῖς εὐχομένη σοὶ τὰ ἐν βίῳ ἀγαθὰ ὑπαρχθῆναι” (ll. 3-7)

In other words, the phrase τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ὑπάρχω often appears in a second initial health wish: it seems to be a more general recapitulation. Only five letters have the common construction εὐχομαι with the infinitive clause τὰ ἐν βίῳ σοὶ κάλλιστα ὑπαρχθῆναι (and variants): in P.Oxy. XXXVI 2783 (quoted above), P.Oxy. XX 2275, P.Berl.Zill. 11, SB III 6222 and PSI III 206¹⁶⁹. In that last letter, the opening lines are as follows:

“πρὸ τῶν ὅλων εὐχομαι πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς ε[ὐ]τυχεῖν σοὶ (= σε) καὶ τ[ὸ] προσκύνημά σου [π]οιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρ’ οἷς ἐπιξενού[μ]αι θεοῖς, εὐχομαι [δέ σ]οὶ τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ἀγαθὰ ὑπ[α]ρχθῆναι” (ll. 3-8)

This formula is similar to the ones with a participle construction, as it has the same tripartite structure with an initial health wish, a *proskynema* phrase and a second *formula valetudinis initialis* after the *proskynema*. The formula in PSI III 206 is strange as there are no other instances of initial health wishes that are asyndetically constructed after the *proskynema*¹⁷⁰. Given that the letter consists of two torn strips, it is possible that more characters were lost in the lacuna¹⁷¹, I propose a new reading:

“... εὐχομαι[νος (= εὐχομενος) σοὶ τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ἀγαθὰ ὑπ[α]ρχθῆναι”

The common confusion between αὶ and εἰ (Gignac 1976: 191-192) does not pose a problem for this conjecture.

The subjects of the infinitives vary: τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα (eleven instances) and τὰ ἐν βίῳ ἀγαθὰ (four instances)¹⁷². In most cases the verb is put in the passive aorist (cf. quotes above). In P.Tebt. II 418, a passive future infinitive ὑπαρχθήσασθαι is used, and in PSI XIV 1415 an active present infinitive ὑπάρχειν.

As the above examples show, often σοὶ or ὑμῖν is added to this phrase. Σε in the following occurrence should be read as σοὶ as well:

¹⁶⁹ In the fourteenth attestation, PSI XII 1247 verso, a different construction is used which is not relevant here.

¹⁷⁰ Two formulas are similar, but not identical to PSI III 206: in CPR V 19 (TM 24981) and SB XIV 12173 (TM 32954), the initial health wish is placed syndetically after the *proskynema*, but they differ from PSI III 206 in that the *proskynema* is not preceded by another initial health wish, respectively: “οὕτως καὶ ἐγὼ (= καὶ ἐγώ) ἐνθάδε τὸ προσκύνη[μ]ά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς κυρίοις [Διο]σκόροις καὶ παρὰ τῷ κυρ[ί]ῳ Σ[ε]ράπιδι καὶ εὐχομαί σοὶ τ[ὴν] σωτηρίαν τοῦ παντὸς βίου καὶ τὴν ὑγίαν (= ὑγίειαν) τῶν τέκνων σου καὶ τοῦ παντὸς οἴκου σου” (ll. 10-17) and “τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ κάτ’ (= καθ’) ἐκάστην ἡμέραν καὶ τοῦ κυρίου μου ἀδελφοῦ Ἀφρηνγίου καὶ τῆς συνβίου αὐτοῦ τῆς ἀδελφῆς μου Ζηνοβία (= Ζηνοβίας). εὐχομαι ὑμᾶς ἀμφοτέρους ὀλοκλη[ρ]εῖν.” (ll. 2-8).

¹⁷¹ Cf. <http://www.psi-online.it/images/orig/PSI%20III%20206%20r.jpg?1365956493> for a digital image of the papyrus (accessed on March 5, 2015).

¹⁷² In PSI III 206, both variants appear (cf. *supra*).

“[πρὸ πα]ντὸς εὔχομαί σε (= σοι) τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα [ὑπα]ρχθῆναι” (P.Berl.Zill. 11; TM 30580; ll. 3-4)

The standard phrase εὔχομαί σε was probably so ingrained that the writer did not notice that a dative was needed in this construction¹⁷³.

In ten letters¹⁷⁴, dated between the 1st and the 3rd centuries AD, only the noun τὰ κάλλιστα (or variants) appears, as a substantive construction not as an infinitive construction:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντ[ω]ν εὔχομαί σοι τὰ κάλλιστα” (PSI IX 1042; ll. 3-4)

A variant to τὰ κάλλιστα is τὰ κάλλιστα ἐν βίῳ (in SB XIV 11901; TM 30092 and SB III 6222; TM 31054)¹⁷⁵. In these examples, the reference to the addressee is put in the dative (σοι or ὑμῖν; cf. *supra*, § 3.2.1.2).

3.2.2.12. Minor variants

In one letter, the variant εὐδοκιμεῖν appears:

“ὑγιαίνειν μὲν σε καὶ εὐδοκιμεῖν διὰ παντὸς τῷ ὑψίστῳ θεῷ εὔχομαι” (P.Select. 18; TM 16836; ll. 4-6)

In P.Oxy. XIV 1680 (TM 31788), the sender expresses his wish for the addressee’s well-being by means of the verb εὐδοῶ:

“καὶ ἐ[ὔχομ]αί τῷ θεῷ ὀλοκληρεῖν σε καὶ εὐδο[ῶ]σθαι καὶ ὑγιαίνειν (= ὑγιαίνοντά) σε ἀπολαβεῖν ἐν τοῖς ἰδίῳις” (ll. 3-5)

In what seems to be the initial health wish of P.Alex.Giss. 61 (TM 27583), a letter preserved in the archive of Apollonios *strategos*, the verb εὐρωστέω is attested, which is not found elsewhere in this *topos*¹⁷⁶:

“[-ca.?- θ]έλω εὐρωστεῖν (= εὐρωστεῖν; my remark) εὐτυχοῦντα [-ca.?-]ν σου πάντων” (ll. 3-4)

¹⁷³ A similar occurrence is P.Oxy. XII 1593 (TM 33662): “[- ca.25 - εὐθυ]μοῦντί σοι (= σοι) καὶ εὐδαιμονοῦντι διὰ π[αντὸς] [. . . .] δοθῆνέ (= δοθῆναί) σοι τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (ll. 1-3). The writer probably intended to write σε –the confusion between αι and ε is common (Gignac 1976: 191-192)– instead of the grammatically correct σοι.

¹⁷⁴ I.e. PSI IX 1042 (TM 30663), P.Oxy. XII 1586 (TM 31768), P.Oxy. XIV 1758 (TM 29021), P.Mich. III 212 (TM 28801), P.Phil. 34 (TM 25215), PSI XIII 1332 (TM 27125), SB XVIII 13591 (TM 30980), SB XIV 11900 (TM 26549), P.Oxy. XIV 1679 (TM 31787) and SB XIV 11901 (TM 30092).

¹⁷⁵ In SB XIV 11900, the fragmentary phrase is supplemented as follows: “τὰ κάλλιστα καὶ [ἄριστα ἐν βίῳ]” (ll. 5-6).

¹⁷⁶ It is, however, attested as a participle in the closing formula (cf. *infra*, chapter 7, § 4.2.2).

In P.Herm. 47 (TM 33482), the noun εὐρωστία is used:

“πρὸ μὲν ἀπάντων εὐχομ[αι] τῷ Θεῷ περὶ τῆς ἐ[ὐρ]ωστίας σου” (ll. 3-5)

3.2.3. Topos ‘to find the addressee in health’ and variants¹⁷⁷

3.2.3.1. Infinitive construction

The verb ἀπολαμβάνω is most common to express the sender’s hope to find the addressee in health. It occurs in 23 letters¹⁷⁸, ranging from the late 1st until the 4th-5th centuries AD¹⁷⁹, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαι τῷ θεῷ ὀλοκλήρους ὑμᾶς ἀπολαβεῖν” (P.Oxy. XIV 1773; TM 31815; ll. 3-5)

“πρὸ παντὸς εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) τῷ θεῷ ὑγιένουσάν (= ὑγιαίνουσάν) σε καὶ εὐθυμοῦσαν ἀπολαβεῖν (= ἀπολαβεῖν) τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (P.Bour. 25; TM 32904; ll. 4-6)

The variant καταλαμβάνω is attested in P.Oslo II 62 (TM 33593):

“εὐχομαι πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς εὐθέω[ς] ἐπανελθόντα με καταλαβεῖν \σε/ [[ὡς] ὑγ[ι]αίνουσας” (ll. 4-6)¹⁸⁰

Recently, a new reading of P.Sijp. 59 a (TM 110224) has been proposed (Papathomas 2009: 197):

¹⁷⁷ Besides the infinitive clause (§ 3.2.3.1) and the purpose clause (§ 3.2.3.2) an alternative construction appears in P.Herm. 5 (TM 21124): “ἥς εὐχόμεθα καὶ ἐλπίζομεν τεύξεσθαι παρὰ τῆς τοῦ παντοκράτ[ορ]ος θεοῦ χάριτος, ἀπολαβόντες σε ἐρρωμένον ψυχῆι τε καὶ σώματι καὶ καλῶς ἀπαλλάξαντα.” (ll. 11-15) and in P.Giss. I 22 (TM 19424): “[πρὸ π]άν[τ]ων εὐχομ[α]ί σε [τὸν ἀγ]αθ[ὸν] ἀσπ[ά]σασθαι [καὶ] τὴν [γλυκυ]τάτην σου ὄψιν προσκυ[νῆσαι] νῦν ὄντως ἀμοιβ[ή]ν [ἤδη] τῆς εὐσεβείας μου ἀ[πολ]αμβανούσ[η]ς/ σε ἀπρόσ[κοπ]ον καὶ ἰλαρώτατον. ταῦ[τά] μοι ἢ πᾶσα εὐχή ἐστι [καὶ μ]έριμνα.” (ll. 3-11). P.Giss. I 22 is preserved in the archive of Apollonios *strategos*. Its uncommon phraseology in the health wish is discussed in chapter 8, § 2.

¹⁷⁸ In P.Oxy. LIX 4000 (TM 33121), the writer seems to have mixed up the infinitive construction with the purpose clause: “τῇ θείᾳ προνοίᾳ εὐχομαί σοι (= σε) υἱένειν (= ὑγιαίνειν) καὶ εὐθυμουντι (= εὐθυμοῦντα) ἀπολαβης (= ἀπολαβεῖν) τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα.” (ll. 3-4). Given the fact that the first part of the initial health wish is an infinitive clause, I follow the editor in considering this as an attestation of the *Acl*. Probably, in PSI XV 1564 (TM 34286) ἀπολαβεῖν or one of its variants was written where the text now has a lacuna: “[πρὸ μὲν πᾶ]ντων εὐχομαι ὑμᾶς [-ca.?-] ὀλοκληροῦντες (= ὀλοκληροῦντας)” (ll. 3-4).

¹⁷⁹ The variant with ἀπολαμβάνω was therefore not a later development of the formula (πρὸ μὲν πάντων) εὐχομαι + *Acl*, as was previously believed: Koskeniemi thought that the verb ἀπολαμβάνω was attested only from the 3rd (or perhaps the 2nd) century AD onwards (Koskeniemi 1956: 135). Ziemann considered it a Christian formula (Ziemann 1910: 324).

¹⁸⁰ A similar phrase was perhaps found in SB XVIII 13111 (TM 35159): “ἐλπίζ[ω γὰρ εἰς (τὸν) θεὸν ὅτι ὑμᾶς ὑγιεῖς] καταλ[αμ]βανο (= καταλαμβάνω)” (ll. 2-3). Since the phrase is for the most part supplemented, it has not been taken into account.

“[πρὸ μὲν πά]γτων εὔχομαι ἔρρω[μένόν σε καταλά]βι (= καταλαβεῖν) τὰ γράμματά μου” (ll. 3-4)

Given the fact that the exact number of lost characters is unknown and given the preponderance of ἀπολαβεῖν, I would suggest to emend the uncommon verb καταλαμβάνω to ἀπολαμβάνω, and to read [ἀπολά]βι as ἀπολαβεῖν.

Other variants are ἀποδίδωμι and δίδωμι. Δίδωμι appears invariably in the passive infinitive δοθῆναι in four letters viz. SB XIV 11588 (TM 32936), P.Oxy. XII 1593 (TM 33662), P.Herm. 4 (TM 21123) and P.Herm. 5 (TM 21124), e.g.:

“[εὔ]χομαι ὑ[γιαίν]οντ[ί σοι κ]αὶ εὐθυμοῦντι δ[ο]θῆναι [τὰ γ]ράμμα[τ]α” (P.Herm. 5; ll. 3-4)

These four attestations are all from the 4th century AD. Also ἀποδίδωμι is used five times in the passive ἀποδοθῆναι, viz. in SB XXVI 16716 (TM 97320), P.Oxy. XLVIII 3396 (TM 33708), P.NYU I 25 (TM 33591), P.Neph. 1 (TM 33555) and P.Princ. II 101 (TM 32797), e.g.:

“πρὸ πάντων εὔχομαι τῷ θεῷ ὑγιένοντί (= ὑγιαίνοντί) σοι καὶ εὐθυμοῦντι ἀποδοθῆναι τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (P.NYU I 25; ll. 3-4)

These letters are all dated to the 4th century AD, too. A similar example is found in the 4th-5th century AD letter SB XXIV 16204 (TM 32720):

“... [εὐχόμε]νοι [- ca.10 -] . ὑγειαίνοντί (= ὑγιαίνοντί) σοι ἐνχειρισθῆναι (= ἐγχειρισθῆναι) ταῦτί μου [τὰ γρά]μματα” (ll. 4-5)

In the cases with ἀποδίδωμι, δίδωμι and ἐγχειρίζω, the recipient is referred to in the dative (σοι or ὑμῖν) and the participles are of course subordinate to those personal pronouns as well¹⁸¹.

My data have revealed that the occurrences of this *topos* can be divided into two different types: in the early examples dated before the 4th century AD, such as P.Oxy. XIV 1773 (*supra*), the sender prays to find the addressee safe and sound. From the 4th century onwards, τὰ γράμματα and variants¹⁸² appear in this *topos*. That phrase has a different, self-referential perspective as it refers to the correspondence itself¹⁸³: in those

¹⁸¹ The editor does not always give the grammatical correct version: “[πρ]ὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχο[μ]αί τῷ θεῷ ὑγαινούσης (= ὑγαινούση; my remark) ἀ[ε] καὶ εὐθυμούσης (= εὐθυμούση; my remark) ἀποδοθῆναί σου (= σοι) τὰ παρά μου γράμματα” (SB XXVI 16716; TM 97320; ll. 4-8).

¹⁸² Τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα is the most common variant and appears in nine letters, τὰ παρ’ ἡμῶν γράμματα occurs once, and so does τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματά μου. Also τὰ γράμματα, ταῦτά μου γράμματα and τὴν ἐπιστολήν have only one attestation.

¹⁸³ This marked chronological difference between the two variants of this phrase was not discussed in older studies. Ziemann and Koskenniemi simply described that the self-referential phrase appeared from the 4th century AD onwards. They did not study the *topos* in which the sender prays to find the addressee well and

phrases the sender expresses the hope that the addressee will receive his letter in good health. All 4th century examples of (ἀπο)δίδωμι, for instance, belong to this type. In other words, this *topos* has apparently undergone a diachronic change.

Yet, in both variants of the phrase, the hope is usually expressed that the recipient is fine¹⁸⁴. In P.Oxy. XIV 1773 (cf. *supra*), as well as in eight other letters¹⁸⁵, ὀλόκληρος is used as a predicative adjunct. In other cases, this function is fulfilled by a participle. Also among the verbs put in the participle, there is variation: the verbs ὑγιαίνω (twelve attestations and one supplement), εὐθυμέω (nine attestations and one supplement) and ὀλοκληρέω (three attestations and one supplement) are the most common, but also other verbs are used:

“εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) ἀπολαβῖν (= ἀπολαβεῖν) σε ἐρρω\μένον/” (P.Euphrates 17; TM 44675; ll. 2-3)

“ἦς εὐχόμεθα καὶ ἐλπίζομεν τεύξεσθαι παρὰ τῆς τοῦ παντοκράτ[ορ]ος θεοῦ χάριτος, ἀπολαβόντες σε ἐρρωμένον ψυχῆι τε καὶ σώματι καὶ καλῶς ἀπαλλάξαντα” (P.Herm. 5; TM 21124; ll. 11-15)

“... εὐχομένη παρὰ πᾶσι θεοῖς ὑγιαίνον[τά] σε καὶ εὖ διάγοντα ἀπολαβεῖν μετὰ τῶν ἡμῶν πάντων” (P.Oxy. IX 1217; TM 31648; ll. 4-7)

“[- ca.25 - εὐθυ]μοῦντί σοι (= σοι) καὶ εὐδαιμονοῦντι διὰ π[αντὸς] [.] δοθῆνέ (= δοθῆναί) σοι τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (P.Oxy. XII 1593; TM 33662; ll. 1-3)

Also the fragmentary health wish in P.Stras. VI 553 (TM 26912) can perhaps be supplemented:

consequently did not remark that this new variant seems to have led to the disappearance of the older phrase (cf. Ziemann 1910: 324; Koskenniemi 1956: 137; 187). Obviously, we cannot pinpoint the exact moment when the letter writers switched from one phrase to the other; further, language change is a process that takes its time: in PSI VII 829 (TM 32874), dated to the 4th century AD, ἀπολαμβάνω is completed with σε, and P.Sijp. 59 a, dated to the 3rd century AD, has the ‘self-referential construction’ with τὰ γράμματα. Also the sociohistorical background of the phrase is not clear: “*Die Phrase kommt ausschliesslich in christlichen Briefen vor, aber eine christliche ideelle Basis lässt sich kaum erkennen.*” (Koskenniemi 1956: 188). Whereas it is indeed true that most occurrences have a Christian background, a couple of texts do not have references to the Christian God and are not included in the collections of Christian letter by Naldini 1968, Tibiletti 1979 and Kim 2011 (P.Abinn. 23; TM 32669 and P.Wash.Univ. I 35; TM 32572). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to investigate the religious beliefs of these senders. My data only serve as an indication that one should not regard this phraseology as unproblematic proof that the senders were Christians.

¹⁸⁴ However, such an extension is absent in SB III 6265 (TM 25445) and PSI VII 837 (TM 30730): “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὀλοκληρῖν (= ὀλοκληρεῖν) καὶ ἀπολαβῖν (= ἀπολαβεῖν) παρὰ πᾶσι θεοῖς” (PSI VII 837; TM 30730; ll. 2-3) and “πρὸ μὲν παντὸς εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ τάχειον ἀπολαβεῖν” (SB III 6265; TM 25445; ll. 3-5). Given that both letters already express a health wish in the first part of the infinitive clause (by means of ὀλοκληρεῖν and ὑγιαίνειν), another wish for the addressee’s well-being might have felt tautological.

¹⁸⁵ I.e. P.Abinn. 23 (TM 32669), P.Oxy. LIX 3997 (TM 31129), P.Laur. II 40 ll. 8 – 13 (TM 31508), P.Mich. III 216 (TM 21346), P.Mich. III 219 (TM 21349), P.Oxy. XIV 1773 (TM 31815), PSI III 236 (TM 31228) and PSI VII 829 (TM 32874).

“[-ca.?- ἀπ]ολαβεῖν σε ὑγιαί[-ca.?-]” (l. 4)

The original phrase probably had the participle of ὑγιαίνω viz. ὑγιαί[νοντα]. The fragment was presumably proceeded by εὔχομαι or a variant.

3.2.3.2. Purpose clause¹⁸⁶

In addition to the infinitive construction, a purpose clause can also express the *topos* ‘to find the addressee in good health’¹⁸⁷. Here again, ἀπολαμβάνω is the most common verb (eighteen attestations from the 3rd until the 6th centuries AD¹⁸⁸). In such subclauses, the verbs appear in the subjunctive mood.

Apart from the common ἀπολαμβάνω, other verbs appear as well. The verb ἀποδίδωμι, which was also a variant to ἀπολαμβάνω in the infinitive construction (cf. *supra*, § 3.2.3.1), is attested in P.Neph. 10 (TM 33563):

“προηγουμένως εὔχομαι τῷ παντοκράτορι θεῷ περὶ τῆς ὀλοκληρίας σου ὅπως ὑγιαίνοντί σοι καὶ εὐθυμοῦντι ἀποδοθεῖη ταῦτά μου τὰ γράμματα” (ll. 3-6)

Three other letters seem to be based on the same idea:

¹⁸⁶ The subordinating conjunctions show an interesting pattern, not in line with Clarysse’s findings that ἵνα is far more often used than ὅπως after the Ptolemaic period (cf. Clarysse 2010b: 43-45): in fact, twelve letters have ὅπως and this conjunction is supplemented in one other letter; four use ἵνα and ὡς occurs once. The occurrences of ὅπως are not homogeneous, they are used in letters with distinct purposes (informal family matters but also business transactions) and are found in different chronological and geographical contexts – one letter was even sent from Israel. Often, the letter has a great many orthographic, morphological and syntactic errors (e.g. P.Oxy. LVI 3864; TM 35475, see also Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 379 for a discussion of the style of P.Oxy. LVI 3860 (TM 33601)), so that the use of ὅπως does not match the formal character of the letter.

The same is true for the purpose clauses with other verbs such as διαφυλάσσω (discussed *supra*) or ἀποδίδωμι (discussed *infra*): of the nine other occurrences, five have ὅπως, three ἵνα and one ὡς.

¹⁸⁷ In three other letters, P.Oxy. LVI 3859 (TM 33600), P.Oxy. LVI 3860 (TM 33601) and SB XXII 15359 (TM 33346), the writer mixes up the infinitive construction with the purpose clause construction, e.g.: “προηγουμένως εὔχομαι τῇ θεῖα προνοίᾳ ὅπως ἀπολαβῖν τὰ παρὰ σοῦ γράμματα” (SB XXII 15359; ll. 4-6) Yet, I consider them as attestations of the purpose clause. Also in P.Abinn. 22 (TM 10022) the purpose clause is grammatically incorrect as the sender seems to have combined the purpose clause with elements of the infinitive construction (viz. a superfluous σαι which was probably intended as σε, as the subject of the infinitive clause): “εὔχομε (= εὔχομαι) τὸν παντοκράτ[ο]ρα θεὸν [ὄ]π[ω]ς ὑγιενοντι (= ὑγιαίνων) σαι (= συ) μετὰ τοῦ ὕκου (= οἴκου) ἀπολάβης τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (ll. 3-5). A similar confusion is found in P.Oxy. LVI 3864 (TM 35475).

The attestation in the 2nd century BC letter P.Bad. IV 48 (TM 5830) seems to be an *ad hoc* wish, and a predecessor of this *topos*: “εὔχομαι δὲ τοῖς θεοῖς, ἵν’ ὑγιαίνοντά σε ὑποδέξωμαι κατὰ πολλοὺς τρόπους, ὅτι καὶ ἐκ πολεμίων ἡμᾶς ἔρυσαι (= εἴρυσαι) καὶ πάλι εἰς πολεμίους ἡμᾶς ἀφείς ἀπελήλυθας” (ll. 2-3).

¹⁸⁸ Further, the verb is supplemented in three other letters.

“[π]ροηγουμαίνως (= προηγουμένως) εὔχομαι νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας περὶ (= περὶ) τῆς σοῦ ὀλοκληρείας (= ὀλοκληρίας) ὅπως ὑγιένοντος (= ὑγιαίνοντος) <σ>ου καὶ εὐθ[υ]μοῦντος προσδέξῃ τὰ ἐμὰ γρά[μ]ατα (= γράμματα)” (P.Abinn. 36; TM 32674; ll. 5-9)

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχὰς καὶ δεήσις (= δεήσεις) ἀναπέμπω πρὸς τὸν Θεόν μου καὶ σωτηραν (= σωτῆρα) ἡμῶν τὸν [Χρ]ιστὸν ὅπως ὑγιένοντας (= ὑγιαίνοντας) ὑμᾶς καὶ εὐθυμοῦντάς μοι συνήθως διατηρησιν (= διατηρῶσιν)” (P.Grenf. I 61; TM 38215; ll. 7-12)

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων παρακαλῶ τὸ(ν) θ(εὸ)ν καὶ π(ατέ)ρα τοῦ σωτῆρος Ἰη(σο)ῦ Χ(ριστο)ῦ ὅπως καταξιώσει με τοῦ εὐρεῖ(ν) χάριν ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ δέξασθέ (= δέξασθαί) σαι (= σε) τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (P.Lond. VI 1927; TM 32660; ll. 5-9)

The purpose clauses present a similar diachronic evolution as the infinitive constructions in this *topos*: in the early examples of the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, ἀπολαμβάνω (or variant) was put in the first person and the direct object of this verb was the addressee, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαι θεοῖς πᾶσιν [ὄ]πως ὑγιαίνοντας ὑμᾶς ἀπο[λ]άβω” (P.Ryl. II 244; TM 31173; 3rd century AD; ll. 3-5)

In later attestations (from the 4th century AD onwards), the verb is put in the second person with the letter as direct object¹⁸⁹, e.g.:

“... εὐχόμενος τῇ θεῖα προνοίᾳ ὅπως εὐθυμοῦσαι καὶ ὑγαιίνουσαι (= ὑγιαίνουσαι) ἀπολάβητε τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (P.Oxy. LIX 4001; TM 33122; ll. 4-7)

As in the infinitive construction, τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα is the most common object in the self-referential phrase (ten occurrences); in SB XXII 15359, strangely enough, τὰ παρὰ σοῦ γράμματα (l. 6). Ἡ παρ’ ἐμοῦ προσηγορία is the object of ἀπολαμβάνω in P.Ross.Georg. III 10 (TM 32908), P.Iand. VI 103 (TM 36108), and P.Köln II 111 (TM 35436) and P.Batav. 21 (TM 37506)¹⁹⁰:

¹⁸⁹ The 6th century AD letter P.Grenf. I 61 is an exception to this as it does not have a self-referential phrase (cf. *supra*).

PSI Com. 18 (TM 78849), dated to the 3rd or 4th century AD, may perhaps be an early example of the self-referential phrase: “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαι περὶ τῆς ὀλοκληρία[ς] σου ὥπος (= ὅπως) ἀπολάβη[ς] τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (ll. 3-4).

¹⁹⁰ The last letter is only fragmentarily preserved. Further, in P.Wash.Univ. II 108 (TM 36208), the following phrase occurs: “[εὔχομαι τὸν] πανελεῖμονα θεό[ν], ὅπως [ύ]γι[α]ίνουσα [ἀπολάβης δ]ιὰ γραμμάτων τὴν προσηγορίαν” (ll. 1-2). Other variants are only attested once: ταῦτά μου τὰ γράμματα in P.Neph. 10 and τὰ ἐμὰ γράμματα in P.Abinn. 36 (cf. *supra*).

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχ[ο]μαι τῷ παντοκράτορι θεῷ ὡς ὑγιένουση (= ὑγιαίνουσα) καὶ εὐθυμοῦση (= εὐθυμοῦσα) μετ[ὰ τ]οῦ συμβίου σ[ου] καὶ τῆς θυγατρὸς σου ἀπολάβῃς τὴν παρ’ ἐμοῦ προσηγορίαν” (P.Batav. 21; ll. 3-7)

Like in the infinitive construction, both the early variant of the phrase and the later self-referential version, participles which express the hope that the addressee is in good health are usually added¹⁹¹. Since those participles refer to the addressee, they should — in the self-referential phrase— be put in the nominative case¹⁹², e.g.:

“... εὐχόμενος τῇ θείᾳ προνοίᾳ ὅπως εὐθυμοῦσαι καὶ ὑγιαίνουσαι (= ὑγιαίνουσαι) ἀπολάβῃτε τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (P.Oxy. LIX 4001; TM 33122; ll. 4-7)

In the early phrase, however, the addressee is the object and the participles (or predicative adjuncts) are in the accusative case, e.g.:

“πρὸ γε πάντων εὐχόμεναι\θα/ (= εὐχόμεθα) τῷ θεῷ ὅπως ὀλοκληρόν σε ἀπολάβω\μεν/” (P.Oxy. LV 3816; TM 31917; ll. 3-4)¹⁹³

The participles and predicative adjuncts are similar to those in the infinitive construction: ὑγιαίνω (twenty occurrences), εὐθυμέω (thirteen occurrences) and ὀλοκληρέω (four occurrences). In P.Lond. III 1244 (S. 244) (TM 33790), the uncommon participle εὐπυγμοῦντα appears:

“... εὐχόμενος καὶ παρακαλῶν τὸν θεὸν ἵνα σαι (= σε) ἀπολάβω εὐθυμοῦντα καὶ εὐπυγμοῦντα καὶ ὀλοκληροῦντα” (ll. 6-7)

In conclusion, the infinitive clause and the purpose clause are variants of the same idea, and the different constructions have undergone the same diachronic evolutions.

3.2.3.3. Origin of the phrase

The Demotic letters have a similar formula in which the sender prays to find the addressee safe and sound (Depauw 2006: 183-186). The Greek phrase might have been borrowed from Demotic. According to Depauw, the time gap between the Demotic formula and the first occurrence in Greek prevents any firm conclusions: the latest Demotic attestation is dated to AD 92-93 (Depauw 2006: 183), and it was previously

¹⁹¹ Such extensions are absent in P.Lond. VI 1927 and PSI Com. 18.

¹⁹² There is a great deal of case confusion, partly because the infinitive and the purpose clause are intermingled (cf. *supra*); but also other types of confusion appear. In P.Haun. II 25 (TM 32377), for instance, the construction of a genitive absolute is grammatically incorrect: “πρὸ με (= μεμ) πάντων [εὐ]χομεν (= εὐχομαι) τῷ παντοκράτωρ[ι] (= παντοκράτορι) θεῷ ὅπως (= ὅπως) ὑγιέν[ο]ντός (= ὑγιαίνοντός) σου καὶ εὐθυμοῦτος (= εὐθυμοῦντος) ἀπολάβῃς τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα// κύριέ μου δέσποτα πάτηρ (= πάτερ)” (ll. 4-7).

¹⁹³ This is the only occurrence of ὀλοκληρός.

thought that the phrase εὔχομαί σε ὀλοκληρὸν ἀπολαβεῖν did not appear before the 2nd century AD (cf. *supra*, footnote 179). Yet, I was able to find an earlier occurrence of the Greek variant, viz. SB III 6265 (TM 25445) dated to the late 1st century AD:

“πρὸ μὲν παντὸς εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ τάχειον ἀπολαβεῖν” (ll. 3-5)

And the phrase P.Bad. IV 48 (TM 5830), which seems to be a predecessor of the ἀπολαμβάνω phrase and expresses the same idea, was written as early as 127 BC:

“εὔχομαι δὲ τοῖς θεοῖς, ἴν’ ὑγιαίνοντά σε ὑποδέξωμαι κατὰ πολλοὺς τρόπους, ὅτι καὶ ἐκ πολέμιων ἡμᾶς ἔρυσαι (= εἴρυσαι) καὶ πάλι εἰς πολεμίους ἡμᾶς ἀφείς ἀπελήλυθας” (ll. 2-3)

In other words, there is no (large) gap between the Demotic and Greek attestations. Of course, it cannot be excluded that the phrase displays an epistolary universalism —its content is rather cliché— (cf. Depauw 2006: 186), but the apparent chronological continuity from the Demotic phrase to the Greek one suggests a link between the two languages.

3.3. Extensions

3.3.1. Information about the sender’s health¹⁹⁴

From the 1st century BC onwards the habit of giving information about one’s own health as a sender, started to fall into disuse (cf. *supra* § 2.2.1). The few Roman letters in which the sender still confirmed his well-being right after the health wish πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν, have been considered relics of the old formula (Ziemann 1910: 321-322)¹⁹⁵. My investigation, however, has revealed that there are in fact 21 examples from the first three centuries AD¹⁹⁶, and that they are not random remnants from the old health wish, e.g.:

¹⁹⁴ This section will be published in JJP (volume 34).

¹⁹⁵ Exler, too, gave examples of the combination of the Roman health wish with information about the sender’s health, but he did not discuss them. (Exler 1923: 107-108).

¹⁹⁶ I.e. SB VI 9165 (TM 25290), P.Mich. VIII 475 (TM 27088), P.Mich. VIII 476 (TM 27089), P.Mich. VIII 478 (TM 27091), P.Mich. VIII 480 (TM 27093), O.Claud. II 283 (TM 29700), O.Claud. II 303 (TM 29716), P.Mich. VIII 495 (TM 27105), P.Bingen 74 (TM 78042), P.Mich. VIII 491 (TM 27101), BGU II 632 (TM 28196), BGU III 794 (TM 28088), BGU XI 2129 (TM 26963), P.Giss. I 97 (TM 27875), P.Lund II 1 (TM 28115), BGU I 27 (TM 28211), SB V 8027 (TM 27373), O.Lund. 14 (TM 74875), P.Col. X 278 (TM 31838), SB VI 9194 (TM 30754) and P.Hamb. III 227 (TM 30070). I excluded *ad hoc* phrases with information about the sender’s health (e.g. P.Brem. 56 (TM 19640), P.Oxy. XII 1586 (TM 31768), P.Lips. I 110 (TM 31909) and P.Oxy. XIV 1770 (TM 31812)).

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ εὐτυχεῖν μοι, ὃ μοι εὐκταῖόν ἐστιν,
ὑγιαίνω δὲ καὶ αὐτός” (P.Mich. VIII 476; TM 27089; ll. 3-4)

The quote comes from a letter from the 2nd century AD bilingual Latin and Greek archive of Claudius Tiberianus. Three other letters from this Karanis archive (P.Mich. VIII 475, 478 and 480) have a similar phraseology in which the sender refers to his own well-being by means of the verb form ὑγιαίνω¹⁹⁷. Since these letters are sent by different senders, this uniformity cannot be linked to the language of one individual (nor to the influence of one scribe, cf. *infra*, footnote 198); this extension seems to be quite common in this archive¹⁹⁸. These are not the only letters from a similar background that provide information about the sender’s health. Like the archive of Claudius Tiberianus, that of Gaius Iulius Agrippianus to which another occurrence —BGU XI 2129, a letter to the veteran Iulius Agrippianus— belongs, is a bilingual Latin-Greek collection dealing with Roman protagonists (cf. *supra*). Like in the two archives, several other letters with information about the sender’s own health involved the military: P.Lund II 1 was sent by a soldier and the fragmentary BGU III 794 is about a legionary, Maron. P.Mich. VIII 491 was sent from Italy: the sender Apollinarios reports to his mother Taesis that he has reached Rome alive and well. His journey to Italy was clearly a part of his military duties (cf. l. 7). Also BGU I 27 was written in Italy: another Apollinarios informs a certain Eirenaios about his arrival in Rome and, related to this, about his state of health.

So, in several letters the sender who reassures the addressee that he is fine, is an (ex-)soldier. One might hypothesize that a military man and his relatives are more concerned about well-being, as danger is always lurking in a soldier’s life? This may be a possible explanation in the letters sent by soldiers from far-away places such as Italy in

¹⁹⁷ Contrary to the verb forms in the phrase εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι ὑγίαινον δὲ καὶ ἐγὼ (cf. *supra*, § 1.3.1), the most common verb form here is ὑγιαίνω (twelve attestations and supplemented in three others). The plural ὑγιαίνομεν occurs in O.Lund. 14 (TM 74875) and P.Hamb. III 227 (TM 30070). Ὑγίαινον appears only once (viz. in SB VI 9165 (TM 25290), and so does ἔρρωμαι (in BGU XI 2129; TM 26963). The phrase is elliptic and has no verb in P.Giss. I 97 (TM 27875): “καὶ ἐγὼ (= ἐγὼ) αὐτῆς (= αὐτή) μετὰ τῶν τέκνων” (ll. 5-6). And in BGU III 794 (TM 28088) the following phrase appears: “καίγω (= καὶ ἐγὼ) αὐτὸς καλῶς μοι ἐστίν” (ll. 4-5). As the examples show, both ἐγὼ and αὐτός are attested, and they can be combined within one phrase. In P.Giss. I 97 (cf. *supra*), SB V 8027 (TM 27373) and P.Bingen 74 (TM 78042), the sender does not only give information about his own health but also about that of his people. In O.Lund. 14 (TM 74875), the sender similarly discusses the health of his sheep: “καὶ ἡμεῖς [ὑγιαίν]ομεν με(τὰ) τῶν κτηνῶν ἡμῶν” (ll. 2-3).

¹⁹⁸ This is not the only formulaic aspect in which the letters of the archive show a remarkable uniformity (cf. *infra*, § 3.3.2, chapter 5, § 3.4.1.1, chapter 10, § 3.1). The uniformity is not caused by the influence of one scribe: the letters from Terentianus (P.Mich. VIII 476, 478 and 480) are written in different hands —one scribe was responsible for P.Mich. VIII 476 and 478— but the other letters all show different hands (Youtie and Winter 1951: 54; Halla-aho 2003b: 245; Strassi 2008: 46-58); P.Mich. VIII 475 is a letter from Papius Apollinarius to Tiberianus.

P.Mich. VIII 491 and BGU I 27¹⁹⁹, but this cannot explain the presence of this *topos* in the other letters.

Perhaps, the explanation for the high number of occurrences of information about the sender's health in military-related letters is situated on a different level. The army was one of the contexts in Graeco-Roman society where Latin was more intensively used than elsewhere. Indeed, the examples from the bilingual archives of Claudius Tiberianus and of Gaius Iulius Agrippianus give rather straightforward indications of a Latin background; in several other letters, this is more indirect. For instance, the names of the correspondents are often Latin, e.g. Iulius Germanus and Antonius Maximus in P.Mich. VIII 495²⁰⁰ and BGU II 632, respectively. Also persons mentioned in the letter—for instance, in the salutations—sometimes have Latin names, e.g. Secundus in P.Mich. VIII 495 (l. 10); Antoninus (l. 8), Maximus (l. 9), Aufidia (l. 17) and Fortunata (ll. 20-21) in BGU II 632, and Primus (l. 6) in SB VI 9165.

From this observation that about half of the occurrences have military and possibly a Latin background²⁰¹, I wonder whether the phrase with information about the sender's health mirrors a Latin formula? Like the early Ptolemaic bipartite health wish, the Latin initial health wish had a twofold structure with the wish itself being followed by information about the sender's health: *si vales, bene est; ego valeo* (cf. *supra*)²⁰². Unlike the Greek phrase, it remained in use for many centuries: according to Seneca, the phrase was common up to his time (Sen. *epist.* 15, 1). This is confirmed by documentary material: the formula appeared in the Vindolanda tablets, dated to the late 1st or early 2nd century AD, e.g. T.Vindol. I 52: “*frater si vales b[ene e]s̄t̄ vero ego valeo*” (l. 2) (Halla-aho

¹⁹⁹ However, fighting was not a major part of the soldier's life; they would also have been used as a convenient manual labor force (Alston 1995: 78-79).

²⁰⁰ This letter belongs to the archive of Sokrates the tax collector (cf. www.trismegistos.org/archive/109; accessed on May 21, 2015). Strassi linked this archive to the Tiberianus archive (Strassi 2008: 160-163).

²⁰¹ Similarly, newly edited documents also contain the *topos* under discussion here. Also in O.Did. 356 (TM 144917) and O.Did. 358 (TM 144919), the sender gives information about his health. In O.Did. 356, the uncommon verb ἰσχύω mirrors the verb of the health wish: “ἐὔχομαί σε ἰσχύειν ἰσχύ[ω δ' ἐγὼ] καὶ αὐτός” (ll. 2-4) (cf. *supra*, § 3.2.2.5). In that letter, the sender bears the Latin name Maximus. Also O.Did. 358 was penned by Maximus as a favor to the sender Trebellius, who wanted to write to Sallustius; in fact, Maximus penned letters for various people, i.e. O.Did. 355-360 (Bülow-Jacobsen 2012: 276-282). This collection seems to attest to a close-knit group, perhaps with a Latin background: this clique of persons, all with Latin names, are frequently mentioned in each other's letters. The phrase in O.Did. 359 (TM 144920), belonging to the same collection, is fragmentary, and it is not clear whether the preceding health wish is of the type χαίρειν καὶ ἐρωσθαι/ὑγιαίνειν or πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν.

Further, the information formula appears in six unedited letters from Krokodilo and in nine from Maximianon (Fournet 2003: 482), but like in O.Did. 359, it is not clear to which type of health wish these phrases were connected. Also in this collection the verb ἰσχύω appears in this formula (Fournet 2003: 482). It is not unthinkable that also some of these unedited letters would attest to a Latin background.

²⁰² Yet, this formula is not attested in the Latin letters of the Tiberianus archive.

2009: 45), as well as in a 1st century AD letter from Vindonissa (C.Epist.Lat. 16 = T.Vindon. 43.190) and in a papyrus from Oxyrhynchos, dated to the Augustan era (C.Epist.Lat. 10 = P.Oxy. XLIV 3208; TM 78573) (cf. Halla-aho 2003a: 31). The Latin counterpart of the information formula could explain why this phrase seems to be favored in ‘Latinized environments’.

3.3.2. Relative subclause²⁰³

In eight private letters, dated between the 2nd and the 3rd centuries AD²⁰⁴, a relative subclause in which the importance of the health wish is stressed, is added to the *formula valetudinis initialis*, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ εὐτυχεῖν μοι, ὃ μοι εὐκταῖόν ἐστιν”
(P.Mich. VIII 476; TM 27089; l. 3)

P.Mich. VIII 476 is one of the four letters from Terentianus, preserved in the the Claudius Tiberianus archive, that expand the initial health wish in this way²⁰⁵. The relative subclause in Terentianus’ letters is remarkably uniform: in all instances he uses the phrase ὃ μοι εὐκταῖόν ἐστιν.

However, there is more variation in the other four occurrences:

“ὃ μοι εὐκτόν ἐστιν” (P.Mich. VIII 466; ll. 3-4)
 “ὃ μοι πάντων ἐστὶν ἀνανγκαιότερον (= ἀναγκαιότερον)” (BGU I 332; ll. 3-4)
 “ὅπερ ἐμοὶ δι’ εὐχῆς ἐστὶν” (P.Mil.Vogl. I 24; l. 4)²⁰⁶

In the bilingual Claudius Tiberianus archive, the relative clause also appears in Terentianus’ Latin letters, and the phraseology in the two languages is strikingly similar: P.Mich. VIII 468 (TM 27081; ll. 3-4): “*ante omnia opto te bene [v]alere, que m[ichi] ma]xime vota [su]nt*”²⁰⁷ vs. “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ εὐτυχεῖν μοι, ὃ μοι εὐκταῖόν ἐστιν” (P.Mich. VIII 476; cf. *supra*).

²⁰³ This section has been published in GRBS 53.2 (2013): 280-283 (i.e. Nachtergaele 2013: 280-283). This extension has not yet been investigated as a general phenomenon. Only the occurrences in Terentianus’ letters (cf. *infra*) received scholarly attention in past studies.

²⁰⁴ I.e. P.Mich. VIII 465 (TM 17239), 466 (TM 17240), 476 (TM 27089), 477 (TM 27090), 478 (TM 27091), 479 (TM 27092), P.Mil.Vogl. I 24 (TM 12344) and BGU I 332 (TM 28252). P.Mich. VIII 465 and 466 come from the Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris archive (cf. *supra*).

²⁰⁵ The other letters are P.Mich. VIII 477, 478 and 479. The four letters are written by three different scribes (Youtie and Winter 1951: 54; Halla-aho 2003b: 245; Strassi 2008: 46-58). The language should thus not be attributed to the scribes, but to Terentianus himself.

²⁰⁶ In P.Mich. VIII 465, ὃ μοι εὐκταῖόν ἐστιν is largely supplemented.

²⁰⁷ This Latin expression also occurs outside the Tiberianus archive, e.g. “*opto deos ut bene valeas que (= quae) mea vota sunt*” (C.Epist.Lat.74; l; 2) and “*ant(e) omnia opto dios (= deos) ὑτ bene valias (= valeas) {valias (= valeas)} quon* (=

The Latin relative subclause in Terentianus' letters is thought to have been borrowed from Greek (Cugusi 1980: 185; 1983: 52-54; Adams 1977: 4-5; 2003: 79; Cugusi 2009: 233). Yet, in my opinion, the influence went the other way around²⁰⁸. The fact that similar phrases are used in the Vindolanda tablets, suggests that Latin did not borrow this feature from Greek: in T.Vindol. II 299 the formula “*quod est principium epistulae meae te fortem esse*” (ll. 1-2) translates as “which is the principal reason for my letter (to express the wish?) that you are vigorous” (Bowman, Thomas, and Adams 1994: 272). Although the letter is badly preserved, it is clear that the formula appears in the opening of the letter, perhaps in the initial health wish.

Also T.Vindol. II 225 is interesting:

“[ca. 7 . li]benter amplexus s[um do]mine salutandi te oççaşşoñeñ [d]ominum meum et quem salvom [[h]abere]] esse et omnis spei [[suae]] compotem inter praecipua voti habeo” (ll. 4-9)

Since the Latin of the Vindolanda tablets was not directly exposed to Greek influence, it seems that Latin independently developed the possibility to add to the initial health wish a relative clause that stresses the importance of the *topos*²⁰⁹. When a relative subclause appeared in the initial position in the Greek letters from the 2nd century AD onwards, it was probably borrowed from Latin. Greek phraseology, however, did play a role in this process: the acceptance of the new relative subclause was, in my view, facilitated by the fact that Greek letters often extended the initial health wish by adding some kind of subclause: until the Augustan period, a Greek letter could have a comparative subclause as an addition to the health wish (cf. *supra*, § 2.2.3). After the

quod) meum votum est” (O.Did. 326; TM 144889; ll. 3-5). A similar phrase is supplemented in C.Epist.Lat. II 218 (TM 69959; l. 3).

Not only the Latin letters by Terentianus show uniformity; there seems to be a standardized phrase in Latin with the verb *sum* and the noun *votum*.

²⁰⁸ It is not likely that the relative subclause in the initial health wish was an internal Greek development. There are no predecessors to the *formula valetudinis initialis*, and also the relative subclause which was added to the final health wish (cf. *infra*, chapter 6, § 1.4.1) could not be the source of inspiration: firstly, there is no chronological continuity between the Augustan attestations of the subclause added to the final health wish, and those of the initial health wish attested only from the 2nd century AD onwards. Most likely, the relative subclause in the final health wish disappeared in the beginning of the Roman period along with the final health wish itself. Secondly, it seems improbable that —without any external impulse at all— the relative subclause shifted from the end to the opening of the letter, from being attached to the closing *formula valetudinis* to being joined to the initial *formula valetudinis*, without any documents preserved attesting to this evolution.

Also Bülow-Jacobson suggested in the case of O.Did. 445 (cf. *infra*) that it “is probably copied on the Latin *quod meum votum est*” (Bülow-Jacobsen 2012: 381).

²⁰⁹ This is not surprising, since emphasizing the importance of the addressee's health seems a rather universal *topos*.

Augustan period, when the comparative subclause was no longer used, the relative subclause could fill the gap under the influence of the Latin epistolary tradition. The source of this phrase also explains the predominance of letters from a Latin background in the occurrences: besides the four attestations from the bilingual Claudius Tiberianus archive, two occurrences come from the archive Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris, which has a potential Latin background as well (cf. *supra*, § 3.2.2.3). Also the new evidence from the Eastern Desert points to a Latin background of the documents: the phrase is attested in O.Did. 445 (TM 145006). The names of the correspondents are lost, but the fact that someone with a Latin name Munatius (l. 9) is mentioned, might be suggestive. Also the handwriting points to a Latin background: it is “certainly influenced by Latin writing, even with the calamus cut square and held in the Latin way to give fat diagonals and horizontals” (Bülow-Jacobsen 2012: 380). It is interesting that the phraseology of O.Did. 445, was probably identical to that in Terentianus’ letters:

“[-ca.?- ύγ]ιαίνειν, ὃ μοι εὐκταῖόν [ἔστι]” (ll. 3-4)

As this ostrakon from Didymoi is of course in no way connected to Terentianus’ letters, this uniformity must be due to the existence of a set expression in Latin. This strengthens my hypothesis that the Greek phrase is a translation of a (perhaps more common?) Latin equivalent that had a (more) fixed wording.

3.3.3. Health wish for third persons

In almost seventy cases, the health wish is not only expressed towards the addressee, but also towards some of his relatives and friends²¹⁰, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων [ε]ὔχομαί σε υἰαίνειν μετὰ τῶν σῶν πάντ[ω]ν” (P.Mert. I 23; TM 28779; ll. 2-3)

The prepositions used to refer to third persons are μετὰ (forty attestations and three supplements), σύν (six attestations and one supplement) and ἅμα (seven attestations)²¹¹. Another construction is attested in P.Oxy. XLII 3065 (TM 30332):

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχ[ο]μαι τῷ θεῷ περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν καὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου Στεφάνου” (ll. 3-4)

²¹⁰ In O.Florida 18 (TM 74512) and O.Krok. I 72 (TM 88663), a health wish is made for the horse (“πρὸ μὲν παν[τὸς] εὔχομαί σε υἰαίνειν με[τὰ] τοῦ ἀβασκάντου σου ἵππου”, O.Florida 18; ll. 3-5). Other occurrences are found in unedited ostraca from Krokodilo and Maximianon (cf. *supra*, footnote 98).

²¹¹ In P.Lond. VI 1919 (TM 16857), the following preposition construction appears: “εὔχομαι οὖν τῷ ἀει[μνήστῳ] θε(ε)ῷ π[ι]άσαις ὥραις περὶ σου καὶ περὶ [τῶν ἀδελφῶ]ν ἐν Χ(ριστ)ῷ” (ll. 12-14).

The third persons also appear in the genitive case in seven other letters, including in P.Abinn. 31 (TM 10028):

“εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) γὰρ καὶ παρὰ τῷ κ(υρί)ῳ τὴν ὀλοκληρίαν Κωσταντίου καὶ Δόμνου” (ll. 5-6)

In this letter, only third persons are mentioned, and the addressee is not being wished good health. This is possible because this letter has two initial health wishes: the first one deals with the addressee and in this way the second one —quoted above— could be dedicated entirely to third persons²¹².

The plain accusative occurs in SB III 6262 (TM 31055) and P.Tebt. II 414 (TM 28427), respectively:

“... εὐχόμενος, ἵνα σε ἀπολάβω ὀλοκληροῦντα καὶ τοὺς ἡμῶν πάντας” (ll. 3-5)
“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνιν (= ὑγιαίνειν) καὶ τὰ παιδία σου κα[ι] Πᾶσιν τὸν κορυφον (= κορυφ<αῖ(?)>ον)” (ll. 5-7)

Further, also by means of the adverbs πανοικησίᾳ (in P.Lond. II 479 (S. 255); TM 31220 and P.Oxy. XIV 1664; TM 21964) and πανοικεῖ (in PSI XIV 1415; TM 27056 and P.Oxy. XIV 1758), the sender expresses the idea that the wish for good health not only applies to the addressee alone, but equally to his entire social circle.

3.3.4. Gods in the initial health wish

A reference to the gods was sometimes made in health wishes of the type εἰ ἔρρωσαι, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὑγιαίνον (cf. *supra*, § 1.2.4 and 1.2.5). In the phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν no such attestation is found. In the formula of the Roman period, a reference to the gods is made in more than a hundred letters. The number of initial health wishes with a reference to one or more gods increases from the 2nd century AD onwards. This is part of a general, increasing tendency to advertise one’s religion²¹³, which is probably due to Egyptian influence (Depauw 2006: 183).

The two main constructions are εὐχομαι with a reference to the gods in the dative case, and —to a lesser extent— εὐχομαι combined with παρὰ with the name of the god in the dative case (about thirty attestations)²¹⁴, e.g.:

²¹² Perhaps a similar construction was written in P.Haun. II 20 (TM 32376): “πρ[ὸ] παντὸς εὐχ[ο]μα[ι] τῷ θεῷ περὶ (= περὶ) τῆς [σ]φ[τ]ηρείας (= σωτηρίας) σου κ. τέκνων.” (ll. 3-4). Although it does not fit the gap of seven letters, καὶ τῶν σῶν τέκνων is a possible conjecture.

²¹³ In a forthcoming paper (“The Emergence of God(s) in Papyrus Letters”) of which he kindly gave me a prepublication copy, Willy Clarysse provides a table with references to god(s) over the centuries (table 1), which shows the percentage of letters mentioning god(s) in each century.

²¹⁴ In SB XIV 11588 (TM 32936), both constructions appear in one single initial health wish.

“εὐχομαι τοῖς θεοῖς ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας σου” (P.Harr. I 103; TM 28709; ll. 4-5)
 “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) ὑμᾶς ὀλοκληρῖν (= ὀλοκληρεῖν) παρὰ τῷ
 κυρί(ω) θ(ε)ῶ” (P.Oxy. XXXI 2601; TM 32692; ll. 3-5)

The preposition παρὰ is common in the *proskynema* formula (cf. *infra*, chapter 5, § 2.1), not in the initial health wish—the Ptolemaic examples of references to the gods have a plain dative (e.g. SB XXII 15324; TM 43176 or P.Bad. IV 48; TM 5830, and cf. *supra*, § 1.2.5): the construction with παρὰ is thus the result of a confusion of the two formulas. Clarysse observed that the references in the plain dative usually follow the verb εὐχομαι, but that the god(s) introduced by παρὰ come after the infinitive²¹⁵.

There are a number of formulas where ‘god’ is in the accusative case²¹⁶:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) τὸν παντοκρατοραν (= παντοκράτορα) θεὸν
 τὰ περὶ τῆς ὑγίας (= ὑγείας) σου καὶ ὀλοκληρίας σου χαίριν (= χάριν)” (BGU III
 948; TM 33251; ll. 2-4)²¹⁷

In most instances a reference to θεός is made. In more than twenty letters θεός is in the plural. In thirteen of those cases, πᾶς is added²¹⁸. In P.Köln X 418 (TM 47279²¹⁹) and in SB III 6262 (TM 31055), the health wish is addressed to the πατρῶοι θεοί:

²¹⁵ There are, however, a handful of exceptions to this, e.g.: “[πολλ]ᾶ ἐπεύχομαι παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς τὴν ὀλοκληρεῖ[αν (= ὀλοκληρίαν) σου καὶ πάντ]ων \τῶν/ ἀγαπώντων ὑμ[ᾶ]ς” (P.Iand. II 15; TM 33276; ll. 2-3). In P.Gen. IV 174, the παρὰ construction is in its usual place, but given the predominance of the plain dative, this supplement is far from certain: “[- ca.20 -.] διὰ πάντων εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) ὑ[μ]ᾶς ὑγιαίνειν καὶ ὀλοκληρεῖν παρὰ τῷ κ(υρί)ω θ(ε)ῶ” (ll. 2-3). In my opinion, it is too speculative to supplement a specific reference to god(s).

²¹⁶ In SB XVIII 13111 (TM 35159), the uncommon εἰς τὸν θεόν is supplemented: “ἐλπίζ[ω γὰρ εἰς (τὸν) θεὸν ὅτι ὑμᾶς ὑγίει] καταλ[αμ]βανο (= καταλαμβάνω)” (ll. 2-3). Yet, εἰς with the god(s)’s name in the accusative case is also found in P.Oxy. XVI 1860 (TM 37866): “... εὐχόμενος εἰς τὸν δεσπότην θεὸν διαφ[υ]λά[ξαι] αὐτὴν καὶ εὐπραγεῖν (= εὐπρακτεῖν)” (ll. 2-3). P.Grenf. I 61 deviates in the main clause from the standard phraseology: “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχὰς καὶ δεήσις (= δεήσεις) ἀναπέμπω πρὸς τὸν θεόν μου καὶ σωτηραν (= σωτήρα) ἡμῶν τὸν [Χρ]ιστὸν” (ll. 7-10). Also the wish in P.Lond. III 1244 (S. 244) (TM 33790) is idiosyncratic: “... εὐχόμενος καὶ παρακαλῶν τὸν θεὸν ἵνα σαι (= σε) ἀπολάβω εὐθυμοῦντα καὶ εὐπυγ’μοῦντα καὶ ὀλοκληροῦντα” (ll. 6-7). In P.Lond. VI 1919 (TM 16857), the first reference to god is inconclusive as it was supplemented, but the phrase ἐν Χ(ριστ)ῶ at the end of the letter is interesting: “εὐχομαι οὖν τῷ ἀει[μνήστ]ω θ(ε)ῶ π[ᾶ]σαις ὥραις περὶ σοῦ καὶ περὶ [τῶν ἀδελφῶ]ν ἐν Χ(ριστ)ῶ” (ll. 12-14).

²¹⁷ The other occurrences are P.Wisc. II 76 (TM 32548), P.Wash.Univ. II 108 (TM 36208) P.Iand. VI 103 (TM 36108) and P.Abinn. 22 (TM 10022). In P.Lond. VI 1927 (TM 32660), the accusative completes the main verb παρακαλέω: “πρὸ μὲν πάντων παρακαλῶ τὸ(ν) θ(ε)ὸν καὶ π(ατέ)ρα τοῦ σωτήρος Ἰη(σο)ῦ Χ(ριστο)ῦ ὅπως καταξίωση με τοῦ εὐρεῖ(ν) χάριν ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ δέξασθέ (= δέξασθαί) σαι (= σε) τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (ll. 5-9). In SB XIV 11538 (TM 35132), the accusative seems to appear in what appears to be the initial health wish: “[πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαι τὸν παν]τωκράτωρα (= παντοκράτορα) θεῶν (= θεὸν) [ὅπως or ἵνα ...] (ll. 2-3) (cf. Gonis 1997: 144-145).

²¹⁸ I.e. P.Oxy. XXXVI 2783 (TM 30385), P.Haun. II 33 (TM 26602), P.Oxy. VI 933 (TM 31322), P.Alex.Giss. 58 (TM 27580), SB X 10529 b (TM 25207), P.Mich. III 214 (TM 21344), P.Oslo II 62 (TM 33593), P.Oxy. IX 1216 (TM 28935),

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν καὶ εὐχόμενος, ἵνα σὲ ἀπολάβω ὀλοκληροῦντα καὶ τοὺς ἡμῶν πάντας, παρ’ οἷς ἐπιξενουῦμαι, πατρώοις θεοῖς” (SB III 6262; ll. 2-6)

In P.Iand. VI 115 (TM 30602) and P.Oxy. XX 2273 (TM 30487), the initial health wish addresses οἱ θεοὶ οἷς ἐπιξενουῦμαι. In P.Mich. VIII 499, the health wish is made before οἱ ἐνθάδε θεοί. These three references to the gods are also attested in the *proskynema* phrases (cf. *infra*, chapter 5, § 2.2). Also in this aspect the phraseology of the initial health wish and the *proskynema* overlap.

Yet, θεός in the singular is even more popular with about seventy occurrences. The singular can refer to one specific pagan god or a monotheistic god (e.g. the Christian God) (cf. Versnel 2011: 267 and 273). In a total of about thirty Christian letters, mainly from the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, κύριος is added to θεός²²⁰, and in P.Abinn. 31 (TM 10028), κύριος appears without θεός:

“εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) γὰρ καὶ παρὰ τῷ κ(υρί)ῳ τὴν ὀλοκληρίαν Κωσταντίου καὶ Δόμνου” (ll. 5-6)

Also other appositions appear: δεσπότης (in P.Oxy. XXXIV 2729; TM 32645 and in P.Oxy. XVI 1860; TM 37866), παντοκράτωρ (seven attestations from the 4th and 5th centuries AD²²¹), ὕψιστος (five attestations, mainly from the 4th century AD²²²), πανελεήμων (seven attestations from the 4th to the 6th centuries AD²²³). In SB III 6222 (TM 31054; 4th century AD), it is unclear what adjective was used:

“[πρὸ μὲν πάντων]ν εὐχομαι π[ερί] ὀλοκληρία[ς] πά[σης] τῷ . . .]μ . [θ]εῶ ἔπιτα (= ἔπειτα) καὶ τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστά σοι [ὑ]παρχθῆ[ναι]” (ll. 2-4)

Since πᾶς is attested nowhere else in combination with a substantive such as ὀλοκληρία or σωτηρία (cf. *supra*, § 3.2.1.2), perhaps πα[...] does not belong to ὀλοκληρίας, but to

P.Oxy. IX 1217 (TM 31648), P.Ryl. II 244 (TM 31173), PSI III 206 (TM 31222), PSI VII 837 (TM 30730) and SB XXII 15324 (TM 43176).

²¹⁹ In this letter, the variant “παρὰ τοῖς πατρώ[ο]ι[ς] ἡμῶν θε[ο]ῖς” (ll. 3-4) seems to have appeared.

²²⁰ In P.Abinn. 5 (TM 10040) and P.Berl.Zill. 12 (TM 30581), κύριος ἡμῶν θεός appears. Κύριος is supplemented in P.Gen. IV 174 (TM 129796) dated to the 6th or 7th century AD.

²²¹ I.e. SB XIV 11538 (TM 35132), SB XX 14226 (TM 34035), P.Abinn. 22 (TM 10022), P.Haun. II 25 (TM 32377), P.Batav. 21 (TM 37506), BGU III 948 (TM 33251) and P.Neph. 10 (TM 33563). In P.Herm. 5 (TM 21124), the following health wish appears: “... ἧς εὐχόμεθα καὶ ἐλπίζομεν τεύξεσθαι παρὰ τῆς τοῦ παντοκράτ[ορ]ος θεοῦ χάριτος, ἀπολαβόντες σε ἐρρωμένον ψυχῆι τε καὶ σώματι καὶ καλῶς ἀπαλλάξαντα.” (ll. 11-15).

²²² I.e. SB VI 9138 (TM 36197), P.Select. 18 (TM 16836), P.Iand. II 14 (TM 33275; in this letter, the phrase is actually τῷ ἐν ὑψίστ[ο]υ θεῷ; l. 3), P.Lips. I 111 (TM 33705) and SB VI 9605 (TM 33118).

²²³ I.e. P.Oxy. LVI 3864 (TM 35475), P.Oxy. LVI 3865 (TM 35476), P.Oxy. XLVIII 3421 (TM 33727), P.Wash.Univ. II 108 (TM 36208), P.Col. XI 299 (TM 34018), P.Iand. VI 103 (TM 36108) and P.Ross.Georg. III 10 (TM 32908). In SB VI 9138, dated to the 6th century AD, also the variant ἐλεημονέστατος appears.

θεῶ. Πανελεήμονι might be a more satisfactory conjecture: this adjective occurs in combination with θεός in the 4th century AD and perfectly fits the gap of nine characters. The μ is hardly readable (cf. Remijsen 2010: 189) and could have been mistaken for a ν²²⁴. In P.Harr. I 107 (TM 31473) the reference to god(s) is very extensive:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχῶμαι (= εὐχομαι) τῷ πατρὶ θεῶι τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τῷ παρακλήτῳ πνεύματι ὅς (= ὡς) σὲ διαφυλάξωσιν καιτὰ (= κατὰ) τε ψυχὴν καὶ (= καὶ) σῶμα καὶ πνεῦμα, τῷ μὲν σώματι υἰγίαν (= υγιείαν), τῷ δὲ πνεύματι εὐθυμία (= εὐθυμίαν), τῇ δὲ ψυχῇ ζωὴν αἰώνιον” (ll. 4-12)

Here, not only God, but also the Holy Spirit is addressed. In eleven instances ἡ θεία πρόνοια is mentioned in the initial health wish²²⁵.

In P.Rain.Cent. 72 (TM 30085), sent from Hermopolis, reference is made to Hermes:

“[πρὸ] μὲν πάντῳ[ν εὐχῶμαι τῷ] Ἑρμῆ περὶ [τῆς σω]τηρίας σου” (ll. 2-3)

Similarly, the sender of P.Turner 18 says to have prayed for the addressee to Sarapis when he was in Alexandria. The τύχη of Antioch is mentioned in BGU III 794 (TM 28088):

“πρὸ τῶν ὅλων εὐχομαί σοι (= σε) υγιένιν (= υγιαίνειν) παρὰ τῇ τύχῃ Ἀντιωχίας” (ll. 3-4)

3.3.5. Intensifiers

Intensifiers appear in more than 350 initial health wishes of the type πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε υγιαίνειν. The most common intensifier is πρὸ (μὲν) πάντων with almost 250 attestations. A variant to this is πρὸ ἀπαντων, which only occurs in P.Herm. 47 (TM 33482). It usually appears at the beginning of the sentence²²⁶. The similar πρὸ παντός is attested 27 times and is supplemented in ten other letters. Διὰ παντός has nine certain attestations and is (partly) supplemented in four others; διὰ πάντων only occurs in BGU III 846 (TM 28097) and P.Gen. IV 174 (TM 129796). Πρὸ (τῶν) ὅλων is preserved in 32 initial health wishes and supplemented in one other case, which are all mainly dated to

²²⁴ There are other attestations of god(s) without an article, e.g. “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαι θεοῖς πᾶσιν [ὄ]πως υγιαίνοντας ὑμᾶς ἀπο[λ]άβω” (P.Ryl. II 244; TM 31173; ll. 3-5) or “πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὀλοκληρεῖν (= ὀλοκληρεῖν) καὶ ἀπολαβεῖν (= ἀπολαβεῖν) παρὰ πᾶσι θεοῖς” (PSI VII 837; TM 30730; ll. 2-3).

²²⁵ I.e. SB XXII 15359 (TM 33346), P.Oxy. LVI 3859 (TM 33600), P.Oxy. XLVIII 3396 (TM 33708), P.Oxy. XLVI 3314 (TM 32498), P.Abinn. 25 (TM 10023), P.Laur. IV 191 (TM 35446), P.Oxy. LIX 4000 (TM 33121), P.Oxy. LIX 4001 (TM 33122), SB XIV 11588 (TM 32936), P.Oxy. XVII 2156 (TM 32837; in this letter, the variant ἡ θεία τοῦ θεοῦ πρόνοια appears) and SB VI 9605 (TM 33118; here, the reference to god is elaborated into θεία πρόνοια τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).

²²⁶ In only two documents from the archive of Apollonios *strategos*, the intensifiers are found in a different place, cf. *infra*, chapter 8, § 2.

the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. Προηγουμένως is a later development, with fourteen attestations, all dating from the late 3rd century AD onwards. Πρῶτον occurs in P.Abinn. 31 (TM 10028) and in SB VI 9139 (TM 36198), where the variant πρῶτον πάντων is found. Ἐν πρώτοις only occurs in P.Ross.Georg. V 6 (TM 32838). For νυκτὸς (καὶ) ἡμέρας the earliest attestation is P.Alex.Giss. 58 (TM 27580), a letter from Eudaimonis preserved in the archive of Apollonios *strategos*²²⁷:

“ο . ω . . τὰς παρ’ ἡμεῖν ταραχ[ὰς] οὐ καρτε[ρ]ῶ νυκτ[ὸ]ς ἡμέρας ε[ὐ]χ[ο]μένη τοῖς θεο[ῖ]ς πᾶσι καὶ π[ά]σαις ὄ[π]ωσ[ε] δ[ι]α[σ]υ[λ]λα[β]ῶσι [. . .]π[-ca.?-]” (ll. 3-6)

The three other attestations date to the 4th century AD²²⁸. In the early attestation P.Bad. IV 48 (TM 5830), κατὰ πολλοὺς τρόπους appears:

“εὐχομαι δὲ τοῖς θεοῖς, ἵν’ ὑγιαίνοντά σε ὑποδέξωμαι κατὰ πολλοὺς τρόπους, ὅτι καὶ ἐκ πολεμίων ἡμᾶς ἔρυσαι καὶ πάλι εἰς πολεμίους ἡμᾶς ἀφεις ἀπελήλυθας” (ll. 2-3)

Other intensifiers are πάντοτε (five attestations²²⁹), αἰεὶ (four attestations²³⁰), πολλά (in CPR VII 57; TM 30206 and P.Iand. II 15; TM 33276), ἐν τάχει (in P.Herm. 4; TM 21123 and P.Kellis I 75; TM 33329), τάχειον (in SB III 6265; TM 25445), ἐπὶ πάντα (only in BGU XVI 2612; TM 23335), ἐπὶ μῆκιστον χρόνον (only in P.Mil. II 81; TM 33514), εἰς μακροὺς χρόνους (only in P.Mich. VIII 499) and πάση ὥρᾳ (in P.Brem. 60; TM 19645 and πάσαις ὥραις in P.Lond. VI 1919; TM 16857). The intensifier καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν is attested in P.Mich. III 214 (TM 21344) and in P.Mich. VIII 499; and καθ’ ἡμέραν is found in P.Münch. III 57 (TM 78543). These two intensifiers are typical of the *proskynema* phrase (cf. *infra*, chapter 5, § 4). This is thus another example of the overlap between the two formulas.

In BGU III 885 (TM 9398), a letter from the archive of Apollonios of Bakchias²³¹, περὶ πάντων is supplemented at the beginning of the initial health wish:

“περὶ πάντων[ν εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν]” (l. 2)

Whereas this phrase appears at the beginning of the health wish in one of St. John’s letters (3 John 1:2) (cf. Ziemann 1910: 319), I am not sure whether the words περὶ πάντων introduce a health wish in this particular instance. In the papyrus letters, περὶ

²²⁷ The language of the Apollonios archive is discussed in chapter 8, § 2.

²²⁸ I.e. SB VI 9605 (TM 33118), P.Abinn. 36 (TM 32674) and P.Neph. 1 (TM 33555). Yet, in an unpublished letter from Krokodilo, the similar phrase διὰ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας appears (cf. Fournet 2003: 483).

²²⁹ I.e. P.Oxy. XXXI 2598 a and b (respectively TM 30437 and TM 30438), P.Alex.Giss. 60 (TM 27582), P.Giss. I 17 (TM 19419) and P.Oxy. XIV 1759 (TM 29022).

²³⁰ I.e. P.Oxy. IX 1216 (TM 28935), P.Oxy. XVII 2156 (TM 32837), SB XXII 15324 (TM 43176) and SB XXVI 16716 (TM 97320).

²³¹ For information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/16 (accessed on May 21, 2015).

just after the opening formula introduces the subject the sender wants to discuss (White 1972a: 16-17). Further, none of the thirteen other private letters in this archive open with a health wish, but they immediately start with the main message. In this respect, BGU II 417 (TM 28136), another letter from the same archive, offers an interesting parallel:

“περὶ ὧν ἔγραψας μελήσει μοι καὶ ἐγὼ δὲ σὲ ἐρ\ω/τῶ πάντα τὰ μετέωρα ἀπαλλάξει καὶ μὴ πάλιν σεαυτῶ μετέωρα καταλείπει[ι]ν αἰσθόμε(νον) τὴν τοῦ καιροῦ πικρίαν” (ll. 2-5)

In other words, instead of an initial health wish, it is more likely that *περὶ πάντων* actually introduced the body of the letter.

In the 4th century AD letters P.Neph. 1 (TM 33555), P.Herm. 5 (TM 21124) and P.Oxy. LXI 4127 (TM 33609), the sender adds *ψυχῆ καὶ σώματι*, and in another 4th century AD letter, P.Harr. I 107 (TM 33609), a variant appears, e.g.:

“πρ[ὸ] μὲν π[άν]των εὐχο[μαί] σε ὀλοκληρεῖν ψυχῆ καὶ σώμα[τι]” (P.Oxy. LXI 4127; ll. 6-10)

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχῶμαι (= εὐχομαι) τῶ πατρὶ θεῶι τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τῶ παρακλήτῳ πνεύματι ὅς (= ὡς) σὲ διαφυλάξωσιν καιτὰ (= κατὰ) τε ψυχὴν καὶ (= καὶ) σῶμα καὶ πνεῦμα, τῶ μὲν σώματι υἰγίαν (= υγιείαν), τῶ δὲ πνεύματι εὐθυμία (= εὐθυμίαν), τῆ δὲ ψυχῆ ζωὴν αἰώνιον” (P.Harr. I 107; ll. 4-12)

3.3.6. *Dativus ethicus*

In four letters, a *dativus ethicus* expresses the sender's involvement in the addressee's health, e.g.:

“... εὐχόμεναι υγιένιν (= υγιαίνειν) σοι (= σε) ἡμεῖν (= ἡμῖν)” (P.Oxy. XIV 1774; TM 33676; l. 6)

“π[ρὸ] μὲμ (= μὲν) [πα]ντὸς εὐχομε (= εὐχομαι) τῶ πανελεήμονι θεῶ ὅπως [ύ]γυένοντος (= υγιαίνοντος) σοῦ καὶ εὐθυμῶντὸς (= εὐθυμοῦντὸς) μοι ἀπολάβης (= ἀπολάβης) τὴν παρ' ἐμοῦ προσηγορίαν” (P.Ross.Georg. III 10; TM 32908; ll. 4-6)²³²

4. Conclusion

The Greek initial health wish has known three subsequent phases in the millennium from the 3rd century BC until the 6th-7th centuries AD. Each of the formulas had a great deal of variation, both in lexicon and in construction. I have been the first to study all these constructions and this has revealed some patterns in the variation. For instance,

²³² The other occurrences are P.Oxy. XVII 2156 (TM 32837) and P.Grenf. I 61 (TM 38215).

the phrase τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ὑπάρχω seems to be especially popular as a second initial health wish as it expresses a general and summarizing wish. Further, this study has revealed that the *topos* ‘to find the addressee in good health’ underwent a diachronic change: whereas the sender originally prayed to find the addressee well, this expression took a self-referential turn from the 4th century AD onwards and evolved into the wish for the addressee to receive the sender’s letter in good health. This change took place no matter what construction was used to formulate the initial health wish (infinitive clause or purpose clause).

Some of the extensive variation led to language change. Overall, the language change is due to internal Greek evolutions. I do not agree with the hypothesis that the Greek initial health wish πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν, and its infinitive construction, were derived from Latin. In my opinion, this formula arose from an internal linguistic evolution. Whereas this hypothesis was put forward in previous studies, my research has revealed the successive steps from the comparative subclauses being added to phrases such as “εἰ ἔρρωσθε, ἢ (= εἴη) ἄν, ὡς τοῖς θεοῖς εὔχομαι εἶδῖν (= ἰδεῖν) ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνοντας” (P.Münch. III 57; TM 78543; l. 3-5), and, later, to “[I]σιδώρα (= Ἰσιδώρα) Ἀσκλαῖτι τῶι ἀδελφῶι [χαίρειν] καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὑγιαί[ν]ειν καθάπερ [ε]ὔχομαι” (BGU IV 1205; TM 18655; ll. 2-4) to the new formula εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν.

This is not to say that there was no contact-induced language change: Egyptian traditions were probably responsible for the increasing number of references to the god(s) (Depauw 2006: 183). Also the *topos* ‘to find the addressee well’ was suggested to be of Egyptian origin, but this could not be supported by textual evidence, as there seemed to be a chronological gap between the Greek and the Egyptian material. My thesis has revealed new documents of the *topos* under discussion which fill in this gap and can thus sustain this hypothesis.

Also, Latin seems to have been influential on the level of phraseology: the relative subclause added to the formula πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν, and the phrase in which the sender gives information about his own health seem to occur more often than usual in letters with a Latin background. Similarly, some lexical variants are shown to be more popular among letter writers who seem to be familiar with Latin letter-writing as well: the fact that ἐρρωῶσθαι is preferred over ὑγιαίνειν in the phrase πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν, may be a contact-induced variant. Yet, the source of these kinds of variants is hard to retrieve as the linguistic background of most documents is unknown. Since the variants also appear in documents which were most certainly not susceptible to influence from Latin, either the contact-induced variants might have spread from Latin contexts to other texts, or the variants arose from a combination of diverse reasons. With regard to the choice for the infinitive ἐρρωῶσθαι, for instance, I have argued that in some cases, there might have been influence from Latin traditions, whereas in other letters different motives, which had nothing to do with language contact, might have caused the use of ἐρρωῶσθαι. What seems clear, however, is that

language contact between Latin and Greek was more two-way traffic than often thought: it was not just Greek that influenced Latin, the latter, for its part, also left its mark on the evolution of the Greek language.

Also in the language of individuals and of groups, patterns occurred. Despite the numerous variants, certain people clung to a specific phraseology. In past studies, this had been pointed out for Hierokles and Artemidoros in the Zenon archive, and my investigation has contributed to the understanding of the idiolectic preferences of these writers. The archive of Claudius Tiberianus attests to some uncommon extensions to the phrase εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν, such as the information about the sender's health and the relative subclause. The extensions, which were probably contact-induced variants from Latin, were added to the internal Greek phrase εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν. Like the texts in the archive, also the phrases in these texts seem to be bilingual in nature. Further, it seems that Terentianus preferred uniformity in his expressions: he seems to have had a preference for the same wordings.

Also other groups of people seem to have developed a shared language. This has been shown for the Athenodoros archive: in the expression ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν, the uncommon verb (δι)εὐτυχέω and the set expression ἄριστ' ἐπανάγω seem to have been relatively popular. They are used in letters written in different hands and sent by different senders. In another atypical aspect, the Athenodoros archive shows similarities with the Asklepiades archive: only in these collections, a comparative subclause was added to the initial health wish of the type ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν.

Chapter 5 *Proskynema* formula

1. Introduction

1.1. Textual and factual attestations of the Greek *proskynema*

In my corpus about 240 *proskynema* formulas¹ have been preserved, coming from all over Egypt and dating between the (late) 1st and the 4th-5th centuries AD². Then the phrase disappeared as a consequence of the growing success of Christianity (Depauw 2006: 180)³. Its basic phraseology is τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τῷ θεῷ⁴, in which τῷ θεῷ is not intended as a specific reference to a god but is used here to generally refer to one or more (mainly pagan) god(s). The formula mostly appears in the opening lines of the

¹ The publication of new ostraca will increase this number significantly: the so far unpublished letters of O.Krok. would preserve 72 *proskynemata*, those of O.Max. no less than 175 *proskynemata* (Cuvigny 1997: 140; Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 57).

² The first reference to the *proskynema* is UPZ I 109 ll. 1-24 (TM 3501; BC 98) of the bilingual Demotic and Greek archive of Chonouphis from Memphis (for more information on the archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/51, accessed on April 27, 2015). A *proskynema* is mentioned twice, but both phrases are unfortunately damaged (“ὕπ ωγ ἐπεὶ ἐν τῇ πόλει αἰρετίζω αὐτοὺς ὡς [ποι]ῶσί [μο]ι [τ]ὸ πρ[ο]σκύνημα αὐτῶν ἐν . . . [.]” (ll. 4-6) and “[τὸ] προσκύνημα ποιήσιν παρὰ [τῷ] Σαράπει [- ca.9 -]”; ll. 18-19). It is no coincidence that the first occurrence has an Egyptian background, as the inclusion of *proskynema* phrase in Greek letters is a result of interference with the Egyptian tradition (cf. *infra*, § 1.2). The first more or less precisely dated occurrences of the standardized formula of the type τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τῷ θεῷ are P.Köln VI 278 (TM 25884; 1st century AD) and P.Col. VIII 216 (TM 17628), dated around 100 AD. The early date of SB XX 14253 (TM 26176; AD 1-125) but especially the fragmentary character of the supposed *proskynema* phrase made me decide not to include this letter in this chapter: only four characters are left (“[- ca.?- προσκύνη]μά σου [- ca.?-]”, l. 3), which is too little evidence to read a *proskynema* phrase, in my opinion. For the same reason, I exclude P.Stras. IX 871 (TM 26533, ll. 3-4): “[τὸ προσκύνημά σου πο]ιῶ παρὰ τῷ κυρί[ω - ca.?- Σαράπιδι -ca.?-]”.

³ Yet, there are some Christian *proskynemata* (Choat 2006: 94-96).

⁴ Translation: “I make obeisance to you before the god(s)”.

letter⁵: it often follows the initial health wish and is connected to it by means of καί⁶, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγενεῖν (= ὑγιαίνειν) καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς” (P.Brem. 58; TM 19643; ll. 2-6)

The *proskynemata* are connected to traditions of temple visits and pilgrimage (Spiegelberg 1905: 165). Pilgrims would make a *proskynema* inscription on the walls of the main temple of the city in which they had arrived, praying for the well-being of relatives and/or friends. Hundreds of these graffiti inscriptions have survived from the 2nd century BC onwards (Koskenniemi 1956: 141)⁷. In Geraci’s line of reasoning, the *proskynema* formulas in the private letters have an epigraphical counterpart: whenever the letters’ authors say that they have made —or are going to make— a *proskynema*, they actually mean writing an inscription on a temple wall. In some of the papyrus letters, there are indeed references to making *proskynema* inscriptions in sacred places:

“τῶν φίλων [ἐ]μ[ῶν] τὰ ὀνόματα ἐνεχάραξα τοῖς [ἐ]ροῖς ἀξιμνάτως, τὸ προσκύνημα [...]” (P.Sarap. 101; TM 17126; ll. 10-12)

But we should not think that all *proskynema* formulas refer to epigraphical acts (Depauw 2006: 183). This is also clear from the fact that far from all *proskynemata* are linked to the context of pilgrimage⁸; unlike what was previously thought⁹, my investigation has revealed that not only travelers away from home made obeisance to the gods: *proskynema* formulas are also found in the letters from persons who stayed at home. We

⁵ In eighteen letters, the *proskynema* phrase is not situated in the letter’s opening. These formulas sometimes deviate from the standard phraseology; in some cases, the formula is shortened, e.g. “καὶ τὸ προ[ο]σκύνημα τῆς κυρίας Ἰσιδος” (P.Haun. II 18; TM 30121; ll. 13-15). Other cases are a description of how the *proskynema* ritual was executed, e.g.: “πρὸ πάντων αὐρίον τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιήσω ἐν τῷ Σαραπειῶν, ἐπεὶ σήμερον οὐκ ἀνέβην ἀπὸ ἀδρῶν σκυλμῶν καὶ κινδύνων” (P.Brem. 48; TM 19632; ll. 29-32).

⁶ The initial health wish and the *proskynema* phrase are to some extent pleonastic as they both pray for the sender’s health. Therefore, the growing use of the *proskynema* phrase is considered responsible for the decreasing number of attestations of the initial health wish (Fournet 2003: 482).

⁷ An example are the *proskynema* inscriptions from the 1st century AD found in Wadi Hammamat (cf. Kayser 1993: 112-126), e.g.: “τὸ προσκύνημα Μάρκου Οὐαλερείου ἱπέος καὶ τοῦ εἵππου (= ἵππου) αὐτοῦ Εἰερακίωνος (= Ἰερακίωνος) παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Πανὶ (ἔτους) ιγ Νέρωνος Θῶθ κ” (SB XX 15648; TM 79134; AD 66).

⁸ Yet, there are several attestations, in which the fact that the sender has arrived in a certain city, indeed seems to have been the trigger for the *proskynema* formula to the god of that city, e.g.: “γεινώσκειν σε θέλω ὅτι τῇ ια γεγόναμεν εἰς Ἐρμού πόλιν καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σ[ο]υ ποιῶ παρ’ ο[ἱ]ς ἐπιξενοῦμαι θεοῖς[ς]” (P.Oxy. XLI 2982; TM 26862; ll. 3-7).

⁹ Some scholars previously thought that the link between *proskynemata* and pilgrimage was so strong that the *proskynema* formula only occurred in letters from travelers: “Immerhin erhält man bei der Lektüre dieser Briefe den Eindruck, dass sie von Personen geschrieben worden sind, die sich auf einer Reise fern ihrer Heimat befanden” (Koskenniemi 1956: 140).

know, for example, that Eudaimonis stayed in her hometown Hermopolis, while her son Apollonios, the *strategos*, held his office in Heptakomia:

“καὶ οὐ διαλείπω [τὸ προσκύνημά] σου ποιῶσ{α} παρὰ πᾶσι τ[οῖς θεοῖς]”
(P.Alex.Giss. 57; TM 27579; ll. 3-4)¹⁰

In many other letters, no one seems to be traveling, and the letter is sent between two persons at home. In the letter of condolence SB XIV 11646 (TM 41797), for instance, it is unlikely that the sender or the addressee was traveling. In general, many letters with *proskynema* phrases describe everyday life which gives the impression that the senders were at home, rather than on a trip¹¹.

This brings us to the next point: if the *proskynema* phrase is not strictly linked to traveling and to pilgrimage, the question about the authenticity of the phrase “I make obeisance to you before the gods” raises: one wonders whether the sender actually visited a temple and made obeisance to the addressee; or should we imagine the *proskynema* formula as an epistolary formula, rooted in the traditions of temple visits, but alienated from it? Quite a number of scholars indeed think that the *proskynema* in many private letters did not correspond to an actual religious act but that it is a merely formal phrase:

“In der Regel ist denn auch nicht von einem wirklich verrichteten Gebet auszugehen, es handelt sich vielmehr um eine unverbindliche Freundlichkeitsfloskel.” (Kortus 1999: 39)

However, there are numerous instances showing that the *proskynema* formula was actually performed, e.g.:

“πρὸ πάντων αὔριον τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιήσω ἐν τῷ Σαρα[π]είῳ, ἐπεὶ σήμερον οὐκ ἀνέβην ἀπὸ ἀδρῶν σκυλμῶν καὶ κινδύνων” (P.Brem. 48; TM 19632; ll. 29-32)

Why would that not have been the case in other instances¹²? The *proskynema* was probably not an extended ritual (such as making an inscription, cf. *supra*), but perhaps a prayer one said when visiting or passing a temple, or even when passing a statue of a

¹⁰ This quote follows the edition of Kortus (Kortus 1999: 77), but is not without problems: the brackets in ποιῶσ{α} do not match the Leiden editing Conventions: we would expect ποιῶσ<α>.

¹¹ The lack of contextual information, however, makes it often hard to decide whether one of the correspondents was away from home.

¹² However, the idiosyncratic *proskynema* in P.Oxy. LIX 3997 (TM 31129) made for “the people and god”, makes it hard to imagine that it was actually done in a local temple: “θεὸς δὲ μόνος οἶδε ὅτι καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν τὸ προκυνημά (= πρόσκυνημά) σου ποιῶ, ἥτε (= εἶτε) παρ’ ἀνθρώποις, ἥτε (= εἶτε) παρὰ θεῶν” (ll. 8-11). To whom would that local temple then be dedicated? To “the people”?

god (cf. Versnel 2011: 78)¹³. Possibly, a *proskynema* was sometimes even executed in the sender's house, as the sender might have been praying for the addressee in front of a votive statue. From that point of view, the *proskynema* formula in the private letters was in some cases perhaps almost a performative utterance¹⁴.

The fact that the *proskynema* formula is not confined to the letters of pilgrims far away from home, has other implications as well: it should not necessarily be made for the main local deity¹⁵. Indeed, different scholars suggested that the domain of the god might have played a role as well (Geraci 1971: 188-189; Kortus 1999: 40; Messeri 2001: 168; cf. *infra*, § 2.1.14). Still, the references to the gods in the *proskynema* formulas are in the first place a reflection of the local cults (cf. Clarysse and Winnicki 1989: 72). In this respect, the *proskynema* formula in the private letters can give valuable information about the place of sending (cf. Kortus 1999: 39). This information is otherwise hard to retrieve, since senders do not often mention the place of writing as this must have been evident for the addressee (cf. *supra*, chapter 1, § 3.2).

1.2. Egyptian background

How the *proskynema* phrase became part of the Greek epistolary tradition, has been the topic of a fierce debate. Spielberg thought that the Greek *proskynema* phrase was influenced by a similar opening formula in Egyptian letters (Spiegelberg 1905: 53-54). The fact that the *topos* was already a conventional element of pharaonic letters, supports this thesis (Depauw 2006: 179). The observation that the term προσκύνημα does not occur with the same meaning outside Egypt, also points in that direction (Tibiletti 1979: 53). Koskenniemi, however, questioned this view and pointed to the fact that the *proskynemata* only appeared in the Greek letters after centuries of contact with Egyptian traditions:

“Jedoch erregt es Aufmerksamkeit, dass das Proskynema im griechischen Brief erst vom 1. oder eigentlich vom 2. Jahrh. n.Chr. an auftritt, mit anderen Worten: erst nachdem der griechische Brief bereits vier Jahrhunderte lang unter ägyptischem Einfluss gestanden hat.” (Koskenniemi 1956: 143-144)

¹³ Similarly, it was the habit in my country until some decades ago to make the sign of the cross whenever passing a church. Lighting a candle in a church for a relative or a friend, is a similar modern ritual.

¹⁴ Of course, the exact sociohistorical context of this ritual seems beyond retrieval, and it would lead me too far in this thesis to elaborate on this.

¹⁵ In the Hellenistic and Roman world, religion was locally rooted: every city had its divine patron. If you would travel to another city, you would not pray in the temple of the god of your own city but you would go to the main temple of the local cult (Mikalson 2006: 209-210).

But it was especially Geraci, the author of a monograph on the *proskynema* formula, who doubted Spielberg’s thesis that the *proskynema* phrase in the Greek letters developed directly under the Egyptian influence (Geraci 1971: 165). To Geraci, the Greek and the Egyptian scribal traditions were strictly separate, which would make the crosslinguistic transfer impossible. Depauw, however, convincingly argued that is not possible to separate this tradition from its Egyptian background (Depauw 2006: 181-183). Also the objection Koskenniemi made (cf. *supra*) was refuted by Depauw:

“... precisely because in the 1st century BC the decline of Demotic had proceeded to a stage where an increasing number of indigenous Egyptians probably turned to Greek as their preferred means of written communication. The influx of non-native speakers may have made Greek epistolary formulae more vulnerable to extraneous influence, since more hellenized scribes brought their own traditions and idiom with them” (Depauw 2006: 183; cf. *supra*, chapter 1, § 1.2.1.1)

Since Depauw’s work, the *communis opinio* holds that the *proskynema* formula in the Greek private letters arose as a result of the Egyptian influence.

2. Variation regarding god

Most *proskynema* formulas contain a reference to a god¹⁶, e.g.:

“τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστη(ν) ἡμέραν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σεράπιδι” (CPR VII 54; TM 26667; ll. 3-4)

In five attestations, however, another more indirect construction is used, e.g. in P.Oxy. LIX 3988 (TM 27844):

“τοῦ Σεράπιδος θέλοντος κομψῶς ἔσχον καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ἐποίησα, ὡς εἶπον, καὶ πάντων” (ll. 16-19)

Also in P.Giss. I 85 (TM 19472), a letter from the archive of Apollonios *strategos*, one should take the information of the sentence preceding the *proskynema* formula into account to know to what god the *proskynema* is made:

“εὐχαριστῶ [παρὰ τῷ κυ]ρ[ί]ω Ἑρμῇ [καὶ οὐ διαλείπω [τ]ὸ προσκ[ύνη]μά σου [ποι]ῶν [καθ’ ἐ]κάσ[τη]ν ἡμέρ[αν]” (P.Giss. I 85; ll. 7-9)

In P.Brem. 48 (cf. *supra*, § 1.1) and P.Brem. 15 —two more letters from the archive of Apollonios *strategos*— and in P.Sarap. 89 c —a letter from the archive of Eutychides—, the temple or the festivities on behalf of the god are mentioned instead of the god himself:

¹⁶ Ten occurrences are too fragmentary to decide whether a god was mentioned or not.

“τὸ προσκύνημά σου ἐποίησα πρὸς ταῖς θυσίαις τῆς Ἰσιδος τῆι νυκτὶ γενεσί[οι]ς αὐτῆς” (P.Brem. 15; TM 19600; ll. 31-33)

“ὕγιαίνοντες σοῦ [κη]δόμεθα, τοῖς καλοῖς Σαραπείοις τὸ προσκύνημά σου καὶ τῶν τέκνων π[οι]ήσαντες” (P.Sarap. 89 c; TM 17114; ll. 3-5)

This is one of the aspects in which the Apollonios archive and the archive of Eutyichides¹⁷ deviate in the same way from standard phraseology (cf. also *infra*, chapter 8, § 2).

In ten occurrences, no god was actually named¹⁸, including P.Giss. I 85, quoted above, where the god Hermes is mentioned in the sentence preceding the *proskynema*. SB XIV 12173 (TM 32954) has a Christian background. It has been suggested that the sender thought that the phrase would be less connected to its pagan background without a reference to a god (cf. Tibiletti 1979: 55)¹⁹, but overall, there is no clear reason as why there is no reference to a god in those *proskynemata*.

2.1. Reference to a specific deity²⁰

So, in most cases, the name of the god made obeisance to is explicitly mentioned. The reference to the deity is then mostly introduced by the preposition *παρά* with the divine name in the dative case. Further, there are three examples of the god's name/gods' names in the dative case²¹, viz. in SB VI 9017 Nr. 34 (TM 25260)²², P.Princ. III 190 (TM 27138) and PSI IV 308 (TM 31135):

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι” (PSI IV 308; ll. 5-7)

¹⁷ For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/87 (accessed on May 21, 2015). This archive is discussed more in depth in chapter 8, § 2. There, also more contextual information is given.

¹⁸ I.e. SB XIV 12173 (TM 32954), P.Brem. 66 (TM 19651), P.Giss. I 85 (TM 19472), P.Leid.Inst. 42 ll. 20 – 28 (TM 43134), P.Oxy.Hels. 50 (TM 30201), P.Paris 18 (TM 32147), P.Tebt. II 412 (TM 28425), SB XXII 15736 (TM 79200), in the *proskynema* at the beginning of O.Heid. 428 and that at the end of P.Oxy. LV 3809 (TM 29103).

¹⁹ However, there are examples of monotheistic adaptations of this pagan phrase (cf. *infra*).

²⁰ In this paragraph, I do not include the indirect references to deities discussed above.

²¹ To Ghedini, the preposition *παρά* is rare in classical Greek. In his view, the preponderance of *παρά* + dative in the *proskynema* phrase supports the Egyptian origin of the formula. Instead of *παρά*, the scholar would expect a dative case or *πρὸς* + dative case (Ghedini 1922: 191). However, the combination of *παρά* with a name of a god in the dative is already attested in the 3rd century BC: “εὐχόμεθά σοι παρά τῆι Ἀσάρτηι δοῦναι σοι ἐπ[αφροδισίαν πρὸ]ς τὸν βασιλέα” (PSI V 531; TM 2153; ll. 1-2). *Παρά* probably carries the meaning of “in the temple of the god in question” (cf. Zilliacus 1943: 42).

²² According to Schwartz, one should supplement *παρά* in the *proskynema* phrase of SB VI 9017 Nr. 34: τὸ προσκύνημ[ά σου ποιῶ] τῆι κυρίᾳ Ἀθηνᾶ (Schwartz 1956: 121). Since other references to the god(s) in the dative case without *παρά* are attested and since the editor does not indicate that there is space for four more letters, I do not follow his suggestion.

The preposition *πρός* is attested in SB XVIII 14052 (TM 30991) and supplemented in SB VI 9194 (TM 30754)²³, e.g.:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ πρὸς τοῖς πατρώοις θεοῖς καθὼς ἐνέτειλάς μοι” (SB XVIII 14052; ll. 4-7)²⁴

2.1.1. Sarapis

Sarapis is the most common god in this formula with 87 occurrences²⁵, e.g.:

“τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστη(ν) ἡμέραν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι” (CPR VII 54; TM 26667; ll. 3-4)

SB XXIV 16338 (TM 31477) deviates from the standard *proskynema* phrase and extends the formula as follows:

“καὶ <τὸ> προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καὶ χάριτα\ς/ ὁμολογῶ παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι” (ll. 3-5)

The variant *Σάραπις* appears seventy times²⁶, whereas *Σέραπις* is attested in only eight instances²⁷. They obviously refer to the same god (Clarysse and Paganini 2009: 76). As the variant *Σάραπις* is attested until the 4th century AD, it confirms Clarysse’s and Paganini’s doubts about the earlier hypothesis that Ptolemaic Sarapis was replaced by

²³ Further, it is attested in two unpublished ostraca from the Eastern Desert (cf. Fournet 2003: 484). In P.Haun. II 18 (TM 30121), the god is mentioned in the genitive case: “καὶ τὸ πρ[οσ]κύνημα (= προσκύνημα) τῆς κυρίας Ἰσιδος” (ll. 13-15). This is an abridged form of the standard formula (cf. *supra*, footnote 5). Also in O.Lund. 14 (TM 74875), the god made obeisance to is referred to in the genitive: “καὶ τὸ προσκύνημα ἡμῶν) ποίει ἐχόμενα τῆς κυρίας Λητῶ” (ll. 5-6). About the uncommon ἐχόμενα, where one expects παρὰ, the editor wrote: “Die aus dem Partizip des Verbes ἔχομαι hergeleitete Form ἐχόμενα, eine nicht gewöhnliche Variante von ἐχομένως, korrespondiert mit dem Genetiv der Person, wodurch eine adverbial-präpositionale Relation zum Genetiv ausgedrückt wird.” (Tsiparis 1979: 91-92). The editor offered the same translation for ἐχόμενα as for the common παρὰ in the *proskynema* phrase on ll. 3-4 of the same letter.

²⁴ Also the subclause καθὼς ἐνέτειλάς μοι is uncommon and a similar phrase is not attested elsewhere in the *proskynema*.

²⁵ I excluded the occurrences in which the name of the god Sarapis was completely reconstructed by the editor; this is the case in P.Heid. VII 400 (TM 28976), SB I 4420 (TM 32119; Geraci doubts this reconstruction cf. Geraci 1971: 201), P.Mich. VIII 477 (TM 27090) and P.Mich. VIII 513 (TM 30513). Perhaps also P.Harr. I 105 (TM 28711) had a *proskynema* phrase for Sarapis, but as only the name of the god is preserved and the rest of the sentence is lost, this is a mere hypothesis. I did not include P.PalauRib. 36 (TM 32152) either, as I doubt that the reference to Serapis was part of a *proskynema* phrase (cf. *infra*, footnote 99).

²⁶ In P.Oxy. XLI 2984 (TM 26864), the α is uncertain. In five other letters, (a part of) the first syllable of the god’s name is supplemented, so that it is impossible to know whether the letter writer had written an α or an ε.

²⁷ In three other occurrences, the ε is uncertain, viz. in CPR V 19 (TM 24981), in P.Mich. XV 751 (TM 28820; cf. BL XI p. 134) and in P.Mich. XV 752 (TM 28821).

Serapis in the Roman period (Clarysse and Paganini 2009: 76). More likely, the variant Serapis is the usual form in Latin (Clarysse and Paganini 2009: 77).

Wilcken and Youtie were convinced that a *proskynema* before Sarapis always points at a connection with Alexandria (Wilcken 1912: 122-123; Youtie 1978: 98)²⁸. Indeed, seventeen letters²⁹ come with certainty from that city, e.g.:

“γενόμενοι εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν τὸ [π]ροσ[κ]ύνημά σου καὶ τῶν π[α]ιδίων σου καὶ τῆς ἀδελ[φ]ῆ[ς] σου ἐποιήσαμεν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι καὶ Νε[ί]λλ[ο]υ τοῦ φίλου” (BGU II 451; TM 25646; ll. 3-7)

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγ[ιαί]νειν ὡς καὶ ἐπ’ Ἀλεξανδρείας ἡ[ὕ]ξάμην] παρὰ τῷ Σαράπιδι διαμῖναί (= διαμεῖναί) σε εἰς ὀλλὰ ἔτη ἕως αὐξήσας ἀποδώσω τὰς χάριτας” (P.Turner 18; TM 15688; ll. 3-7)

Yet, other scholars have expressed skepticism about the idea that the letters with a *proskynema* for Sarapis are per definition of Alexandrian origin (e.g. Koskenniemi 1956: 140; Aly 1971: 173-174; Strassi 2008: 46) Indeed, there are some letters which were (probably) not sent from Alexandria³⁰. Especially the letters from the Eastern Desert are relevant in this discussion (e.g. O.Claud. II 386; TM 29785)³¹. Although we often do not know exactly where the senders were writing from, it seems more plausible that they were making obeisance to Sarapis somewhere close to Mons Claudianus than somewhere in Alexandria. First of all, we know that there were temples dedicated to Sarapis in and around Mons Claudianus (cf. Meredith 1954: 103-107; Shelton 1990: 268; Bingen et al. 1997: 68)³². Further, the ostraca were used for short-distance communication and did not travel very far (Bingen et al. 1997: 46; 63; 70; Cuvigny 1997: 140; Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 58)³³. In other words, the (relatively) recent publication of the private letters from the Eastern Desert has thus altered the views on the *proskynema*

²⁸ The same idea is still found in some recent studies: “As usual, it is likely that the *proskynema* formula before Sarapis indicates an Alexandrian origin” (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 329).

²⁹ i.e. CPR VII 54 (TM 26667), P.Mich. XV 751 (TM 28820), P.Mich. XV 752 (TM 28821), P.Mich. VIII 492 (TM 27102), P.Alex. 28 (TM 30465), SB XVI 12571 (TM 32588), BGU II 385 (TM 28133), BGU II 451 (TM 25646), BGU II 625 (TM 28194), BGU III 843 (TM 25639), P.Oxy. XIV 1670 (TM 31781), BGU VII 1680 (TM 30955), P.Amh. II 136 (TM 21701), P.Mich. III 213 (TM 31546), P.Stras. V 304 (TM 27772), SB III 6263 (TM 27792), UPZ I 109 ll. 1-24 (TM 3501).

³⁰ Cf. regarding P.Oslo III 151 (TM 25913), Geraci remarked that its provenance is not necessarily Alexandria (Geraci 1971: 175).

³¹ Further, *proskynemata* to Sarapis are also preserved in some thirty so far unedited letters from the Eastern Desert (Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 53; 57).

³² Cf.: “O.Faw. 23 suggérerait l’existence d’un temple de Sarapis entre Coptos et le wādi Fawākhir” (Schwartz 1956: 123).

³³ This is not to say that there was no communication at all between the Eastern Desert and the Nile valley (cf. O.Claud. II 250).

formula: we should not assume that every letter with a *proskynema* formula was written in Alexandria.

2.1.2. Isis

An important cult center of Isis was Coptos, which is situated on the east bank of the Nile. P.Mich. VIII 502 (TM 27112) with a *proskynema* before this goddess was indeed sent from Coptos. Of the in total seventeen *proskynemata* before this goddess³⁴, twelve are sent from Raima in the Eastern Desert³⁵. The observation that Isis was also invoked in the Eastern Desert, is supported by archaeological and epigraphical evidence (Meredith 1954: 122-123). P.Brem. 15 (TM 19600) from the Herakleopolite nome, attests to festivities in honor of Isis:

“τὸ προσκύνημά σου ἐποίησα πρὸς ταῖς θυσίαις τῆς Ἰσιδος τῆι νυκτὶ γενεσί[οι]ς αὐτῆς καὶ μᾶλλον προσηυχόμεν ποιεῖν σε τὰ(ς) ἀδροτάτας προκοπάς” (ll. 31-34)

This special occasion explains why Isis and not the local patron deity Hermes was invoked (cf. Youtie 1978: 96)³⁶.

In P.Ross.Georg. III 4 (TM 30784), Isis is referred to by her epithet μυριώνυμος (“of countless names”) (cf. Ghedini 1917: 66; Versnel 2011: 55-56):

“[πρὸ] παντὸς εὐχομέ σε ὑγιένειν καὶ τὰ (= τὸ) προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῆ μυριωνύμω θεᾷ Ἰσιδι καὶ τῷ κυρίῳ Ἀπόλλωνι καὶ τοῖς συννάοις θεοῖς” (ll. 2-5)

Also in the letter from Coptos, P.Mich. VIII 502, Isis is described in marked wordings³⁷:

³⁴ The papyrus O.Claud. II 259 (TM 29679) contains two letters, each with a *proskynema* for Isis.

The *proskynema* before Isis is reconstructed in O.Claud. II 261 (TM 29681). Although this reconstruction is plausible, I do not include this letter in the total number of occurrences.

Further, Isis is referred to in the *proskynema* of two more unedited ostraca from this region, viz. O.Claud. inv. 4440 and 5899 (Bingen et al. 1997: 67). These two occurrences have not been included in the numbers either.

³⁵ In some letters, the *proskynema* formulas themselves attest that the place of the obeisance, and thus of letter-writing, was Raima (cf. *infra*); in others, prosopographical information shows that the sender was writing from Raima (e.g. the letters to Alexas, cf. Bingen et al. 1997: 88). Of some letters, found at Mons Claudianus, the place of sending is unknown, but they are thought to come from Raima as well (Bingen et al. 1997: 66-67 and 101).

³⁶ P.Mich. VIII 502 comes from Coptos (cf. *supra*) and P.Brem. 15 from the Herakleopolite nome; in the three occurrences, the place of writing is unknown i.e. P.Haun. II 18 (TM 30121), SB XII 11066 (TM 30317) and P.Ross.Georg. III 4.

³⁷ Clarysse and Devijver argued that a *proskynema* to the τριχώματα of Isis is also to be read in the fragmentary letter SB XX 14249 (TM 26173): “[τὸ] προσκύν[ημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ -ca.?-]ωμα ση[-ca.?-]” (ll. 2-3) (Clarysse and Devijver 1989: 297). Its finding place Kossei (Leukos Kimen) is situated at the end of the caravan route departing from Coptos, which makes it probable that Coptos was the place of writing. Convincing as this may be, I did not take this into account.

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ἀδιαλείπτως ποιούμενος παρὰ τοῖς τριχώμασι ἐν Κοπτῶ”
(ll. 3-5)

The hair (τρίχωμα) is a *pars pro toto* for the goddess. It was in Coptos, where —according to the myth— the goddess cut off a lock of hair in mourning for her husband Osiris (Youtie and Winter 1951: 122), and this relic was worshipped there (Geraci 1971: 182). Another notable element in the quote above is the explicit reference to the location of the worshipping act (and, consequently, the place of writing), viz. “ἐν Κοπτῶ”. This extension is also found in two other *proskynema* formulas to Isis:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τῇ κυρείᾳ Ἴσιδι ἐν Ῥαιεμα” (O.Claud. II 255; TM 29675; ll. 3-5)

“καὶ τὸ πρῶσκύνημά (= προσκύνημά) σου πῶ (= ποιῶ) παρὰ τῇ κυρείᾳ (= κυρία; my remark) Ἰσιδι ἐν Ῥαιεμα” (O.Claud. II 256; TM 29676; ll. 3-5)

2.1.3. Tyche

Tyche appears in nine letters³⁸, (probably) all from the Eastern Desert. In its geographical spread, Tyche resembles Isis thus closely. In fact, the Isis cults in the Eastern Desert “may well have been associated with Τύχη just as the Τύχαι may have been associated with Isis” (Bingen et al. 1997: 66). The observation that Tyche was an important goddess in the Eastern Desert, is confirmed from an archaeological perspective: there was a Tychaion at Mons Claudianus (Shelton 1990: 268) which was probably built in the Antonine period. This is presumably why all texts with a *proskynema* to Tyche all date from this period, none from the Trajanic period (Bingen et al. 1997: 65). There were probably different temples for Tyche in the region, as the *proskynema* formulas themselves show, e.g.:

“καὶ τοῦ (= τὸ) προσκύνημά σου πῶ (= ποιῶ) παρὰ τῇ τύχη τοῦ Κλαυδιανοῦ καὶ τοῖς συννάοις θεοῖς/” (SB XX 15081; TM 29517; ll. 2-5)

“[τὸ προσ]κύνημά σοι ποιῶ [παρὰ τῇ Τ]ύχη Πορφυρ[ίτου]” (O.Claud. II 302; TM 29715; ll. 3-4)³⁹

“τὸ [δ]ὲ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τῆς Τύχης Ῥα[ει]μα” (O.Claud. II 278; TM 29695; ll. 3-4)

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημα ἡμῶν (= ὑμῶν) ποιῶ παρὰ τῇ Τύχη Καμπῆτος” (O.Claud. II 237; TM 29660; ll. 4-5)

³⁸ *Proskynemata* to Tyche are also known to be attested in unedited ostraca from the Eastern Desert, including two *proskynemata* to Τύχη Σιμίου (Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 52; 57).

³⁹ The same *proskynema* appears in a so far unpublished ostrakon, viz. O.Claud. inv. 5427 (Bingen et al. 1997: 68).

In five letters the *proskynema* is made for τύχη τοῦ πραισιδίου⁴⁰, and in two of them, O.Claud. II 225 and 228, the word string is extended to τύχη τοῦ πραισιδίου καὶ τῶν ὀρέων ὅπου ἐπιξενοῦμαι⁴¹.

2.1.4. Athena

SB VI 9017 Nr. 34 (TM 25260), SB VI 9164 (TM 27279), SB XXII 15456 (TM 79038) are the only attestations of Athena in my corpus. All three letters were found in the Eastern Desert⁴². Schwartz suggested that SB VI 9164 was not a long-distance message: it was probably written from a place relatively close to the finding place Persou (Schwartz 1956: 123). O.Max. inv. 1214 (cf. Cuvigny 1997: 141), which is not part of my corpus, indeed attests to a cult center of Athena in Persou thanks to its geographical reference in the *proskynema*: Ἀθηνᾶ ἐν Πέρσου (l. 3). Also SB VI 9017 Nr. 34 was found in Persou: it might have been a letter which was never sent (Cuvigny 1997: 142). SB XXII 15456 was found in Maximianon. Most likely this short message was sent from somewhere near its finding place and was also written in the Eastern Desert, perhaps even somewhere in or near Persou?

Like Isis and Tyche, Athena was an important goddess in the cult of the Roman army, and she was connected to Isis (Cuvigny 1997: 143). All three goddesses are often mentioned in the *proskynema* with a geographical reference⁴³.

2.1.5. Souchos

My corpus preserves one *proskynema* for Petesouchos (P.Petaus 29; TM 8848) and two of Souchos (i.e. P.Oxy. XXXI 2598 b; TM 30438, and P.Mich. VIII 473; TM 27086)⁴⁴. The two crocodile gods are deities traditionally closely linked to the Arsinoite nome, with its capital Krokodilon polis. P.Petaus 29 and P.Oxy. XXXI 2598 b are indeed (probably) written in the Arsinoites. P.Mich. VIII 473, a letter from the archive of Claudius Tiberianus, was probably written in Thonis. The location of this village is not

⁴⁰ I.e. O.Claud. II 225 (TM 29648), 228 (TM 29651), 235 (TM 29658), 274 (TM 29691) and 280 (TM 29697). It is also attested in six unpublished ostraca viz. O.Claud. inv. 4483, 5363, 5518, 5521, 6029 and 7047 (Bingen et al. 1997: 66).

⁴¹ A similar phrase with τύχη τῶν ὀρέων is found in the unpublished O.Claud. inv. 5544.

⁴² *Proskynemata* to this goddess are attested in 65 unpublished ostraca from the Eastern Desert (Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 52; 57).

⁴³ The insert of a toponym might perhaps have been intended to avoid confusion: “*Il se pourrait aussi que la formule de proscynème joue le rôle d’une adresse de l’expéditeur, information qui peut, dans certains cas, avoir son intérêt: en lisant le nom de la divinité, le destinataire identifie le lieu d’expédition, ce qui permet, par exemple, de neutraliser les problèmes d’homonymie découlant d’une onomastique généralement banale*” (Fournet 2003: 478).

⁴⁴ Further, in P.Oxy. XXXI 2598 a (TM 30437), the name of the god Σοῦχος is supplemented by analogy with P.Oxy. XXXI 2598 b, written on the back of the document.

retrievable, but given the reference to Souchos, it is thought to be somewhere in the nome as well (Geraci 1971: 186; Alston 1995: 136). I agree with Strassi that the reference to this god is insufficient evidence to place Thonis in the Arsinoite nome, especially since the cult of the god Souchos was also attested elsewhere in Egypt (Strassi 2008: 102)⁴⁵.

2.1.6. Hermes

The three letters with a *proskynema* made before Hermes —i.e. P.Brem. 61 (TM 19646), P.Giss. I 14 (TM 19416) and SB X 10278 (TM 16755)— belong to the 2nd century AD archive of Apollonios *strategos*. Also the above-mentioned indirect reference to Hermes in P.Giss. I 85 comes from the same collection. This is no coincidence since the archive's protagonists are mostly writing from Hermopolis, Hermes' city: P.Brem. 61, SB X 10278 and P.Giss. I 85 are sent from Hermopolis (cf. Maehler 1966: 23); and P.Giss. I 14 from somewhere in the Hermopolite nome. The importance of the local cult of Hermes for the people in the archive is not only reflected in the *proskynema* phrase; also in other parts of the letter, Hermes receives special attention, e.g. in P.Giss.Apoll. 7 (TM 19426), a fragmentary letter from Eudaimonis to her son Apollonios:

“[τ]ῶν θεῶν [οὔ]ν θελόντων καὶ μάλιστα τοῦ ἀνικητοῦ Ἑρμοῦ” (ll. 1-3)

The insertion of the expression θεῶν θελόντων is rather common in the private papyrus letters. However, it is mostly used as a general reference to the gods. The addition of a reference to one specific god, as in Eudaimonis' letter, is unusual (cf. Ghedini 1917: 57). To my mind, it not only shows the importance of the cult of Hermes in this region and to Eudaimonis in particular⁴⁶, but it is also exemplary for Eudaimonis' writing style: she often deviates from the stereotypical wordings and gives her letters a personal touch (cf. *infra*, chapter 8, § 2). Further, she adapts her phraseology to the circumstances: as this letter was written during the trouble of the Jewish revolt, the adjective ἀνίκητος is appropriate (Whitehorne 1994: 26-27).

2.1.7. Apis

The traditional cult center of Apis lies in Memphis. In SB VIII 9903 (TM 22926), the *proskynema* phrase is contextualized as follows:

⁴⁵ Thonis might also have been a village close to the Alexandria (Strassi 2008: 105-106).

⁴⁶ When Eudaimonis writes “χάρις τῷ θεῷ” in P.Giss. I 23 (TM 19425; l. 11), this should thus not be interpreted as an example of monotheism; θεός most likely refers to Hermes in this case (cf. Ghedini 1917: 57).

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ἐποίησα (= ἐποίησα) παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Ἄπιδι. ἐγενόμεθα γὰρ ἐν Μέμφιδι τῆι ιζ ἑσπέρας” (ll. 3-8)

The past tense of the verb ποιέω in the *proskynema* phrase indicates that the sender executed the *proskynema* ritual at an earlier moment when he was still in Memphis; at the moment of letter-writing, the sender had already left again. The two other occurrences, SB VIII 9930 (TM 32001) and P.Oxy. LV 3810 (TM 29104), might have been sent from Memphis as well (Kruse 2002: 838-839).

2.1.8. Thoeris

The goddess Thoeris is linked to Oxyrhynchos (Geraci 1971: 180). The two letters with *proskynemata* for this deity, P.Oxy. III 528 (TM 28368) and PSI XIV 1415 (TM 27056), were found in Oxyrhynchos but unfortunately do not give information about where they were composed. P.Oxy. III 528 is a remarkably personal letter from a longing husband to his wife Isidora who has left him. Also the addition of σε φιλούση to Θοήρις in the *proskynema* phrase is idiosyncratic:

“καὶ καθ’ ἐκάστης [ἡμέρα]ς κα[ὶ] ὄψας (= ὄψιας) τὸ προσκύνημά σου πυῶ (= ποιῶ) παρὰ τῆ σε φιλούση Θοήρι” (ll. 4-6)

Literally, the sender Serenos says that the goddess Thoeris still loves Isidora, but indirectly this is of course a message that Serenos still loves his wife. This letter shows that letter writer could adapt standard phrases to the circumstances and add a personal touch.

2.1.9. Apollo

A *proskynema* to Apollo appears only in two letters of unknown provenance⁴⁷: SB XIV 12081 (TM 30111) and P.Ross.Georg. III 4 (TM 30784). In the latter, the *proskynema* is both made for Apollo and for Isis.

2.1.10. Philotera

At present, there are only two letters in which obeisance is made to Philotera, the deified sister of Ptolemy II: SB XXII 15453 (TM 79035) and SB XXII 15454 (TM 79036) both are letters from a certain Sarapias to Ammonios who was probably a soldier based in

⁴⁷ Another attestation of this god is in an unedited letter found in Krokodilo, viz. K472. Apollo is known to be the titular deity of Krokodilo, which has led to the hypothesis that this letter was written in this village but was never sent. Nevertheless, there were other places in the Eastern Desert where Apollo was worshipped, which might have been the place of writing of this ostrakon (Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 52).

Maximianon in the Eastern Desert (cf. Bülow-Jacobson and Fournet 1994: 31)⁴⁸. Although the exact location of the sender in the region of the Eastern Desert is unknown, Sarapias might have stayed in the port bearing the same name as the goddess in the *proskynema* formula —Philotera— when writing these letters (Bagnall, Criboire, and Ahtaridis 2006: 165-166). Another hypothesis is that this goddess had a cult place somewhere between Maximianon and the Red Sea (Bülow-Jacobson and Fournet 1994: 31), perhaps in Simiou, where she might have been identified with the Tyche of Simiou (Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 53).

2.1.11. Ammon

Ammon was the main deity of Thebes. The god is attested in the *proskynema* formulas of two private letters viz. SB VI 9249 (TM 27294) and O.Claud. II 283 (TM 29700). The former might indeed have been written somewhere in the Thebaid, around Syene, but the latter was found and probably also written at, or in the vicinity of, Mons Claudianus. This is not so strange, since Pan, one of the most important gods in the Eastern Desert, was assimilated with Ammon (Geraci 1971: 56)⁴⁹.

2.1.12. Dioskoroi

An obeisance to the Dioskoroi is only attested in CPR V 19 (TM 24981)⁵⁰. In addition to the Dioskoroi, the *proskynema* in this letter is also made to Sarapis:

“ὥς καὶ σὺ γὰρ ἡμῶν ἐμνήσθης παρ’ ἕκαστα κατ’ ἐπιστολήν, οὕτως καὶ γὰρ (= καὶ ἐγὼ) ἐνθάδε τὸ προσκύνη[μ]ᾶ σου ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς κυρίο[ις Διο]σκόροις καὶ παρὰ τῷ κυρ[ίῳ Σ]εράπιδι” (ll. 8-13)

⁴⁸ Seventeen more letters with *proskynemata* to Philotera from the O.Max. collection are waiting to be published (Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 57).

⁴⁹ Whereas there are many epigraphical *proskynemata* to Pan, the epistolary attestations of *proskynemata* before this god are “surprisingly rare”. (Bingen et al. 1997: 65-68; Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 53). Yet, in the recent excavations a handful of letters with references to Pan have been discovered e.g. in the letters from Philokles to Kapparis (i.e. O.Did. 379; TM 144940 and O.Did. 381; TM 144942) and in one unpublished letter; the letters are believed to be written from Phoinikon (Bülow-Jacobsen 2012: 296). Further, a *proskynema* for Pan is attested in O.Did. 461 (TM 145022), which is also thought to have been sent from Phoinikon (Bülow-Jacobsen 2012: 394) and in an unpublished ostrakon from Krokodilo (cf. Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 52). Still, there seems to be a dichotomy between the popularity of Pan in the Eastern Desert and the low number of occurrences of this deity in the *proskynema* formulas of private letters. Cuvigny argued that by the time the *proskynema* phrase became common in the private letters, the cult of Pan had lost importance and was being replaced by cults of Roman deities (Cuvigny 1997: 139-146).

⁵⁰ A *proskynema* to the Dioskoroi also occurs in O.Did. 458 (TM 145019). This reference to the Dioskoroi suggests that the letter was not only found but probably also written in Didymoi: the letter was thus presumably never sent (Bülow-Jacobsen 2012: 392). A similar *proskynema* also occurs in an unpublished ostrakon found in Krokodilo (K670) (cf. Bülow-Jacobsen 2003: 52).

2.1.13. Leto

A reference to Leto appears only once, in the letter O.Lund. 14 (TM 74875):

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημα ἡμῶν] ποίει ἐχόμενα τῆς κυρίας Λητώ” (ll. 5-6)

This phrase is quite uncommon in that the main verb is put in the imperative (cf. *infra*, § 3.4.2).

2.1.14. Aphrodite

SB XIV 11644 (TM 25326) is the only letter in my corpus with a reference to Aphrodite in the *proskynema* formula⁵¹. The letter is a complaint that the addressee has left without giving notice, and does not seem to come back. The sender is particularly touched by these events, and expresses her love for the addressee⁵². The choice to make a *proskynema* before Aphrodite should be seen against this background of disappointment in love: the goddess' domain fits with the content of the letter. With the invocation of Aphrodite, the sender of SB XIV 11644 makes a clear statement: in her point of view, the relationship is not yet over; she still hopes and prays that her lover (husband?) will return. Overall, this letter might be an example that not only local cults influence the choice as to what deity obeisance was made to in the *proskynema* formula; the circumstances could also play a role.

⁵¹ A reference to this goddess occurs in a handful of letters found in Didymoi and probably written in Aphroditis Orous (Bülow-Jacobsen 2012: 288; 359; 377; 395; 396; 398): O.Did. 367 (TM 144928), 423 (TM 144984), 442 (TM 145003), 462 (TM 145023), 463 (TM 145024) and 465 (TM 145026). Perhaps Aphrodite is also attested in fragmentary *proskynema* phrases of O.Did. 386 (TM 144947): “τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ] παρὰ τῆ κυρία Ἄφροδίτῃ - ca.6 -]” (ll. 2-3), and O.Did. 459 (TM 145020): “[τὸ προσκύνημά σου] ποιῶ] παρὰ τῆ κυρία Ἄφροδίτῃ.” (ll. 3-4). Also these two letters are thought to be written from Aphroditis Orous based on their *proskynemata* (cf. Bülow-Jacobsen 2012: 310-312; 393). In other words, the edition of new ostraca adds a great many occurrences.

⁵² In a commentary on this letter, Parassoglou suggested that the reference to Aphrodite in combination with what he calls the “attitude” of the sender, who expresses emotional distress and strong affection, hints at the sender being female (Parassoglou 1971: 653). My data, however, deny that female senders make obeisance to female goddesses and *vice versa*. Many of the *proskynemata* to Isis, for instance, appear in letters from men. To call the “attitude” of the sender particularly female is not based on factual proof, but is a *Hineininterpretierung* of the papyri based on clichéd views on women. However, if we read this letter as a broken love story, it is logical that the sender would be a woman, as the addressee is a man and heterogeneous relationships were standard. So, from another line of reasoning, I reach the same conclusion as Parassoglou, viz. that the sender of SB XIV 11644 was a woman.

2.1.15. Zeus Kasios

BGU III 827 (TM 24886), a letter sent from Pelusium, is a clear example of a *proskynema* made to a local god, since Zeus Kasios is the local deity worshipped in this town and had a temple there (Geraci 1971: 182).

2.2. General reference to deities

Apart from the references to a specific deity, a group of gods in general is mentioned in many *proskynema* phrases. Such a general reference can appear in combination with a specific deity e.g.: “καὶ τοῦ (= τὸ) προσκύνημά σου πυῶ (= ποιῶ) παρὰ τῇ τύχῃ τοῦ Κλαυδιανοῦ καὶ τοῖς συννάοις θεοῖς/” (SB XX 15081; ll. 2-5, cf. *supra*) or can stand on its own e.g.: “καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά [σο]υ [π]οιῶ παρὰ τοῖς πατρώοις ἡμῶν” (P.Mich. III 212; TM 28801; ll. 4-5).

2.2.1. The local gods

With different phrases, the senders refer to the local gods of the place from which they are writing. Since *proskynema* formulas appear both in letters from travelers as in letters from people who stayed at home, the ‘local gods’ can be the gods of the hometown or the gods of the city the traveler visits⁵³.

2.2.1.1. Οἱ ἐνθάδε θεοί

This general reference to “the gods here” is found in 29 private letters and in all preserved occurrences, it stands on its own⁵⁴, e.g.:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς” (P.Mich. VIII 491; TM 27101; ll. 3-4)

⁵³ ‘Οἱ ἐνθάδε θεοί, θεοὶ οἷς ἐπιξενοῦμαι and οἱ ἐπιχώριοι θεοί would indicate that the writer was away, outside his religious context (Bingen et al. 1997: 67), whereas other phrases would be used when the sender was at home, writing to an addressee far away (e.g. οἱ πατρώοι θεοί) (Geraci 1971: 193). Indeed, the phrase θεοὶ οἷς ἐπιξενοῦμαι is clearly written by a traveler. This is, as far as I am concerned, not so evident for phrases like οἱ ἐνθάδε θεοί. Another (less plausible) idea is that some of these terms have a cosmopolitan connotation (e.g. οἱ ἐνθάδε θεοί), whereas others reflect the immigration of the Greeks from the homeland to Egypt (e.g. οἱ πατρώοι θεοί) (Koskenniemi 1956: 140).

⁵⁴ The four instances in which the word string is (almost) completely supplemented have not been included in this number i.e. P.Mich. VIII 480 (TM 27093), SB XIV 11900 (TM 26549), SB VI 9249 (TM 27294) and SB XXIV 16214 (TM 31142).

2.2.1.2. Οἱ πατῶροι θεοί

A reference to the ancestral gods is made in eleven letters⁵⁵, of which the provenance is mostly unknown. There is some variation in the phraseology. In two letters ἡμῶν is added to the word string:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά [σο]υ [π]οιῶ παρὰ τοῖς πατῶροις ἡμῶν” (P.Mich. III 212; TM 28801; ll. 4-5)

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου [ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστ]ην ἡμέραν παρὰ τοῖς πατῶ[ο]ι[ς] ἡμῶν θε[ο]ῖς” (P.Oslo III 159; TM 31640; ll. 2-4)

In contrast to the two phrases above, the following *proskynema* formula appears in P.Oxy. LIX 3993 (TM 27849):

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημα ὑμῶν ποιοῦμεν παρὰ τοῖς πατῶροις ὑμῶν θεοῖς” (ll. 4-5)

Given the existence of the phrase ὁ παρ’ ἡμῶν θεός and the fact that people invoke their own local gods, I wonder whether ὑμῶν should not be interpreted as ἡμῶν —the confusion between the two is a common spelling mistake (Gignac 1976: 262). The appearance of ὑμῶν earlier in the sentence as a genitive with προσκύνημα might have triggered the error.

2.2.1.3. Θεοὶ οἷς ἐπιξενοῦμαι

This word string appears in seven letters. It is clearly linked to the context of traveling as the senders are far away from home. For instance, P.Lips. I 110 (TM 31909), is a letter from Palestina; also the sender of P.Meyer 20 (TM 31286) was away from home (cf. ll. 4-7). In SB VIII 9867 (TM 31993), πάντες is added to the reference to the gods:

“[τ]ὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ πᾶσι θεοῖς οἷς ἐπιξενοῦμαι” (ll. 3-6)

2.2.1.4. Οἱ ἐπιχώριοι θεοί

Of a similar meaning is the reference to the ἐπιχώριοι θεοί. It only appears once, viz. P.Oxy. VI 936 (TM 31325), a 3rd century AD letter from Pausanias to Iulius Alexandros:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς ἐπιχωρίοις θεοῖς” (ll. 4-5)

⁵⁵ In SB XVIII 13613 (TM 30984), the variant παρὰ τοῖς πατρίοις θεοῖς appears. The *proskynema* in SB XXIV 16077 (TM 27058) is too fragmentary to be included.

2.2.1.5. Οἱ παρ' ἡμῖν θεοί

In SB XXIV 16334 (TM 28708), the following *proskynema* appears:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παδὰ (= παρὰ) τῦς (= τοῖς) παρ' ἡμῖ<ν> θεοῖς” (ll. 3-5)

2.2.2. Οἱ σύνναοι θεοί

In fifteen *proskynema* formulas the σύνναοι θεοί are mentioned⁵⁶, e.g.:

“... ποιούμενός σου τὸ προσκύνημα καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σεράπιδι καὶ τοῖς συννάοις θεοῖς” (P.Mich. VIII 476; TM 27089; ll. 4-5)

With the single exception of P.Ross.Georg. III 1 (TM 17951) the word string οἱ σύνναοι θεοί is found in combination with another deity, mostly Sarapis, as in the quote above. In one letter, the name of the other god is unreadable; the three other letters refer to Thoeris, Isis and Apollo, and Tyche (cf. *supra*)⁵⁷.

2.2.3. Πάντες οἱ θεοί

A *proskynema* to all gods is made in ten private letters. In most cases, this is the only reference in the *proskynema* formula, e.g.:

“τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς” (BGU I 38; TM 28214; ll. 4-6)

But in P.Giss. I 14 (TM 19416) a reference is made both to “all gods” and to Hermes in particular (cf. *supra*).

2.2.4. Θεοί / θεός

A simple reference to οἱ θεοί (in the plural) is not found often in the *proskynema* formulas: the only two attestations in my corpus are both problematic⁵⁸:

“[καὶ τὸ προσ]κύνημά σου πο[ιῶ]ι πα[ρὰ] τοῖς θεοῖς[.]” (P.Giss. I 81, ll. 1-8; TM 25461; ll. 3-4)

⁵⁶ Here again, the fragmentary P.Mert. III 112 (TM 28789) and the supplemented P.Princ. III 190 (TM 27138) (cf. Geraci 1971: 180) have not been taken into account.

⁵⁷ I.e. PSI XIV 1415, P.Ross.Georg. III 4 and SB XX 15081 (discussed above).

⁵⁸ Τοῖς θεοῖς seems to be attested in an unedited ostrakon from the Eastern Desert (cf. Fournet 2003: 484). In SB XIV 12029 (TM 32341), the editor probably did not intend to reconstruct a *proskynema* for “τοῖς θεοῖς”: I believe he wanted to indicate that an irretrievable adjective or adverb should be added to θεοῖς (e.g. πᾶσι θεοῖς or ἐνθάδε θεοῖς): “καθ' ἑκάστην [ἡμέραν τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς [-ca.?- θεοῖς -ca.?-]. I therefore did not include this occurrence.

“[-ca.?-]. προσκύνημά σου [-ca.?-]. ισ . . . ξε παρὰ θεοῖ[-]” (P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 627; TM 25575; ll. 2-3)⁵⁹

In the very fragmentary passage in P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 627, παρὰ θεοῖς πᾶσι is a possible (perhaps more plausible) conjecture, since this word order and the omission of the article is found in, for example, PSI III 236 (TM 31228):

“[προηγ]ουμένως εὔχομαί σε ὀλόκληρον ἀπολα[βεῖν καὶ τὸ] προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην [ἡμέρ]αν παρὰ θεοῖς πᾶσι” (PSI III 236; ll. 3-5)

The occurrence of παρὰ θεοῖς in the first letter of P.Giss. I 81 (ll. 1-8) is, to my mind, even more questionable, as in the second letter of P.Giss. I 81 (ll. 8-21), the formula οἱ θεοὶ πάντες appears:

“[καὶ] τὸ προσκύνημά σου προ[ι]ῶ παρὰ τοῖς [θ]εοῖς πᾶσι” (P.Giss. I 81; ll. 11-13)

Since the opening lines of the two letters are similar, it is doubtful whether the editor’s addition of a simple οἱ θεοί in the first letter is correct. Kortus treated the conjecture πα[ρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς] as a fact and believed that the addition of πᾶσι in the second letter was a deliberate strategy of the sender Temis to exceed the writer of the first letter:

“*Auffällig is die Erweiterung von θεοῖς um πᾶσι. Der Briefanfang entspricht im übrigen wörtlich dem des ersten Briefes. Ob Temis die Proskynema-Formel des ersten Briefes bewußt übertreffen wollte?*” (Kortus 1999: 190).

His hypothesis conflicts with the fact that an intensifier πλεῖστα is used in the opening formula of the first letter, but not in the second —if Temis indeed wanted to surpass the sender of the first letter, she would definitely have inserted an intensifier as well. I am rather skeptical about the idea that we could see how different letter writers would have wanted to surpass each other. In this case, I prefer to supplement the formula in the first letter after the example of the second letter: the supplement πα[ρὰ θεοῖς πᾶσι] or πα[ρὰ πᾶσι θεοῖς] perfectly suits the gap of ten characters. In sum, there are no certain attestations of the phrase οἱ θεοί in the *proskynema* formulas.

The singular form, however, does appear a few times. In a total of six letters, the *proskynema* formula has a reference to θεός⁶⁰, κύριος θεός⁶¹ or δεσπότης θεός (only in

⁵⁹ I would supplement the article τό to προσκύνημα, since only in this letter and in the fragmentary *proskynema* of SB VI 9017 Nr. 18 (TM 25245), the article is missing; also in the latter, τό should be supplemented (cf. the article was added in SB XXIV 16338 (TM 31477) (Gonis 1998: 194)). Further, the attestation of the *proskynema* formula in P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 627, allows us to date this letter more precisely: instead of the vague current dating AD 1-399, the document was presumably not written before AD 75.

⁶⁰ I.e. in P.Oxy. LIX 3997 (TM 31129; cf. *supra*, footnote 12) and in P.Oxy. XXXIII 2682 (TM 30429). In SB XX 14250 (TM 26174), θεός is completely supplemented: “[τὸ προσκύνη]μά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τῷ [θεῷ]” (l. 4). Perhaps the

P.Oxy. XIV 1775; TM 336677). Some of these references to a single god might refer to the Christian (or Jewish or Manichaean) god (Kim 2011: 32): it is typical of a transitional stage between paganism and Christianity that the terminology is not well-delineated (Tibiletti 1979: 55) and that pagan formulas like the *proskynema* are still in use in Christian letters. But reference to θεός can also refer to a specific (local) god:

“καὶ τῷ θεῷ με ἐχαρίσω, παρ’ ᾧ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ μετὰ τῶν σῶν πάντων” (P.Brem. 49 of the archive of Apollonios *strategos*; TM 19633; ll. 13-16)

Though the name of the god is not explicitly mentioned here, the geographical background of the letter (Hermopolis) and the strong presence of the god Hermes in the archive of Apollonios *strategos* (cf. *supra*, § 2.1.6) makes it plausible that θεός refers to the same god⁶².

2.3. Epithets and additions to the god(s)

2.3.1. Κύριος

The most common epithet in the *proskynema* phrase is κύριος, with about 130 attestations. The adjective is not confined to one specific god, but is used widely, e.g.:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύν[η]μά σου ποιῶ παρ[ὰ] τῷ κυρείῳ (= κυρίῳ) Πετεσούχῳ” (P.Petaus 29; TM 8848; ll. 2-3)

2.3.2. Μέγας

Contrary to κύριος, μέγας seems to be linked to the god Sarapis: the epithet is attested four times in the *proskynema* phrase, each time in combination with Sarapis⁶³, e.g.:

“τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ κάτ’(= καθ’) ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῷ μεγάλῳ Σαράπιδι” (P.Cair.Isid. 132; ll. 2-3)

editor wanted to indicate that a reference to a god should follow (cf. SB XIV 12029; cf. *supra*, footnote 58). If this was meant as a supplement, it is unconvincing.

⁶¹ I.e. P.Oxy. LIX 3998 (TM 33119), P.Oxy. LXV 4493 (TM 78595) and PSI VII 825 (TM 17679). I suggest a new reading for P.Alex. 30 (TM 32705), in which I doubt whether κύριος θεός is part of the *proskynema* (cf. *infra*, § 4). This occurrence has therefore not been taken into account.

⁶² Not Sarapis, as Wilcken stated (cf. Youtie 1978: 94).

⁶³ Viz. P.Oxy. XLIII 3094 (TM 15973), P.Cair.Isid. 132 (TM 30621), P.Oxy. XIV 1758 (TM 29021) and P.Warr. 18 (TM 30705). Further, in P.Münch. III 120, the epithet is for the most part supplemented. Yet, the numbers are too low to link this adjective to Sarapis, especially since Sarapis is often referred to in the *proskynema*.

2.3.3. Θεός

The epithet θεός is attested three times, once for Isis and twice for Sarapis, e.g.:

“καὶ τὰ (= τὸ) προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῆ μυριωνύμῳ θεῶ
Ἰσιδι καὶ τῷ κυρίῳ Ἀπόλλωνι καὶ τοῖς συννάοις θεοῖς” (P.Ross.Georg. III 4; TM
30784; ll. 3-5)

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμαίραν (= ἡμέραν) παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ
θεῷ Σαράπιδι” (P.Oxy. XIV 1670; TM 31781; ll. 3-6)⁶⁴

3. Variation regarding the verb ποιέω⁶⁵

3.1. Person and number

The standard phrase contains the present indicative first person singular ποιῶ (in approximately 200 *proskynema* formulas). The plural form ποιούμεν is (logically) used when there is more than one sender (eight instances)⁶⁶. In those cases, other verbs in the letter, e.g. the initial health wish, are usually expressed by a plural form too (e.g. εὐχόμεθα for the health wish). In P.Mich. III 207 (TM 28796), the person who makes obeisance to a god, is not the sender, but an acquaintance of his. The *proskynema* formula appears in the third person singular:

“τὸ προσκ[ύ]νημά σου ποιε[ῖ] π[α]ρὰ τ[οῖς ἐ]νθάδε θεοῖς” (ll. 5-6)

⁶⁴ The other attestations of θεός with Sarapis is P.Oxy. LIX 3992 (TM 27848). In this letter, there is apart from κύριος another illegible epithet: “παρὰ τῷ θεῷ τῷ θε[] τῷ[ι] κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι” (ll. 14-16).

⁶⁵ The verb ποιέω is absent in the *proskynema* formula of the following letters, i.e. in P.Haun. II 18 (an abbreviated *proskynema*, cf. *supra*, footnote 5), in P.Oxy. XXXI 2595 (TM 30434; ποιῶ has been added by the editor), in the first *proskynema* phrase of O.Heid. 428 (TM 80117; ποιῶ has been added by the editor), and in BGU III 827. Also in this last letter from the single sender Zoe we could add (the singular) ποιῶ: “τὸ προσκύνημά σου <ποιῶ> παρὰ τῷ Δὶ τῷ Κασίῳ” (ll. 2-3). In O.Lund. 15 (TM 74876) and in P.PalauRib. 31, the *proskynema* phrase is damaged. Here, the editor did not supplement the letter with a form of ποιέω. Although we cannot be sure about the verb form, the predominance of the present indicative ποιῶ in combination with a reference to a single sender (in line 6 of P.PalauRib. 31 (μοι) and in the opening formula of O.Lund. 15), make the supplement ποιῶ plausible for both letters (*infra*, I will discuss other parts of P.PalauRib. 31 that can be supplemented).

⁶⁶ I.e. P.Oxy. XLIII 3094 (TM 15973), P.Oxy. LIX 3993 (TM 27849), SB XVIII 13591 (TM 30980), SB XIV 11900 (TM 26549), SB VI 9017 Nr. 16 (TM 25243), O.Claud. II 263 (TM 29683), O.Lund. 14 (in the *proskynema* phrase at the beginning of the letter) and SB XXIV 16291 (TM 79427). The current reading of P.Col. VIII 216 (TM 17628) also has ποιούμεν, but I will propose a conjecture (cf. *infra*, § 3.4.1.1).

From the preceding sentence, “ἀσ[π]άζεται [ὕ]μας Σ[.]π.ν.πυλης” (ll. 4-5), it is clear that the sender of the greetings is also the person making the *proskynema* (and is thus the subject of ποιῆ).

3.2. Tense

Other variations in the verb ποιέω concern the tense. The aorist is attested in four letters⁶⁷, e.g.:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ἐποίησα (= ἐποίησα) παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Ἄπιδι” (SB VIII 9903; ll. 4-6)

The future tense is represented once in P.Brem. 48 (cf. *supra*, § 1.1)⁶⁸:

“πρὸ πάντων αὔριον τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιήσω ἐν τῷ Σαρα[π]είῳ, ἐπεὶ σήμερον οὐκ ἀνέβην ἀπὸ ἀδρῶν σκυλμῶν καὶ κινδύνων” (ll. 29-32)

3.3. Voice

Besides tense, number and person, there is also variation in voice. Whereas the standard phrase puts ποιέω in the active, some attestations have a middle voice. From a grammatical point of view, the use of the middle voice is explained by the fact that προσκύνημα ποιέω is reanalyzed as a periphrastic definition of προσκυνέω. The Little-Scott-Jones dictionary gives many other examples of the middle of ποιέω in this situation, e.g. ποιέεσθαι ὁδοιπορίην, for ὁδοιπορέειν, Hdt.2.29 (LSJ, s.v. ποιέω)⁶⁹.

There are seven attestations of the middle indicative ποιούμαι⁷⁰. Further, I doubt the editor’s interpretation of παιωμ as ποιῶ in the *proskynema* phrase of SB XXII 15454 (TM

⁶⁷ I.e. SB VII 9903 (TM 22926), BGU II 451 (TM 25646), P.Oxy. LIX 3988 and P.Brem. 15. The aorist is also found in one unedited ostrakon from Krokodilo (Fournet 2003: 484). The *proskynema* phrase in P.PalauRib. 36 (TM 32152), if we may assume that there was one, is heavily damaged: “τὸ [προσκύνημα ἐποίησα παρὰ] τῷ κυρίῳ Σαραπ[ίδι -ca.-?]” (ll. 2-3). Since there are no textual indications that the *proskynema* ritual was performed in the past, and since the number of occurrences of the aorist in this phrase is low, the supplement of this tense is doubtful. In fact, in section 5, I will show that also other aspects of this supplement are not convincing (cf. *infra*, footnote 99).

⁶⁸ The future tense is also attested in an unedited letter from the Eastern Desert (cf. Fournet 2003: 484).

⁶⁹ Cf. also the use of the middle voice μνείαν ποιέομαι is due to the fact that μνείαν ποιέω is reanalyzed as a periphrastic definition of its synonym μνημονεύω. Further, the epistolary phrase μνείαν ποιέομαι (or μνημονεύω) is similar to the *proskynema* phrase, as they both often have a reference to gods with the phrase παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς (Koskeniemi 1956: 146): “μνείαν (= μνείαν) σου ποιούμενος παρὰ τοῖς [ἐν]θάδε θεοῖς ἔκομισάμην [ἔ]ν ἐπι[σ]τόλιον παρὰ Ἀντωνε[ί]νου τοῦ συνπολ[ε]ίτου ἡμῶν” (BGU II 632; TM 28196; ll. 5-9).

⁷⁰ I.e. P.Mich. XV 751 (TM 28820), P.Mich. XV 752 ll. 1-26 (TM 28821), P.Mich. VIII 480 (TM 27093), P.Col. X 278 (TM 31838), P.Heid. VII 400 (TM 28976), SB III 6263, ll.1-17 (TM 27792) and P.Mich. III 209 (TM 28798). The verb is reconstructed in P.Mich. XV 752 and P.Heid. VII 400, two letters from the Saturnila archive. Given the

79036), viz. “καὶ τὸ{υ} προσκύνημά σου παιωμ (= ποιῶ) παρὰ τῇ Φιλοτέρᾳ” (ll. 4-5). It is strange that the writer of the letter added a μ at the end of the verb; the addition of a final -ν is rather common, but this phenomenon is not described for -μ (Gignac 1976: 112-113). To my mind, this is a futile attempt to write ποιοῦμαι. The writer of the letter clearly has trouble spelling words: for example, the form “εὔχομεν” (i.e. εὔχομαι; l. 3) shows that the sender did not master the middle first person singular. In the closing formula ἐρρῶσθαι εὔχομαι as “ἐρῶσθη αυχο” (l. 17), the writer drops the entire ending -μαι in εὔχομαι. I feel that this renders it plausible that he might have omitted -αι in παιωμ⁷¹, so that the form was intended as ποιοῦμαι⁷².

As a result, the middle ποιοῦμαι probably occurs eight times. No less than five of them are preserved in the Saturnila archive⁷³: P.Mich. XV 751, P.Mich. III 209, SB III 6263, P.Mich. XV 752 ll. 1-26 and P.Heid. VII 400 —the verb form is admittedly (convincingly) supplemented in the two last letters. Four of the five letters with ποιοῦμαι were written by Sempronios; only P.Mich. III 209 is a letter from his brother Saturnilos. The feature of expressing the *proskynema* phrase with the middle ποιοῦμαι instead of the standard ποιῶ seems to have been a shared linguistic element in the archive⁷⁴; but use of ποιοῦμαι is not the only interesting feature in the archive of Saturnila; in fact, the whole *proskynema* phrase has a specific phraseology which deviates from the standard wording, e.g.:

“ἄμα δὲ καὶ τὸ προσκοίνημά (= προσκύνημά) σου ποιοῦμε (= ποιοῦμαι) ἡμερησίως
[παρὰ τ]ῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι” (P.Mich. XV 751; ll. 3-4)⁷⁵

consistent use of the middle instead of the active verb forms in the *proskynema* formulae of the archive (cf. *infra*), the reconstruction of ποιοῦμαι in the two letters is convincing and the occurrences are included in the discussion. Less plausible is the supplement in P.Aberd. 71 (TM 28301). Only the beginning of the verb has been preserved: “ποιο[ῦμαι]” (ll. 3-4) and it is not clear how many characters have been lost. In my opinion, the sender possibly intended to write ποιῶ —and not the uncommon ποιοῦμαι— but confused ο and ω, which occurs very frequently (Gignac 1976: 275-277). This is a widespread error which is attested in other *proskynema* formulas, e.g.: “[τ]ὸ π[ρο]σκ[ύ]νημά σου [π]οιο [π]αρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπ[ι]δι” (SB XXIV 16269; TM 33207; ll. 3-5). Therefore, I do not regard P.Aberd. 71 as an attestation of the middle verb form.

⁷¹ In general, apocopes are widely attested in the papyri (cf. Mayser 1970a: 125-126). For instance, in P.Mil. II 80 (TM 31541), the entire ending is omitted: “καὶ τὸ προσκύνημα σοῦ ποι (= ποιῶ) καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι[δ]α[ς] μετὰ τῶν ἀβασκάν(των) ἡμῶν παιδι[ο]ων (= παιδίων) καὶ τῶν φιλοῦντων ἡμ[ων]ᾶς (= ἡμᾶς)” (ll. 3-7). In that letter, the phrase τῶν φιλοῦντων ἡμ[ων]ᾶς is not attested elsewhere in the *proskynema* formula, but it is common in the greeting formula (*supra*, chapter 3, § 6.1.3).

⁷² For the spelling ω instead of ου see (Gignac 1976: 208-209).

⁷³ For information on this archive, see chapter 4, §3.2.2.3.

⁷⁴ Sempronios’ letters are all autographs (cf. *infra*, chapter 8, § 1); obviously, Sempronios did not pen P.Mich. III 209, a letter addressed to him from his brother Saturnilos. The different hands exclude that scribal influence was the cause of this uniformity.

⁷⁵ Translation: “and at the same time I make daily supplication for you before the lord Sarapis”.

The formula of the type ἅμα δε καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶμαι ἡμερησίως appears five times in the *proskynema* phrase, all in letters from the Saturnila archive. So, all letters from the archive with a *proskynema* formula, use this uncommon phraseology. Another remarkable element – besides the middle ποιῶμαι – is the word string ἅμα δε καί⁷⁶. It is used to link the *proskynema* formula to the previous health wish: ἅμα δε καί does not appear in *proskynema* phrases outside the Saturnila letters⁷⁷. It thus seems to be an element of shared language. As we do not have other attestations, it did probably not (or not significantly) spread outside this family. The other rare element is the intensifier ἡμερησίως. Like the word string ἅμα δε καί, it is not attested in the *proskynema* formulas but in those from the Saturnila archive. Overall, the letters of the Saturnila archive are remarkably homogeneous in their deviation from standard phraseology⁷⁸.

Let me now return to the discussion of the form of ποιῶμαι. Besides the five attestations of the Saturnila archive, there are three other occurrences of this form. The first attestation, P.Mich. VIII 480 is preserved in another 2nd century AD Karanis archive, namely the bilingual Latin and Greek archive of Claudius Tiberianus.

Secondly, P.Col. X 278 is a 3rd century AD letter from a man with the Latin name Turbon. The document shows a linguistic overlap with a document from the Claudius Tiberianus archive: the verb ἐξουδενίζω in P.Col. X 278 (l. 9) is observed to occur only in two other letters – P.Mich. VIII 477 (TM 27090) of the Claudius Tiberianus archive and P.Laur. II 39 (TM 28765) of the archive of Epagathos, who was estate manager of the veteran Lucius Bellienus Gemellus⁷⁹ (Cribiore 1990: 24; Azzarello 2008a: 191-192). In this respect, P.Col. X 278 seems to show a linguistic resemblance with two Roman soldiers'/veterans' archives. Moreover, another rare word in P.Col. X 278, βαρυγαυδής (l. 11, probably indicating a kind of cloak), is only found in P.Mich. XV 752 (TM 28821) of the Saturnila archive (Cribiore 1990: 25). Although this might be due to coincidence, in

⁷⁶ Only in P.Heid. VII 400, ἅμα δε instead of ἅμα δε καί appears.

⁷⁷ In the body of the papyrus letters, there are some attestations of ἅμα δε καί being used as a connection between two sentences, e.g.: “μεταδώσις δὲ καὶ τῷ ἀδελφῷ ὑμῶν [Λ]ονγίνω, ἅμμα (= ἅμα) δὲ καὶ ἄσπασε αὐτόν” (BGU II 615; TM 28191; ll. 29-31) and “δοκιμάζω γὰρ αὐτούς, ἅμα δὲ καὶ τῆς γῆς τῆς ἐνταῦθα οὐκ ἄπιροί (= ἄπειροί) εἰσιν” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59500; TM 1138; l. 5). Sempronios is the only one in the archive who also uses ἅμα as a connection between two sentences in the body of the letter (P.Wisc. II 84; TM 26689; ll. 7-9): “γείνωσκε (= γίγνωσκε) οὖν, ἀδε[λ]φέ, ἰκανῶς με ἀγων[ι]ᾶν ἅμα μηδὲ τὰς νύκτε[α]ς (= νύκτας) κοιμώμενον ἄχρε[ι]ς (= ἄχρις) οὗ μοι δηλώσης πῶς δι[ά]γει ἐν τούτῳ τῷ ἄερί”.

⁷⁸ This is not only the case in the *proskynema* formulas, but also in other epistolary passages (for conclusive remarks, see chapter 8, § 1).

⁷⁹ Like the protagonists of the Claudius Tiberianus archive, also Gemellus of the Epagathos archive might have been bilingual; some orthographic elements even suggest that his native tongue was Latin (Bülow-Jacobsen: 162). Yet, Azzarello suggested that Epagathos was the probable sender of P.Laur. II 39 (Azzarello 2008a: 192) and his linguistic background is not known.

certain linguistic aspects, P.Col. X 278, thus resembles other attestations of the middle form ποιούμαι.

Finally, the last attestation, SB XXII 15454 is a letter from Sarapias writing from Philotera to Ammonios, who was probably a soldier based in Maximianon in the Eastern Desert (cf. *supra*, § 2.1.10). This is one of two letters preserved from the former to the latter; the other letter, SB XXII 15453 (TM 79035), was probably written by an experienced professional and does not contain a great many mistakes —the *proskynema* takes the normal active form ποιῶ—; SB XXII 15454, on the other hand, has a very phonetic orthography and is written in a stiff hand with influence from the Latin cursive⁸⁰ (Bülow-Jacobson and Fournet 1994: 33; Bagnall, Crihiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 166).

In other words, many of the occurrences of the middle are linked in some way to a ‘Latinized’ environment (the members of the Saturnila are Roman citizens and other attestations are connected to the context of soldiers and veterans), which might point to a Latin influence in this matter. I will return to this issue in the next section, where I will discuss the middle participles.

3.4. Mood

3.4.1. Participles

When the *proskynema* phrase is expressed with a participle, the formula is subordinate to the initial health wish⁸¹.

3.4.1.1. Middle participles

The middle participle ποιούμενος is attested four times (i.e. in P.Mich. VIII 476, 477, 478 (TM 27091) and 502 (TM 27112, where the participle is partly supplemented cf. *infra*)), but to my mind, there is possibly another attestation: in P.Col. VIII 216 (TM 17628),

⁸⁰ Yet, Latin influence in the handwriting cannot be automatically linked to the *latinitas* of the scribe, as this could be due to other reasons such as mimicry. Caution is thus required (Fournet 2003: 444).

⁸¹ The opposite construction in which the *proskynema* phrase forms the main clause and the initial health wish is subordinate to it, has already been discussed *supra* in chapter 4. P.Oxy. XIV 1775 (TM 33677) is an unusual example of the intertwinement of the *proskynema* phrase and the initial health wish. The common *proskynema* is extended with a purpose clause typical of the health wish (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.3.2): “τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἑκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῷ δεσπότῃ θεῷ ὅπως ὀλόκληρόν σε ἀπολάβω” (ll. 3-5). A similar phrase is found in “τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἑκάστην (= ἑκάστην) ἡμέρ[αν] παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ ὅπως υἰαίνων (= υἰαίνονται) καὶ εὐθυμοῦν[τι] ἀποδοθῆ[ι] σοι τὰ παρ’ ἐμοῦ γράμματα” (PSI VII 825; TM 17679; ll. 3-5).

Severianus writes from Alexandria to his ‘brother’ Ammonios. His severely damaged initial health wish and *proskynema* formula are as follows:

“πρὸ ἀ[ν]τ[ω]ν εὐχ[ομ]α[ι] ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνεν (= ὑγιαίνειν) τὸ προσκύνημά σου
ποιοῦμε[ν] παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι” (ll. 2-3)

Whereas the sender probably uses a first person singular in the initial health wish as well as in all other verb forms in the letter, he seems to switch to a plural form in the next phrase—which is uncommon (cf. *supra*, § 3.1). Furthermore, the initial health wish and the *proskynema* formula are constructed asyndetically, another unusual element (cf. *supra*, § 1.1)⁸². This made me wonder whether ποιοῦμε[ν] is the correct reconstruction; especially, since it seems plausible that there was more than one character ([ν]) lost in the lacuna⁸³: in the line above, the word εὐχ[ομ]α[ι] disappeared almost completely in the same gap. There may thus be more characters lost than only the ν in ποιοῦμε[ν] and the reconstruction ποιοῦμε[νος] is tempting. It solves the problems with the number and the asyndeton. This would bring the total number of instances of the middle participle to five.

The attestations of the middle participle seem to confirm the observations about the middle indicative ποιοῦμαι, namely that they are popular in a soldier’s/veteran’s environment, in which there might have been interference from Latin. Three of the five attestations of the middle participle come from the Latin and Greek bilingual Claudius Tiberianus archive⁸⁴, which was found in Karanis; they are letters from the soldier Terentianus to his ‘father’ Tiberianus, i.e. P.Mich. VIII 476, 477 and 478:

“... ποιούμενός σου τὸ προσκύνημα καθ’ ἑκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σεράπιδι
καὶ τοῖς συννάοις θεοῖς” (P.Mich. VIII 476; ll. 3-5)

⁸² Only in five other letters, the initial health wish and the *proskynema* phrase are two main clauses, not linked by the conjunction καί: i.e. P.Mich. VIII 509 (TM 27119), BGU I 38 (TM 28214), BGU I 276, (TM 28249), BGU I 332 (TM 28252) and BGU III 846 (TM 28097). When there is no initial health wish, the *proskynema* phrase is sometimes linked to the previous sentence anyway, e.g. “Ἐπαφρόδειτος ἔδωκέ μοι δραχμὰς τεσσαράκοντα τέσσαρας καὶ πυροῦ ἥμισυ καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ (= ποιῶ) παρὰ πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς[ς]” (P.Brem. 57; TM 19642; ll. 3-6). In other words, it is so common to start the *proskynema* phrase with καὶ and to link it with the previous sentence, that this also happens when there is no link with regard to content between the *proskynema* phrase and the previous clause.

⁸³ For a digital photo of the papyrus,

see <http://www.columbia.edu/cgi-bin/dlo?obj=columbia.apis.p251&size=300&face=f&tile=0> (accessed on January 24, 2014).

⁸⁴ Halla-aho had already drawn attention to the middle participles in Terentianus’ letters (Halla-aho 2003a: 19, footnote 24; Halla-aho 2003b: 246), but, as it was beyond the scope of her study, she did not discuss in depth the occurrences in Terentianus’ letters nor the general phenomenon of the middle participles in the *proskynema* formula.

In the fourth attestation, P.Mich. VIII 502, ποιούμενος was partly supplemented and has an ungrammatical construction:

“πρὸ παντὸς [ὑγιαίνειν σε] εὔχομαι καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ἀδιαλείπ[τως ποιούμε]νος παρὰ τοῖς τριχώμασι ἐν Κοπτῶ” (ll. 3-5)

There is no main verb in the *proskynema* formula. Perhaps it was so common to link the initial health wish and the *proskynema* with καί that the writer also included this conjunction in the participle construction. P.Mich. VIII 502 was also found in Karanis: it is a letter from the soldier Gemellus to his brother, written from Koptos. Also the onomastics in the fifth occurrence, P.Col. VIII 216, hint at a Latin context: not only the sender’s name Severianus is Latin (cf. *supra*), but also some of the persons greeted bear Latin names (Victor and Honoratus; l. 8)⁸⁵.

In general, this kind of confusion in the voice of the verb ποιέω did not frequently arise; yet in Latinized contexts, it seems to appear more commonly than elsewhere. Given this sociolinguistic background of the middle attestations, the use of the middle is probably not (only) due to the periphrastic definition of προσκυνέω. Perhaps, given the close link between the initial health wish and the *proskynema* (cf. *supra*, § 1.1), the middle form εὔχομαι of the *formula valetudinis* might have influenced the use of the middle in *proskynema* phrase. The fact that some of these writers might have known Latin, which did not have middle forms in its verbal system, might have triggered the use of ποιούμαι and ποιούμενος instead of the standard active forms. The middle forms thus seem to be contact-induced variants⁸⁶.

3.4.1.2. Active participles

Besides the middle participles, eight letters⁸⁷ have a *proskynema* formula with the active participle of ποιέω, e.g.:

“... τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶν παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς” (P.Mich. VIII 495; ll. 4-8)

“... τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶν παρὰ πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς” (P.Mich. VIII 490; ll. 3-5)

⁸⁵ The middle participle is also attested in an unedited letter from the Eastern Desert (M360; cf. Fournet 2003: 484). The edition of this document should reveal whether the sociolinguistic context is similar to the other occurrences.

⁸⁶ Unfortunately, the sociohistorical background of each of the attestations is unclear —only in the case of Claudius Tiberianus we are sure about his knowledge of Latin. This hampers a firm conclusion about interference.

⁸⁷ I.e. P.Mich. VIII 490 (TM 27100), P.Mich. VIII 495 (TM 27105), P.Bingen 74 (TM 78042), P.Sarap. 89 c (TM 17114), P.Alex.Giss. 57 (TM 27579), P.Giss. I 14 (TM 19416), P.Giss. I 85 (TM 19472) and SB X 10278 (TM 16755).

Whereas the participle is connected to the initial health wish in P.Mich. VIII 490 and 495, four other letters, which are all preserved in the archive of Apollonios *strategos*, have the idiosyncratic feature that the participle is subordinate to the construction οὐ διαλείπω:

“καὶ οὐ διαλείπω [τὸ προσκύνημά] σου ποιούσ[α] παρὰ πᾶσι τ[οῖς θεοῖς]”
(P.Alex.Giss. 57; TM 27579; letter from Eudaimonis to Apollonios; ll. 3-4)⁸⁸

“[κ]αὶ οὐ διαλείπω [τ]ὸ προσκ[ύνη]μά σου [ποι]ῶν [καθ’ ἐ]κάσ[τη]ν ἡμέρ[αν]”
(P.Giss. I 85; TM 19472; letter from Hermaios to Apollonios; ll. 8-9)

“πρὸ πάντων σε εὐχομαι ὑγιαίνειν μετὰ τοῦ κυρίου μου Ἡρακλᾶ Ἀπόλλωνος καὶ τῆς κυρίας μου Ἀλινῆς ὧν οὐ διαλείπω [[τὸ] ποιῶν τὸ προσκύνημα παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Ἑρμῇ καὶ παρὰ πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς” (P.Giss. I 14; TM 19416; letter from Eraphrodeitos to Apollonios; ll. 2-5)

“πρὸ πάντων σε εὐχομαι [[σε] ὑγιαίνειν μετὰ Ἀλίνης τῆς κυρίας καὶ Ἡρακλᾶ Ἀπόλλωνος οὗ τὰ τέκνα ἐπ’ ἀγαθῷ βασιτάξ[ε]ις, ὧν οὐ διαλείπω τὸ προσκύνημα ποιῶν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Ἑρμῇ” (SB X 10278; TM 16755; letter from Horion to Apollonios; ll. 2-5)

Adding the litotes οὐ διαλείπω to the epistolary phrase has the effect of a strong intensifier⁸⁹. The word string οὐ διαλείπω in the *proskynema* formula is unique to the Apollonios *strategos* archive⁹⁰. Since the letters are sent by four different persons, it does not seem to be an idiolect, but an element of shared language. Further, the texts are not written in one and the same hand, so scribal influence is also to be excluded as an explanation for this uniformity⁹¹.

Moreover, in P.Giss. I 14 and SB X 10278 (cf. *supra*), the *proskynema* phrase is a relative clause subordinate to the initial health wish. These two letters from the archive of

⁸⁸ Translation: “and I do not stop making obeisance to all the gods”.

⁸⁹ In letters like P.Giss. I 85, in which the word string οὐ διαλείπω is combined with an intensifier, there is a tautology of continuity: “I do not stop making obeisance to you every day”.

⁹⁰ This word string οὐ διαλείπω is attested a few times in other epistolary formulas and in the body texts of private letters from the 2nd century BC onwards, e.g.: “Διονυσία θέωνι τῷ κυρίῳ χαίρειν καὶ ἔρρωσθαι, ἔρρωμαι δὲ καὶ αὐτή, σοῦ τὴν ἀρίστην μνήαν (= μνεῖαν) ἐπὶ παντὸς ἀγαθοῦ ποιουμένη οὐ διαλείπω” (P.Bad. IV 48; TM 5830; BC 127; ll. 1-2). It was also used in petitions which often have formulas similar to the epistolary phrases, e.g. “οὐ διαλίπομεν καθ’ ἡμέρ[α]ν ἐκάστην εὐχόμενοι ὑπὲρ τε σοῦ καὶ τῶν τέκνων ...” (BGU VIII 1835; TM 4914; ll. 5-7).

⁹¹ P.Giss. I 14 and SB X 10278 might have been written by the same scribe; not only the similar handwriting but also the layout of the text suggest this, e.g. the opening formulas of the two letters are structurally identical: the names of sender and addressee are separated by an interspace, the addressee is characterized as τῷ κυρίῳ —the article without and the politeness term with *iota adscriptum*— and then χαίρειν follows after another interspace. The hand in P.Giss. I 85 seems to differ from the previous two. P.Alex.Giss. 57 is hard to judge as it is very fragmentary, but it might have been a third hand, deviating from the three other letters (I am grateful to Willy Clarysse, who has studied the images of these texts for me and has shared his professional opinion on this matter).

Apollonios *strategos*, are the only ones with this construction. Here again, the letters of this archive deviate from the standard phraseology and preserve a variant which is not attested outside the collection.

3.4.2. Imperative and infinitive

In O.Lund. 14, the imperative ποίει appears (cf. *supra*, § 2.1.13), as the sender instructs the addressee to pray to Leto for his (and his family's) health. In two letters, the infinitive appears⁹². Those attestations are adaptations which deviate significantly from the standard phraseology.

4. Intensifiers

In a total of more than hundred letters an intensifier is added to the *proskynema* phrase⁹³. The intensifier typical of this formula is καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν, which appears in seventy letters. The intensifier is reconstructed by the editor in several letters. However, in two of those letters, I doubt the reconstruction of the editor. In P.Alex. 30 (TM 32705), the editor supplemented the greater part of the *proskynema* including the intensifier “[καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέρ]ας παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ” (ll. 4-5). Καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέρας would then be a contamination of the standard intensifier καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν and the genitive of time. In that case, ἡμέρας should be interpreted as ἡμέραν. Yet, to my mind, it is far from certain that this 4th century AD letter had a *proskynema* phrase, especially since the verb εὐθυμέω follows the reconstructed *proskynema*:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομέ (= εὐχομαί) σοι (= σε) ὑγ[ιαίνειν καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέρ]ας παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ καὶ εὐθυμο[ῦσθαι -ca.?-]” (ll. 3-5)

Εὐθυμέω is, as said above in chapter 4, attested in the initial health wish. It is thus possible —and perhaps more plausible than the current reading of a *proskynema*— that the initial health wish ran from lines 3 to 5.

⁹² I.e. P.Mert. I 22 (TM 28778): “δι' ὅπερ παρακληθεὶς γράφε μοι συνεχῶς ἵνα διαγνῶ σε οὕτως με ἡ[γ]απηκότα, ἐπεὶ τῷ μὴ γράφειν μοι ἔσται σ[ημ]ῖον (= σημεῖον) τοῦ δ[η]λ[ο]ῦν μου ἀμνημονεῖν τοῦ (= τὸ) προσκύνημά μου ποιε[ῖν παρ]ὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι.” (ll. 6-12). In UPZ I 109 ll. 1-24 (TM 3501), the phrase is damaged (cf. *supra*, footnote 2).

⁹³ To Koskenniemi, expressions such as καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν or even καθ' ὥραν make it hard to believe that the formula corresponded to a real religious practice of making an inscription (Koskenniemi 1956: 142). Further, intensifiers in the *proskynema* phrases appear in all three scenarios (i.e. the sender traveling, the addressee traveling and none of the correspondents traveling). There is thus no difference in use according to the circumstances.

Also the *proskynema* in O.Kellis 142 (TM 74670) was for the most part supplemented (Reiter 2008: 312):

“καὶ κάτ’ (= καθ’) ἡμέραν [ἐκάστην πο]ιῶ [τὸ προσκύνημά σου παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῶ]” (ll. 5-6)

Since the word order of καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν is identical in all occurrences, it would be surprising —yet, not impossible— to find καθ’ ἡμέραν ἐκάστην in O.Kellis 142⁹⁴. Further, the reading of παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῶ is questionable: there are no indications that this specific reference to a god should be added: the content does not indicate that this letter was Christian, and the expression παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῶ is not common (cf. *supra*). The most problematic aspect of this reconstruction is the word order [πο]ιῶ [τὸ προσκύνημά σου]: usually, τὸ προσκύνημά σου precedes the verb. Only in two other letters, P.Mich. VIII 476 (TM 27089) and P.Giss. I 14 (TM 19416) the reverse construction is found. All these elements make me very skeptical about this supplement: I see too little evidence to reconstruct a *proskynema* phrase in O.Kellis 142.

A variant to the popular καθ’ ἡμέραν ἐκάστην is καθ’ ἡμέραν: it is attested in the epigraphical *proskynemata* (Geraci 1971: 145) and occurs only twice in my corpus of private letters⁹⁵. Not only does the abbreviated form καθ’ ἡμέραν appear, the common formula can also be enlarged, as in the following example:

“καὶ καθ’ ἐκάστης [ἡμέρα]ς κα[ι] ὀψας (= ὀψίας) τὸ προσκύνημά σου πυῶ (= ποιῶ) παρὰ τῆ σε φιλοῦση Θεοήρι” (P.Oxy. III 528; TM 28368; ll. 4-6)

The phrase ἐκάστης ἡμέρας appears twice, viz. P.Oxy. LIX 3992 (TM 27848) and in P.Oxy. LV 3809 (TM 29103):

“τὸ [προ]σκύνημα ὑμῶν ποιῶ [πα]ρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς καὶ [τὸ] προσκ[ύ]νημά σου ἐκάσ[τη]ς ἡμέρας ποιῶ” (P.Oxy. LV 3809; ll. 3-7)

Καθ’ ἐκάστην ὥραν is attested in the *proskynema* phrase of P.Mich. VIII 492 (TM 27102)⁹⁶:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ὥραν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι” (ll. 2-3)

⁹⁴ The original editor himself indicated the uncertainty of his conjecture by adding a question mark: “καὶ κάτ’ (= καθ’) ἡμέραν [ἐκάστην (?)-ca.?-] ω[-ca.?-]” (ll. 5-6).

⁹⁵ I.e. SB VI 9164 (TM 27279) and P.Brem. 66 (TM 19651). The intensifier is also attested twice in unpublished ostraca from Krokodilo (cf. Fournet 2003: 484). Further, in P.Mich. VIII 513 (TM 30513) and SB VI 9164 (TM 27279), καθ’ ἡμέραν was completely reconstructed by the editor: “[καὶ τὸ προσκύνη]μά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τοῦ κυ[ρί]ου Σαράπιδι καθ’ ἡμέραν]” (P.Mich. VIII 513; ll. 2-3) and “[τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ’ ἡμέραν] παρὰ τῆ κυρία Ἀθη[νᾶ]” (SB VI 9164; ll. 3-5).

⁹⁶ It also occurs in an unpublished ostrakon from Maximianon (cf. Fournet 2003: 484).

Like καθ' ἐκάστην, also this formula can be shortened to καθ' ὥραν:

“καὶ τὸ [π]ροσκύνημά σου ποιῶ καθ' ὥραν π[α]ρ[ὰ] τῶ] κυρίῳ Ἐρμῆ” (P.Brem. 61; TM 19646; ll. 47-49)

All of the above intensifiers are in essence variants of the basic formula καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν; also the intensifier of the Saturnia archive, ἡμερησίως has the same meaning (cf. *supra*).

The intensifier ἀδιαλείπτως appears only once in the *proskynema* formula, viz. in P.Mich. VIII 502 (TM 27112):

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ἀδιαλείπτως ποιούμε]νος παρὰ τοῖς τριχώμασι ἐν Κοπτῶ” (ll. 4-5)

This intensifier expresses the same idea —to “continuously” make obeisance— as the construction οὐ διαλείπω + participle (cf. *supra*). This adverb is rare in private letters, but it is found in business documents, such as contracts.

An uncommon intensifier in the *proskynema* phrase is αἰεὶ, which is attested in SB VI 9017 Nr. 16 (TM 25243) and in SB XIV 11644 (TM 25326), e.g.:

“τὸ προσκύνημά σ[ο]υ αἰεὶ ποιῶ παρὰ τῆ κυρίᾳ Ἀφροδίτῃ” (SB XIV 11644; ll. 3-4)⁹⁷

In some letters, intensifiers typical of the health wish appear. In ten letters⁹⁸, πρὸ πάντων appears in the *proskynema* formula, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων τὸ προσκύνημά σου πυῶ (= ποιῶ) καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῶ θεῶ” (P.Oxy. XXXIII 2682; TM 30429; ll. 3-5)

P.Oxy. XXXIII 2682 does not have an initial health wish and *proskynema* phrase is written immediately after the opening phrase where the initial health wish would have been. Πρὸ τῶν ὅλων is attested in P.Tebt. II 418 *recto* (TM 31362):

“πρὸ τῶν ὅλων τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τῶ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι καὶ τοῖς συννάοις θεοῖς” (ll. 4-6)

By inserting an intensifier characteristic of the health wish, the *proskynema* phrase takes over the connotation of the health wish, as if the sender is saying, when making

⁹⁷ The *proskynemata* in the unpublished ostraca from the Eastern Desert preserve two other intensifiers: νύκτα τε καὶ ἡμέραν and πάντη πάντως (cf. Fournet 2003: 484).

⁹⁸ I.e. P.Oxy. LV 3810 (TM 29104), P.Oxy. XXXIII 2682 (TM 30429), P.Bon. 44 (TM 27068), SB XVI 12594 (TM 30292), P.Brem. 48 (TM 19632), P.Lond. III 973 b (S. 213) (TM 33776), P.Tebt. II 412 (TM 28425), SB III 6262 (TM 31055), P.Berl.Cohen 15 (TM 110057) and SB XXIV 16214 (TM 31142). SB XII 11253 (TM 16409) is too fragmentary to include in this list.

obeisance to a god, that he is praying for the addressee's well-being (cf. Koskenniemi 1956: 139). Since the initial health wish and the *proskynema* phrase are often grammatically connected (cf. *supra*, 3.4.1), it is not surprising that also the use of the intensifiers overlaps.

5. Persons made obeisance to

In most cases, the *proskynema* is made to the (singular) addressee alone: τὸ προσκύνημά σου⁹⁹. The grammatically expected dative σοι is only attested in three –or four– letters¹⁰⁰, dated between the 1st-2nd and the 3rd-4th centuries AD. Most other occurrences

⁹⁹ In P.Haun. II 18, no reference to the addressee was given: “καὶ τὸ προ[σ]κύνημα (= προσκύνημα) τῆς κυρίας Ἰσιδος” (ll. 13-15). This is an abbreviated variant of the *proskynema* phrase (cf. *supra*, footnote 5). An explanation as to why P.Giss. I 14 and SB X 10278 (TM 16755) did not include a reference to the addressee will be given later in this section. In P.PalauRib. 36 and UPZ I 109 ll. 1-24, the *proskynema* phrase is supplemented without a reference to the addressee (respectively): “τὸ [προσκύνημα ἐποίησα παρὰ] τῷ κυρίῳ Σεραπ[ίδι -ca.-?]” (ll. 2-4) and “[τὸ] προσκύνημα ποιήσιν παρὰ [τῷ] Σαράπει . . .” (ll. 18-19). Without a photo of UPZ I 109, it is not clear whether there is space to include a reference to the addressee. In P.PalauRib 36, where it is not clear how many letters were lost, the current reconstruction without σου or ὑμῶν is therefore unconvincing. Since both the aorist ἐποίησα and the reference to the addressee are unlikely, the entire supplement of the *proskynema* in P.PalauRib 36 should be reconsidered. I doubt whether lines 1-2 had in fact a *proskynema*: this phrase seems to be linked asyndetically to the initial health wish with [δι]ασώζεται, which is uncommon (cf. *supra*). Perhaps the reference to τῷ κυρίῳ Σεραπ[ίδι] was just part of the initial health wish.

It is also possible to supplement the reference to the addressee in P.PalauRib. 31. Above I have also commented on the reconstruction of the verb (cf. *supra*, footnote 65), which results in the following proposed new reading: “καὶ τὸ προσκύνη[μά σου or ὑμῶν ποιῶ - ca.-?] . . . [καθ’] ἐκάστην ἡμέραν [-ca.-?]” (ll. 3-5). Similarly, to the fragmentary phrase in SB XII 11253, σου or ὑμῶν should be added: “τὸ προσκύνη[μά σου or ὑμῶν -ca.-?]” (l. 3). I propose to add the reference to the addressee after the phrase τὸ προσκύνημα as is common (cf. *infra*).

In the fragmentary P.Sarap. 101 (TM 17126), the person who was made obeisance to was not preserved, and was probably not simply σου: “καὶ τῶν φίλων [ἐ]μ[ῶν] τὰ ὀνόματα ἐνεχάραξα τοῖς [ἐ]ροῖς ἀειμνάτως, τὸ προσκύνημα [1 line missing]” (ll. 10-13). Perhaps it was αὐτῶν referring to the sender's friends (cf. τῶν φίλων [ἐ]μ[ῶν]), but as this is far from certain, I will not make a conjecture here.

In P.Oxy. LIX 3992 (TM 27848), the sender makes obeisance to a third person by means of αὐτῆς in the first place, but then also refers to the sender (σου, l. 16): “ἐκάστη[ς μὲν] τοῖς ἡμέρας τὸ προσκύνημα αὐτῆς [π]οιῶ παρὰ τῷ θεῷ τῷ θε[. . .] τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι καὶ σοῦ καὶ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτῆς” (ll. 13-17). In P.Mert. I 22 (TM 28778), the *proskynema* is a bit different: the sender expresses fear that the addressee has forgotten about him and has failed to make a *proskynema* his behalf: “δι’ ὅπερ παρακληθεὶς γράφε μοι συνεχῶς ἵνα διαγνῶ σε οὔτως με ἡ[γ]απηκότα, ἐπεὶ τῷ μὴ γράφειν μοι ἔσται σ[ημ]ῖον (= σημεῖον) τοῦ δ[η]λ[ο]ῦν μου ἀμνημονεῖν τὸ προσκύνημά μου ποιεῖν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι.” (ll. 6-12).

¹⁰⁰ I.e. SB VI 9017 Nr. 16 (TM 25243), O.Claud. II 302 (TM 29715) and P.Lips. I 110 (TM 31909). In my opinion, also the writer of P.Oxy. XII 1482 (TM 28994), intended to write σοι and not σου: “τὸ προσκύνημά (= προσκύνημά) σου (= <σ>ου, according to the editor) ποιῶ καὶ τῶν τέκνων σου π[ά]ντων [καὶ] τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου [πάντων] κ[αὶ] - ca.9 -]” (ll. 22-24), since in the rest of the sentence he used the genitive form σου correctly. The dative σοι poses more problems for him: in another phrase of this letter σου is interpreted as σοι, e.g.: “καὶ ἂν σου (= σοι) δοκῆ γράψις (= γράψεις) μοι περὶ τούτων” (l. 17).

use the genitive case to refer to the person for whom the *proskynema* is made¹⁰¹: this is emblematic for the loss of the dative case and its replacement by the accusative and the genitive, which started in the Hellenistic period (for clitics already from the 1st century BC onwards) (Cooper and Georgala 2012: 280-281). In this aspect, the genitive replacement of dative clitics was facilitated by their similar position, typically following the verb and by the reinterpretation of the possessive function of the genitive as being semantically close to the dative of the beneficiary. The *proskynema* phrase is thus a typical example of this new use of the genitive (Cooper and Georgala 2012: 282-283).

In 36 instances, ὑμῶν appears: in letters to a single addressee, it probably refers to the addressee and his relatives. In P.Mich. III 213 (TM 31546), the variant ὑμῶν παντός is found:

“τὸ προσκύνημα ὑμῶν παντὸς ποιῶ καθ’ ἐ[κ]άστην ἡμέραν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι” (ll. 2-4)

In P.Mert. II 82 (TM 28784) the construction ὑπέρ + genitive is used:

“καὶ ὑ[π]έρ σου τὸ προσκύνημα ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς” (ll. 4-5)

In P.Aberd. 188 (TM 28321) and in SB XXVI 16758 (TM 97238), ὑπέρ is a conjecture by the editor:

“[τὸ προσκύνημα ὑπέρ] ὑμῶν ποιῶ [παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαρά]πιδι” (P.Aberd. 188; ll. 6-8)
 “[-ca.?- ὑπέρ σου] τὸ προσκύνημα [α -ca.?- ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς [-ca.?-]”
 (SB XXVI 16758; ll. 2-3)

Given the rareness of ὑπέρ + genitive and the fact that the exact number of lost characters is in both cases unknown, these suggestions are not convincing. Since it is not clear in both phrases how many letters are lost between the brackets where ὑπέρ is now reconstructed, I propose to omit ὑπέρ. In the first letter, this would lead to the emendation “[τὸ προσκύνημα] ὑμῶν...”. In the second letter, the most plausible solution is “[-ca.?-] τὸ προσκύνημα [α σου -ca.?-]...” or “[-ca.?-] τὸ προσκύνημα [α ὑμῶν -ca.?-]...”, since the reference to the addressee (in the form of σου or ὑμῶν) appears in all attestations but one¹⁰² after the noun προσκύνημα.

Considering that the *proskynema* phrase mostly refers to the addressee and in some cases also to his social circle as well, the following formulas are hard to interpret:

¹⁰¹ The use of the genitive is paralleled in the *proskynema* inscriptions cf. Geraci 1971. Given the predominance of the genitive, I see no reason to correct τὸ προσκύνημά σου into σοι, as the editor of PSI III 206 (TM 31222) does.

¹⁰² Only in P.Mich. VIII 476 (TM 27089) the inverse word order appears: “σου τὸ προσκύνημα” (l. 4).

“[τὸ] προσκύνημα ἡμῶν ποιῶ παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σα[ράπι]δι” (P.Mich. VIII 508; TM 27118; ll. 2-3)

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημα ἡμῶν πάντων [-ca.?-]” (O.Lund. 15; TM 74876; ll. 7-9)

Ἡμῶν is an example of the common confusion between η and υ (Gignac 1976: 262), and these sentences should be read as τὸ προσκύνημα ὑμῶν (πάντων)¹⁰³.

Whereas phrases with ὑμᾶς refer to the addressee’s relatives and friends in general, in some cases, the social circle of the addressee gets a more pronounced place in the *proskynema*, and some of them are explicitly mentioned¹⁰⁴, e.g.:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύ[νημ]ᾶ σου ποιῶμεν καὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ [σου] Ἡ[ρα]κλειίδου καὶ τῶν συνβίων [ὑμῶ]ν καὶ τῶν τέκνων παρὰ τῷ μεγάλ[ω] Σαράπιδι” (P.Oxy. XLIII 3094; TM 15973; ll. 2-6)

In total, third persons are referred to in fourteen *proskynema* formulas¹⁰⁵. In the first *proskynema* phrase of O.Heid. 428 (TM 80117), only third persons are mentioned and not the addressee:

“καὶ Σεραπίωνος τοῦ ἐπιστάτου μου τὸ προσκύνημα καὶ τοὺς (= τῶν) παρ’ αὐτοῦς (= αὐτῶ) <ποιῶ>” (ll. 2-5)

In most cases, third persons appear in the genitive case, as in the above-mentioned P.Oxy. XLIII 3094 and O.Heid. 428. In three instances, the preposition μετά is used¹⁰⁶, e.g.:

“καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ παρὰ τῷ κυρείῳ (= κυρίῳ) Σεράπιδος (= Σεράπιδι) μετὰ τοῦ τέκνου σου” (P.Mich. VIII 514; TM 30514; ll. 5-7)

Two uncommon constructions to refer to third persons are found in letters from the archive of Apollonios *strategos* (cf. *supra*):

¹⁰³ In the second letter on the papyrus P.Mich. VIII 508, the same spelling mistake in the *proskynema* formula has indeed been corrected into ὑμῶν (l. 11).

¹⁰⁴ Also in the *proskynema* inscriptions, friends and relatives can be referred to by name (Koskeniemi 1956: 141).

¹⁰⁵ The unedited *proskynemata* in ostraca from the Eastern Desert provide a handful of other attestations of this phenomenon, including a *proskynema* in which the horse of the addressee is mentioned (cf. Fournet 2003: 485; cf. chapter 4, § 2.2.2 and § 3.3.3, for references to horses in the initial health wish).

¹⁰⁶ The other occurrences are P.Mil. II 80 (TM 31541) and P.Brem. 49 (TM 19633). In P.Bingen 74 (TM 78042), the word order suggests that the word string μετὰ τῶ\ν/ ἑμῶν should be read in combination with the previous phrase: “ὑγιαίνω δὲ καὶ ἴγω (= ἐγώ) μετὰ τῶ\ν/ ἑμῶν τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶσα παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι.” (ll. 3-4) (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.3.1). Perhaps in P.Haun. II 27 (TM 26601), the preposition σύν was used in the same context, but the fragmentary state of preservation hinders a conclusion.

“πρὸ πάντων σε εὐχομαι ὑγιαίνειν μετὰ τοῦ κυρίου μου Ἡρακλᾶ Ἀπόλλωνος καὶ τῆς κυρίας μου Ἀλινῆς ὧν οὐ διαλείπω [[τὸ]] ποιῶν τὸ προσκύνημα παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Ἑρμῇ καὶ παρὰ πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς” (P.Giss. I 14; TM 19416; ll. 2-5)

“πρὸ πάντων σε εὐχομαι [[σε]] ὑγιαίνειν μετὰ Ἀλίνης τῆς κυρίας καὶ Ἡρακλᾶ Ἀπόλλωνος οὗ τὰ τέκνα ἐπ’ ἀγαθῷ βαστάξε[ι]ς, ὧν οὐ διαλείπω τὸ προσκύνημα ποιῶν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Ἑρμῇ” (SB X 10278; TM 16755; ll. 2-5)

In these phrases, the *proskynema* is made on behalf of the people for whom the sender prays in the initial health wish (i.e. the addressee σε, and third persons).

6. Conclusion

The *proskynema* formulas display a rich variation. The choice as to what god is referred to in this phrase, usually has to do with the local cults: the deity who is made obeisance to in the *proskynema* formula, is generally also the main god worshipped in town where the letter was written. However, this principle does imply that a letter with a *proskynema* before Sarapis should automatically be linked to Alexandria; the ostraca from the Eastern Desert with a reference to this deity have disproved this view. Further, the circumstances of writing and the content of the letter, might have played a (minor) role in the choice of the god as well. This may have been the case with the love goddess, Aphrodite. In one example, the sender might have deliberately appealed to this deity, since Aphrodite is relevant to the request the sender wants to make¹⁰⁷.

This study is the first to investigate other variation than the gods mentioned in the *proskynema*. This has led to some new insights. Firstly, the middle forms of the verb ποιέω (the indicative ποιοῦμαι and the participle ποιούμενος) are uncommon variants to the standard active forms. The close link between the initial health wish and the *proskynema* formula may explain this phenomenon: the middle form εὐχομαι might have triggered the middle forms of ποιέω. Since most occurrences seem to be connected to the context of soldiers and veterans —a ‘Latinized’ environment— the middle forms might have been contact-induced variants. Secondly, my investigation has revealed some elements of shared language in the Saturnila archive and in the archive of Apollonios *strategos*. In the first collection, the use of ἅμα δε καί and of the intensifier ἡμερησίως do not occur in any other *proskynema* formula. In the archive of Apollonios *strategos*, the use of the litotes οὐ διαλείπω in the *proskynema* is unique.

¹⁰⁷ We can perhaps compare this to the tradition of Christian people: they do not pray randomly to a saint but invoke the saint relevant to the wish they have, e.g. saint Antony if one has lost his belongings.

Chapter 6 Final health wish

In this study, a ‘final health wish’ denotes a wish for the addressee’s well-being that is usually found just before the closing formula¹. Such a phrase is far less common than the initial health wish (about 130 against more than 700 attestations respectively). The reason for this is obvious: the final health wish had more or less the same meaning as the closing formula, which is also concerned with the addressee’s health. This is more prominent with the closing formula ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι than with its earlier-dated counterpart ἔρρωσο: whereas the final health wish often appears in the Ptolemaic letters with the closing formula ἔρρωσο, its usage was considerably less frequent after Ptolemaic period. The appearance of the new, longer closing formula ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι in the Roman period may have eliminated the final health wish. Although the use of the final health wish decays from the 1st century AD onwards, there are isolated attestations until the 4th century AD².

For the final health wish, there was only one phrase in use, viz. ἐπιμέλου/ἐπιμελοῦ σεαυτοῦ ἵν’ ὑγιαίνῃς³, of which some variations existed⁴. The main variants are

¹ In a dozen of letters, one other sentence stands between the final health wish and the closing formula. Further, nine attestations of the ‘final’ health wish appear in the middle of the letter, e.g. P.Mich. VIII 464 (TM 17238). I have included these occurrences in this overview. Some occurrences, like O.Berenike II 130 (TM 89156), might have held a final health wish, but are too fragmentary to discuss in this chapter.

² One attestation, P.IFAO II 10 (TM 25087), is dated to the 1st or 2nd century AD, two occurrences are from the 2nd century AD (P.Col. VIII 215; TM 17627 and P.Fay. 119; TM 10784) and P.Ammon I 3 (TM 23631), dated around AD 324 – 330 AD, preserves the last final health wish.

³ Translation: “take care of yourself so that you are healthy”. A similar, yet distinct formula exhorts the addressee to look after certain people or goods, e.g.: “ἐπιμελοῦ δὲ καὶ τοῦ μόσχου” (P.Ryl. II 229; TM 12977; ll. 19-20), “ἐπιμέλου δὲ Τιτόας καὶ Σφαίρου” (P.Athen. 60; TM 77953; ll. 13-14) and “κ[α]ὶ ἐπιμελοῦ τῆς οἰκίας” (SB XXIV 16267; TM 79415; l. 8). These phrases are obviously not health wishes and are therefore not included in this study. Admittedly, the line between this type and the final health wish is not always easy to draw, as some final health wishes also omit the purpose clause with ὑγιαίνω and can refer to third persons as well, e.g.: “ἐπιμέλου δὲ καὶ σεαυτοῦ καὶ τῶν παιδῶν/ ἵν’ ὑγιαίνητε” (P.Rein. II 109; TM 5270; ll. 5-6) and “ἐπιμελοῦ σεαυτῆς καὶ τῶν παιδαρ[ί]ων οὐς ἀσπάζομαι καὶ τοὺς ἡμῶν) Ἀρτεμείν τε καὶ Τυχάριο(ν) καὶ Ἀμμῶν[ιν] καὶ Δίδυμον, τὸν ἄνδρα Τυχάρου, καὶ Σαραπιάδα καὶ τὴν μητέρα” (P.IFAO II 10; TM 25087; ll. 24-30).

constructions with *καλῶς ποιέω*, *εὐχαριστέω* or *χαρίζομαι* which are all combined with the participle of *ἐπιμέλομαι/ἐπιμελέομαι*. Also the participle of *ἐπιμέλομαι/ἐπιμελέομαι* being used on its own, is attested (cf. Ziemann 1910: 314; Koskenniemi 1956: 134).

1. Ἐπιμέλου σεαυτοῦ ἴν' ὑγιαίνης

1.1. The main verb⁵

1.1.1. Imperative ἐπιμέλου/ἐπιμελοῦ

In about ninety private letters, the final health wish is constructed with the imperative *ἐπιμέλου* or *ἐπιμελοῦ*⁶. This is the most common way of expressing this *topos*, and it is attested from the 3rd century BC until the 4th century AD. It is especially frequent in the 1st century BC because of 34 letters with this phrase preserved in the Athenodoros archive, e.g.:

“ἐπιμέλου δὲ σεαυτῆς ἴνα ὑγι(αίνης)” (SB XX 14280; TM 23704; ll. 7-8)

The plural variant *ἐπιμέλεσθε* (or *ἐπιμελεῖσθε*) appears in three letters⁷, e.g.:

“ἐπιμέλεσθε δὲ ἕαυ[τῶ]ν, ἴν' ὑγιαίνητε” (SB I 5216; TM 5636; ll. 11-12)

The basic form of the final health wish *ἐπιμέλου σεαυτοῦ ἴν' ὑγιαίνης* closely resembles the Latin *cura ut valeas*. Several scholars argued that Latin took over this phrase from Greek (e.g. Ziemann 1910: 316). If this hypothesis is correct, the final health must have been borrowed in the Hellenistic period, as the Latin counterpart *cura ut valeas* appears early in Latin epistolography, e.g. in Cicero's letters. Consequently, it spread across the Roman empire: the phrase *cura ut valeas* is attested in the Vindolanda letters (cf. Halla-aho 2009: 52), which are free from Greek influence. Unlike its Greek counterpart, the Latin formula has few variants.

⁴ Apart from the formulaic final health wishes, other letters also have *ad hoc* wishes for the addressee's well-being, e.g.: “ἔρρωμένωι ἐθύομεν τῶι Ἀπόλλωνι ὑπὲρ τῆς σῆς ὑγι[ας -ca.?-]” (P.Cair.Zen. V 59806; TM 1430; l. 2). These phrases are not included in this overview.

⁵ In BGU XVI 2659 (TM 22382), the main clause is lost: “πρ[ὸ] πάντων κα . . . [ἴν' ὑ]γιαίνης ὃ δὲ μέγιστον [ἡγοῦμαι]” (ll. 12-13). In P.Tebt. II 408 (TM 13560), the final health wish seems to be abbreviated and only the characteristic opening of the final health wish “τὰ δ' ἄλλα” and purpose clause are written: “τὰ δ' ἄλλα ἵν' ὑ(γιαίνης)” (l. 17).

⁶ Both the variants *ἐπιμελέομαι* and *ἐπιμέλομαι* are attested. In the imperative, there is no way in telling which variant the writer intended. Other verb forms, such as the participle *ἐπιμελόμενος/ἐπιμελούμενος*, show that the variant *ἐπιμέλομαι* was more popular in the papyri than the more classical *ἐπιμελέομαι*. P.Yale I 42 (TM 6206) is the only certain attestation of the variant *ἐπιμελούμενος*; the verb form is partly supplemented in P.Stras. VIII 721 (TM 3965) and is completely supplemented in BGU XVI 2600 (TM 23323).

⁷ Also in P.Cair.Zen. IV 59579 (TM 1213) *ἐπιμέ[λεσθε]* is supplemented; the variant *ἐπιμελεῖσθε* has no certain attestations is only found as the interpretation of the verb form *ἐπιμελωσθε* in BGU IV 1078 (TM 9455). In that last letter, the final health wish is addressed to more than one person, but the letter has a single addressee. Perhaps, the addressee and his social circle are in this way addressed in the final health wish.

1.1.2. Main verbs with the participle ἐπιμελόμενος

1.1.2.1. Χαρίζομαι

The verb χαρίζομαι is part of the final health wish in 23 letters, dated between the 3rd century BC and the 1st century AD⁸, e.g.:

“χαρίζοιο δ’ ἄν ἡμῖν ἐπιμελόμενος σαυτοῦ, ὅπως ἄν ὑγιαίνης” (BGU XIV 2417; TM 4013; ll. 6-8)

The potential construction χαρίζοιο or χαρίζοισθ’ ἄν —respectively five and one attestation(s)— is less popular than the future indicative χαριεῖ / χαριῆ (seventeen occurrences in total). The dative ἡμῖν is only found in BGU XIV 2417 (quoted *supra*); the singular μοι is attested in four letters⁹, including in the peculiar final health wish of P.Diosk. 15 (TM 44730), where the dative μοι is extended with οὐ μόνον δὲ ἐμοί, ἀλλὰ ὅλη τῇ πόλι (= πόλει):

“σὺ δὲ χαριῆ μοι μεγάλως, οὐ μόνον δὲ ἐμοί, ἀλλὰ ὅλη τῇ πόλι (= πόλει), ἐπιμελόμενος σοῦ (= σοῦ), ἵνα ὑγιαίνων ἔρχη πρὸς τε τὴν ἀδελφὴν καὶ τὰ παιδιά καὶ πάντας τοὺς φίλους-τούτου γὰρ ἡμῖν, μὰ τὸν Ἡρακλῆ, οὐθὲν μέγιστόν ἐστιν” (ll. 24-29)¹⁰

1.1.2.2. Καλῶς ποιέω

In at least three letters, καλῶς ποιέω in the main clause is followed by ἐπιμελόμενος, i.e. P.Cair.Zen. I 59093 (TM 747), PSI V 495 (TM 2123) and P.Cair.Zen. III 59478 (TM 1116)¹¹. In the last letter, the variant καλῶς ποιήσεις occurs:

“σὺ οὖν καλῶς ποιήσεις σαυτοῦ τε ἐπιμελόμενος ἕως ἄν ἐγὼ παραγένωμαι” (ll. 8-10)

In P.Cair.Zen. I 59093 and PSI V 495, letters from Herakleitos to Zenon, the form καλῶς δ’ ἄν ποιοῖς seems to appear:

⁸ Sometimes, the participle ἐπιμελόμενος is not found immediately after the main verb χαρίζομαι, and also other phrases are subordinate to the same main verb, e.g.: “χαριεῖ οὖν ἀκούσας αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ ὧν παραγένονεν ὑποδείξας, μάλιστα δὲ σαυτοῦ ἐπιμελόμενος ἵν’ ὑγιαίνης” (P.Cair.Goodspeed 4; TM 78157; ll. 10-14).

⁹ I.e. in P.Cair.Zen. I 59135 (TM 784), P.Cair.Zen. II 59251 (TM 896), P.Diosk. 15 (TM 44730) and P.Cair.Zen. I 59032 (TM 692), where it is for the most part supplemented.

¹⁰ In this phrase, as in P.Cair.Zen. I 59093 and in P.Cair.Zen. III 59478 (quoted in the following section), σὺ is added.

¹¹ In the 3rd century BC letter P.Petr. III 53 (o) (TM 7481), καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις is supplemented and therefore its attestation is uncertain: “[καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις] ἐπιμελό[μενό]ς τε σαυ[τοῦ]” (ll. 7-8).

“καλῶς δ’ ἂν ποιοῖς καὶ σὺ ἐπι[μ]ελόμεν[ος] σα[υτο]ῦ ὅπως ὑγιαίνης” (P.Cair.Zen. I 59093; l. 19)

“[-ca.?- καλῶς δ’ ἂν πο]ιοῖς ἐπιμελόμενος σαυτοῦ ὅπως ὑγιαίνης” (PSI V 495; ll. 20-21)

Herakleitos perhaps had a preference for some uncommon features in the health wish: the potential construction καλῶς δ’ ἂν ποιοῖς ἐπιμελόμενος is not attested anywhere else other than in the two preserved letters from Herakleitos. Also the use of the conjunction ὅπως is uncommon (cf. *infra*, § 1.3). Yet, the low number of occurrences and the fragmentary beginning of the phrase in PSI V 495 prevent firm conclusions.

All (certain and possible) attestations of the final health wish with καλῶς ποιέω are dated to the 3rd century BC. Perhaps this was an early variant which became outdated in later periods.

1.1.2.3. Εὐχαριστέω

Εὐχαριστέω in the final health wish appears in only four letters, viz. in P.Eleph. 13 (TM 5847; from the 3rd century BC Milon *praktor* archive¹²), in P.Yale I 42 (TM 6206; from the 2nd century BC archive of Leon *toparches*¹³), in P.Lond. VII 2080 (TM 1641; from the 3rd century BC Zenon archive) and in P.Cair.Zen. IV 59575 (TM 1209; also from the Zenon archive). In the first three occurrences, the dative μοι is added to the phrase, e.g.:

“εὐχαριστήσεις οὔμ (= οὔν) μοι σαυτοῦ τε ἐπιμελόμενος” (P.Eleph. 13; l. 7)

In P.Cair.Zen. IV 59575, the plural ἡμῖν appears:

“εὐχαριστήσεις οὔν ἡμῖν σαυ[τοῦ τε ἐπιμελό]μενος ὅπως ἂν ὑγιαίνης” (ll. 5-6)

1.1.3. Sole participle ἐπιμελόμενος/ἐπιμελούμενος

The participle ἐπιμελόμενος sometimes appears without any of the above-mentioned main verbs. According to Ziemann, it is then grammatically subordinate to the closing formula ἔρρωσο (Ziemann 1910: 315). Mandilaras, on the other hand, calls this use of the participle “participle for imperative”, which is perhaps preferred over the longer final health wishes for reasons of brachylogy (Mandilaras 1973: 372-373).

Of the six occurrences, which are dated to the 2nd and the early 1st centuries BC, no less than four come from the archive of the officers Pates and Pachrates¹⁴, e.g.:

¹² For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/141 (accessed on May 21, 2015).

¹³ For more information on this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/131 (accessed on May 21, 2015).

¹⁴ The other letters are SB XVI 12321 (TM 4080), written in 97 BC and P.Stras. VIII 721 (TM 3965), written in 137 or 148 BC. The archive preserves the private correspondence between soldiers from Pathyris on campaign

“ἐπιμελόμενοι δὲ καὶ αὐτῶν ἴν’ ὑγ[ι]αίνητε” (SB XXIV 16069; TM 161; ll. 8-9)

These four private letters are the only Greek papyri in the archive —the four other documents in this archive are Demotic private letters. The expression of the final health wish without a main verb might thus be a shared linguistic element in the archive.

1.1.4. Variants

Further, there are two variants which interpret the standard formula ἐπιμέλου σεαυτοῦ ἴν’ ὑγιαίνης more loosely¹⁵:

“. πάντων δὲ [μάλιστα] παρακαλῶ τοῦ σώματος ἐπιμέλεσθαι” (BGU VIII 1874; TM 4953; l. 9)

“πρὸ τῶν ὅλων δέομαι τοῦ σώματος -ca.?- ἐπιμέλειαν ποιεῖσθαι ἴν’ ὑγιαίνης” (BGU XVI 2649; TM 23373; ll. 8-9)

1.2. Object of ἐπιμέλομαι¹⁶

In most cases, the object of the verb ἐπιμέλομαι is the addressee, expressed by the genitive of the reflexive pronouns σεαυτοῦ/σαυτοῦ and σεαυτῆς/σαυτῆς, depending of course on the addressee’s gender:

“σαυτοῦ ἐπιμ(έλου) ἴ(ν’) ὑ(γιαίνης)” (BGU VIII 1872; TM 4951; ll. 16-17)

“ἐπιμέλου δὲ σεαυτῆς ἵνα ὑγι(αίνης)” (SB XX 14280; TM 23704; ll. 7-9)

In P.Cair.Zen. I 59135 (TM 784), the following variant with the preposition ἅμα appears:

“χαρίζοιο ἄν οὔμ (= οὔν) μοι καὶ ἐπιμελόμενος ἅμα σαυτοῦ” (ll. 3-4)

In P.Diosk. 15 (TM 44730), the addressee is referred to by σου:

“σὺ δὲ χαριῆ μοι μεγάλως, οὐ μόνον δὲ ἐμοί, ἀλλὰ ὅλη τῇ πόλι (= πόλει), ἐπιμελόμενος σοῦ (= σοῦ), ἵνα ὑγιαίνων ἔρχῃ πρὸς τε τὴν ἀδελφὴν καὶ τὰ παιδιά

during the Judean-Syrian-Egyptian conflict of 103-101 BC. The letters had different senders and were also addressed to multiple addressees, among whom the officers Pates and Pachrates (cf. www.trismegistos.org/archive/59 (accessed on April 27, 2015)).

¹⁵ Perhaps a similar variant with an infinitive construction is found at line 27 of BGU VIII 1875 (TM 4954). The phrase is, unfortunately, too damaged to draw firm conclusions: “[-ca.?-]. ἐπ[ι]μέλεσθ(αι) ἴν’ ὑγι[αί]νης”.

¹⁶ Not all final health wishes have an object. In two letters from the archive of Athenodoros *dioiketes* (BGU XVI 2660; TM 23384 and BGU XVI 2645; TM 23369), the formula seems abbreviated and the object is omitted, e.g.: “πρὸ δὲ πάντ[ω] ἐπιμέλ(ου) ἴν’ ὑγι(αίνης)” (BGU XVI 2660; l. 16); also P.Tebt. II 408 (cf. *supra*, footnote 5) is a shortened final health wish. In P.Cair.Zen. I 59032 (TM 692) and BGU XVI 2628 (TM 23352), the lack of an object is probably the result of the fragmentary character of the final health wish.

καὶ πάντας τοὺς φίλους τούτου γὰρ ἡμῖν, μὰ τὸν Ἡρακλῆ, οὐθὲν μέγιστόν ἐστιν”
(ll. 24-29)

The object with a plural verb form is ἑαυτῶν, which is attested in eight letters¹⁷, e.g.:

“ἑαυτῶν δὲ ἐπιμελόμενοι ἴν’ ὑγιαίνητε” (SB XX 14731; ll. 7-8)

Ἐαυτῶν is the variant of the classical ὑμῶν ἑαυτῶν. The fact that the first and second person reflexive pronouns could be replaced by the third person reflexive pronoun, is a general linguistic phenomenon, already attested in Attic tragical language (LSJ, s.v. ἑαυτοῦ; Mayser 1970b: 63-65). The same phenomenon occurs, in my opinion, also in the following cases:

“χαριεῖ μέγਾਲως φροντίσας ὅπως ταῦτα [-ca.?-] ἐπιμελόμ[εν]ος δὲ καὶ ἑαυτοῦ, ἵνα ὑγι[αίνης]” (BGU X 2007; TM 5013; ll. 7-11)

“ἔρωτῶ σε μέγਾਲως καὶ παρακαλῶ, ἐπιμέλου ἑατῆς (= ἑαυτῆς) ἅμα καὶ τῆς μικρᾶς ὡς παρέλθ[η]τε τὸν χιμῶνα (= χειμῶνα), εἶνα (= ἵνα) εὐρομον (= εὐρωμεν) ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς) υἰένωντος (= ὑγιαίνοντας)” (P.Col. VIII 215; TM 17627; ll. 8-12)¹⁸

As far as I am concerned, ἑαυτοῦ and ἑαυτῆς should be interpreted as σεαυτοῦ and σεαυτῆς. In the last example, the health wish not only refers to the addressee, but also to a third person by means of the word string ἅμα καὶ τῆς μικρᾶς. Three other instances refer to third persons in the plain genitive, instead of with the construction ἅμα with genitive case, which is used in P.Col. VIII 215, e.g.:

“ἐπιμέλου δὲ καὶ σαυτοῦ καὶ τῶν παιδίω\ν/ ἴν’ ὑγιαίνητε” (P.Rein. II 109; TM 5270; ll. 5-6)¹⁹

In seventeen letters dated between the 3rd century BC and the Augustan period, the addressee is only indirectly mentioned in the expression τὸ σῶμα (and variants), e.g.:

“παρὰ πάντα δὲ χαριῆ τοῦ σώματος ἐπιμελόμενος, ἴν’ ὑγι[αίνης]” (BGU VIII 1871; TM 4950; ll. 11-12)

“εὐχαριστήσις οὖν μοι ἐπιμελούμενος τοῦ σώμα[τός] σοῦ [ἵ]να ὑγιαίνης” (P.Yale I 42; TM 6206; ll. 17-19)

¹⁷ I.e. SB XX 14728 (TM 164), SB XXIV 16069 (TM 161), SB XX 14731 (TM 158), SB XVIII 13171 (TM 2518), P.Cair.Zen. IV 59579 (TM 1213), BGU IV 1078 (TM 9455), P.Grenf. II 36 (TM 76) and SB I 5216 (TM 5636).

¹⁸ This final health wish bears resemblance to those governed by a politeness verb such as καλῶς ποιέω (discussed *supra*), but in P.Col. VIII 215 the ἐπιμέλου phrase is grammatically independent from the politeness verbs.

¹⁹ The other examples are P.IFAO II 10 (TM 25087) and P.Münch. III 58 (TM 78544).

P.Yale I 42 is the only attestation of σώματός σου. In one letter, both the reflexive pronoun and τὸ σῶμα are supplemented:

“[[προ]] πρὸ δὲ [π]άντων τοῦ σώμα[τος σεαυτοῦ ἐπιμέλου ἵνα -ca.?-]” (BGU XVI 2635; TM 23359; ll. 10-12)

Σεαυτοῦ is not attested elsewhere in combination with τὸ σῶμα. Even though it is possible that such a variant existed, but has not been preserved, other possible (perhaps even more probable) conjectures are τοῦ σώμα[τος ...] or τοῦ σώμα[τός σου...].

White saw an evolution in the use of the two objects: to his mind, τὸ σῶμα was used in the occurrences of the early Ptolemaic period, while the reflexive pronoun appeared only later (White 1986: 201-202). Both τὸ σῶμα and the reflexive pronoun are, however, already attested from the 3rd century BC onwards, as my data have shown²⁰. Overall, it seems that both variants coexisted in the Ptolemaic period.

In three letters dated to the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD²¹, the object of ἐπιμέλου is the infinitive ὑγιαίνειν or the noun ὑγίεια:

“τᾶλλα (= τὰ ἄλλα) δ’ ἐπιμέλου ὑγείας σου ἵνα σε καὶ εὐτυχοῦντα ἔχωμεν” (BGU XVI 2619; TM 23343; ll. 10-11)

“τὰ δ’ ἄλλα [.σε]αυτοῦ καὶ τοῦ ὑγιαίν[ε]ιν ἐπιμέλου—” (BGU XVI 2623; TM 23347; ll. 12-13)

“τὰ ἄλλα τοῦ ὑγιαίνειν ἐπιμέλου” (P.Col. VIII 212; TM 17625; ll. 7-8)

The verb ὑγιαίνω is commonly found in the purpose clause, as we will see in the next section. The examples above abbreviate that formula without loss of the original meaning: both the aspect of ὑγιαίνω and the reference to the addressee are present in the phrases of BGU XVI 2619 and BGU XVI 2623 —in P.Col. VIII 212, there is no explicit reference to the addressee.

1.3. Purpose clause

Usually the final health wish has a purpose clause²², in which we (mostly) find the verb ὑγιαίνω in the present subjunctive mood in the second person singular (ὑγιαίνης) or plural (ὑγιαίνητε)²³, e.g.:

²⁰ The use of σώματος is not attested after the Augustan period, whereas the reflexive pronoun continues in the Roman period, but this difference might be due to coincidence: against seventeen attestations of τὸ σῶμα, there are over a hundred occurrences of the reflexive pronoun.

²¹ Possibly, this variant is thus a later evolution, but the low number of occurrences prevents a definite conclusion.

²² About twenty letters do not have a purpose clause: in some fragmentary letters, the purpose clause was perhaps lost; in others, another subclause with a different meaning was added, e.g.: “σὺ οὖν καλῶς ποιήσεις

“καὶ σαυτοῦ ἐπιμέλου ἴν’ ὑγιαίνης” (PSI XV 1513; TM 69308; ll. 9-10)

“καὶ ἑαυτῶν δ’ ἐπιμελόμενοι ἴν’ ὑγιαίνητε” (SB XVIII 13171; TM 2518; ll. 11-12)

In P.Oxy. IV 805 (TM 20458), the participle of εὐτυχέω is added to the purpose clause:

“σεαυτῆς ἐπιμέλου ἴν’ ὑγιαίνης εὐτυ(χοῦσα)”²⁴

In eight other documents, all dated to the 2nd century BC²⁵, the verb ὑγιαίνω appears subordinate to the verb ἀσπάζομαι in the purpose clause²⁶, e.g.:

“χαρίζοι<ο> δ’ ἂν μάλιστα τοῦ σώματος ἐπιμελ[ό]μενος ἴν’ ὑγιαίνοντα σὲ ἀσπασώμεθα” (BGU XIV 2418; TM 4014; ll. 11-14)

In this type of final health wish, ἀσπάζομαι refers to the physical reunion of sender and addressee²⁷.

In four purpose clauses, the sender formulates the wish to find the addressee safe and sound in his own wordings, e.g.:

“ἐπιμέλου δὲ καὶ σαυτοῦ ὅπως ὑγιαίνης καὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐρρωμένος ἔλθης” (P.Petr. II 11 (1); TM 7667; ll. 8-9)²⁸

Also with regard to the conjunction, there is variation: in over a hundred instances the conjunction is ἵνα, while in eleven letters only ὅπως is used. The less successful variant is no longer found after the 2nd century BC²⁹.

σαυτοῦ τε ἐπιμελόμενος ἕως ἂν ἐγὼ παραγένωμαι” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59478; TM 1116; ll. 8-10). But in some letters, an abbreviated variant without purpose clause was the intended phrase, e.g. “καὶ ἐπιμέλου σαυτοῦ” (P.Mich. VIII 464; TM 17238; l. 16). The editor of BGU XVI 2635 (TM 23359) supplements the beginning of the purpose subclause, but it is in my opinion too tentative to supplement such a large part of the phrase: “[προ] πρὸ δὲ [π]άντων τοῦ σώμα[τος σεαυτοῦ ἐπιμέλου ἵνα -ca.?-]” (ll. 10-12).

²³ Sometimes incorrect spellings of the conjunctive have not been corrected: “τὰ δ’ ἄλλα σαυ[τοῦ ἐπιμέλο]ν ἴν’ ὑγιαίνεις (= ὑγιαίνης; my remark)” (P.Princ. III 186; TM 17278; ll. 15-16) and “καὶ σεα[τοῦ ἐπιμέλου] ἴν’ ὑγιαί]νεις (= ὑγιαίνης; my remark)” (BGU XVI 2656; TM 23380; ll. 18-19).

²⁴ The editor did not number the lines.

²⁵ The low number of occurrences prevents us from drawing any conclusions about the limited time span of this type of health wish.

²⁶ I.e. BGU XIV 2418 (TM 4014), P.Münch. III 58 (TM 78544), P.Diosk. 16 (TM 44731), P.Diosk. 17 (TM 44732), P.Ross.Georg. II 4 (TM 78739), P.Tebt. III.1 768 (TM 7848), P.Bad. IV 48 (TM 5830) and UPZ I 61 (TM 3452). In the last letter, the full stop should be removed and lines 29-31 should be read as one single formula: “ἐπιμέλου δὲ τοῦ σώματος. ὅπως ὑγιαίνοντας ὑμᾶς ἀσπασώμεθα πασώμεθα (= ἀσπασώμεθα)” (ll. 29-31).

²⁷ The meaning of this type of phrases is “take care of yourself so that I/we may greet you in health”.

²⁸ The other examples are BGU XVI 2619, P.Col. VIII 215 and P.Diosk. 15, quoted *supra*.

²⁹ This is consistent with the findings of Clarysse that ἵνα became more popular than ὅπως after the 2nd century BC, and that ὅπως ultimately disappeared in favor of ἵνα (Clarysse 2010b: 43-45).

1.4. Extensions

1.4.1. Relative subclause³⁰

In ten private letters the final health wish is expanded with a relative subclause, e.g.:

“καὶ σεαυτοῦ ἐπιμελοῦ ἴν’ ὑγιαίνης, ὃ δὴ μέγιστόν ἐστι” (BGU IV 1204; TM 18654; ll. 7-8)

The relative subclause has no fixed wordings as the quotes *infra* will show, but it has one main idea: it puts extra emphasis on the wish for good health.

The above example BGU IV 1204 comes from the 1st century BC Asklepiades archive. In BGU IV 1208 (TM 18658) of the same archive, a similar formula is found:

“[τὰ δὲ] ἄλλα χαριεῖ τοῦ σώμα(τος) [ἐπι]με(λό)μενος ἴν’ ὑγιένης (= ὑγιαίνης), ὃ δὴ μέγιστον ἡγοῦμαι” (ll. 48-50)

The other eight attestations come from the contemporary Athenodoros archive³¹, e.g.:

“παρὰ πάντα ἐπιμέλου σεα<υ>τοῦ [ἵ]να ὑγι[αίν]ης ὃ ἐστὶ μοι εὐκτότατον παρὰ πᾶσι τοῖ<ς> θεοῖς” (BGU XVI 2617; TM 23341; ll. 7-9)

Wilcken observed the large number of attestations in those two archives and suggested that it was an example of *lokale Eigentümlichkeiten* (Wilcken 1920b: 283). In fact, the case is even stronger: there are no other occurrences of the final health wish with a relative subclause except for those in the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives. Rather than a ‘local peculiarity’, this phrase seems to be a shared linguistic element connecting the two archives.

Some final health wishes can be considered as predecessors of the extended formula with a relative subclause, e.g. the 2nd century BC letter P.Diosk. 15 quoted above³². This phrase expresses the idea that the addressee’s health is the thing that matters most to the sender, but they do not use a relative subclause. So, emphasizing concern for the addressee’s health, was already attested earlier, but to express this idea in a relative subclause added to the final health wish, was presumably a later innovation. Since the

³⁰ This section has been published in GRBS 52: 278-280 (i.e. Nachtergaele 2013: 278-280).

³¹ Viz. BGU XVI 2600 (TM 23323, 2617 (TM 23341), 2630 (TM 23354), 2643 (TM 23367), 2644 (TM 23368), 2659 (TM 23383), 2661 (TM 23385) and 2663 (TM 23387). The relative subclause also occurs in a few official letters from the Athenodoros archive, e.g. BGU XVI 2624 (TM 23348) and BGU XVI 2631 (TM 23355).

³² Two other ‘predecessors’ are PSI V 495 (TM 2123; 3rd century BC; ll. 20-21): “[?- καλῶς δ’ ἂν πο]ιοῖς ἐπιμελόμενος σαυτοῦ ὅπως ὑγιαίνης οὐθὲν γὰρ τούτου μεῖζόν ἐστιν” and P.Diosk. 17 (TM 44732; 2nd century BC; ll. 24-27): “τὰ δε σαυτοῦ ἐπιμελόμενος, ἴν’ ὑγιαίνοντά σε ἀσπάζωμαι. τούτου γάρ μοι μέγιστον οὐθὲν ἐστιν”.

number of attestations is low, the relative subclause probably did not become widely used. That is no surprise, since the final health wish σεαυτοῦ ἐπιμελοῦ ἵν' ὑγιαίνης, to which the relative clause was added, fell into disuse in the Roman period. In other words, the new final health wish with a relative clause, which only appeared in the 1st century BC, did not have much chance to become widespread; it presumably disappeared, together with the health wish to which it was attached.

1.4.2. Intensifiers

In most letters, the final health wish appears without an intensifier, but in about 26 formulas, from the 2nd century BC onwards intensifiers do appear. Παρὰ πάντα is attested in six private letters, e.g.:

“παρὰ πάντα δὲ χαριῆ τοῦ σώματος ἐπιμελόμενος, ἵν' ὑγι[α]ίνης” (BGU VIII 1871; TM 4950; ll. 11-12)

Ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα occurs only in P.Diosk. 16 (TM 44731) and μγάλως in P.Diosk. 15 (TM 44730), and μάλιστα is found twice, viz. in P.Cair.Goodspeed 4 (TM 78157) and BGU VIII 1875 (TM 4954)³³:

“[-ca.?- πάντ]ων δὲ μάλιστα χα[ρι]εῖ τοῦ σώ(ματος) [-ca.?- ἐπιμελόμενο]ς ἵν' ὑ(γιαίνης)” (ll. 17-18)

This phrase is damaged at the beginning. If the editor's suggestion of πάντων is correct, we can perhaps supplement the intensifier πρὸ πάντων. This intensifier appears in eleven other letters dated to the 1st century BC or the 1st century AD³⁴. Also another intensifier known from the initial health wish, πρὸ (τῶν) ὄλων is attested four times in the final health wish, viz., e.g.:

“πρὸ τῶν ὄλων σεαυτοῦ ἐπιμέλου ἵν' ὑγιαίνης ὃ δὴ μέγιστον ἡγοῦμαι” (BGU XVI 2644; TM 23368; ll. 13-14)

In three letters (P.Münch. III 58; TM 78544, P.Diosk. 16 and P.Tebt. III.1 768; TM 7848), the intensifier τὴν ταχίστην is found in the purpose clause, e.g.:

“ἐπιμέλου δὲ καὶ σεαυτοῦ ἵν' ὑγιαίνοντά σε τὴν ταχίστην ἀσπασώμεθα” (P.Tebt. III.1 768; ll. 26-28)

³³ It is further completely supplemented in BGU VIII 1874 (TM 4953).

³⁴ In BGU VIII 1874, there does not seem to be enough space to supplement πρὸ πάντων: “ . πάντων δὲ [μάλιστα] παρακαλῶ τοῦ σώματος ἐπιμέλεσθαι.” (ll. 7-8).

Like in the quote above, all attestations of τὴν ταχίστην are found in the purpose clause with ἀσπάζομαι.

1.4.3. Τὰ ἄλλα and τὰ λοιπά

Some final health wishes add τὰ ἄλλα (Koskenniemi 1956: 134), e.g.:

“τὰ δ’ ἄλλα σουτοῦ ἐπιμελόμενος ἵν’ ὑγιένης (= ὑγιαίνης)” (SB XVI 12321; TM 4080; ll. 12-13)

This variant is found in 25 private letters from the late 2nd century BC onwards. Hence, τὰ ἄλλα seems to be a later development (cf. White 1986: 202). Τὰ λοιπά appears in P.Cair.Zen. IV 59579 (TM 1213), but it is not directly connected to the verb ἐπιμέλωμαι³⁵:

“καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ ἀνδρίζεσθε καὶ ἐπιμέ[λεσθε ἑαυτῶν ἵνα ὑγιαίνητε]” (ll. 5-6)

I have found another possible attestation of τὰ λοιπά in the final health wish of P.Oxy. VII 1061 (TM 20350):

“ἀσπάζεται σε Ἀθηναροῦς καὶ τὰ παιδιά τὰ λοιπά. ἐπιμέλου σεα(υτοῦ) ἵν’ ὑγι[α(ίνης)]” (ll. 24-26)

The adjective λοιπός is rarely found in greetings: it is only attested in three letters from the 4th century AD archive of Nephros (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, footnote 117). Furthermore, the phrase τὰ ἄλλα and τὰ λοιπά are usually found at the beginning of the final health wish. I therefore suggest interpreting lines 24-26 as follows: “ἀσπάζεται σε Ἀθηναροῦς καὶ τὰ παιδιά. τὰ λοιπὰ ἐπιμέλου σεα(υτοῦ) ἵν’ ὑγι[α(ίνης)]”.

In P.Diosk. 17 (TM 44732), it is tempting to supplement τὰ ἄλλα or τὰ λοιπά, but these conjectures are too short to fit the gap and the reading of τὰ is uncertain:

“τὰ δε σουτοῦ ἐπιμελόμενος, ἵν’ ὑγιαίνοντά σε ἀσπάζωμαι” (ll. 24-26)

2. Conclusion

The final health wish ἐπιμέλου σεαυτοῦ ἵν’ ὑγιαίνης remained in use only from the 3rd century BC until the 1st century AD (with a few later remnants). Nevertheless, a number of variants to the standard phrase developed. Given the low number of attestations of each variant, it is often difficult to decide if the particular variant was linked to a

³⁵ As far as I know, no scholar has already discussed this variant. In P.Cair.Zen. III 59522 (TM 1159) and P.Cair.Zen. II 59192 (TM 838), both letters from the Zenon archive, τὰ λοιπά occurs in a phrase in which the sender exhorts the addressee to look after certain people or goods, e.g.: “δίδου δὲ καὶ Διονυσίωι ἄς ἂν ἐνδεμῆι (= ἐνδημῆι) ἡμέρας ἄρτων α , οἴνου κο(τύλας) β, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ ἐπιμέλου αὐτοῦ” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59522; ll. 20-25).

specific period or a social milieu. The relative subclauses attached to some of the final health wishes, however, all come from the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives. This feature seems to have been a shared linguistic item in the epistolary language of the archives.

Chapter 7 Closing formula

Most private letters end with a closing formula: in about 2500 letters from my corpus, such a phrase has been preserved¹. However, in ostraca the closing formula is regularly omitted, no doubt due to lack of space (cf. Fournet 2003: 486). Also in Late Antique letters the habit of ending the letter with a closing formula seems to be disappearing (cf. Ziemann 1910: 350)².

The papyrological millennium saw the rise and fall of various epistolary phrases³. In this gradual process, new formulas emerged, coexisted for a certain time with older

¹ Sometimes, the closing formula was mingled with the date, e.g.: “ς (ἔτους) ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι Παῦνι φίλ(τατε). κς.” (SB XX 14453; TM 14883; ll. 8-10).

² Kortus regarded the absence of a standard closing formula as a sign of an unlettered writer: “*Der formale Abschluß eines Briefes wird durch die Schluß klausel gebildet. Diese fehlt in Papyrus-Briefen selten, wobei dann davon auszugehen ist, daß es sich um einen ungebildeten Schreiber handelt, der diese Formel nicht kannte*” (Kortus 1999: 44). This kind of explanations for variations are also found in Ziemann, almost 100 years earlier (cf. Ziemann 1910: 275). From the point of view of variationist sociolinguistics, I do not agree with this statement and acknowledge that there are various reasons for deviating from the standard phraseology.

³ In this chapter the phrases are discussed in chronological order. Only a handful of writers do not use the formulaic phraseology, but express a wish in their own words at the end of the letter; these have not been taken into account. The phrase of P.Herm. 6 (TM 21125) is clearly inspired by the topos of hoping to find the addressee again safe and sound, which was popular in the initial health wish (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.3): “ἔρρωμένον σε ἀπολάβοιμι, δέσποτα ἀδελφε, τῶν ἡμῖν βουλομένων ἐνδόξως τυχόντα” (ll. 33-34).

Some letters use the imperative form of verbs other than ἔρρωμαι to express the health wish, e.g. “εὖ πράττετε” (P.Oxy. I 115; TM 28407; l. 12), “εὐθύ[μει], κυρία” (P.Ross.Georg. III 2; TM 17952; l. 32), “ἔρρωσο καὶ καλῶς ἔχε” (P.Oxy. XLVII 3357; TM 25948; l. 19), and “ὕγιαίνε” in BGU VIII 1874 (TM 4953; l. 14), BGU XVI 2661 (TM 23385; l. 9) and SB XXIV 15909 (TM 41420; l. 8), dated to the 1st centuries BC and AD. Mandilaras only summed up two attestations of ὕγιαίνε and ascribed this variant to Ptolemaic times (Mandilaras 1973: 304). Yet, in PSI XV 1553 (TM 114331) and P.Iand. II 22 (TM 20183), the respective forms ὑγιένον (l. 18) and ὑγιέον (l. 7) have been interpreted as “*ein Schreibfehler für ὕγιαίνον [...], was wiederum eine Hybridform (Imperativ Präsens mit Aorist-Endung) für ὕγιαίνε ("sei gesund") darstellt*” (Papathomas 2010b: 210-211). The fact that these letters are dated to, respectively, the 3rd and the 7th centuries AD, refutes Mandilaras’ thesis.

Some other *ad hoc* phrases are short Christian prayers, e.g.: “ἡ ἀγία καὶ ζωοποιὸς τριάς εἴη μεθ’ ὑμῶν” (PSI XIV 1425; TM 35054; l. 8), “εὐχ(ο) δὲ περὶ ἐμο(ῦ)” (P.Iand. VI 103; TM 36108; l. 17), “ἐ[ῖρ]ή[ν]η σοι ἀπὸ τοῦ

ones and often —but not always— replaced them in the end. The old and the new variants can even appear together in one letter, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι καὶ ἐπιστέλλειν περὶ ὧν ἂν θέλης. ἀσπάζεται σε Δημήτριος καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐμοὶ καὶ οἱ φίλοι καὶ γνώριμοι. ἔρρωσό μοι, τιμιώτατε” (P.Herm. 12; TM 28724; ll. 12-16)

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, ἀδελφὴ γλυκυτάτη. ἔρρω(σο)” (P.Hamb. II 192; TM 30461; ll. 30-33)

“ἔρρωσθαί σαι ἐν Κ(υρί)ῳ, ὁ Κ(ύριός) σαι διαφυλάξει ἡμῖν” (SB VIII 9746; TM 33802; ll. 34-35)⁴

Another type of overlap is found in P.Oxy. XXXI 2603 (TM 32694). The closing formula is a mix of the ἔρρωσο and the ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι phrase:

“ἔρρωσο ὑμᾶς εὔχομαι” (l. 33)

Often, the closing formula was written in a different hand than the rest of the letter; for a sender who could write, but who nevertheless used a scribe, writing the closing formula by one’s own hand was a polite way of closing the letter, perhaps comparable to our present-day signatures.

1. Ἐρρωσο

Occurring in approximately 1250 private letters, the closing formula ἔρρωσο⁵ (and ἔρρωσθε) was widely used⁶ during the entire papyrological millennium: it is attested from the 3rd century BC until the 7th century AD⁷. In this period, the popular new variant

θεοῦ” (P.Ness. 68; TM 21498; l. 6) and “ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰη(σοῦ) [Χρ(ιστοῦ) μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν]” (SB XIV 11532; TM 32935; l. 11).

Two letters use ἔρρωμαι in a periphrastic construction: “ἔρρωμένος μοι διατελοῖς μετὰ τῶν φιλτάτων κύριέ μου ἀσύγκριτε Ἀλύπι” (P.Flor. II 140 *recto*; TM 10996; ll. 8-11) and “ἔρρωμένος ε. θυμ[.] διατελοῖς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον, δέσποτα τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς, ἀδελφε, σεμνολόγημα ἐμόν” (P.Stras. IV 286; TM 32703; ll. 13-18).

⁴ The occurrence of both formulas cannot be explained as a transitional stage, as Ziemann saw it: “*Quod ambas clausulas is eiusdem epistulae fine coniunctas interdum videmus, haec quoque transitus illius sunt vestigia*” (Ziemann 1910: 337). When the letter P.Hamb. II 192 was written in the 3rd century AD, for instance, the phrase ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι was already widely attested. Furthermore, also duplications of one and the same formula appear, e.g. “ἔρρω(σο). ἔρρω(σο)” (P.Oxy. XLII 3070; TM 25083; ll. 8-9), which suggests that the occurrence of two closing formulas is a more general phenomenon.

⁵ Translation: “Farewell”.

⁶ Ἐρρωσο is also attested in the early documentary letters outside Egypt, e.g. in a lead letter from Panticapeum in the Black Sea region, dated between 400 and 350 BC (cf. Ceccarelli 2013: 341-342).

⁷ The dating of P.Oxy. I 120 (TM 31346) to the 3rd century AD instead of to the 4th century AD as the editors suggested, was based on the occurrence of ἔρρωσο, which was thought not to be found after the 3rd century AD (cf. Mandilaras 1973: 296). In the light of this present investigation, the argumentation for a date in the 3rd

—ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι— arose, but it did not (completely) dispel the phrase ἔρρωσο⁸. This may have something to do with the fact that the formula ἔρρωσο may have been chosen for the purpose of brachylogy.

The singular ἔρρωσο has roughly 1200 attestations. The plural ἔρρωσθε occurs about 25 times in letters addressed to multiple addressees: this is clear from the opening formula, or from other phrases e.g.: “μὴ ἐνοχλεῖ[τ]ξ” (PSI VI 552; TM 779; ll. 19-20). In the approximately 25 remaining instances, the expression ἔρρωσθε appears in a letter to one single addressee or in a fragmentary letter in which the number of addressee(s) is unknown, e.g.:

“Ἐπώνυχος Σαραπίων τῷ φιλτάτῳ πολλὰ χαίρειν. [...] ἔρρωσθε(ε)” (O.Amst. 22; TM 70369; dated to the late 2nd century AD)

Since αἰ and ε are frequently confused (Gignac 1976: 191-192), the closing formula is in these cases possibly intended as ἐρρωσθαί, as well as in other instances from the Roman period: it would then be a short variant of ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι; shortening this formula is, incidentally, not uncommon (cf. *infra*, § 2.4), e.g.:

“ἐρρωσθαί σε. τὰ κεραμι (= κεράμια) ἐπειδὴ αἰτοῦν εἰς προθυμιο (= προθυμῆιον) πολὺ ναῦλον. ἐρρω(σθαί)” (SB XII 11021; TM 25066; ll. 15-17)

In the first example, an abbreviated form of ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι appears in line 15 (“ἐρρωσθαί σε”). Then, a postscript is added in the margin. Ἐρρω(σθαί) seems to be a second, even more shortened variant of ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι⁹. Yet, in general, the forms ἔρρωσθε and ἐρρωσθαί¹⁰ are problematic in letters to a single addressee and it is not clear whether they are intended as the plural ἔρρωσθε or as the short form of ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι. Also among editors, there seems to be a great deal of confusion: sometimes, ἔρρωσθαί this is interpreted as ἔρρωσθε, e.g. in O.Claud. II 298 (TM 29711; l. 8), in other cases, the form ἔρρωσθαί is not explained (e.g. SB VI 9017 Nr. 16; TM 25243; l. 11), and in examples like O.Claud. I 162 (TM 24170) and P.Yale I 80 (TM 26923), the editors seem to suggest with their accentuation in ἐρρωσθε that the form should be interpreted as the

century AD is no longer valid; and perhaps the date of P.Oxy. I 120 should be altered. Similarly, Mandilaras' thesis that the plural ἔρρωσθε does not appear after the Ptolemaic period (Mandilaras 1973: 304) is refuted by my updated data, which contain letters as late as the 7th century AD with this verb form (e.g. P.Ness. 75; TM 39300).

⁸ My data thus do not confirm Ziemann's hypothesis that “*ex initio saec. II. p. formula ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι magis magisque progreditur: magnam habet delectationem animadvertere, quomodo nova clausula paulatim superet et depellat veterem [i.e. ἔρρωσο; DN]*” (Ziemann 1910: 337).

⁹ In my opinion, only SB XII 11021 is a certain attestation of this shortened variant of ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι. The other forms of ἔρρωσθε/ἐρρωσθαί are unclear.

¹⁰ I deliberately do not accentuate these forms.

infinitive ἔρρωσθαι (but they do not propose this reading). Since we cannot retrieve the writer’s intentions, I will leave these approximately 25 intermediate forms out of the investigation¹¹.

In two ἔρρωσο formulas, the sender explicitly mentions his own name in the closing formula:

“Σουμαῖος | ἔρρωσο” (P.Yadin II 52; TM 29268; ll. 20-21)

“[Ἄννα]νος | ἔρρωσο ἀδελφέ” (P.Yadin II 59; TM 29269; ll. 6-7)

Both letters were not written in Egypt, but in Palestine. They belong to one and the same collection of Greek documents from the Hebraic military milieu and are dated to the period of the Second Jewish Revolt (Lifshitz 1962: 243-244). The usual language of correspondence was Hebrew, but apparently these letters were written in a bilingual environment. In P.Yadin II 52, the sender comments on his language choice and explains that he did not feel like writing in Hebrew (ll. 11-15). Yet, the language shows some Hebraisms (Lifshitz 1962: e.g. 246-247)¹².

1.1. Personal preferences¹³

Hierokles of the Zenon archive is shown to have changed his habits regarding the closing formula over time: until about May 257 BC, he did not include a closing formula; later he started to use ἔρρωσο. Since almost every letter that Hierokles received must have had this closing phrase, the sender probably conformed to the general practice of adding ἔρρωσο (Evans 2005: 157-158).

Hierokles’ letters offer a unique opportunity to study an individual’s language over time, since many letters are autographs and are precisely dated. Other scholars have tried to identify similar changing patterns in a sender’s writing style, but without success. Ziemann, for instance, studied the archive of Eutychides and suggested that

¹¹ Another intermediate form ἔρρωσθ(αι) —deliberately not accented— can be supplemented in P.Mich. VIII 502 (TM 27112; l. 20): “ἔρρωσθ()”.

I am not the first researcher dealing with this problem. Also Fournet, in his study of the letters of the praesidia, does not include the intermediate forms within the category of the ἔρρωσο phrases, nor within that of the ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι formulas: “*Je regroupe ici les formes dont on ne peut savoir si elles représentent un infinitif (ἔρρωσθαι) ou, quand la lettre a (ou peut avoir) plusieurs destinataires, un impératif pluriel (ἔρρωσθε)*” (Fournet 2003: 487).

¹² Doering remarked that the fact that the sender writes his own name in the closing formula, is peculiar (Doering 2012: 75); but he did not provide an explanation for this phenomenon. Lifshitz 1962 did not mention this feature.

¹³ Another uncommon use of the closing formula is found in P.Mil.Vogl. I 11 (TM 78532). In this letter, the closing formula ἔρρωσο is combined with the formula giving information about the sender’s health, which is in fact typical of the initial health wish (cf. *supra*, chapter 4): “ἔρρωσο, ἐρρώμην δὲ καὶ αὐτός” (ll. 9-10).

Eutychides started to prefer the formula ἔρρωσθαί σε εὖχομαι over ἔρρωσο. But his letters cannot be precisely dated between AD 90 and 133. There is thus no way of ascertaining whether the letters with ἔρρωσθαί σε εὖχομαι were written later than the other letters (Ziemann 1910: 337). The scholar developed a similar hypothesis for Lucius Bellienus Gemellus, whose letters have been preserved in the archive of Epagathos: in his early correspondence Gemellus would have written ἔρρωσο, whereas in the later letter P.Fay. 117 (TM 10782; dated to AD 108), he used the elaborate phrase and “*novem sequitur morem*” (Ziemann 1910: 337). Whereas Ziemann presented this as a permanent change, the reality is different: in a letter from AD 110 (P.Fay. 118; TM 10783), Lucius Bellienus Gemellus still uses ἔρρωσο. Most likely Eutychides and Lucius Bellienus Gemellus simply varied between different formulas, as so many other letter writers.

2. Ἐρρωσθαί σε εὖχομαι

From the (late?) 1st century AD onwards¹⁴, the new phrase ἔρρωσθαί σε εὖχομαι¹⁵ rapidly starts spreading¹⁶. It remains in use until the 6th century AD, and is attested in a total of about 1100 private letters. The formula is very similar to the initial health wish πρὸ πάντων εὖχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν, which started to appear from the 2nd century BC onwards, and which became dominant in the Roman period (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3). The chronology of the two phrases clearly shows that the new closing formula was inspired by the new initial health wish—and not the other way around. Moreover, when it comes to the initial health wish, there are clear traces of predecessors of the phrase εὖχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3). Also the fact that the first occurrences of the new closing formula already had the standard phraseology with even a fixed word order ἔρρωσθαί σε εὖχομαι, points in the same direction¹⁷. In other words, this study has enabled me to map the patterns of language change for the new initial health wish and the new closing formula¹⁸.

¹⁴ In P.Leid.Inst. 84 (TM 78489), dated to the 1st century BC, this phrase was supplemented: “ἐρρωσθαί σε εὖχομαι. -ca.?-]” (l. 8). Given the early date, I doubt this conjecture and would suggest “ἐρρωσο -ca.?-]”. PUG II 60 (TM 24946), dated to the early 1st century AD, should—according to Clarysse—be dated to the 2nd century AD.

¹⁵ Translation: “I pray that you are well”.

¹⁶ In the letters precisely dated to the 2nd century AD, the number of occurrences of ἔρρωσο and ἔρρωσθαί σε εὖχομαι is more or less equal (219 vs. 242), but in the 3rd century AD, ἔρρωσθαί σε εὖχομαι clearly gains the upper hand with almost 400 occurrences against 46 attestations of ἔρρωσο.

¹⁷ Yet, P.Oxy. XLII 3062 (TM 25082; vaguely dated to the 1st century AD) has the inversed word order which perhaps mirrors the word order of the initial health wish: “εὖχομαί σε ἐρρωσθαί, ἄδελφε”; ll. 12-13).

¹⁸ This study could answer a question which was thought to be irretrievable (Ziemann 1910: 335).

2.1. Main verb

The common main verb in the closing formula is εὔχομαι (or εὐχόμεθα)¹⁹. Only a dozen of documents have another main verb. Βούλομαι is attested in the closing formula of eight private letters²⁰. Besides the occurrences in private letters, it has been acknowledged that this verb is typical of official correspondence (Ziemann 1910: 337-338; Jördens 2011: 233). Indeed, phrases like ἐρρῶσθαί σε βούλομαι are regularly found in official letters, e.g. in P.Oxy. XLVII 3343 (TM 22456), a letter from a certain Claudius Iulianus to the *strategos* Androstheneas about, among other things, the handling of petitions. Among the eight private letters with βούλομαι, P.Brem. 6 balances between private and official. This letter is preserved in the archive of Apollonios *strategos* and is written to the protagonist. The external address “Ἀπολλωνίω στρατηγῶι παρὰ Φλ(αοῦ) Φιλοξένου ἐπιστρα(τήγου) Θηβαΐδος” (ll. 8-10) suggests that this is an official letter, but the content of the letter is private: it is a letter of recommendation, a text type that is commonly counted as private. Similarly, θέλω mainly appears in official

¹⁹ As in P.Yadin II 52 and 59 (cf. *supra*, § 1), the sender of the closing formula sometimes adds his personal name. In P.Herm. 14 (TM 33472), the following phrase appears: “(hand 2) Κορέλλιος ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις, κύριέ μου υἱέ. (hand 3) Δίδυμος ἐρρῶσθαί σε πολλοῖς χρόνοις εὔχομαι, κύριέ μου πάτρων. (hand 4) Φιδείας ἐρρῶσθαί σε πολλοῖς χρόνοις εὔχομαι, κύριέ μου πάτρων. (hand 5) Πατώς ἐρρῶσθαί σε πολλοῖς χρόνοις εὔχομαι, κύριέ μου πάτρων. (hand 6) Ἀλῆς ἐρρῶσθαί σε πολλοῖς χρόνοις εὔχομαι, κύριέ μου πάτρων.” (ll. 6-15). Since the opening formula with the senders’ names are lost, it is not clear whether the senders of this closing wish are indeed the senders of the letter; however, the verb forms in the body of the letter show that there was more than one sender. If these persons were indeed the senders, it would be a polite gesture of each of them to sign the letter by their own hands —moreover, the insertion of the personal names was necessary for clarification.

Also the context of the closing formula in PSI XV 1553 (TM 114331) is not clear: “(hand 2) ἐρρῶσθαί σε vac. ? εὐχόμεθα ὑγιεινόν (= ὑγιεινόν or ὑγίαινον). (hand 3) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι, ἄδελφε. (hand 4) ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι, κύριέ μου Σαραπίων, vac. ? πανοικησίᾳ ἐγὼ Θέων” (ll. 17-21). Since this letter has two senders (cf. opening formula), the two first closing formulas should be attributed to them. The writer of the third closing formula identifies himself as Theon —but his relation to the correspondents is beyond retrieval; without the addition of his name, it would also have been unclear to the addressee who was responsible for this wish. Also in SB XVIII 13762 (TM 36300), it is not clear who uttered the wish: “ἐγὼ δὲ ὁ ν[εῶτ(ερος)] Ἀναστάσιος ὁ ὑμέτερ(ος) δοῦλ(ος) πάντοτε εὔχομαι ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑγίας ὑμῶν ἵνα καὶ [-ca.?-]” (ll. 31-32). The sender’s name is lost; in this letter, not only Anastasios, but also a certain Phoibasias writes in the first person (cf. ll. 29-30; from which scholars concluded that she was the sender cf. Pintaudi and Thomas 1986: 162; Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 235). Since other people, such as Phoibasias, take up the pen and write from a first person perspective, we can, in my opinion, not know who the sender was and what Anastasios’ role in the letter was.

²⁰ I.e. P.Mich. VIII 464 (TM 17238), P.Mich. VIII 500 (TM 27110), P.Bon. 44 (TM 27068), P.Brem. 6 (TM 19591), P.Brem. 61 (TM 19646), P.Mil.Vogl. II 76 (TM 15188) P.Erl. 118 (TM 31409) and P.Iand. VI 102 (TM 36107). In P.Bon. 44 two main verbs, εὔχομαι and βούλομαι, are asyndetically combined in a strange construction: “ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὔχομαι πανοικεῖ βούλομαι” (l. 9). The editor suggested to add <καί>, (Coppola 1933: 666). Whereas this would bring a solution to the grammatical problem in this sentence, the fact remains that a closing formula with two verbs is unattested elsewhere.

letters²¹, but is also attested in a private letter which is not part of my corpus, O.Did. 437 (TM 144998). Finally, ἐπιθυμέω appears only in P.Worp 50 (TM 115579) as the main verb in the closing formula²².

2.2. Words expressing the health wish

Unlike the formulas of the initial health wish, almost all occurrences of the closing formula have the infinitive construction²³. In most occurrences, ἔρρωμαι is the verb of the infinitive clause, but in 23 letters from the 1st century AD and later (also) (an)other verb(s) expressing a wish for a good health appear(s)²⁴. In ten letters²⁵, the infinitive ὑγιαίνειν appears in the closing formula. In five of them, the word order is reversed, resulting in a phrase which is very similar to the initial health wish, e.g.:

“πρὸ πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγα[ί]νεῖν (= ὑγιαίνειν)” (P.Mich. VIII 485; ll. 19-20)²⁶

²¹ E.g. O.Krok. I 41 (TM 88630) or P.Giss. I 11 (TM 19413).

²² Further, it occurs in the private letter O.Did. 437 (TM 144998) and in an unedited ostrakon from the Eastern Desert (cf. Fournet 2003: 487). The verb ἐπέυχομαι was previously thought to be attested in some letters from the Heroninos archive (e.g. SB VI 9466; TM 14238, P.Flor. II 252; TM 11138 and P.Flor. II 242; TM 11123), but Rathbone reads the simple εὔχομαι in these attestations (Rathbone 1988: 161).

²³ Only in SB XVIII 13762 (TM 36300, quoted above in footnote 19), a substantive construction appears; in P.Oxy. XX 2276 (TM 30489), an AcP construction occurs: “ἀσπάζομαι κατ’ ὄνομα τὰ ἀβάσκ[αν]τὰ [σο]υ παιδία, μεθ’ ὧν ἐρρωμένην σε <ἐ>ν κν[ρίω θ]εῶ εὔχομαι” (ll. 28-30). The fact that all other instances have the infinitive clause supports my hypothesis that the closing formula ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι is based on the similar initial health wish: in the initial health wish there had always been a great deal of variation, also with regard to the grammatical constructions. The closing formula seems to have copied the most popular variant —viz. the construction with infinitive clause— from the initial health wish.

²⁴ Besides wishes for good health, occasionally also other *topoi* and *ad hoc* wishes are expressed in the closing formula. In P.Ryl. II 233 (TM 19531), the closing formula does not refer to the addressee’s well-being but contains a wish for success: “εὔχομαί σε τὸν κύριον ἰδεῖν ἐν μείζοσι προκοπαῖς, ἐν ἀδραῖς εὐημερίαις” (ll. 15-16). In P.Herm. 12 (TM 28724) and P.Oxy. XLI 2980 (TM 26860), the closing formula is intertwined with a courtesy phrase, e.g.: “ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι καὶ ἐπιστέλλειν περὶ ὧν ἔαν θέλῃς” (P.Herm. 12; ll. 12-13). Other variants seem to be *ad hoc* wishes: “ἐρρωσθέ (= ἐρρωσθαί) σε εὔχομαι vac.? καὶ λαβεῖν μοι πίστιν πολλοῖς χρόνοις, κύριε ἄδελλ\φει/” (P.Rain.Cent. 161; TM 34788; ll. 34-35) and “ἐρρωσθαί σε ἐν κ(υ)ρίω καὶ ἐν τάχ[ε]ι ἐπανελεῖν πρὸς ἡμᾶς εὔχο[μαι]” (P.Mert. II 93; TM 33523; ll. 34-35). The last occurrence is somewhat similar to PSI III 211 (cf. *infra*), and to the initial health wishes that express the hope to find the addressee safe and sound. Further, in O.Did. 333 (TM 144896), which is not included in this corpus, the following idiosyncratic expression appears: “εὔχομε (= εὔχομαι) αὐτήν ζῆν.” (ll. 12-13).

²⁵ I.e. P.Oxy. II 292 (TM 20563), P.Flor. III 332 (TM 19372), P.Mich. VIII 485 (TM 17243), P.Oxy. XLI 2980 (TM 26860), SB XXIV 16204 (TM 32720), P.Sarap. 103 *ter* (TM 17147), P.Gen. IV 163 (TM 29470), P.Rein. II 118 (TM 32063), P.Rein. II 119 (TM 29275), and P.Würzb. 21 (TM 27172). The infinitive is supplemented in P.Sijp. 59 a (TM 110224). Further, ὑγιαίνειν is attested in three ostraca from Didymoi, which have not been included in my corpus, i.e. O.Did. 19 (TM 144586), 372 (TM 144933) and 438 (TM 144999).

²⁶ The other instances are P.Mich. VIII 485, P.Sarap. 103 *ter*, P.Flor. III 332 and P.Gen. IV 163.

It has been suggested *supra* that P.Mich. VIII 485 —belonging to the Karanis archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris (cf. chapter 4, § 3.2.2.3)— may show interference from Latin. It is tempting to regard the use of ὑγιαίνειν and the reversed word order in this letter as influence from Latin: the Latin epistolary phraseology with its identical initial health wish and closing formula, might in this case have influenced the choice for ὑγιαίνειν and the reverse word order in the closing formula (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, e.g. § 3.2.2.3). However, interference cannot be a general explanation, since many other occurrences do not have a Latin background —diverse (often irretrievable) motives may lie behind the lexical choice for ὑγιαίνω instead of ἔρρωμαι. In P.Flor. III 332, for instance, which is preserved in the archive of Apollonios *strategos*, another explanation than interference should account for the appearance of ὑγιαίνω. Considering the hypothesis that will be formulated in chapter 8 (cf. *infra*, § 2) that this archive shared linguistic elements with the archive of Eutychedes, it is interesting to note that also a letter from the Eutychedes archive uses the infinitive ὑγιαίνειν in the closing formula with reversed word order (i.e. P.Sarap. 103 *ter*).

Sometimes ὑγιαίνειν is combined with ἔρρωσθαι; occasionally ὑγιαίνειν is combined with a verb other than ἔρρωσθαι, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι ὑγιένιν (= εὐτυχεῖν) καὶ εὐτυχῖν (= εὐτυχεῖν) ἐπι [.] . . αἰζονα
ις (= εἰς) μακροὺς ἔωνες (= αἰῶνας)” (P.Würzb. 21; ll. 17-21)

Εὐτυχέω is attested five times besides in P.Würzb. 21²⁷. In P.Mich. III 206 (TM 28795), the verb is extended with τὰ μείζονα:

“ἔρρωσθέ (= ἔρρωσθαί) σοι (= σε) εὔχομαι καὶ εὐτυχεῖν τὰ μ[εῖ]ζονα” (ll. 24-25)

In CPR XXV 3, apart from ἔρρωσθαι and εὐτυχεῖν also the verb εὐθυμέω appears:

“ἔρρωσ vac.?θαί σε καὶ εὐτυχῖν (= εὐτυχεῖν) καὶ εὐθυμῖν (= εὐθυμεῖν) διὰ vac.?
παντὸς εὔχομαι, κύριε ἄδελφε, vac.? ἀσύνκριτε” (ll. 5-8)²⁸

Like ὑγιαίνω, εὐτυχέω and εὐθυμέω, also some of the other verbs appearing in the closing formula²⁹ are known from the initial health wish: ὀλοκληρέω is found in P.Sijp. 59 a (TM 110224), and completely supplemented in P.Oxy. XIV 1766 (TM 31808)³⁰.

²⁷ I.e. P.Sarap. 86 (TM 17108), CPR XXV 3 (TM 92434), P.Louvre I 67 (TM 32229), P.Mich. III 206 (TM 28795) and P.Stras. V 304 (TM 27772).

²⁸ The verb εὐθυμέω is not attested elsewhere as an infinitive in the closing formula; it does, however, appear as a participle (cf. *infra*, 4.2.2).

²⁹ Διαφυλάσσω is completely supplemented in P.Euphrates 16 (TM 44674) and has therefore not been taken into account: “[ε]ύχομε (= εὔχομαι) τοῖς θεοῖς [ύμ]ας διαφυλάξ[ε] (= διαφυλάξαι)” (ll. 7-8).

³⁰ In P.Oxy. XIV 1678 (TM 31786), the infinitive ὀλοκληρεῖν (deliberately not accented) is interpreted as ὀλοκληροῦσαν: “ἔρρωστέ (= ἔρρωσθαί) σε εὔχομε (= εὔχομαι) ὀλοκληρεῖν (= ὀλοκληροῦσαν)” (l. 27). Yet, it

Προκόπτω is attested in P.Sarap. 100 (TM 17125), P.Ross.Georg. V 6 (TM 32838) and SB XXII 15380 (TM 78969). Προκόπτω and its derivations are not widely used in the papyri³¹. In fact, the presence of this verb in SB XXVI 16536 (TM 29260; l. 7) was one of Litinas' arguments to link this document to the archive of Apollonios *strategos* (Litinas 2001: 810)³². The fact that προκόπτω appears in the closing formula of P.Sarap. 100, a letter from the Eutychides archive, is in line with the observations of chapter 8 (cf. *infra*, § 2) that the archives of Apollonios and Eutychides share a number of uncommon linguistic features. The phrase καλῶς ἔχω, which was already in use in the initial health wishes from the Ptolemaic period (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 1.2.1), is only attested once in P.Flor. II 230 (TM 11109), a letter from the Heroninos archive. Similarly, also the verb form καλῶς διακεῖσθαι occurs only once:

“[εὐ]χομαι τή]ν σωτηρίαν ἡμῶν [καλ]ῶς διακεῖσθαι” (O.Claud. II 234; TM 29657 ll. 10-11)³³

Εὐφραίνω is the final infinitive which expresses the hope that the addressee is well: this variant appears only once³⁴, in P.Mich. VIII 465 (TM 17239) —a letter from Apollinarios to his mother— which was preserved in the archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris³⁵.

Another *topos* in the closing formula is the wish to find the addressee safely again. Like in the initial health wish (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.3), this is expressed by the verb ἀπολαμβάνω, viz. in PSI III 211 (TM 35286):

“[ἐρ]ῶσθαί σε εὐχομαι ὀλοκληροῦντας (= ὀλοκληροῦντα) ἀπολαβεῖν” (ll. 8-9)³⁶

seems to me that the sender asyndetically combined two infinitives —although such an asyndetic combination of two infinitives is uncommon in the closing formula, e.g. P.Würzb. 21, quoted *supra* and PSI III 211, quoted *infra*. Since the reading of ὀλοκληροῦσαν is only an interpretation, I do not include this letter as one of the examples of the participle of ὀλοκληρέω (cf. *infra*, § 4.2).

³¹ A search in de DDbDP shows that προκόπτω and προκοπή appear 22 times in total.

³² Its derivation προκοπή occurs three times in the Apollonios archive, i.e. “εὐχομαί σε τὸν κύριον ἰδεῖν ἐν μείζοσι προκοπαῖς, ἐν ἀδραῖς εὐημερίαις” (P.Ryl. II 233; ll. 15-16), “καὶ μᾶλλον προσηυχόμεν ποιεῖν σε τὰ(ς) ἀδροτάτας προκοπάς” (P.Brem. 15; ll.33-34) and “μετέλαβον πα[ρ]ά τινων ἀπὸ Ἰβιῶνος σήμερον ἐλθόντω[ν] συνοδοιπορηκένα[ι] τιν[ι] παιδαρίῳ τοῦ κυρίου Ἀπολλωνίου ἀπὸ Μέμφεως [ἐ]ρχομένῳ εὐαγγελίζονται τὰ τῆς νε[ί]κης αὐ[τ]οῦ καὶ προκοπῆς” (P.Giss. I 27; TM 19429; ll. 3-7).

³³ This is the only instance in which the addressee is not the subject of the infinitive clause.

³⁴ Εὐφραίνω is also attested as a participle (cf. *infra*, § 4.2).

³⁵ This uncommon verb also appears in the body of the same letter: “διὸ ἐρωτῶ [σε τή]ν κυρ[ί]αν μου . . .].χως καὶ ἰλαρῶς εὐφρα[ί]ν[ε]σθαι” (ll. 22-24).

³⁶ A somewhat similar phrase is the *ad hoc* wish in P.Herm. 6 (TM 21125) (cf. *supra*, footnote 3).

2.3. Reference to the addressee³⁷

In more than 900 cases, the addressee is referred to as σε, which is subject in the infinitive clause. Another common variant is ὑμᾶς, with more than 100 occurrences from the 1st-2nd to the 5th-6th centuries AD. In three letters, the variant ὑμᾶς πάντα appears³⁸. Whereas ὑμᾶς is in the initial health wish mainly found in letters to multiple addressees (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.1.1), the use of this personal pronoun in the closing formula does not imply that the letter is sent to multiple addressees: in almost half of the cases of ὑμᾶς in the closing formula, the letter is sent to one single addressee. In those occurrences ὑμᾶς probably refers to the addressee as well as to his relatives and friends: in almost all attestations of ὑμᾶς in the closing formula of letters to one recipient, greetings to the addressee's social circle appear just before the formula, e.g.:

“Ζώσιμος Εὐφροσύνω ἀδελφῶ χαίρειν. πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὀλοκληρῖν (= ὀλοκληρεῖν) ἅμα τῇ συνβίῳ σου καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις σου. ... ἀσπάζω Παπᾶν καὶ Ἀμμῶνιν τὸν νυκτόν γραφον κ[α]ῖ Ἀθανάσιν. ἐρρῶσθαι ὑμᾶς εὐχομαί” (P.Laur. I 20; TM 31506; ll. 1-5 and ll. 8-10)

So, we can assume that ὑμᾶς relates to the addressee and his social circle, and it is a *pluralis sociativus*.

In fourteen instances, the reference to the addressee is not put in the accusative case (σε), but in the dative σοι³⁹, e.g.:

“ἐρρῶσθαί σοι (= σε) εὐχομαί” (P.Mich. VIII 482; l. 18)

In two other letters, συ is found:

³⁷ Sometimes ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὐχομαί underwent elision with ἐρρῶσθαί σ' εὐχομαί as a result (cf. P.Amh. II 143; TM 33623). This is corrected by the editor as ἔρρῶσθαί σ<ε> εὐχομαί in P.Col. X 253 (TM 29036), P.Flor. II 149 (TM 11006) and P.Flor. II 272 (TM 11157). In my opinion, such corrections are unnecessary, certainly in the cases of P.Flor. II 149 and 272, both from the Heroninos archive. In that archive, many closing formulas seem to have undergone elision; they are edited as ἐρρῶσθαί σεύχομαι (= σε εὐχομαί) (e.g. P.Flor. II 118; TM 10971; ll. 7-8), which is of course identical to σ' εὐχομαί. Also in P.Oxy. XXXVI 2783 (TM 30385), elision might explain the strange closing formula, which is now read as “ἐρρῶσθαί σε χομαί (= <εὔ>χομαί)” (l. 28). To me, it seems more logical to read ἐρρῶσθαί σ' εχομαί (= εὐχομαί). Ἐχομαί for εὐχομαί is also attested in the closing formula of PSI VII 835 (TM 36189).

³⁸ I.e. P.Mich. III 203 (TM 21342), P.Giss.Bibl. III 31 (TM 33682) and P.Iand. VI 96 verso (TM 30599).

³⁹ I.e. P.Mich. VIII 482 (TM 17241), BGU II 615 (TM 28191; in both letters on this papyrus, the closing formula has σοι instead of σε, viz. l. 17 and ll. 33-34), P.Gron. 19 A (TM 29212), P.Mich. III 206 (TM 28795), P.Oxy. VII 1068 (TM 31315), P.Oxy. VIII 1158 (TM 31724), P.Oxy. IX 1220 (TM 31651), SB XII 10841 (TM 32558), SB VI 9400 (TM 36839), PSI VII 835 (TM 36189), P.Oxy. XXXI 2602 (TM 32693), P.Oxy. XLVIII 3418 (TM 33724) and P.Oxy. XLVIII 3400 (TM 22492).

“ἔρρισθε (= ἔρρωσθαί) συ (= σε) εὐχομεν (= εὔχομαι) πολλυ (= πολλοῖς) χρόνης (= χρόνοις)” (P.Oxy. LVI 3864; TM 35475; ll. 36-37)

“ἔρρωσθαί συ (= σε) εὔχομαι” (P.Giss. I 97; TM 27875; l. 16)

Συ has been interpreted by the editor as σε, but —since the confusion between υ and οι is more common than that between υ and ε (Gignac 1976: 197; 273-274)— σοι might actually have been intended. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that also in other places in the two letters, υ stands for οι. In P.Oxy. LVI 3864, this is the case with πολλυ for πολλοῖς in the closing formula and in line 31: “εἰδοῦ (= ἰδοῦ) προέγραψά συ (= σοι)”. The writer of P.Oxy. LVI 3864 clearly had a great many difficulties with orthography, including the οι cf. also χρόνης for χρόνοῖς. In lines 7-8 of P.Giss. I 97, there is also a confusion between υ and οι: “καλῶς οὖν πυήσεις (= ποιήσεις)”. I therefore include those two occurrences in the discussion of dative-for-accusative substitution.

Thus, a total of sixteen letters dated between the 2nd and the 6th centuries AD have the dative σοι (sometimes written as συ) instead of the expected accusative. The phenomenon of dative-for-accusative substitution is also observed in the salutations and in the initial health wish πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε (σοι) ὑγιαίνειν (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 2.2 and 3.2 and chapter 4, § 3.2.1.1); a number of letters that have σοι in the closing formula, equally display a similar confusion between σε and σοι in the salutations and/or the initial health wish⁴⁰. The factors that caused such confusion in the closing formula are thus similar to those in the other two formulas, especially to those in the initial health wish. With regard to the closing formula, there are some signs that the confusion might mainly be caused by phonetic similarity between the vowels of the case endings⁴¹: P.Oxy. LVI 3864, quoted above, attests to a lack of mastery of orthographic conventions. Whereas P.Oxy. LVI 3864 admittedly represents an extreme case of orthographic variation, phonetic similarity might have been important in the closing formula, since the pronoun is always followed by a word starting with a vowel, and different elements suggest the phonetically weak position of the pronoun. For instance, vowel elision is attested in the closing formulas (ἔρρωσθαί σ’εὔχομαι, cf. *supra*, footnote 37). The lack of phonetic distinction between the pronouns in this phrase is not only visible in the elision of the vowel; the reference to the addressee could even be omitted altogether (cf. *infra*, § 2.4.3). Also the scribal context should be taken into account: the closing formula is often written by the sender himself who, in many cases, does not seem to be very familiar with writing. For such a writer, but also for the more

⁴⁰ In P.Mich. III 206 (TM 28795), the initial health wish, the closing formula and the salutations have σοι instead of σε. In P.Gron. 19 A (TM 29212) and P.Mich. VIII 482 (TM 17241), the salutations as well as the closing formula use the dative instead of the accusative case.

⁴¹ Other factors discussed with regard to the same phenomenon in the salutations and the initial health wish — such as phraseological confusion— are less relevant to the closing formula.

skilled writer, the orthography of phrases that sounded similar in pronunciation might have been difficult to remember, especially since the closing formula (as well as the initial health wish) had an *AcI* structure which started to fall out of use and was no longer productive after the 2nd century AD (cf. Halla-aho 2003a: 29). Hence, it is likely that the use of the dative in the initial health wish and the closing formula is related to the decline of the *AcI* construction⁴².

2.4. Abbreviations of the basic formula⁴³

2.4.1. Omitting the main verb

In eight letters dated between the 1st-2nd and the 5th centuries AD⁴⁴, the main verb is omitted, e.g.:

“ἐρρωσθαί σοι ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ” (P.Abinn. 6; l. 27)

Although there is not a general explanation for the omission of εὔχομαι or variants, in P.Abinn. 6 and SB VIII 9746, the shortened ἐρρωσθαί phrase is not the only closing formula; the phrase is combined with another closing formula: “ὁ κύριος ὁ θεὸς διαφυλάξει σοι” (P.Abinn. 6; ll. 25-26) and “ὁ Κ(ύριός) σοι διαφυλάξει ἡμῖν” (SB VIII 9746; ll. 34-35). Given the omnipresence of the closing formula of the type ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, abbreviated variants like “ἐρρωσθαί σοι ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ” supposedly did not lead to confusion.

2.4.2. Omitting the word expressing the health wish

In P.Stras. VIII 719 (TM 35032), a shortened phrase seems to have been the original formula:

“✠ σοὶ εὔχομα[ι] vac.?” (l. 16)

2.4.3. Omitting the reference to the addressee

Whereas the closing formula usually refers to the addressee by means of σε or ὑμᾶς (cf. *supra*), there is no reference to the addressee in about fifty letters from the 1st until the

⁴² For a more detailed discussion of the individual texts with the σοι-for-σε confusion, see Stolk and Nachtergaele; article submitted to *Symbolae Osloenses*.

⁴³ I do not include instances in which lacunae could be the cause of the abbreviated phrase.

⁴⁴ I.e. SB XII 11021 (TM 25066), P.Oxy. IX 1215 (TM 28934), P.Abinn. 6 (TM 10051), P.Phil. 35 (TM 27218), SB VIII 9746 (TM 33802), O.Krok. I 73 (TM 88664), SB VI 9156 (TM 14119) and P.Oxy. X 1300 (TM 35577).

5th centuries AD⁴⁵. In those cases, the standard closing formula is abbreviated to ἔρρωσθαι εὔχομαι, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαι εὔχομαι π[ο]λλοῖς χρόνοις” (P.Oxy. XLVIII 3402; TM 33713; ll. 7-8)

Whereas the editors of a dozen of these occurrences add <σε>, Gonis had already remarked that the omission of the personal pronoun is not so rare that it should be regarded as an accidental omission. Consequently, he did not support editorial additions of <σε> (Gonis 1997: 137). I hold the same opinion and I therefore propose to remove the editorial additions of σε in all other documents (cf. appendix III).

The motives for the omission of a reference to the addressee were probably diverse and often a combination of factors, ranging from simply forgetting, through saving space (for instance on an ostrakon)⁴⁶, to feeling that the formula was clear without a reference to the addressee. Kenyon argued that the shortened phrase ἔρρωσθαι εὔχομαι was a transitional formula, between the old ἔρρωσο and the new ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι (Kenyon 1898: 161). Ziemann rightly disproved this hypothesis since the abbreviated formula only starts to appear centuries after the phrase ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι was introduced in the phraseology of the closing formula (Ziemann 1910: 336).

In P.Freib. IV 71 (TM 26509), I doubt the editor’s emendation:

“[-ca.?- ἔρρωσθ]αι εὔχομαι” (l. 10)

Since the omission of the reference to the addressee is not widespread, I would include σε and supplement the phrase as follows: “[-ca.?- ἔρρωσθαί σ]αι εὔχομαι”. This emendation is plausible as the confusion between ε and αι is well-known (Gignac 1976: 191-192).

3. Minor variants

3.1. Ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξῃ⁴⁷

In 27 private letters from the 4th century AD and later, a new (Christian) formula appears⁴⁸, e.g.:

⁴⁵ This phenomenon is thus far more widespread than Exler thought, who only had six occurrences in his corpus (Exler 1923: 70).

⁴⁶ About 15% of the closing formulas without a reference to the addressee are written on pottery, which is somewhat higher than the total percentage of private letters written on ostraca (cf. *supra*, chapter 1, § 1.1). However, given the low number of occurrences, this may also be due to coincidence. Further, many of the occurrences also abbreviate ἔρρωσθαι and εὔχομαι, e.g.: “ἔρρωσθ(αι) εὔχ(ομαι)” (P.Oxy. XXXVI 2781; TM 26870; l. 13), which seems to suggest that the letter writer wanted to save space.

⁴⁷ Translation: “May the Lord preserve you”.

“ὁ κύριος ὁ θεὸς διαφυλάξει (= διαφυλάξη) σαι (= σε)” (P.Abinn. 6; TM 10051; ll. 25-26)

The prayer for divine protection is clearly a *topos* of the later period⁴⁹. Most formulas have as main verb the compound διαφυλάσσω (20 occurrences), whereas a minority uses the simple φυλάσσω (seven occurrences). In SB VI 9397 (TM 36836), διασώζω appears in combination with διαφυλλάσσω. The verbs are attested in different moods, viz. the conjunctive, the optative and the imperative. Different moods and variants have always occurred and there does not seem to be a diachronic evolution.

The form διαφυλάξη is most common with seven attestations; φυλάξη appears in BGU II 605 (TM 39044). Apart from these occurrences, the editor interpreted the form (δια)φυλάξοι as (δια)φυλάξη in SB VI 9397 (TM 36836) and 9107 (TM 36196); in P.Berl.Sarisch. 17 (TM 39331) the grammatically erroneous διαφυλάξοι is not corrected by the editor: this form was presumably intended as διαφυλάξη. The form φυλάξει in P.Neph. 7 (TM 33561) might be a future indicative, but is more plausibly a variant of φυλάξη (or perhaps φυλάξει<ε>). In P.Lond. VI 1929 (TM 32662) the form διαφυλάξει is interpreted by the editor as διαφυλάξει<ε>. However, given the frequency of διαφυλάξη and the widespread itacism (cf. Gignac 1976: 240-242), διαφυλαξει could also be intended as διαφυλάξη. Nevertheless, the form (δια)φυλάξειε(ν) is found regularly as well: the aorist optative διαφυλάξειε(ν) appears five times, and φυλάξειεν occurs in P.NagHamm. 68 (TM 32410). The optative (δια)φυλάξαι is found four times: in SB VIII 9746 (TM 33802) and P.Oxy. LV 3821 (TM 22532) the variant διαφυλάξαι appears, and P.Köln IV 200 (TM 34796) and P.Oxy. LVI 3858 (TM 33599) have φυλάξαι. Finally, the present optative διαφυλλάσσοι is found in P.Neph. 14 (TM 33567) and supplemented in P.Neph. 17 (TM 33568); φυλλάσσοι is attested in P.Neph. 1 (TM 33555) and in P.Bour. 25 (TM 32904).

In general, three subjects can be discerned in this formula: ὁ θεός, ὁ κύριος and ἡ θεία πρόνοια⁵⁰. Θεός appears eight times. Only in two letters, the simple ὁ θεός is the subject, e.g.:

“ὁ θ(εὸ)ς δὲ διαφυλάξη σε” (P.Abinn. 8; TM 10065; ll. 28-29)⁵¹

⁴⁸ This date is consistent with Koskeniemi's findings (cf. Koskeniemi 1956: 151). In SB VI 9605 (TM 33118), P.Col. XI 301 (TM 34020) and P.Neph. 5 (TM 33559), the phrase is for a large part supplemented; these occurrences have not been taken into account.

⁴⁹ Cf. forthcoming article by W. Clarysse “The Emergence of God(s) in Papyrus Letters” of which he kindly gave me a prepublication copy.

⁵⁰ The subject is lost or supplemented in BGU III 984 (TM 33256) and P.NagHamm. 68 (TM 32410). These occurrences have not been taken into account.

⁵¹ The other occurrence is P.Lond. VI 1924 (TM 32657).

In the other cases, θεός is extended with an adjective, viz. with δυνατός in P.Oxy. LVI 3858 (TM 33599), with παντοδύναμος in P.Köln IV 200 (TM 34796) and with παντοκράτωρ in P.Herm. 8 (TM 33467). The other variants are θεός τῆς εἰρήνης in P.Lond. VI 1923 (TM 32656), θεός ὁ πάντων δεσπότης in SB VI 9107 (TM 36196) and κύριος ὁ θεός⁵² in P.Abinn. 6 (TM 10051). Besides P.Abinn. 6, κύριος is found in eight other letters. The simple κύριος is the subject of six closing formulas, e.g.:

“ὁ Κ(ύριός) σου (= σε) διαφυλάξαι ἡμῖν” (SB VIII 9746; TM 33802; ll. 34-35)

Further, in two other letters, SB VI 9397 (TM 36836) and PSI XIII 1345 (TM 38683), κύριος is added to the subject Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, e.g.:

“ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός διαφυλάξῃ ὑμᾶς” (PSI XIII 1345; l. 17)

In eight letters, ἡ θεία πρόνοια appears and in P.Ross.Georg. III 9, the variant ἡ ἀγαθὴ πρόνοια is found.

The subject of the phrase is always the addressee: in nineteen occurrences this is expressed by the personal pronoun σε⁵³ and in four with the plural ὑμᾶς. In the three other instances an abstract noun such as ἡ σὴ θεοφιλία indirectly refers to the recipient of the letter (cf. appendix I).

Finally, there are some *ad hoc* formulas which bear resemblance to the διαφυλάξῃ phrase:

“θεοὶ σε σώσειαν διὰ παντὸς πανοικησίᾳ” (P.Oxy. LV 3812; TM 31913; ll. 13-14)

“θεοὶ [π]αρεῖξεν σοὶ προσφιλεῖς” (P.Herm. 2; TM 21121; ll. 31-32)

3.2. Ὑγιαίνων δῖελθε

In the 6th and 7th centuries AD, a new variant arises: ὑγιαίνων δῖελθε⁵⁴. The formula is attested in only five letters and shows little variation:

“ὕγιένον (= ὑγιαίνων) δῖελθε” (P.Vind.Worp 14; TM 36053; l. 11)

“ὕγιαίνοντες δῖελθατε” (SB XVI 12474; TM 35998; l. 12)

“κ(ύρι)ε ὑγιένων (= ὑγιαίνων) δῖελθε” (SB VI 9139; TM 36198; l. 16)⁵⁵

⁵² In other words, the different variants appear together and are thus clearly not distinct.

⁵³ Further, this personal pronoun is supplemented in P.Köln IV 200 (TM 34796).

⁵⁴ Translation: “Stay healthy”.

⁵⁵ The other two cases are SB VI 9140 (TM 38720) and P.Ness. 50 (TM 39295).

3.3. Εὐτύχει and διευτύχει⁵⁶

The forms εὐτύχει and διευτύχει belong to a different register than the other closing formulas, as εὐτύχει and διευτύχει are the common closing phrases in petitions. Yet, they also appear in private letters as polite, formal and solemn closing formulas, often found in letters from inferiors to superiors (Ziemann 1910: 350; Exler 1923: 74; Koskenniemi 1956: 151)⁵⁷: they are sometimes combined with a polite opening formula, such as τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα in the 3rd century BC examples, e.g. P.Cair.Zen. III 59317 (TM 961)⁵⁸. In total, εὐτύχει and διευτύχει are found in about ninety private letters dated throughout the entire papyrological millennium –but most attestations come from the 3rd century BC (Zenon archive)⁵⁹.

Several scholars have described εὐτύχει and διευτύχει as successive steps in a diachronic change (Mandilaras 1973: 304): according to Ziemann and Exler, εὐτύχει appears until the 1st or 2nd century AD, and then διευτύχει takes over its function and starts to replace εὐτύχει (Ziemann 1910: 335; Exler 1923: 69). Whereas this is generally true for petitions⁶⁰, this evolution is not as distinct in private letters: εὐτύχει mostly appears in the 3rd century BC but remains in use until the 7th century AD; διευτύχει appears in only six private letters dated from the 1st or the 2nd until the 4th centuries AD⁶¹.

⁵⁶ Translation: “May you prosper”. In previous sections I have mainly described a diachronic evolution of the standard closing formula. The phrase εὐτύχει and its variant διευτύχει need to be excluded from this diachronic overview.

⁵⁷ However, in the Kleon archive, Polykrates and Philonides use this closing formula sometimes for correspondence within the family.

⁵⁸ Exler connected the closing formulas with the opening formulas (Exler 1923: 74). But, there is not a one-to-one relationship between a certain opening formula and a certain closing formula; for example, there are instances of the opening phrase ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν τῷ δεῖνι, with the closing formula ἔρρωσο (e.g. P.Cair.Zen. I 59121; TM 770).

⁵⁹ Εὐτύχει is also attested in an early lead letter, dated to the 3rd century BC and found in the harbor of Marseilles (Ceccarelli 2013: 349), suggesting that this closing formula was widely used in the Greek-speaking world.

⁶⁰ There are only a few attestations of εὐτύχει in and after the 2nd century AD, and of διευτύχει before the 2nd century AD.

⁶¹ O.Leid. 38 (TM 5942) is dated only vaguely between the 2nd century BC and the 1st century AD. One cannot argue in favor of 1st century AD as a more refined date, based on the dates of the other occurrences: the number of occurrences is too low to understand its chronological distribution. Moreover, the first attestation of the verb διευτυχέω in the initial health wish goes back as far as the 2nd century BC (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 2.1.3).

4. Extensions

4.1. Intensifiers

Intensifiers appear in more than 300 letters dated between the 1st and the 7th-8th centuries AD⁶². They are found in the ἔρρωσο, the ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι and the ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξει phrases, but are not preserved in the closing formulas ὑγιαίνων δίελθε and εὐτύχει.

Πολλοῖς χρόνοις is a Latinism (Adams 2003: 80; 507) that became widely established in the Greek papyri, with about 230 attestations between the 1st and the 6th centuries AD⁶³. It is mostly found in the phrase ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι but is also attested in at least six attestations of the ἔρρωσο formula⁶⁴. In three letters⁶⁵, the word order is reversed into χρόνοις πολλοῖς. In P.Lond. VI 1925 (TM 32658) and P.Kellis I 5 (TM 33297), the word string is split and there are other words between πολλοῖς and χρόνοις. In SB XIV 11666 (TM 32942), the following variant appears:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε πολλοῖς χρόνοις εὐχομαι·εὐδαιμονοῖς πανο[ι]κησίᾳ” (ll. 15-17)

In this closing formula εὐδαιμονοῖς shows a progressive assimilation under the influence of πολλοῖς χρόνοις and should of course be interpreted as εὐδαίμοσι. Other variants of πολλοῖς χρόνοις are πάμπολλοις χρόνοις (in P.Princ. II 98; TM 32794), μακροῖς καὶ εἰρηνικοῖς χρόνοις (in P.Bour. 25; TM 32904), and πολλοῖς ἔτεσιν (three attestations⁶⁶). Also εἰς μακροὺς χρόνους (in P.Oxy. LIX 3992; TM 27848), εἰς πολλοὺς χρόνους (three attestations⁶⁷), πολλοὺς χρόνους (in PUG II 90; TM 26596⁶⁸), ἐπὶ πολὺν

⁶² This refutes Ziemann's assertion that intensifiers only start appearing from the 3rd century AD onwards (Ziemann 1910: 342). Older scholars list a few of the intensifiers, but do not attempt to describe them all (Ziemann 1910: 342; Koskenniemi 1956: 152).

⁶³ In my opinion, this intensifier might have been originally in some other letters as well. In P.Fay. 136 (TM 33391), it seems that the sender intended to use this intensifier (or one of its variants: “ἔρρωσθαί ὑμᾶς εὐχομαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις ἀγ. [. . .]”). Perhaps, also O.Douch III 210 (TM 34566) had the intensifier πολλοῖς χρόνοις, but this is beyond retrieval, since the phrase is almost completely lost, respectively: “ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι π. [-ca.-]” (ll. 6-7).

⁶⁴ I.e. P.Oxy. XLII 3087 (TM 30345), P.Oxy. XX 2275 (TM 32726), P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 209 (TM 35249), P.Col. X 252 (TM 25942), P.Hamb. I 54 (TM 28695) and SB III 6262 (TM 31055). In P.Wisc. II 75 (TM 32547), the intensifier is partly supplemented. In O.Douch III 198 (TM 34554), it is unclear whether the ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι or the ἔρρωσο formula was intended, and the intensifier is uncertain as it seems abbreviated: “ἔρρωσθαί π(ολλοῖς χρόνοις)” (l. 9).

⁶⁵ I.e. P.Ross.Georg. V 6 (TM 32838), P.Oxy. LIX 4004 (TM 35213) and P.Ross.Georg. III 10 (TM 32908).

⁶⁶ I.e. P.Oxy. LV 3810 (TM 29104), P.Flor. III 365 (TM 31148) and P.Gen. I (2e éd.) 75 (TM 32145).

⁶⁷ I.e. SB XX 14339 (TM 32176), P.Oxy. X 1299 (TM 33637) and P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 85 (TM 36899). In the last letter, εἰς is completely supplemented.

⁶⁸ Χρόνους is supplemented in this phrase.

χρόνον (in P.Lond. VI 1928; TM 32661, and P.Herm. 8; TM 33467), ἐπὶ μέγιστον χρόνον (in SB I 2266; TM 33812), ἐν μεγίστοις χρόνοις (in SB XX 14506; TM 38467) and εἰς τὸν αἰὲν χρόνον (in P.Fay. 117; TM 10782) emphasize the duration. The intensifier ἐπὶ μήκιστον χρόνον is the most popular intensifier of the phrase ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξει and is attested in three letters⁶⁹. Further, ἐπὶ μήκιστον χρόνον is found in two formulas of the type ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὐχομαι⁷⁰. Of a similar meaning are the intensifier εἰς μακροὺς αἰῶνας (three attestations⁷¹), εἰς μακρὸν αἰῶνα (in P.Laur. II 39; TM 28765) and εἰς αἰῶνα (in P.Mich. VIII 481; TM 27094). The intensifier αἰεὶ is found in four letters⁷². Διὰ βίου occurs in thirteen private letters; its variants are διὰ παντὸς βίου (in P.Iand. VI 94; TM 27153), διὰ μακροῦ βίου (in P.Heid. III 234; TM 25862), διὰ ὅλου βίου (PSI IV 286; TM 31130), δι' ὅλου (in P.Oxy. IX 1219; TM 31650) and διὰ τέλους (in P.NagHamm. 68; TM 32410).

Other intensifiers are less typical of the closing formula and appear also often in other epistolary phrases, e.g. πρὸ πάντων which appears in seven cases⁷³ and πρὸ τῶν ὅλων in P.Oxy. XLI 2980 (TM 26860). Of a similar meaning is τὸ ἀναγκαῖον τῆς ἐπιστολῶν (in BGU II 605; TM 39044). Διὰ παντός is attested in nineteen closing formulas—in two of them, this intensifier is partly supplemented. Less popular are its variants: διὰ πάντα only appears in PSI VIII 887 (TM 36162) and ἐν παντί in P.Oxy. XII 1492 (TM 31748).

Πολλά is the intensifier of seven closing formulas⁷⁴, of which two letters are from Alypius to Heroninos preserved in the latter's archive: P.Flor. II 148 and 149. These are the only two private letters from Alypius with an intensifier in the closing formula⁷⁵. The intensifier ἐπὶ πολλῶν appears in P.Phil. 35 (TM 27218).

Other intensifiers are εὐτυχῶς (in O.Claud. II 242; TM 23994 and P.Oxy. I 118 V; TM 31345), ὀλοκληρῶς (in P.Bas. 16; TM 30799), ἀβασκάντως (in P.Oxy. II 292; TM 20563) and ὀρθῶς (in PSI VII 783; TM 17663).

⁶⁹ I.e. SB VI 9397 (TM 36836), P.Lond. VI 1923 (TM 32656) and P.Lond. VI 1929 (TM 32662).

⁷⁰ I.e. P.Oxy. XXXIV 2727 (TM 30396) and in SB XXII 15482 (TM 79057, where the variant ἐπὶ μήκιστον βίου (= βίου) χρόνον appears).

⁷¹ I.e. P.Würzb. 21 (TM 27172), P.Warr. 13 (TM 27219) and P.Oxy. XLI 2982 (TM 26862).

⁷² I.e. PSI XII 1246 (TM 17410), PSI XII 1247 verso (TM 30631), P.Iand. VI 96 verso (TM 30599) and P.Lond. VI 1929 (TM 32662).

⁷³ I.e. P.Mich. VIII 485 (TM 17243), P.Flor. III 332 (TM 19372), P.Oxy. II 292 (TM 20563), P.Worp 50 (TM 115579), P.Giss. I 75 (TM 19464), P.Mil.Vogl. VI 281 (TM 28874) and PSI VIII 888 (TM 32864).

⁷⁴ I.e. O.Claud. II 274 (TM 29691), P.Flor. II 148 (TM 11005), P.Flor. II 149 (TM 11006), P.Iand. II 9 (TM 28201), P.Oxy.Hels. 48 (TM 26658), P.Stras. VI 531 (TM 26903) and CPR V 23 (TM 34843, cf. Hübner 1979: 458).

⁷⁵ The number of occurrences is too low to draw a firm conclusion (for example, that whenever Alypius used an intensifier in the closing formula, he consistently chose πολλά).

4.2. Participles

4.2.1. Occurrences and constructions in the different closing formulas

In the past, scholars had already noticed that a participle was sometimes added to the addressee in the closing formula. This is often a tautological construction, in which the health of the addressee is prayed for once again⁷⁶, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαι ὑμᾶς εὐχομαι ὀλοκληροῦντας” (P.Oxy. XXXVI 2788; TM 30387; ll. 19-20)

Whereas it was regarded as an uncommon extension (Ziemann 1910: 343), this study shows that participles were rather widespread: they are attested in about a hundred letters⁷⁷, dated between the 1st and the 5th-6th centuries AD⁷⁸.

The participle is a standard element in the phrase ὑγιαίνων δίελθε (cf. *supra*, § 3.2). Also in the phrase ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξει, the participle of ἔρρωμαι is thought to be a standard element of the formula (Ziemann 1910: 347). My data contradict this thesis: out of the total of 25 phrases, fourteen have a participle construction, eleven do not⁷⁹, and in P.Oxy. LVI 3858, ἀπρόσκοπος has the same function as the participles⁸⁰, e.g.:

“δυνατὸς ὁ θεὸς φυλάξει (= φυλάξει) σε, ἔστ’ ἂν ἐκτελέσης τὴν λιτ[ο]υργίαν (= λειτουργίαν), ἀπρόσκοπον” (P.Oxy. LVI 3858; TM 33599; ll. 24-27)

“ἔρρωμένην τὴν ὑμῶν θαυμασιότητα ἢ θία (= θεία) πρόνοια διαφυλάξαιεν (= διαφυλάξειεν)” (SB VI 9395; TM 36834; ll. 13-14)

In the archive of Nepheros, all four closing formulas of the type ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξει have a participle. Perhaps, in some circles such as the archive of Nepheros, the phrase

⁷⁶ In this section I only discuss participles which express a health wish. In a handful of closing formulas, other types of (*ad hoc*) participles are added, which have not been taken into account e.g.: “ἔρρωσθαι σ[ε] ἐν κ(υρ)ίῳ Χριστῷ εὐχομαι ἐπὶ πολὺν χρόνον εὐχόμενον ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ συνεχῶς, πάτερ θεοσεβεστατατε (= θεοσεβέστατε)” (P.Lond. VI 1928; TM 32661; ll. 8-11).

⁷⁷ Perhaps a closing formula with a participle was also found in P.Iand. VI 107 (TM 27156), but the phrase is damaged and has not been taken into account. Sometimes different verb forms are combined in one closing formula, as the examples *infra* will show.

⁷⁸ My data conflict with Koskeniemi’s hypothesis that this construction was rare before the 3rd century AD (Koskeniemi 1956: 152).

⁷⁹ PSI XIII 1345 (TM 38683), the participle does not express a health wish for the addressee (cf. footnote 76): “ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς διαφυλάξει ὑμᾶς εὐχόμενος τ[ῆς] κατὰ πρόσωπον προσκυνήσεως” (ll. 17-18).

⁸⁰ The phrase ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξει is attested 27 times (cf. *supra*, § 3.1). In the other letter, P.Berl.Sarisch. 17, the formula is damaged so that it is not clear whether there was a participle or not. In this phrase, the extension ἐν ὑγιείᾳ is found “ὁ κύριος ἐν ὑγιείᾳ ὑμᾶς διαφυλάξει τ[ο] - ca.9 -” (l. 4), which fulfills the same function as the participles, i.e. referring to the addressee’s health.

with participle might be favored, but in general the addition of a participle was not standard in the formula ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξει.

Also in the ἔρρωσο and the ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι phrase, the addition of a participle was optional; in the ἔρρωσο phrase, such an extension is rather uncommon and it is found in only nine letters, dated between the 1st century BC and the 3rd-4th century AD⁸¹. In the formula ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, on the other hand, a participle is added in about seventy cases from the 1st until the 5th and perhaps the 6th centuries AD.

In the ἔρρωσο phrase —as in the formula ὑγιαίνων δίελθε— the participle is expected to be found in the nominative case, subordinate to ἔρρωσο, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσό μοι ὑγιαίνουσα” (P.Mich. VIII 490; TM 27100; l. 20)

In formulas ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι and ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξει, the participle which is grammatically linked to the addressee should be in the accusative case (cf. *supra*). The divergent grammatical constructions in the different closing formulas seem to have led to confusion, both for the writer —and for the editor: in the following letters, the grammatically erroneous construction has not been corrected:

“ἐρρω[σθαί σε εὔ]χομαι, μήτερον, καὶ διὰ παντὸς εὐτυχοῦσα (= εὐτυχοῦσαν; my remark)” (P.Sarap. 89 c; TM 17114; ll. 9-10)

“πρὸ δὲ πάντων ὑγιάνειν (= ὑγιαίνειν) σε εὔχ[ο]μαι ἀβασκάντως τὰ ἄριστα πράττων (= πράττοντα; my remark)” (P.Oxy. II 292; TM 20563; ll. 11-13)

Only in SB III 6262 (TM 31055), the participle agrees with the *dativus ethicus*, and seems to be linked to the sender instead of to the addressee:

“ἔρρωσό μοι, κύριέ μου πάτερ, εὐτυχοῦντί μοι σὺν τοῖς ἀβασκάντοις μου ἀδελφοῖς, ὡς εὔχομαι, πολλοῖς χρόνοις” (ll. 24-26)⁸²

The sender here varies on the usual *topos* and expresses the idea that he himself would be fortunate if the addressee is well.

4.2.2. Verbs in the participle form⁸³

The most common verb used as a participle is εὐτυχέω, with forty attestations:

⁸¹ I.e. P.Oxy. XX 2275 (TM 32726), P.Mert. II 85 (TM 21320), P.Mich. VIII 490 (TM 27100), P.Hamb. I 54 (TM 28695), P.Warr. 13 (TM 27219), SB III 6262 (TM 31055), SB XIV 11665 (TM 30859), SB XII 10801 (TM 30226) and P.Oxy. IV 805 (TM 20458).

⁸² This is the only attestation of a comparative subclause added to a closing formula.

⁸³ Ziemann and Koskeniemi summed up a couple of verbs used in the participle construction, but did not provide an extensive list (Ziemann 1910: 343; Koskeniemi 1956: 152).

“ἔρρωσο, πανικησίᾳ εὐτυχῶν” (SB XII 10801; l. 14)
 “ἔρρωσθαι ὑμᾶς εὐχ[ομ]αί εὐτυχοῦντας” (P.Oxy. XIV 1768; TM 31810; ll. 14-15)
 “ἔρρωμένον σαι (= σε) καὶ εὐτύχοντα (= εὐτυχοῦντα; my remark) ἢ θία (= θεία)
 πρόνοια διαφυλάξιεν (= διαφυλάξειεν) ἐν μεγίστοις χρόνοις, δέσποτα πάτρων (=
 πατέρων)” (SB XX 14506; TM 38467; ll. 6-10)

In P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 475 (TM 25570) the participle εὐτυχοῦντα is completed with εὐβιον. In some letters εὐτυχοῦντα is not the only participle in the closing formula, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαι [καὶ ὀλοκληρεῖν(?)] σε εὐδοχοῦντα καὶ εὐτυ[χοῦντα καὶ εὐπρα]γοῦντα
 θεοῖς πᾶσι εὐχομαι” (P.Oxy. XIV 1766; TM 31808; ll. 16-18)⁸⁴

Zellmann-Rohrer reads διευτυχοῦντα in P.Oxy. IX 1220 (TM 31651) instead of the original εὐτυχοῦντα⁸⁵. In P.Tebt. II 418 *recto* (TM 31362) the variant εὐτυχευδοξέω appears in the participle construction.

Ὀλοκληρέω is found in nine letters⁸⁶, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαι ὑμᾶς εὐχομαι ὀλοκληροῦντας” (P.Oxy. XXXVI 2788; TM 30387; ll. 19-20)
 “[ἐρ]ρωσθαι σε εὐχομαι ὀλοκληροῦντας (= ὀλοκληροῦντα) ἀπολαβεῖν” (PSI III 211;
 ll. 8-9)
 “ἔρρωσό μοι, γλυκύτατε ἄδελφε, διὰ βίου ὀλοκληροῦντά [σε] ἀπολάβω” (P.Mert. II
 85; ll. 30-33)

In P.Mert. II 85 and PSI III 211, there is a contamination of the standard closing formula and the phraseology of the initial health wish which formulates the idea of seeing the addressee again in good health, expressed by ἀπολαμβάνω (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.3).

All occurrences of the participle of ὀλοκληρέω are relatively late —3rd century AD or later—; given that a similar chronology has been observed for this verb in the initial health wish (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.2.2), this should be regarded as later phenomenon. The verb ἔρρωμαι appears as a participle in fifteen closing formulas⁸⁷. Thirteen of them are of the type ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξῃ (cf. *supra*)⁸⁸; in these closing formulas, which —in

⁸⁴ If the reading is correct, this is the only attestation of the verb εὐπραγέω in the closing formula.

⁸⁵ Cf. <http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;9;1220>; accessed on April 22, 2015.

⁸⁶ I.e. P.Mert. II 85 (TM 21320), P.Flor. II 167 *recto* (TM 11020), P.Giss.Bibl. III 32 (TM 31822), P.Oxy. XXXVI 2788 (TM 30387), P.Flor. III 373 (TM 11175), P.Iand. VI 116 (TM 45340), P.Oxy. XII 1490 (TM 31747), PSI VII 827 (TM 32873) and PSI III 211 (TM 35286). The closing formula with this participle is probably what should be read in the fragmentary SB XIV 11295 (TM 30813) as well, but this occurrence has not been included in the total number: “ἔρωσθαι (= ἔρρωσθαι) [-ca.-] .ου ὀλοκληροῦν[τα]” (ll. 15-17). As discussed above (cf. *supra*, footnote 30), P.Oxy. XIV 1678 is not taken into account since it does not preserve an actual attestation of the participle of ὀλοκληρέω.

⁸⁷ The AcP construction in P.Oxy. XX 2276 (TM 30489) (cf. *supra*) has not been taken into account. In P.Sijp. 60 b (TM 110227), the participle is supplemented.

their basic form— do not contain the typical verb of the health wish ἔρρωμαι, this verb is nevertheless inserted. The two other attestations of the participle of ἔρρωμαι are in closing formulas of the type ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι:

“[ἔρρω]σθαί σε εὐχ(όμεθα), κύριε πάτερ, ἔρρωμ(ένον) εὐτυχ(οῦντα)” (P.Hamb. II 16; TM 26598; ll. 18-19)

In this letter, ἔρρωμαι seems to be tautological, as this verb also appears in the infinitive clause; in the other attestation, P.Ross.Georg. V 6 (TM 32838), προκόπτω is the infinitive in the closing formula.

Besides the occurrences of the closing formula ὑγιαίνων δέλθε, the verb ὑγιαίνω appears as a participle in five letters, dated between the 2nd and the 5th-6th centuries AD⁸⁹, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσό μοι πολλοῖς χρόνοις ὑγιαίνων μετὰ καὶ τῶν σῶν” (P.Hamb. I 54; TM 28695; ll. 14-18)

“ἔρρωσθαί ὑμᾶς εὐχομαι καὶ [-ca.?-] ὑγείανοντας (= ὑγιαίνοντας) καὶ εὖ [διάγοντας]” (SB XIV 11645; ll. 28-29)

“ὑγιενατά (= ὑγιαίνοντά) (hand 2) σε καὶ εὐθυμοῦντα ἢ ἀγαθὴ πρόνοια διαφυλάξιεν (= διαφυλάξιεν) εὐπετῆ βίον διάγοντα, δέσποτά μου τιμιώτατε” (P.Ross.Georg. III 9; ll. 20-23)

In the first letter, the same formula is also used as initial health wish:

“πρὸ παντὸς ἔρρωσό μοι ὑγιαίνουσα τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶν παρὰ πᾶσι τοῖς θεοῖς” (P.Hamb. I 54; ll. 3-5)

Given the fact that some of the letters with the participle of ὑγιαίνω are somehow linked to a Latinized context⁹⁰, it is tempting to regard the choice for this verb as a feature which was more popular in Latin environments than in other contexts (cf. *supra* § 2.2). However, the low number of occurrences and the uncertain linguistic background of the documents in question prevent a confident conclusion.

⁸⁸ I.e. SB VI 9395 (TM 36834), P.NagHamm. 68 (TM 32410), BGU III 984 (TM 33256), P.Bour. 25 (TM 32904), P.Lond. VI 1924 (TM 32657), P.Lond. VI 1929 (TM 32662), P.Neph. 1 (TM 33555), P.Neph. 7 (TM 33561), P.Neph. 14 (TM 33567), P.Neph. 17 (TM 33568), P.Oxy. LV 3821 (TM 22532), SB I 2266 (TM 33812) and SB XX 14506 (TM 38467).

⁸⁹ I.e. P.Ross.Georg. III 9 (TM 32907), SB XIV 11645 (TM 27499), SB XXII 15482 (TM 79057), P.Hamb. I 54 (TM 28695) and P.Mich. VIII 490 (TM 27100). Further, it is supplemented in P.Sijp. 60 b.

⁹⁰ P.Mich. VIII 490, as well as another attestation of ὑγιαίνω, P.Hamb. I 54, come from Karanis, and have a Latin background: the correspondents of P.Hamb. I 54 (Aurelios Perikles, Iulios Serenos) have Latin names and the sender of P.Mich. VIII 490 is in the Roman army. Also the sender of P.Ross.Georg. III 9 bears the Latin name Marcianus; the fact that the initial health wish and the closing formula are made to resemble each other in P.Hamb. I 54 is also a hint at potential influence from Latin phraseology.

The verb πράσσω appears in nine private letters and is completed with the adverb εὖ in seven of those nine attestations, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσό μοι, κύριε, πολλοῖς χρόνοις εὖ πράττοντα (= εὖ πράττων) διὰ βίου”
(P.Oxy. XX 2275; TM 32726; ll. 20-22)

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχο(μαι), κύριέ μου, εὖ πράσσοντα” (PSI VII 833; TM 30729; ll. 7-9)

“ἔρρωμένον σὲ ἢ θία (= θεία) πρόνοια διαφυλάξαι εὖ πράττοντα, κύριε” (P.Oxy. LV 3821; TM 22532; ll. 12-14)⁹¹

The two other occurrences are variants of εὖ πράσσω:

“πρὸ δὲ πάντων ὑγιάνειν (= ὑγιαίνειν) σε εὐχ[ο]μαι ἀβασκάντως τὰ ἄριστα πράττων (= πράττοντα; my remark)” (P.Oxy. II 292; TM 20563; ll. 11-13)

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχόμεθα πανοικησίᾳ διὰ βίου πολλά πράσσοντα” (P.Oxy.Hels. 48; TM 26658; ll. 25-27)

Εὐδοξέω is encountered in P.Princ. II 69 (TM 27167), P.Oxy. XIV 1766 (TM 31808), PSI XII 1261 (TM 17418) and P.Iand. VI 116 (TM 45340), all dated to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι διὰ βίου εὐτυχοῦντα καὶ εὐδοξοῦντα” (PSI XII 1261; ll. 21-23)

The verb διάγω is found in five private letters⁹² dated between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD, and is in three of the five occurrences extended with the adverb εὖ, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαι ὑμᾶς εὐχόμεθα εὖ διάγ(οντας)” (P.Oxy. LIX 3993; ll. 46-47)

In P.Oxy. XIV 1665, the variant κατὰ νοῦν appears instead of εὖ, and in P.Ross.Georg. III 9 διάγω is completed with εὐπετῆ βίον:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι κατὰ νοῦ (= νοῦν) διάγον\τα/” (P.Oxy. XIV 1665; ll. 26-27)

“ὑγιενάτα (= ὑγιαίνοντά) (hand 2) σε καὶ εὐθυμοῦντα ἢ ἀγαθὴ πρόνοια διαφυλάξιεν (= διαφυλάξιεν) εὐπετῆ βίον διάγοντα, δέσποτά μου τιμιώτατε”
(P.Ross.Georg. III 9; ll. 20-23)

⁹¹ The other instances of εὖ πράσσω are P.Rain.Cent. 72 (TM 30085), P.Münch. III 119 (TM 25901), P.Oxy. III 527 (TM 28367) and PSI VII 834 (TM 32876).

⁹² I.e. P.Ross.Georg. III 9 (TM 32907), P.Oxy. LIX 3993 (TM 27849), P.Oxy. XIV 1664 (TM 21964), P.Oxy. XIV 1665 (TM 31776) and P.Oxy. XIV 1668 (TM 31779; here, the phrase is damaged). The phrase is supplemented in SB XIV 11645 (TM 27499): “ἔρρωσθαι ὑμᾶς εὐχομαι καὶ [-ca.-? -] ὑγιαίνοντας καὶ εὖ [διάγοντας]” (ll. 28-29). The reconstruction is probably inspired by the initial health wish, which also has the combination of ὑγιαίνω and διάγω. As we have seen above, there is substantial variation in the formulas of one single letter, and εὖ is not strictly linked to διάγω, but it also appears in combination with πράσσω. As it is not clear how many characters were lost at the end of the line, [πράττοντα] may be a plausible emendation as well.

Εὐθυμέω occurs in PSI XII 1248 (TM 17411), BGU III 892 (TM 28104), P.NagHamm. 68 (TM 32410) and P.Ross.Georg. III 9 (TM 32907), dated between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD. P.Hamb. I 104 (TM 28706) preserves two otherwise not attested variants:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι διὰ βίου καὶ προκόπτοντα τὰ μεγάλα καὶ πλοῦντα τὰ μεγάλα, ἵνα μέγα διγνάσει (= δυνάσει) τοῖς φιλοῦσει[ν] (= φιλοῦσιν)” (ll. 1-4)

The verb εὐφραίνω, which is attested as the infinitive in the *AcI* in P.Mich. VIII 465 (TM 17239; Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris archive (cf. *supra*, § 2.2)), appears once more as a participle in P.Mich. VIII 496 (TM 27106), a letter addressed to Apollinarius which belongs to the same archive⁹³.

Similarly uncommon are the participles of εὐδοκίμέω (in P.Neph. 9; TM 33562 and P.Neph. 14; TM 33567), of εὐρωστέω (in P.Rein. I 41; TM 26149), of εὐανθέω (in BGU IV 1080; TM 31016) and of εὐκοπέω (in PSI IV 286; TM 31130). In other words, there is a great deal of variation.

4.3. Reference to gods

The reference to gods is an integral part of the phrase ὁ θεὸς διαφυλάξει, but also in about fifty other closing formulas, a god is mentioned: most of the occurrences are found in the formula ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, but this feature also appears in three ἔρρωσο phrases⁹⁴ and in one letter with εὐτύχει, P.Rein. I 58 (TM 38555). In one occurrence of the phrase ὁ θεὸς διαφυλάξει an additional reference to god is made:

“ἔρρωμένον σε ἢ θία προνοι διαφυλάξει[ε(?)](?) ἐπὶ μέγιστον χρόνον ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ Χ(ριστ)ῶ, κύριε ἀγαπητ[έ]” (SB I 2266; TM 33812; ll. 24-29)

The occurrences are dated to the 3rd century AD and later⁹⁵. Referring to god(s) is not confined to Christian letters and also references to pagan gods are made, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, κύριέ μου, μετὰ κυρίου μου Σπαρτιάτου θεοῖς πᾶσιν εὐθυμοῦντα” (PSI XII 1248; TM 17411; AD 235; ll. 25-27)

⁹³ By no means can this feature be attributed to scribal influence since the letters are written in two different hands (Youtie and Winter 1951: 5-9; 105-108). The number of occurrences in this archive is too low to conclude that this is a case of shared language.

⁹⁴ I.e. P.Herm. 45 (TM 33480), P.Gron. 17 (TM 31942) and P.Oxy. LXIII 4365 (TM 33683).

⁹⁵ In P.Mert. II 82 (TM 28784), dated to the late 2nd century AD, the gods' reference is not decipherable with certainty, and is therefore called “a highly dubious passage” by Clarysse in his forthcoming paper “The Emergence of God(s) in Papyrus Letters” of which he kindly gave me a prepublication. Hence, it has not been included in this overview. Just as in the case of the initial health wish, Egyptian traditions were probably responsible for the increasing number of references to the gods in the closing formulas from the Roman period onwards (Depauw 2006: 183).

Yet, the references to god(s) in the closing formula only become widespread with the rise of Christianity⁹⁶. Two constructions appear⁹⁷: in eleven letters⁹⁸, the god(s) are in the plain dative, just like in PSI XII 1248. Seven of them, including PSI XII 1248, are pagan letters referring to all gods⁹⁹, and P.Euphrates 16 (TM 44674) refers to οἱ θεοί; the three other letters with the plain dative are clearly Christian:

“ἐρρωσθαί σε, κύριέ μου, διὰ παντὸς τῶ τῶν ὅλων δεσπότη εὔχομαι” (P.Oxy. VI 939; TM 33344; ll. 28-30)

“ἐρρωσθαί ὑμᾶς εὔχομαι τῶ θεῷ διὰ παντὸς καὶ ἐν παντί” (P.Oxy. XII 1492; TM 31748; ll. 17-20)

“ὑγιαίνειν (= ὑγιαίνειν) σε πανέστειον (= πανέστιον) τῇ θείᾳ προνοίᾳ πανοικεῖ πολλοῖς χρόνοις εὔχομε (= εὔχομαι), [δέ]σποτα ἀσύν[κ]ρι[τε] (= ἀσύγκριτε)” (SB XXIV 16204; TM 32720; ll. 18-21)

However, the reference to god(s) is more frequently constructed with ἐν with the dative case¹⁰⁰:

“ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι ὀλοκλή[ρω]ς ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ” (P.Bas. 16; TM 30799; ll. 20-21)

Ἐν κυρίῳ is by far the most common variant. Other references are ἐν θεῷ (in five attestations¹⁰¹), ἐν κυρίῳ θεῷ (in four attestations¹⁰²) and ἐν κυρίῳ Χριστῷ (in P.Lond. VI 1928; TM 32661 and SB I 2266; TM 33812).

⁹⁶ Cf. forthcoming article by W. Clarysse “The Emergence of God(s) in Papyrus Letters” of which he kindly gave me a prepublication copy.

⁹⁷ An *ad hoc* phrase is found in P.Oxy. LV 3812 (TM 31913): “θεοί σε σώσειαν διὰ παντὸς πανοικησίᾳ” (ll. 13-14).

⁹⁸ I.e. P.Euphrates 16 (TM 44674), P.Oxy. LXXV 5062 (TM 128903), P.Oxy. XII 1492 (TM 31748), P.Oxy. XIV 1766 (TM 31808), P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2862 (TM 31832), PSI XII 1248 (TM 17411), PSI XIII 1335 (TM 30571), SB XII 10803 (TM 32553), SB XXII 15757 (TM 31056), P.Oxy. VI 939 (TM 33344) and SB XXIV 16204 (TM 32720).

⁹⁹ I.e. P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2862, PSI XII 1248, SB XII 10803, PSI XIII 1335, P.Oxy. XIV 1766, P.Oxy. LXXV 5062 and SB XXII 15757.

¹⁰⁰ According to Ziemann, it is plausible to reconstruct a reference to the god(s) in the lacuna of BGU III 950 (TM 33252) (Ziemann 1910: 343): “ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι καὶ ε... τι—? πολλοῖς χρόνοις, κύριε τιμώτατε ἄδελφε” (ll. 8-9). Indeed, it is not unthinkable that ε is the beginning of the phrase ἐν with the god(s) in the dative, and that this is another occurrence of this phenomenon, but it is impossible to reconstruct the formula. I therefore left this possible attestation out of the discussion.

¹⁰¹ I.e. P.Kellis I 66 (TM 33320), P.Oxy. LXIII 4365 (TM 33683), P.Vind.Sijp. 26 (TM 30477), P.Neph. 9 (TM 33562) and PSI III 208 (TM 33228).

¹⁰² I.e. P.Oxy. XX 2276 (TM 30489), P.Sijp. 60 b (TM 110227), P.Grenf. II 73 (TM 31940) and P.Oxy. VIII 1162 (TM 33633).

4.4. Reference to third persons

In about 45 letters, dated between the 1st and the 4th centuries AD, not only the addressee, but also third persons are being wished good health¹⁰³, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσο σὺν τῇ ἀδελφ[ῆ] σοῦ καὶ τοῖς σοῖς πᾶσι” (P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2844; TM 25939; ll. 13-15)

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι, κύριέ μου, μετὰ τοῦ κυρίου μου Ἀμμωνιανοῦ καὶ τῶν σῶ[v] πάντων” (P.Mich. VIII 503; TM 27113; ll. 18-20)

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομ(αι) καὶ τὰ παιδία” (P.Oxy. XIV 1763; TM 22006; ll. 12-13)

“ἔρ[ρω]σό μοι ἅμα τῶ υἱῶ ἡμῶν κ[αὶ τ]ῆς μητρὸς ἡ[μῶ]ν παγοικησίᾳ” (P.Oslo II 59; TM 33592; ll. 11-12)

P.Oxy. XIV 1763 is the only attestation of a simple accusative in this construction; ἅμα with the dative case is only found in P.Oslo II 59. The preposition σὺν is attested in eleven letters¹⁰⁴ and μετὰ occurs in 27 letters¹⁰⁵. In many of the letters with μετὰ, the closing formula is intertwined with the greetings: the persons greeted are also addressed in the closing formula (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 1.4.1), e.g.:

“ἄσπασαι τοῦ[ς] σοῦς πάντας μεθ' ὧν καὶ ἔρρωσο (= ἔρρωσο), ἀδελφε” (P.Mich. VIII 498; TM 27108; ll. 24-26)

It is not always people who are referred to in this phrase, also horses are mentioned¹⁰⁶:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι μετὰ τοῦ ἀβασκάντου σου ἵππου” (O.Florida 15; TM 74509; ll. 8-9)

Like in the initial health wish with a reference to the horses (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 2.2.2 and 3.3.3), these instances in the closing formula come from a military context.

As the quotes of P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2844 and P.Mich. VIII 503 above show, third persons are sometimes referred to as a group. The phrases used to describe groups in the closing formula are similar to those in the salutations (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 6.1). In seven

¹⁰³ Another type of reference to a third person is found in P.Flor. II 171 (TM 11026), where a certain Asklepiades, probably the mailman, is referred to in the closing formula: “ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχο(μαι) διὰ Ἀσκληπιάδου” (l. 16).

¹⁰⁴ Further, the preposition is supplemented in SB XIV 11665 (TM 30859).

¹⁰⁵ The preposition is supplemented in P.Alex.Giss. 40 (TM 27562), P.Rain.Cent. 73 (TM 30086) and P.Giss. I 71 (TM 19460); these occurrences have not been taken into account. In P.Hamb. I 54 (TM 28695), both σὺν and μετὰ are attested.

¹⁰⁶ The occurrence in O.Claud. I 165 (TM 24172) is uncertain as the closing formula is very fragmentary: “[ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι] μετὰ τοῦ ἀβασκ[άντου σου ἵ]ππου” (ll. 10-11). Also in some unedited ostraca from the Eastern Desert, references to horses are found in the closing formula (cf. Fournet 2003: 488).

letters, (πάντες) οἱ σοί is found (cf. P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2844 and P.Mich. VIII 503 above)¹⁰⁷. In one letter, οἱ πάντες appears:

“αἰρῶσθαί (= ἔρρωσθαί) σαι (= σε) εὐχομαι σὺν παντοῖς (= πᾶσιν)” (P.Oxy. XX 2274; TM 30488; l. 14)

Six letters refer to the household, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι (= εὐχομαι), ἄδελφε, μετὰ ὅλου σοῦ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ ἀβασκάντου” (SB VI 9549 (4); TM 31113; ll. 11-16)¹⁰⁸

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι πανοικί μετὰ τοῦ οἴκου σου ὅλου, ἄδελφε Ἀπίω[ν]” (P.Ross.Georg. III 3; TM 30783; ll. 24-25)¹⁰⁹

“ἔρρωσώ μοι σὺν καὶ τῇ συνβίῳ σου καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις καὶ τῷ οἴκῳ σου” (P.Hamb. I 54; TM 28695; ll. 10-15)

Finally, in three other letters, the following constructions are found:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι, κύριέ μου χρηστὲ καὶ εὐγενέστατε Ἀπίων, διὰ βίου εὖ διάγοντα μεθ’ ὧν ἡδέως διάγεις” (P.Oxy. XIV 1664; TM 21964; ll. 14-17)

“[ἔρρωσ]θαί σε εὐχομαι, ἄδελφε [φί]λτατε, μεθ’ ὧν βούλη” (P.Mert. I 28; TM 31542; ll. 21-22)

“ἔρ[ρωσο, ἀδελ]φε, εὐτυχῶν [σὺν παντὶ] γένει” (SB XIV 11665; TM 30859; ll. 31-33)

In more than forty letters, adverbs like πανοικησία/πανοικεσία (twelve attestations between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD¹¹⁰), and πανοικί (29 attestations between the 1st-2nd and the 4th-5th centuries AD¹¹¹), πανοικία (in BGU II 450; TM 28143 and P.Flor. II 273 *recto*; TM 11158¹¹¹) and πανέστιον (in SB XXIV 16204; TM 32720¹¹²) have the same meaning: they involve a group of people other than the addressee.

¹⁰⁷ In SB VI 9017 Nr. 15 (TM 25242), the phrase is damaged and it is not clear whether οἱ σοί or οἱ σοὶ πάντες was intended. Πάντες οἱ σοί also occurs in P.Oxy. XLII 3069 (TM 30336), P.Berl.Möller 12 (TM 27198) and P.Giss. I 24 (TM 19426).

¹⁰⁸ In P.Mert. I 24 (TM 21298), an almost identical phrase appears: “[ἔρρωσθα]ί σε δὲ εὐχομαι σὺν ὅλω [τῷ ἀβ]ασκάντῳ (= ἀβασκάντῳ; my remark) σου οἴκῳ.” (ll. 22-23).

¹⁰⁹ A similar construction is found in the following letters: “ἔρρωσθαί [σε εὐχομαι μετ]ὰ τοῦ οἴκου σου ὅλου” (P.Rain.Cent. 73; TM 30086; l. 13) and “... μεθ’ ὧν ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι εἰς μακροὺς χρόνους καὶ ὅλω σου τῷ οἴκῳ[ι]” (P.Oxy. LIX 3992; TM 27848; ll. 18-20).

¹¹⁰ In PSI XIV 1440 (TM 27060), the adverb is fragmentary, and it is supplemented as “πανοικ[εσία -ca.-?]” (l. 9). However, also the other variants such as πανοικί are possible conjectures, so this occurrence has not been taken into account.

¹¹¹ In this letter, “πανοικηία” (l. 25) is interpreted by the editor as πανοικεία, but since the latter is not found in LSJ it should be read as πανοικία.

¹¹² Also πανοικί occurs in the closing formula of this letter.

4.5. Mention of the addressee's name

Vocatives referring to the addressee are added to about 450 closing formulas dating between the 1st and 6th centuries AD. Mostly, the addressee is referred to by a kinship term (such as ἀδελφός), a politeness term (such as κύριος) and/or another characterization (such as τιμιώτατος or φίλτατος). Since these nouns and adjectives indicate how the addressee is characterized, they are discussed in appendix I. In seventeen occurrences, dated between the late 1st and the 4th centuries AD, the addressee's name is mentioned in the vocative (whether combined with another characterization or not):

“ἔρρω(σο) ἄδ(ελ)φε Ἄδραστε” (SB V 7987; TM 18005; ll. 12)

“ἔρρωσθαί σ[ε] εὐχομαι τιμιώτατε Ἀνουβίων” (P.Sarap. 103; TM 17128; archive of Eutychides; ll. 17-18)

“ἔρρωσο Ἀπολλώ[νιε μετὰ] τῆς ἀδελφῆς [σου Ἀλινῆς]” (P.Giss. I 71; TM 19460; archive of Apollonios *strategos*; ll. 10-11)¹¹³

Like P.Sarap. 103, two other letters with the addressee's name in the vocative belong to the archive of Eutychides. Similarly, just like P.Giss. I 71, four other letters are found in the archive of Apollonios *strategos*. In other words, out of seventeen occurrences, about half are part of one of the two collections; referring to the addressee by one's own name thus seems to be particularly popular in those two archives. This is consistent with the observation in chapter 8 (§ 2; cf. *infra*) that the two archives share a number of uncommon linguistic features.

4.6. *Dativus ethicus*

The *dativus ethicus* mainly occurs in the ἔρρωσο closing formula, but it is also attested twice in the phrase ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξει¹¹⁴. Μοι appears in about forty ἔρρωσο formulas from the 1st until the 4th centuries AD¹¹⁵. My investigation of the characterizations (cf. appendix I) has revealed that the following attestation in SB XX 14249 (TM 26173; dated to the 1st or the early 2nd century AD) is not convincing:

¹¹³ The other occurrences are P.Sarap. 80 (TM 17100; archive of Eutychides), P.Sarap. 83 a (TM 17104; archive of Eutychides), P.Brem. 22 (TM 19607; archive of Apollonios *strategos*), P.Brem. 55 (TM 19639; archive of Apollonios *strategos*), P.Giss. I 26 (TM 19428; archive of Apollonios *strategos*), P.Giss. I 91 (TM 19477; archive of Apollonios *strategos*), P.Oxy. XLII 3063 (TM 26813), P.Mich. VIII 485 (TM 17243), P.Harr. I 105 (TM 28711), P.Oxy. XIV 1664 (TM 21964), P.Ross.Georg. III 3 (TM 30783), P.Wisc. II 76 (TM 32548), P.Ross.Georg. V 6 (TM 32838) and PSI XV 1553 (TM 114331).

¹¹⁴ I.e. P.Herm. 8 (TM 33467) and SB VIII 9746 (TM 33802), both dated to the 4th century AD.

¹¹⁵ Μοι is supplemented in three other letters.

“ἔρρωσό μ[ου γλυκύτατε]” (l. 18)

There are a multitude of objections against both words of this conjecture: first of all, this would be the only (and early!) occurrence of μου in combination with γλυκύτατος. Moreover, usually μου follows, rather than precedes the adjective or substantive it is subordinate to. Further, γλυκύτατος was not popular and the supplement seems to be solely based on the opening formula in which the letter’s recipient was addressed in a similar way. So, both the supplements of μου and γλυκύτατος are doubtful. It is also far from certain that we have to supplement a vocative here. The vocative is not a common addition to the ἔρρωσο phrases of the 1st and 2nd centuries AD: of the 176 ἔρρωσο formulas of this period, only 16 (i.e. 9%) have a vocative. A *dativus ethicus* would, in my opinion, be a more plausible supplement in SB XX 14249: “ἔρρωσό μ[οι]”.

Variants is ἐμοί found in P.Oxy. I 118 verso (TM 31345), where it is attested in combination with σοι:

“ἔρρωσό μοι εὐτυχῶς. ἔρρωσο ἐμοί τε καὶ σοὶ εὐτυχ[ῶς]” (ll. 40-42)

Ἡμῖν occurs in P.Oxy. LXIII 4365 (TM 33683), SB VIII 9746 (TM 33802) and in P.Herm. 8 (TM 33467; for its specific phraseology cf. *infra*, appendix I).

In the Saturnila archive, the *dativus ethicus* μοι appears relatively often: it is found six times, all in letters from Sempronios, viz. in P.Mich. XV 751 (TM 28820), in P.Mich. XV 752 ll. 27–42 (TM 28821, where it is partly supplemented), in both letters on the papyrus sheet P.Wisc. II 84 (TM 26689) and in both letters of SB III 6263 (TM 27792). In fact, Sempronios uses the phrase ἔρρωσό μοι in all but one of his closing formulas¹¹⁶. Since all letters by Sempronios seem to be autographs (Papathomas 1996: 119), the writer presumably had a preference for this closing formula and used ἔρρωσο with the *dativus ethicus* μοι as a fixed phrase¹¹⁷.

4.7. Τὰ ἄλλα and variants

The expression τὰ ἄλλα only occurs in the ἔρρωσο closing formula: it occurs in six letters dated between the 1st century BC and the 2nd century AD¹¹⁸, e.g.:

“τὰ δ’ ἄλλα ἔρρωσ(ο)” (P.Oxy. XVII 2148; TM 17524; l. 18)

¹¹⁶ Only in P.Mich. XV 752 ll. 1-26, the closing formula is different, but largely supplemented and thus uncertain: “ἔρρωσ\σ/θ[αί σε εὐχομαι]” (l. 26).

¹¹⁷ Other writers in the archive use the phrase ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι (P.Mich. III 206; TM 28795, a letter from Longinus Celer and P.Mich. III 209; TM 28798, a letter from Saturnilos). In chapter 8 (§ 1), the writing style of Sempronios and his (possible) epistolary preferences are investigated further.

¹¹⁸ I.e. BGU XVI 2637 (TM 23361), P.Oxy. XXXVIII 2838 (TM 22227), P.Giss. I 24 (TM 19426), P.Lund II 2 (TM 28116), P.Oxy. X 1292 (TM 21762) and P.Oxy. XVII 2148 (TM 17524).

This word string is known from the final health wish (cf. *supra*, chapter 6 § 1.4.3). In CPR V 19 (TM 24981), dated to the 1st or the 2nd century AD, the variant τὰ ὅλα appears.

4.8. Minor extensions

A number of extensions only occur in the closing formula ὁ θεὸς διαφυλάξῃ. The phrase ψυχῆ καὶ σώματι (καὶ πνεύματι) is added to the closing formula in three –or possibly four– 4th century AD letters: P.Neph. 1 (TM 33555), P.Neph. 7 (TM 33561) and P.Neph. 17 (TM 33568), and perhaps in what appears to be a closing formula of P.Neph. 5 (TM 33559)¹¹⁹. In P.Neph. 17, the variant ψυχῆ καὶ πνεύματι καὶ σώματι is encountered. All occurrences are from the Nephros archive. Perhaps this phrase was especially popular in this collection: ψυχῆ καὶ σώματι is also found in four initial health wishes, including P.Neph. 1¹²⁰. Overall, the fact that ψυχῆ καὶ σώματι is only found in 4th century AD documents, is consistent with the findings about this very phrase in the initial health wish (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.3.5).

5. Conclusion

The closing formula ἔρρωσο remained in use throughout the papyrological millennium. Mostly the simple verb form was used, but various features could be added to the phrase, such as intensifiers, vocatives, references to god(s), participles, and so on.

The formula ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι is attested from the 1st century AD onwards. It is clearly inspired by the initial health wish, and not the other way around, as my study has shown. Not only the chronology, but also the fact that the closing formula is less susceptible to variation than the initial health wish suggest this. Whereas the closing formula is in many aspects –also regarding the extensions– similar to the initial health wish, the former also shows some peculiarities: unlike the initial health wish, the closing formula is commonly shortened.

The linguistic situation of the closing formulas after the Ptolemaic period is thus one of diversity and coexisting variants: from the rise of the new phrase ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι onwards, letter writers had the choice between the two closing formulas. Whereas Sempronios seems to have had a preference for ἔρρωσο (in combination with μοι), most letter writers used them alternately: even when writing to the same person, a sender sometimes used the short formula ἔρρωσο in one letter, and the phrase ἐρρωσθαί

¹¹⁹ This occurrence has not been included in this study (cf. *supra*, footnote 48).

¹²⁰ If we tentatively assume there is a pattern in this limited number of occurrences, we should not consider it an idiolectic preference since the expression appears in letters from different senders; rather, it would be a shared linguistic element.

σε εὐχομαι in another. In some letters, both closing formulas even appear together in one letter.

In the Late Antique period, two new variants appeared: ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξῃ and ὑγιαίνων δίδωθε. These phrases are only attested in a limited number of cases and were probably not frequently used, since the popular formulas ἔρρωσο and ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι did not become obsolete.

Εὐτύχει and διευτύχει, which originated in the register of petitions, were polite alternatives to end a letter. These two variants coexisted over time as well, unlike previously thought.

Part 2 Synchronic variation

Although letters have a formulaic structure, the individual writer also has free choice: he does not only decide whether to use a certain epistolary *topos* or not, but he also chooses the phraseology of this *topos*: the plethora of (synchronic) variants in each epistolary formula enabled letter writers to develop a preference for one single variant, or to create new *ad hoc* variants. The variation which was typical of Greek epistolary phraseology, was in other words a *conditio sine qua non* and the trigger for individuality in letter-writing. However, studying the language of individuals is not as easy as it may seem at first sight. For instance, the exclusive use of one variant by a particular sender does not exclude the possibility that this sender also used other formulas in letters which have not been preserved. Further, the possibility of scribal influence should be considered when studying the language of the individual by taking into account the palaeographic data of texts (cf. *supra*, chapter 1, § 1.2.2). Although papyrological material does not allow definitive conclusions, a thorough linguistic study of the papyrus letters can lead to plausible hypotheses about idiolectic variation.

In past studies little attention was paid to the synchronic variation at each moment in time and idiolects were not a topic of interest. Scholars such as Koskenniemi even doubted if letter writers could adapt the standard formulas to their own taste:

“den Anteil des Absenders selbst werden wir uns äusserst bescheiden vorzustellen haben. Auch bei vielen, die selbst schrieben, hat die fehlende Gewandtheit im schriftlichen Ausdruck das unmittelbare Hervortreten der Persönlichkeit verhindert.” (Koskenniemi 1956: 35)

In the recent years, however, this view has changed:

“So lassen die Papyrusbriefe, obwohl nicht von Literaten verfasst, sehr oft das Spiel mit der Form und Komposition bemerken, lassen Formelhaftes und Individuelles hervortreten, denn die Valeur einzelner Begriffe und Floskeln kann anhand vieler Belege überprüft werden.” (Palme 2010: 15)

Consequently, the research topic of individual variation has started to prosper. For example, Artemidoros the doctor in the Zenon archive has been shown to have had a

predilection for the adverb εὖ in the initial health wish εὖ ἂν ἔχοι and he is never attested to use καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι (Evans 2007: 305). Similarly, Hierokles, the director of a *palaistra* in the same archive has a preference for the *formula valetudinis* with the verb ἀπαλλάσσω (Evans 2007: 305). Another notable element of Hierokles' writing style is that he changed this attitude towards the closing formula over time: in his earliest documents, he does not add ἔρρωσο, but later he seems to have adapted to the epistolary customs (Evans 2005: 157). These and other idiolectic features (e.g. Herennia's fondness of the greeting verb ἐπισκοπέω instead of ἀσπάζομαι, cf. *supra*, chapter 3) have already been discussed in the previous chapters. In chapter 8, I will study archives whose epistolary phrases have not yet been (fully) investigated *supra* or in past studies.

Contrary to idiolectic preferences, not much research has yet been done on 'shared language', i.e. recurring linguistic peculiarities within one archive. To my mind, elements of shared language are even more intriguing than idiolects as their potential is even greater: this kind of linguistic evidence can be used to assemble clusters of texts that deal with the same group of individuals, and to restore connections and networks that existed in Antiquity. In this way, the linguistic investigation of the papyri is a new, but successful tool in archive studies. In chapter 9, I will discuss some case studies to illustrate this.

The case studies on idiolectic preferences and elements of shared language should not give the false impression that almost every (group of) ancient letter writer(s) has a penchant for uniformity in their epistolary expressions, or that certain idiolectic features were used in every letter, regardless of context. I also discuss stylistic variation depending on the context and the letter's goal. I show that even in letters from senders who are known to have preference for a particular set of formulas, contextual variation appears (chapter 10, § 2). Epistolary formulas are thus studied as markers of conversational and politeness strategies. Not only the epistolary phrases *an sich* should be seen in a larger politeness strategy; also language choice can be carefully chosen for the effect that it should have on the hearers, as I illustrate in section 3 of chapter 10. In that final chapter, I also discuss 'politeness' from a different angle by studying the polite phrases such as καλῶς ποιήσεις, which are often found in the body of the private letters (chapter 10, § 1).

Chapter 8 Idiolects and shared language

1. Saturnila and her sons¹

In chapter 5, I have already discussed the uncommon phraseology of the *proskynema*, which was used in this archive: the phrase is introduced by the word group ἅμα δε καί, uses the intensifier ἡμερησίως and has the unusual middle form ποιοῦμαι (cf. *supra*, chapter 5, § 3.3). All letters from this late 2nd century AD archive with a *proskynema* formula attest to this peculiar phraseology; since this idiosyncrasy is not linked to the language of a specific person, but is found in letters from Sempronios and in one text from his brother Saturnilos to him, this feature seems to be a shared element in the collection. Similarly, the initial health wish is used with uniformity throughout the archive and at the same time the phrase shows deviation from standard phraseology (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.2.3): in all of Sempronios' letters that have an initial health wish, the exact wordings ἐρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι appear; here both the reversed word order and the choice for ἐρρωσθαί instead of the common ὑγιαίνειν are remarkable. As in the *proskynema*, the use of this specific expression is not confined to Sempronios' linguistic usage: the phrase is also found —with a small variation ἐρρωσθαί σοι (= σε) εὐχομαι— in the letter from Longinus Celer. Whereas the uncommon phraseology in the epistolary formulas discussed above is not confined to one specific person, this seems to be different for the closing formula —as we have seen in chapter 7, § 4.6). In all Sempronios' letters but one, the closing formula ἔρρωσο occurs in combination with the *dativus ethicus* μοι, whereas other writers in the archive use the closing formula of the type ἐρρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι (P.Mich. III 206, a letter from Longinus Celer and P.Mich. III 209; a letter from Saturnilos).

¹ For information on this archive, see chapter 4, § 3.2.2.3. This section is submitted to “Handelingen” of the “Koninklijke Zuid-Nederlandse Maatschappij voor Taal- en Letterkunde en Geschiedenis (KZM). Interdisciplinaire vereniging voor onderzoekers in de taalkunde, letterkunde, geschiedenis en klassieke studies”.

As mentioned in the introduction, idiolectic linguistic elements cannot be studied unless the palaeographic data are taken into account. All letters by Sempronios seem to be autographs:

“*Die Hand des vorliegenden Briefes [i.e. P.Heid. VII 400; DN], die mit der Hand der anderen von Sempronius geschriebenen Briefe identisch ist*” (Papathomas 1996: 119)

In evaluating the epistolary style of Sempronios and of the archive as a whole, we can thus conclude that the senders were responsible for the wordings and that the peculiarities in the phraseology are not due to scribal influence². In other words, this writer seems to have developed a remarkably uniform style with a phraseology that often deviates from the common phrasing. This uniformity does not reveal itself at the level of the *topoi*: not in every letter does Sempronios add an initial health wish or a *proskynema*, for instance. Yet, whenever he decides —for whatever reason³— to include a certain *topos*, he always uses the same, somewhat atypical phraseology. Only the closing formula of the second letter of P.Mich. XV 752 seems to deviate from this pattern, but the fact that this phrase is damaged, prevents firm conclusions.

It is difficult to speculate how the uniform language of Sempronios relates to the epistolary language of the other persons in the archive, who sometimes seem to have preferred the same idiosyncratic expressions as Sempronios, rather than standard phraseology (cf. the initial health wish of Longinus Celer in P.Mich. III 206 and the *proskynema* of Saturnilos in P.Mich. III 209). Given the impression that Sempronios, as Saturnila’s eldest son, was the most important person of the family (cf. Papathomas 1996: 118; 120), it is tempting to think that his language influenced that of his younger brothers. This is a possible explanation as to how the elements of shared language appeared in this archive, but this hypothesis of course cannot be proved.

However, the epistolary phrases discussed in the chapters above are not the only parts in the letter where the language of this archive seems to be defined by uniformity⁴; the letters of the Saturnila archive have another unusual epistolary phrase:

² Cf. Obviously, Sempronios did not pen P.Mich. III 209, since this letter from his brother Saturnilos was addressed to him. This can thus not account for the shared linguistic elements in P.Mich. III 209 and in Sempronios’ letters.

³ However, it is beyond retrieval, and beyond the goals of this chapter to try to determine why Sempronios included some epistolary *topoi* in one letter and not in another.

⁴ Papathomas referred to the similar construction of Sempronios’ letters to argue that Sempronios is the sender of P.Heid. VII 400, a letter to Saturnila in which the sender’s name is lost. In the discussion of the epistolary phrases, he mentioned other letters in this archive with similar phraseology in order to convincingly link P.Heid. VII 400 to the dossier or to motivate editorial conjectures. It was not his goal to elaborately discuss the epistolary language in the archive and to compare it with other private letters, which, obviously, one does not expect in an edition of papyri anyway (cf. Papathomas 1996: 117-126). My study is, in other words, the first to focus on the language of the archive as such.

the request to the addressee to a reply about his health. In 166 private letters — especially letters from the Roman period— the sender asks the addressee to reply about his well-being⁵. The low number of occurrences shows that this *topos* was not a standard element in the letter; for instance, unlike the opening and closing formula, the *topos* did not develop a prototypical phraseology. As a reference corpus for the occurrences of this *topos* in the Saturnila archive, I list below all the requests for a reply found in letters from the 2nd century AD Karanis (besides those of the Saturnila archive):

“καλῶς ποιήσεις ἀντι[γρ]άψας μοι περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου καὶ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς τὴν ἀν[τι]φώ[νησ]ιν” (P.Mich. VIII 476; TM 27089; archive of Claudius Tiberianus; ll. 21-23)⁶

“διὸ ἐρωτῶ σε, ἄδελφε, μὴ λερεῖν (= ληρεῖν)⁷ [το]ῦ γράφειν μοι ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρία[ς] σο]υ, ὃ μοί ἐστιν εὐχή παρὰ θεοῖς πᾶσι” (P.Mich. VIII 484; TM 27095; ll. 8-11)

“καὶ σύ μοι ταχύτερον δῆλωσον περὶ τῆς ἀπροσκοπίας σου καὶ τῆς τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου” (P.Mich. VIII 490; TM 27100; ll. 7-9)⁸

“ἐρωτῶ [ὕμᾱς ἀόκν]ως μοι ἀντιγράψαι περὶ τῆς σω[τηρίας] ὑμῶν εἶνα (= ἵνα) καὶ ἐγὼ παραψυχῆν [ἔχω]” (P.Mich. VIII 465; TM 17239; archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris; ll. 35-38)

“ἀλλ’ ὅμως ἐρω[τηθ]εῖς ἀναγκαιῶς σχέθητι πρὸ πάντων [γρά]ψαι μοι περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας [ὕ]μῶν” (P.Mich. VIII 466; TM 17240; archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris; ll. 9-11)

⁵ Perhaps, the increased use of this *topos* in the Roman period was a result of Demotic influence (Depauw 2006: 216-218).

⁶ Similar phrases are found in the following letters from 2nd century Karanis —for practical reasons, these phrases are discussed in a footnote in order not to make the list of phrases in the body text too long—: P.Mich. VIII 479 (TM 27092; archive of Claudius Tiberianus): “καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις ταχύτερόν μοι ἀντιγράψαι περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου” (ll. 8-10), P.Mich. VIII 481 (TM 27094; archive of Claudius Tiberianus): “καλῶς οὖν ποιήσ[ι]ς (= ποιήσεις) κο[μ]ισαμένη ἀντιγράψαι μοι κ[αί] πε[ρὶ] τῆς σωτηρίας [ὕ]μῶν καὶ οὗ [ἐ]ὰν χρειάν ἔχης” (ll. 10-14) and P.Mich. VIII 491 (TM 27101): “καλῶς δὲ ποιῆς (= ποιήσ<εις> —or ποιεῖς, my remark cf. Gignac 1976: 240-242 gewoon getypt; geen EN—) γράψασά (= γράψασά) μοι ἐπιστολὴν πε[ρὶ] τῆς σωτηρίας σου καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου καὶ τῶν σῶν πάντων” (ll. 11-13).

The verb of sending ἀντιγράφω (e.g. in P.Mich. VIII 476) is a less popular variant of the more common γράφω (cf. *infra*, footnote 11). Yet, in all three requests for an answer, Terentianus chooses ἀντιγράφω over γράφω (viz. P.Mich. VIII 476, 479 and 481). In his Latin letters Terentianus always uses the verb *rescribo* when asking the sender for a reply: “*et mihi[i tu] resçreibae*” (P.Mich. VIII 469; TM 27082; ll. 10-11), “*rogo te ut quā aceper[i]s r[e]m con[ti]nua u[t] rescrib[as] mihi [sol]lic[itus sum autem de vice in] do nese mihi resçriβas*” (C.Epist.Lat. 143; TM 69897; ll. 9-10) and “[-ca.?-] *rescrib[e]s mihi[i] ut sequur sim*” (P.Mich. VIII 470; TM 27083; l. 22). In my opinion, Terentianus’ consistent choice for ἀντιγράφω over γράφω might be due to interference from Latin.

⁷ cf. Chapa 1998: 79-80.

⁸ A comparable formula occurs in another letter from 2nd century Karanis: “μὴ οὖν ἄλλως ποιήσις (= ποιήσεις) ἀλλὰ δῆλωσόν μοι περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου, καὶ πείσης τὴν μητέρα (= μητέρα)” (P.Mich. VIII 502; TM 27112; ll. 13-14).

“κα[ι] ἤ[δ]η[η] προτρ[έ]πομαι ἐπιστέλλειν ἡμῖν περὶ τῆς ὑγείας (= ὑγίεας) σου” (P.Mich. VIII 496; TM 27106; archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris; ll. 4-6)
 “γράφε μοι περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου καὶ ὧν θέλεις (= θέλεις)” (P.Mich. VIII 498; TM 27108; archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris; ll. 22-24)⁹

The variation in this reference corpus shows that the sender usually chooses *ad hoc* phraseology; even within one archive (e.g. archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris), the variation is significant: whereas P.Mich. VIII 465 and 466 were both letters from Iulius Apollinarius, written in the same hand, they formulate the *topos* in a completely different way (cf. Youtie and Winter 1951: 5). Yet, the letters in the Saturnila archive have a different pattern: first of all, the request for a reply is relatively often used. It is found no less than six times in this twelve-letter archive:

“διὸ ἐρωτηθεῖς (= ἐρωτηθεῖσα), ἡ κυρία μου, [ἀνόκνωσ μ]οι γράφε περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου” (P.Mich. XV 751; TM 28820; ll. 9-10)

“ἐρ[ωτ]ηθεῖς (= ἐρωτηθεῖσα), ἡ κυρία μου, ἀνόκνωσ [μ]οι γρά[φ]ε[ι]ν π[ε]ρὶ τ[ῆ]ς σωτ[η]ρια (= σωτηρίας) ὑμῶν, εἶνα (= ἴνα) ἄ [μερι]μν[ότ]ερα δι[ά]γω” (P.Mich. XV 752 ll. 1-26; TM 28821; ll. 8-10)

“ἐρωτηθεῖς οὖν, ἄδελφε, τάχιόν μοι γράφιν (= γράφειν) περὶ τῆς [σ]ωτηρίας σου εἶνα (= ἴνα) κάγω (= καὶ ἐγὼ) ἀμεριμνότερος διάγω” (P.Mich. III 209; TM 28798; ll. 9-11)

“ἐρωτηθεῖς’ (= ἐρωτηθεῖσα), ἡ κυρία μου, ἀνόκνωσ (= ἀόκνωσ, according to the editor) μοι γράφειν περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν, ἴνα κάγω (= καὶ ἐγὼ) ἀμεριμνότερα διάγω” (SB III 6263, ll. 1-17; TM 27792; ll. 8-10)

“καλῶσ π[ο]ιήσεις (= ποιησεις) γράψας μοι περὶ τῆς σ[ωτ]ηρίας ὑμ[ῶ]ν” (SB III 6263, ll. 18-31; TM 27792; ll. 30-31)

“λαβων (= λαβοῦσα) μου τὰ γράμματα¹⁰ αὐτῆς ὥρας δήλω[σ]όν μοι πῶς διὰ[γ]εις” (P.Wisc. II 84 ll. 20-42; TM 26689; ll. 22-24)

Secondly, the first four occurrences are remarkably uniform, despite the different senders: three of the letters were sent by Sempronios but P.Mich. III 209 was written by his brother Saturnilos. Also this expression seems to be an element of shared language in the archive, which cannot be due to scribal influence as Sempronios’ letters were autographs, and P.Mich. III 209, a letter addressed to him, was not written by him either (cf. *supra*).

⁹ In P.Mich. VIII 510 (TM 27120), another letter from the Claudius Tiberianus archive, the request for a reply is formulated in a similar way: “γράψο[ν μο]ι π[ε]ρὶ τ[ῆ]ς σωτηρ[ί]ας σου” (ll. 9-10).

¹⁰ cf. *BL* 11, p. 291.

There are different recurring elements: the introductory phrase ἐρωτηθείς, the vocative, the intensifier ἀνόκνωσ and the purpose clause with ἀμεριμνότερος διάγω¹¹. In the following sections I discuss these recurring features.

1.1. Ἐρωτάω

The verb ἐρωτάω conveys a polite request. It is frequently found in requests in the body of the letter, e.g.:

“διὸ ἐρωτῶ σε πέμψον μοι καὶ τὸν κόρακιν καὶ ἤλον” (O.Claud. I 178; TM 29822; ll. 8-10)

With only eleven occurrences¹², its use in the request for a reply is not very widespread. Ἐρωτάω has been subject to interference from Latin: the meaning ‘to request’ is not classical Greek: the verb could originally only be used in the sense of ‘to inquire’. Under influence of the Latin *rogo*, which carries both the meanings of ‘to request’ and ‘to inquire’, the Greek counterpart ἐρωτάω could signify ‘to request’ in post-classical texts (Dickey 2010b: 209). This Latin background also seems to be reflected in the attestations of this verb in the request for a reply. Saturnila and her family were Roman citizens (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.2.3); even though the specific linguistic background is unknown, certain epistolary variants that seem to occur more often in Latin contexts, were attested in this archive: the use of ἐρρωσθαι instead of ὑγιαίνειν in the initial health wish (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.2.3) and also the choice for the middle form ποιοῦμαι — instead of the common active in the *proskynema* (cf. *supra*, chapter 5, § 3.3).

Besides the four letters from the Saturnila archive, two other attestations of ἐρωτάω in the request for a reply belong to archive of the soldiers Iulius Sabinus and his son Iulius Apollinaris¹³. This archive is, as said, geographically and chronologically similar to the Saturnila archive (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.2.3), being from 2nd century AD Karanis. Also the social and linguistic background of the archives overlaps: the protagonists of both collections are Roman citizens, and the archives share the use of ἐρρωσθαι in the initial health wish. Overall, the recurring (and perhaps contact-induced) elements (i.e. ἐρρωσθαι in the initial health wish and ἐρωτάω in the request for a reply) in the two archives should not be regarded as a kind of shared language; the archives probably

¹¹ The fact that all four formulas have the verb γράφω is less telling, as it is the most frequently used verb in the request for a reply.

¹² I.e. P.Mich. VIII 465 (TM 17239), P.Mich. VIII 466 (TM 17240), P.Mich. VIII 484 (TM 27095), BGU XV 2492 (TM 26497), P.Wisc. II 72 (TM 26687), BGU I 332 (TM 28252), O.Claud. I 168 (TM 24176), and the four letters of the Saturnila archive.

¹³ I.e. P.Mich. VIII 465 and 466.

shared a bilingual Latin and Greek background which made them more susceptible than others to such contact-induced variants.

Also other occurrences of ἐρωτάω in the request for a reply come from a similar context. Like the Saturnila archive and that of Iulius Sabinus and his son Iulius Apollinaris, another letter was found in Karanis, viz. P.Mich. VIII 484. The names of the correspondents —Julius Clemens and Arrianus— are Latin. Another instance comes from Mons Claudianus (O.Claud. I 168) and two other occurrences (BGU XV 2492 and P.Wisc. II 72) cannot be linked to a specific region in Egypt, but their content shows that they belong to the military milieu.

In other words, whereas the polite request with ἐρωτάω in the body of the letter was widely used all over Egypt, its appearance in the formulaic request for a reply was perhaps more confined to contexts in which Latin might have played a more important role than elsewhere in Egypt¹⁴. Of course, factors of preservation may have influenced the picture to a certain extent.

Nevertheless, it is notable that four of the eleven occurrences of ἐρωτάω in the request for a reply come from the Saturnila archive, especially since they are used in an identical participle construction ἐρωτηθείς (cf. *supra*). In my opinion, this is not a coincidence, but it is due to shared language in the archive. The direct and consistent connection between ἐρωτηθείς and the vocative in the Saturnila letters further supports this hypothesis.

1.2. Ἄνóκνωσ

The second recurring element is the intensifier ἄνóκνωσ. This adverb is rare and only appears sixteen times in all papyri¹⁵; in the request for a reply, this adverb is found only in the three letters by Sempronios (P.Mich. XV 751 —where it is admittedly supplemented—, P.Mich. XV 752 and SB III 6263). In SB III 6263, White interpreted the adverb ἄνóκνωσ as ἄóκνωσ (White 1986: 181)¹⁶. This is, in my opinion, not necessary

¹⁴ Only BGU I 332 is not in some way connected to a military and/or a Latinized-context.

¹⁵ Eight attestations of the adverb are found in the courtesy formula: in the request for a reply the sender asks the addressee to write about his health, in the courtesy formula he wants the correspondent to write about everything he needs, e.g.: “καὶ εἴ τινος ἦάν (= ἐάν) χρία (= χρεία) σοί ἐστὶν ἀντίγραφόν μοι ἄνóκνωσ” (P.Fay. 130; TM 31422; ll. 13-15). The courtesy formula is sometimes found in combination with the request for a reply, e.g. in P.Mich. VIII 498 (cf. *supra*).

¹⁶ However, ἄóκνωσ —which only appears in a total of 27 papyri, mostly petitions and contracts— is not unattested in the request for a reply of private letters. It is found in two letters in an identical way as ἄνóκνωσ in the Saturnila letters: “ἐρωτῶ [ύμας ἄóκν]ωσ μοι ἀντιγράψαι περὶ τῆς σω[τηρίας] ύμῶν εἶνα (= ἴνα) καὶ ἐγὼ παραψυχὴν [ἔχω]” (P.Mich. VIII 465; TM 17239; ll. 35-38; cf. *supra*) and “ἐάν δὲ ἦστε (= ἦτε) ἐμβαλόμενοι Σαραπίωνι τῶ ἀδελφῶ ἄóκ[ν]ωσ γράψατε περὶ αὐτῶν” (PSI XV 1557; TM 32232; ll. 21-23). The first letter belongs to the contemporaneous Karanis archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris. If the supplement of

since Sempronios seems to show uniformity also in this aspect of his epistolary phraseology. Just like the closing formula, the consistent use of the adverb ἀνόκνωσ is not observed in other writers in the Saturnila archive and seems to be an idiolectic feature of Sempronios' language¹⁷.

1.3. Extension: a reply would reassure the sender

As the overview of the requests for a reply in the reference corpus of 2nd century letters from Karanis above shows, an additional clause (e.g. a purpose subclause) expressing the idea that a reply would reassure the sender, is not common (cf. Koskenniemi 1956: 73). Such a motivation for requesting a reply only appears in a total of eighteen private letters, and it mostly does not have a fixed content nor an invariable phraseology¹⁸. The use of such varied and mainly *ad hoc* expressions make it rather remarkable that the letters from the Saturnila archive have developed a uniform phraseology. Three of the four letters discussed here have an additional clause (P.Mich. XV 752, SB III 6263 and P.Mich. III 209), and in all of them the purpose clauses are almost identical since they share two characteristic features: ἀμέριμνος (in the comparative) and διάγω (cf. *supra*). Since this feature is not confined to Sempronios' language —it also appears in the letter by Satornilos— it seems to be another element of shared language in the archive.

Ἀμέριμνος is not common in the papyri: there are only about forty occurrences. It is therefore interesting that also another letter from the archive, P.Mich. XV 751, has the adjective ἀμεριμνός, more specifically in the phrase in which the sender gives information about his own health:

“μαθὼν δὲ περὶ τῆς σωρηρία[ς] ὑμῶν ἀμεριμνότερος ἐγενάμην” (ll. 8-9)

This phrase immediately precedes the request for a reply, to which no purpose clause is added (cf. *supra*). Perhaps Sempronios did not want to repeat himself by using the expression ἀμέριμνος διάγω once more in the request for a reply and therefore omitted the purpose clause. Overall, whereas Sempronios does not add an identical purpose clause to all his requests for a reply, his language is once again very consistent, as all

ἀνόκνωσ in P.Mich. VIII 465 is correct, the use of ἀ(ν)όκνωσ would be another uncommon linguistic element which is shared by the Saturnila archive and the archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris. Yet, the fact that P.Mich. III 465 is damaged at a crucial point, does not allow us to draw conclusions.

¹⁷ However, there is always the possibility that other members of the family did use this adverb, but that no data of this use have survived.

¹⁸ There are three main ideas expressed in this extension: the sender, first, sometimes asks for a reply because he is worried and wants to be reassured; or, secondly, because a response would make him happy; or, thirdly, because receiving a letter is experienced as a softening of the hyperbolically expressed *Sehnsuchtschmerz* (Koskenniemi 1956: 73-75).

four letters preserve the uncommon ἀμέριμος in (or in the proximity of) the request for a reply.

Of the total of approximately forty occurrences, ἀμέριμος occurs in only four other purpose clauses added to the request for a reply –leaving the ones of the Saturnila archive aside¹⁹:

“κἂν (= καὶ ἂν) διὰ λόγου μοι πεμψε (= πέμψον) εἰ ὀλοκληρῖς (= ὀλοκληρεῖς) ἢ ὡς ἦ, ἵνα ἀμέριμος ὦμε (= ὦμαι), ἀλλὰ ἕως νῦν ὀλιγωρῶ τὰ περὶ σου μὴ κοιμισάμενός σου γράμματα” (P.Lips. I 110; TM 31909; ll. 12-16)

“καὶ γράψον μοι καὶ περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου ἵνα ἀμέριμος ὦμαι” (SB XIV 11853; TM 30913; ll. 4-5)

“πρὸς ταῦτα οὖν καταξίωσο(ν) ἀντιγράψε (= ἀντιγράψαι) ἢ ἐλθῖν (= ἐλθεῖν), εἶνα (= ἵνα) ἀμέριμος γένωμε (= γένωμαι)” (SB XIV 11372; TM 35122; ll. 12-15)

“θέλησον οὖν [-ca.?- δη]λῶσαι ἡμεῖν (= ἡμῖν) τὸ τῆς καταστάσεώς σου καὶ εἰ ἀμε(?)]ριμνεῖς εἰς ἅπαντα τα κατὰ σέ . [-ca.?-] ἀμεριμνῶς ὦμεν καὶ διαν . . . [-ca.?-]” (P.Ross.Georg. V 6; TM 32838; ll. 16-19)²⁰

In sum, the combination of ἀμέριμος and διάγω is found nowhere in the requests for a reply except in the Saturnila archive²¹.

¹⁹ Similarly, διάγω is not widespread either. Yet, in the archive it is, apart from the requests for a reply, attested in the body of P.Mich. XV 752 as well, to ask about the health: “κυ[ρία,] πῶς μοι δι[άγεις]” (l. 13).

²⁰ Similar phraseology is found in SB VI 9605 (TM 33118): “ἀπόστιλόν μοι] περὶ τῆς ὀλοκλη[ρία]ς ὑμ[ῶν] γράφε εἰς τὴν ἀμερι[μνίαν] ἡμ[ῶν]” (ll. 20-22) and in SB X 10525 (TM 36123): “γράψον μοι γράμματα μεθ’ ὑπογραφῆς σου ἵνα ἀμε[ρι]μνήσω” (ll. 5-6).

²¹ The combination of ἀμέριμος and διάγω does appear in P.Haun. II 21 (TM 30122), in P.Ryl. II 235 (TM 27906) and in P.Mich. III 211 (TM 28800), but not in the request for a reply, respectively: “ἐὰν δὲ πάλιν μὴ βουληθῆς ταχύτερόν μοι διάπεμψαι ἐπιστολήν ἵνα κἀγὼ (= καὶ ἐγὼ) ἀμερίμνω διαγω, πάση γὰρ ὥρα ἔτοιμ[ός] εἰμι προσδοκώμενός σου γραμμαματα (= γράμματα)” (ll. 10-14); “ἐθ[αύ]μασε (= ἐθαύμασα) δὲ πῶς διὰ Λυτέρκου οὐκ ἐδήλωσάς μοι περὶ τῆς εὐρωστίας σου καὶ πῶς διάγεις ἴν[α] καὶ ἡμεῖς περὶ σοῦ ἀμερ[ι]μνω διαγωμεν, ἀλλὰ οὐ πρώτως σου τὸ εἰκαῖον μανθάνομεν” (ll. 6-12); “ἴδα (= οἶδα) γὰρ ἡμῶν (= ὑμῶν) τὸ σπουδεῖον (= σπουδαῖον) εἶνα (= ἵνα) ἀμε[ρι]μνότερόν με ποιήσεται (= ποιήσεται), ὑμε[ῖ]ν (= ὑμῖν) γὰρ προσέχων ἀμεριμνότερα δι[ι]άγω” (ll. 7-10). In the first (business) letter, the sender urges the addressee to reply concerning a business transaction (an order of wine), and not concerning his health, as was the case in the Saturnila letters. In the second letter, the expression ἀμερίμνω διαγωμεν is found in the reproach of negligence, which is often found in close connection to the request for a reply.

2. Archive of Apollonios *strategos*²²

A collection of dozens of private letters centered around Apollonios *strategos* was found in Hermopolis, the hometown of Apollonios and his family²³. In the early 2nd century AD, Apollonios was appointed *strategos* of Apollonopolites Heptakomias, and moved to Heptakomia (some 100 km southwards) because of this function. The letters reflect the situation of the split family, with Apollonios and his wife living in Heptakomia and other relatives, including Apollonios' mother Eudaimonis and his daughter Heraïdous remaining in Hermopolis²⁴. The content of the letters is —as always— varied, but in the letters from AD 115 to 117, the threat and danger of the Jewish revolt dominates the correspondence, especially since Apollonios took part in the battle. Palaeographically speaking there is also a great deal of variation in this archive: a remarkably high number of different scribes were involved. Out of the eleven letters that Eudaimonis wrote, “the main body of eight of these letters was certainly penned by a scribe, each one by a different scribal hand” (Cribiore 2002: 151-152). Like the interest in the archive's palaeography (Cribiore 2002: 149-166), this archive has caught considerable scholarly attention²⁵, but the language of the letters has not yet been fully examined. Kortus discussed the epistolary formulas in the letters in his new edition and in his commentary on the Apollonios letters from the Giessen collection, but did not elaborate on their phraseological peculiarities: he only focused on standard phrases, and not on variations to those formulas (Kortus 1999: 22-50)²⁶. Yet, the formulas in the archive show some important deviations from standard phraseology. I have shown in chapter 5 that the *proskynema* phrases in the archive use the unique construction οὐ διαλείπω + participle (§ 3.4.1.2). Also the relatively frequent indirect reference to deities in the

²² This archive contains, besides private letters, also official communication and petitions (cf. www.trismegistos.org/archive/19; accessed on October 4, 2013) —but given the subject of this dissertation, I will focus on the private letters. This section has been accepted (pending minor revisions) in GRBS. A minor aspect of the idiosyncratic linguistic usage in this archive will be discussed in appendix I, § 3.1.1.

²³ After Apollonios laid down office, he brought his collection of letters home (Whitehorne 1994: 21). This explains why letters sent from Hermopolis to Heptakomia, were dug up in Hermopolis.

²⁴ Aline traveled back and forth between the two cities (cf. Cribiore 2002: 152).

²⁵ The letters sent during the Jewish revolt give an insight into the thoughts and the emotions of the senders (Whitehorne 1994: 22). Furthermore, several letters were sent by women. Consequently, the collection was studied within recent work on women in the Graeco-Roman Egypt (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 139-163). Further, peculiarities with regard to the layout have been discussed: many of the letters in the archive are written in several columns (Litinas 2001: 805-806).

²⁶ For instance, Kortus discussed the *proskynema* formula in general terms, but he did not refer to the peculiarities of the *proskynemata* in the Apollonios archive; in fact, to illustrate his point that a letter writer can give a personal touch to a phrase, he quoted a letter from outside the archive (Kortus 1999: 37-40). Litinas, however, made excellent use of the uncommon language in the archive to link a new letter to the collection. His approach shows how promising an in-depth linguistic study of the archive may be.

proskynema phrase is uncommon, but it is attested in other private letters, including one from the Eutychedes archive (§ 2); in this chapter, I will discuss some more linguistic peculiarities of the epistolary language of the Apollonios archive²⁷.

2.1. Initial health wish

Many initial health wishes in this archive differ from the standard formula of this period, *πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν*: out of the twenty private letters in the archive preserving an initial health wish, only seven stick to standard phraseology. In other letters, the writer varies the wording. For instance, in the following letter the first part of the initial health wish —*πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν*— is standard but the addition of *ἀπρόσκοπον εἶναι πάντοτε* is uncommon²⁸:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ [. . .] [.] καὶ ἀπρόσκοπον εἶναι πάντοτε” (P.Alex.Giss. 60; TM 27582; a letter from Eudaimonis; ll. 3-4²⁹)

In fact, the word *ἀπρόσκοπος* and its derivations such as *ἀπροσκοπία* only occur eleven times in all papyri³⁰, of which four times in the Apollonios archive. The other seven attestations range from the 1st to the 5th century AD and cannot be linked to a particular part of Egypt —one letter was even sent from Ostia (P.Mich. VIII 490; TM 27100). The use of *ἀπρόσκοπος* and its derivations is thus not a regiolectic feature. However, two of the occurrences belong to the archive of Eutychedes, P.Sarap. 89 and 95 (TM 17111 and

²⁷ I confine my discussion of this archive to the formulaic phrases typical of private letters, but of course, this archive preserves other interesting linguistic features too. For instance, *ἀφ’ ἧς ἡμέρας* occurs in a peculiar way in the archive. Usually the word string introduces a relative subclause which has the eventualis construction *ἄν + subjunctive* and belongs to the register of contracts, e.g.: “[ἀποδό]τῳ δὲ Ἀμμώνιος Μενάνδρῳ τοὺς μὲν τόκους κ[ατὰ μῆνα ἕκαστ]ο[v], τὸ δὲ δάνειον ἀφ’ ἧ[ς] ἄν ἡμέρας Μένανδρ[ος προεῖπη] ἐν ἡμ[έ]ρα[ι]ς δέκα” (SB XVII 13255; TM 2540; ll. 19-22). In such occurrences, *ἀφ’ ἧς ἡμέρας* defines the beginning of a certain period. The phrase is only found in three private letters. In P.Cair.Zen III 59477 (TM 1115), the context in which *ἀφ’ ἧς ἡμέρας* appears, is related to contracts: the sender asks Zenon for a loan, which he will repay within sixty days of his return. The two other occurrences come from the archive of Apollonios *strategos* and have a different meaning, viz.: “ἀφ’ ἧς ἡμέρας ἐξῆλθον ἀπὸ σοῦ καὶ ἐγενόμην ἐν τῷ Ἐρμοπολεί[τηι, κατε]λαβόμην/ τὸν στρατηγόν” (P.Brem. 61; ll. 3-5) and “ἀφ’ ἧς (= ἧς; my remark) ἡμέρας ἔπεμψάς μοι, ἐζήτησα τὸ λακῶνιον καὶ οὐχ εὔρον ἀλλὰ ἀταλιανὸν σαπρόν.” (P.Giss. I 21; ll. 4-7). Unlike the other documents that contain this phrase, the attestations in the Apollonios archive have this formula at the beginning of the sentence. In these letters, the phrase is a simple indication of time and not an introduction of a relative subclause, which states the beginning of the period within which someone should do something.

²⁸ Further in this paragraph, I will discuss the intensifier *πάντοτε* in the initial health wish. I discuss the most telling variants to the standard health wish, but it is not my intention to describe all uncommon features in the health wishes of this archive.

²⁹ This letter was probably written during the Jewish revolt, in AD 116 or 117 (Zeev 2005: 23).

³⁰ The word is thus not as “conventional” as Whitehorne thought (Whitehorne 1994: 26).

17120, resp.)³¹. This archive is in different aspects similar to the archive of Apollonios. To start with, the archives of Apollonios and of Eutychides come from the same region. Sarapion, the ‘founding father’ of the Eutychides archive lived with his wife and family in the city Hermopolis. The wealthy family owned several hundred *arourai* of land around Hermopolis and in the north of the Hermopolite nome (Schwartz 1961: 339). Like the family of Apollonios, they belonged to the upper-class. Further, the archives are also close in time: the four attestations of ἀπρόσκοπος in the Apollonios archive and the two occurrences in the archive of Eutychides were written at the end of the 1st and the beginning of the 2nd century AD. Hence, the fact that six of the eleven occurrences of ἀπρόσκοπος come from the two archives in the Hermopolite nome might be a shared linguistic feature between those two collections³².

Apart from P.Alex.Giss. 60 (cf. *supra*), the other attestations of ἀπρόσκοπος in the Apollonios archive are P.Giss. I 22 (TM 19424)³³ —another letter from Eudaimonis —, P.Giss. I 17³⁴, a letter from a woman named Taus, and P.Giss. I 79 (TM 19468)³⁵, a letter from a woman whose name is lost³⁶. It is interesting that this idiosyncratic feature appears in the letters, irrespective of the hand they were written in. Consequently, the repetition of the word ἀπρόσκοπος cannot be due to the influence of a scribe: P.Giss. I 22 was probably penned by Eudaimonis herself (cf. Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 155) but Eudaimonis called upon a scribe for P.Alex.Giss. 60 (cf. Cribiore 2002: 151). Also the two other letters were not the work of one single hand: whereas the writer of P.Giss. I 79 “betrays an excellent familiarity with writing” (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 162), the general impression of the hand of P.Giss. I 17 is poor (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 149).

In the formula in P.Giss. I 22, ἀπρόσκοπος is not the only remarkable feature:

³¹ P.Sarap. 95 is a letter from Eutychides, one of Sarapion’s sons, to his brother Heliodoros. Eutychides lived in Magdola Mire, not far from Hermopolis, and that was probably the place where he sent this letter from. The letter deals with issues related to the recovery and the health of Heliodoros, which implies that the addressee had been ill. P.Sarap. 95 cannot be dated precisely within the time span of the archive (AD 90 - 133). P.Sarap. 89 was sent by Heliodoros (addressed to Phibion), who was presumably living in Memphis at the time (Schwartz 1961: 210); P.Sarap. 89 was probably written during the Jewish revolt, perhaps in AD 117 (Zeev 2005: 73).

³² Admittedly, there is the possibility that the data are influenced by factors of preservation, and that the fact that many of the attestations come from the two archives, is due to coincidence. Nevertheless, since ἀπρόσκοπος is not the only shared linguistic element between the two archives, coincidence is not a likely cause for this pattern.

³³ This letter was probably written towards the end of the Jewish revolt, perhaps in AD 117 (Zeev 2005: 37).

³⁴ Kortus excluded that this letter was written in the period that Apollonios actively took part in the Jewish revolt, since the letter only refers to the threat of an illness, not to that of the revolt; in his opinion, the letter thus either dates to AD 113-114 or to 117-120 (Kortus 1999: 150).

³⁵ This letter was written at the end (AD 117 cf. <http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.giss.apoll;24>) or just after the Jewish revolt (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 163).

³⁶ Perhaps Aline was the sender (Cribiore 2002: 155).

“[πρὸ π]άν[τ]ων εὐχομ[α]ί σε [τὸν ἀγ]αθ[ὸν] ἀσπ[ά]σθαι [καὶ] τὴν [γλυκυ]τάτην σου ὄψιν προσκυ[νῆσαι] νῦν ὄντως ἀμοιβ[ή]ν [ἤδη] τῆς εὐσεβείας μου ἀ[πολ]αμβανούσ[η]ς/ σε ἀπρόσ[κοπ]ον καὶ ἰλαρώτατον. ταῦ[τά μ]οι ἢ πᾶσα εὐχή ἐστι [καὶ μ]έριμνα” (ll. 3-11)

The formula differs from standard phraseology in length (nine lines!) and in different other elements: the fact that greetings are sent to the addressee at the beginning of the letter, is not uncommon in this archive (cf. *infra*, § 2.2), but no other papyrus letter includes the greetings in the initial health wish; only here the verb ἀσπάζομαι is subordinate to the main clause with εὐχομαι. Also the verb προσκυνέω is rare in the infinitive clause after εὐχομαι³⁷. Ἀπολαμβάνω, by contrast, is regularly found in the initial health wishes: it appears in different constructions, viz. as an infinitive clause or as a purpose clause after εὐχομαι (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.3). I quote two examples from outside the archive:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαι τῷ θεῷ ὀλοκλήρους ὑμᾶς ἀπολαβεῖν” (P.Oxy. XIV 1773; TM 31815; ll. 3-5)

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαι θεοῖς πᾶσιν [ὄ]πως ὑγιαίνοντας ὑμᾶς ἀπο[λ]άβω” (P.Ryl. II 244; TM 31173; ll. 3-5)

Eudaimonis’ idiosyncratic expression in P.Giss. I 22 is clearly a personal adaptation of the common expression. In most examples of the ἀπολαμβάνω phrase including P.Oxy. XIV 1773 and P.Ryl. II 244, a predicative adjunct (ὀλοκλήρους in P.Oxy. XIV 1773) or a participle (ὑγιαίνοντας in P.Ryl. II 244) express the hope that the addressee will be fine when the sender sees him again. In P.Giss. I 22, Eudaimonis uses ἀπρόσκοπος καὶ ἰλαρώτατος as predicative adjuncts: not only ἀπρόσκοπος is rare, but also ἰλαρώτατος is only attested here in the ἀπολαμβάνω phrase —or even in the initial health wish in general. At the end of the health wish of P.Giss. I 22, Eudaimonis adds that the addressee’s health is important (ταῦ[τά μ]οι ἢ πᾶσα εὐχή ἐστι [καὶ μ]έριμνα). A similar idea is found in another autograph by Eudaimonis:

“[[πρὸ]] πάντων τῶν εὐχῶν μου ἀναγκαιοτάτην ἔχω τὴν τῆς ὑγ/είας σου καὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου Ἀπολλωνίου καὶ τῶν ἀβασκάντων ὑμῶν” (P.Giss. I 23; TM 19425; ll. 4-10)

³⁷ It only appears in the 4th century AD letter P.Kellis I 75 (TM 33329): “προηγουμένως πολλά σου τὴν φιλαδεφίαν προσαγορεύω εὐχόμενός σε προσκυνεῖν ἐν τάχει” (ll. 5-11). Further, the verb appears in the relative subclause attached to the initial health wish of P.Mich. VIII 465 (TM 17239; archive of Gaius Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris): “[πρὸ μὲν π]άντων εὐχομαί σε ἐρρῶσθαι, ὅ μοι [εὐκταίον ἐ]στιν [προ]σκυνῆσαί σε ἐρρωμένην [- ca.10 -]μοι π[. . .], π[. . .] καὶ βίος” (ll. 3-5).

The usual contents of the health wish, viz. praying (εὔχομαι and variants) that the sender is well (ὕγιαίνω and variants) can indeed be found in Eudaimonis' formula — even a variant to the common intensifier πρὸ πάντων is inserted— but the standard health wish has been loosely interpreted.

In PSI IV 308 (TM 31135), a letter from Sarapas to Eudaimonis³⁸, the basic formula is extended with a second infinitive εὐτυχεῖν —if the conjecture is correct:

“πρ[ὸ] μὲν π[άντων ε]ὔχομαί σε ὑγια[ίνειν καὶ διὰ π]αντὸς [εὐτυ]χεῖν” (ll. 3-5)

In total, the verb εὐτυχέω occurs only in thirteen initial health wishes of private letters (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.2.4). Εὐτυχέω recurs as a participle in another initial health wish of the archive, which is again severely damaged³⁹:

“[-ca.?- θ]έλω εὐρωστεῖν (= εὐρωστεῖν; my remark) εὐτυχοῦντα [-ca.?-]ν σου πάντων” (P.Alex.Giss. 61; TM 27583; ll. 3-4)

Another idiosyncratic word in this phrase is εὐρωστέω. This verb is not preserved in any other initial health wish (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.2.12).

In P.Alex.Giss. 59 (TM 27581), the standard construction εὔχομαι with infinitive clause appears, but the verb of this infinitive clause is διασώζω, which does not appear elsewhere in the *formula valetudinis*:

“πρὸ τῶν [ῶλ]ων εὔχομαί σε διασώζεσθαι ἅμα τῇ συμβίῳ σου Ἀλινῆ καὶ ἀβασκάντοις \σ/ου παιδίῳς” (ll. 3-6)

The choice for διασώζεσθαι is perhaps inspired by the threat of the Jewish revolt (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.2.2.10). Also in P.Brem. 63, another letter by Eudaimonis, the initial health wish is adjusted to the circumstances, namely that Aline is expecting her baby anytime soon:

“εὔχομαί σε πρὸ πάντων εὐκαίρως ἀποθέσθαι τὸ βάρος καὶ λαβεῖν φάσιν ἐπὶ ἄρρεν[ο]ς” (ll. 3-6)

This wish is not the “run-of-the-mill” formula Whitehorne calls it. First of all, neither ἀποτίθημι nor λαμβάνω are attested in any other initial health wish —which is obvious as this is an *ad hoc* wish inspired by specific circumstances⁴⁰. Further, the intensifier πρὸ πάντων is in a strange place. Usually we find πρὸ πάντων at the beginning of the

³⁸ I follow Messeri's interpretation that the name should read 'Sarapas' (and not 'Sarapias') and her suggestion that this letter belongs to the Apollonios archive (Messeri 2001: 165-168).

³⁹ The names of the letter's correspondents are also lost.

⁴⁰ Given that the two health wishes —P.Alex.Giss. 59 and P.Brem. 63— which are inspired by the circumstances, are written by different scribes, their idiosyncratic phraseology should be ascribed to Eudaimonis herself.

sentence (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.3.5): *πρὸ πάντων* is not found elsewhere in such an unusual position in the initial health wish, except perhaps in P.Brem. 66 (TM 19651), another letter from this archive⁴¹:

“[εὔχομαί σε πρὸ π]άντων ὑγιαίνειν” (l. 2)

Other intensifiers in the health wishes of this archive deviate from standard phraseology too: P.Alex.Giss. 60, a letter from Eudaimonis, quoted above, preserves the uncommon intensifier *πάντοτε*, which also occurs in the initial health wish of P.Giss. I 17, a letter from Taus to Apollonios:

“καὶ εὔχομαι πάντοτε περὶ τῆς ὑγιείας σου” (l. 4)

Παντότε only occurs only five times in health wishes of the type *πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν* (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.3.5); as said above, the repetition of words in P.Alex.Giss. 60 and P.Giss. I 17 cannot be due to scribal influence. The formula in P.Alex.Giss. 58 (TM 27580), a letter from Eudaimonis to Apollonios, is also a loose interpretation of the idea of the health wish. I specifically want to draw attention to the asyndetic intensifier *νυκτός ἡμέρας*:

“ο . ω . . τὰς παρ’ ἡμεῖν ταραχ[ὰς] οὐ καρτε[ρ]ῶ νυκτ[ὸ]ς ἡμέρας ε[ὐ]χ[ο]μένη τοῖς θεο[ῖ]ς πᾶσι καὶ π[ά]σαις ὄπως [σε] δ[ι]αφυλάξωσι” (ll. 3-6)⁴²

There are only four other instances of this phrase in the *formula valetudinis*, which all date from the 4th century AD (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.3.5). But this intensifier is possibly attested in the body of another letter from this archive:

“οὔτε πο[. . . ο]ὔτε [σε]ιτίοις ἡδέως προσέρχομαι, [ἀλλὰ συν]εχῶς ἀγρυπνοῦσα νυκτός ἡ[μέρας μ]ίαν μέριμναν ἔχω τὴν περὶ [τῆς σωτ]ηρίας σου” (P.Giss. I 19; ll. 5-9)⁴³

P.Brem. 60 (TM 19645) even preserves an intensifier which is not found elsewhere in any epistolary formula, *πάση ὥρα* (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.3.5):

“πάση ὥρα εὔχομα[ι -ca.-] ὑπέρ τε τῆς σω[τ]ηρία[ς] σου καὶ τῶν σῶν] πάντων” (ll. 3-5)

⁴¹ The names of the correspondents are lost.

⁴² I prefer the reading *δ[ι]αφυλάξωσι* over the original *δ[ι]ασυ[λ]λα[β]ῶσι* (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, footnote 164). *Διασυλλαμβάνω* would be a *hapax legomenon*. Also *ταραχή* is uncommon, but this word appears once more in line 9 of this same letter (Whitehorne 1994: 27).

⁴³ The lacuna in ll. 5-6 probably contained the noun *ποτός*, viz. either *πο[τῶι]* or *πο[τοῖς]* (Kortus 1999: 113).

In P.Brem. 60, the sender does not only pray for the well-being of the addressee, but also for other people of the family. Such an extension to the basic idea of the health wish is found in almost seventy papyrus letters in total (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 3.3.3) Since eight of them belong to the archive, it seems that this *topos* was popular in the circle around Apollonios⁴⁴, e.g.:

“πρὸ πάντων σε εὐχομαι [[σε]] ὑγιαίνειν μετὰ Ἀλίνης τῆς κυρίας καὶ Ἡρακλᾶ Ἀπόλλωνος οὗ τὰ τέκνα ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶ βαστάξε[ι]ς, ὧν οὐ διαλείπω τὸ προσκύνημα ποιῶν παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Ἑρμῇ” (SB X 10278; TM 16755; ll. 2-5)

In the initial health wish, the expression ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶ is uncommon⁴⁵. This phrase is attested in total in 33 papyri of different text types (e.g. petitions, letters, lists and applications). No less than ten come from the archive of Apollonios *strategos*⁴⁶. In the private letters of this archive, the phrase appears mainly in messages of a safe travel, but also in a wish for an uncomplicated delivery:

“ὅταν δὲ ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶ ἐκβῶμεν καὶ τὸ δῶμα ἀσφαλισθήσεται ἢ διαβάθρα καγγελλωτῆ (= καγκελλωτῆ) καὶ τὰ προσκήνια γενήσεται ἅμα [[καί]] τῷ καγγελλωτῆ (= καγκέλωι) τοῦ μικροῦ συμποσίου” (P.Ryl. II 233; ll. 2-5)

“δίκαιον δοκῶ εἶναί σε φίλον πᾶσι ὡσπερ καὶ ἦς τοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ νομοῦ, ἴνα μετὰ φιλίας καὶ ἀπροσκόπως ἐξέλθωμεν ἀπ’ αὐτῶν ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶι” (P.Giss. I 79; col. iv, ll. 5-10)

“γένοιτο δ’ [ἐ]μέ σε ἐπ’ [ἀγ]α[θῶ] {σε} προσκυ[γ]ῆ[σα]ι ἔχουσα (= ἔχουσαν; my remark) ἀρ[σένιον]” (P.Giss. I 77; TM 19466; ll. 8-9)

Like ἀπρόσκοπος, ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶ is found more often than usually in the archive. We could thus again wonder whether the use of this word is an element of shared language in the archive. Another similarity with ἀπρόσκοπος is that ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶ also appears twice in the archive of Eutychides, viz. in P.Sarap. 100 (TM 17125) and P.Sarap 103 (TM 17128). In the two letters, the phrase occurs in a similar context as in the Apollonios archive, as it is found in messages about traveling:

“καθ’ ὅλου μὲν ἔδει παρηγορεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς μέχρι οὗ (= οὔ; my remark) ἀναπλεύσης πρὸς ἡμα<ς> ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶ ἀσπαζομένους σε δι’ ἐ[π]ιστολῶν καὶ διακομιζομένους τῆς ἀπὸ σοῦ ἀνταμοιβῆ[ς] τὰς ἴσας” (ll. 4-9)

⁴⁴ cf. Kortus 1999: 35. The 63 attestations represent 4.5% of all initial health wishes, whereas the percentage is much higher for the Apollonios archive (12.7%; my data).

⁴⁵ It is a known farewell or luck wish formula in funerary and votive epigraphical texts.

⁴⁶ I.e. apart from SB X 10278, quoted above, the petitions SB XXVI 16804 (TM 44705), SB V 8001 (TM 18006) and the private letters P.Brem. 9 (TM 19594), P.Brem 65 (TM 19650), P.Giss. I 77 (TM 19466), P.Giss. I 78 (TM 19467), P.Giss. I 79, P.Giss. I 16 (TM 19418) and P.Ryl. II 233 (TM 19531). These numbers are based on my search in the Duke Database of Documentary Papyri (DDbDP).

“ἐὰν δὲ ἐξέλθῃς ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶ, ἔξε[ις] παρ’ ἐμοῦ τὸν κατ’ εἶδ[η λό]γο[ν]” (ll. 15-17)

In sum, the use of ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶ in a private context (safe travel, for instance) is not limited to the two archives; but like ἀπρόσκοπος, also ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶ was perhaps more popular in the circles around Apollonios and Eutychides than elsewhere in the papyri⁴⁷.

So far, the discussion has focused on the phraseology of the initial health wish. However, by way of conclusion, I want to make some remarks about the place of the formula in the letter. In some letters from the archive, the initial health wish and/or the *proskynema* formula do(es) not immediately follow the opening formula, but appear(s) somewhat further in the letter. Annotators have commented upon this uncommon element in P.Brem. 57 (TM 19642), in the following way:

“The most interesting feature of this letter is that Arsis interrupts the customary formula at the beginning to announce her news; then she goes back to report her act of obeisance before the gods. Either she remembered or the scribe noticed the omission and interrupted the flow of her dictation.” (Bagnall, Criore, and Ahtaridis 2008: A7.6, nr. 36)

Also in P.Flor. III 332 (TM 19372)⁴⁸ the initial health wish appears in the body of the letter (lines 15-18) instead of immediately after the opening formula. Like P.Brem. 57, this letter was written by a scribe (Bagnall, Criore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 147), but a different scribe than the one responsible for the penning of P.Brem. 57: the scribe of P.Flor. III 332 is only said to have penned P.Giss. I 21 and P.Brem. 63 (Bagnall, Criore, and Ahtaridis 2008: A7.13, nr. 43). Should we think that (at least two) different scribes imposed an epistolary phrase, and changed the dictation? This seems unlikely, as P.Giss. I 21, which was penned by the same scribe as P.Flor. III 332, does not have an initial health wish at all. I do not think that this scribe sometimes did and other times did not interrupt the sender to add an initial health wish. More likely, the insertion of the health wish *in medias res* is to not be ascribed to the scribe, but to the sender of P.Flor. III 332 –and presumably a similar situation occurred for P.Brem. 57. In other words, the non-standard place of the initial health wish is not a sign of scribal influence, but rather an argument to the contrary: it attests to the scribe writing down verbatim the sender’s stream of consciousness.

⁴⁷ Here too, factors of preservation might have influenced the data.

⁴⁸ In P.Giss. 85 the *proskynema* formula only starts in line 8, which seems to be in the body of the letter rather than in the opening. Unfortunately, the first lines of the letter are severely damaged, so it is impossible to know what was written in lines 2-6 and we cannot exclude that the initial health wish ran down these five lines.

2.2. Initial greetings

Greetings from the sender to the addressee's social circle are mostly found at the end of the letter. Salutations from the sender to the addressee (ἀσπάζομαι σε) more often appear in the opening lines⁴⁹. Yet, greetings at the beginning of the letter are far from commonplace: whereas approximately a thousand letters have greetings at the end of the letter, only some 250 letters send regards at the beginning of the letter (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, footnotes 7 and 8). In the Apollonios archive, no less than 21 private letters contain initial greetings (24.1% of the 87 private letters in the archive). Compared to the 250 initial greetings from a total of roughly 4,350 private letters (i.e. 5.7%), the archive makes thus far frequently more use of this epistolary phrase than the average papyrus letter⁵⁰.

Initial greetings are extensively used by Syrion; he inserts them in all four letters to Ailouras which have been preserved:

“ἀσπάζομαι[α]ί σε καὶ τὰ ἀβ]άσκαντά σου παιδία” (P.Brem. 51; TM 19635; ll. 2-3)

“ἀσπάζομαι σε καὶ τὰ ἀβ]άσκαντά σου παιδία” (P.Giss. I 25; TM 19427; l. 3)

“[ἀ]σπάζ[ομαι]αί σε [δ]ιὰ Χ[. . .]ος τοῦ ἀναδιδ[ό]ν[το]ς σοι τ[ὸ] ἐπιστ[ό]λιον καὶ τὰ ἀβ]άσκαντ[α] παιδί]α καὶ τὴν σύνβιόν σου” (P.Brem. 52; TM 19636; ll. 3-6)

“ἀσπάζομαι[αί] σ[ε] διὰ Κάστορος τοῦ [ἀ]γαδιδόντ[ος] τὴν] ἐπιστολήν καὶ τὰ ἀβ]ά]σκαντά σου πα[ι]δία” (P.Stras. IV 187; TM 26973; ll. 3-5)

The first two formulas are remarkably similar and so are the two last ones. The letters were written by different scribes, so that scribal influence cannot be the explanation for this uniformity⁵¹. The choice to include the initial greetings, as well as their phraseology should be attributed to Syrion himself.

Also Arsis greets the addressee in both letters preserved:

⁴⁹ I would not go as far as Kortus who seems to see a dichotomy between greetings sent to the addressee, found at the beginning, and greetings to third persons at the end of the letter: “*Die Grüße haben ihren festen Platz im Brief. Sie stehen meist am Ende direkt vor der Schlußklausel, mit Ausnahme der an den Empfänger selbst gerichteten Grüße, die meist am Beginn stehen*” (Kortus 1999: 41). In many letters, including the letters of the archive, the sender is greeted at the end of the letter, e.g. “ἐν τάχει σε ἀσπάζομαι” (P.Brem. 66; l. 9, just before the closing formula). Similarly, greetings at the beginning of the letter may be dedicated to third persons, e.g. “πρὸ πάντων [σ]ε ἀσπάζε[τ]αι {σε} Ἡραϊδοῦς καὶ [ἀ]σπ[ά]ζομαι πάντας τ[οὺς] σο[ύς]” (P.Giss. I 77; l.3, just after the opening formula).

⁵⁰ The frequency of this feature is not due to general popularity of the initial greetings in the 2nd century AD: out of the 725 private letters dated to the 2nd century AD, only 48 of them have initial greetings, i.e. 6.6%. The fact that this number is somewhat higher than average can perhaps be attributed to the fact that the many attestations of the Apollonios archive are included in this number.

⁵¹ Cf.: “*ces lettres (i.e. the four letters from Syrion to Ailouras) ne sont pas autographes, à en juger par la différence de mains entre P.Brem. 51 et 52 et par la présence du iota adscrit dans l'en-tête du seul P.Giessen 25*” (Schwartz 1963-1989: 18).

“πρὸ πάντων σε ἀσπάζομαι” (P.Brem. 57; TM 19642; l. 3)

“Εὐκταῖον ἦν μοι δι’ ἐπιστολῆς ἀσπασασθαί σε, ἐπὶ οἴδας τὸ συμβᾶν τῷ εὐμοίρῳ
υἱῷ μου Χαιρήμονι, ὅτι ἐξάπινα ἐγένετο τὸ ἀτύχημα καὶ δεῖ αὐτὸν δευτέρα ταφῆ
ταφῆναι” (P.Giss. I 68; TM 19457; ll. 3-7)⁵²

Whereas initial salutations are attested in all letters preserved from these two senders, the low number of occurrences prevents us from ascribing this pattern to personal preferences.

2.3. Courtesy formula with *προτρέπω* and *ἐπιτρέπω*

Προτρέπω is not oft-used in the papyri. A search in the DDbDP comes up with only 46 attestations, many of which are official documents, viz. official petitions, an edict, an application to the senate and official letters including a copy of a letter from the emperor Hadrian (P.Fay. 19; TM 59966). The verb occurs twice in private letters from the Apollonios archive:

“παρακαλῶ οὖν σε συν[ε]λθεῖν Ἑρμοφ[ί]λω πρὸς Ἡράκλειον τὸν τοῦ
Ἀπολλωτάτος, ἵνα περισσ[ο]τέρως αὐτῷ μελήσῃ διὰ τὸ ὑμῖς αὐτὸν προτρέπεσθ[α]ι”
(P.Giss. I 25; ll. 10-14)

“καὶ σὲ δὲ προτρέπομαι ἐπιτρέπειν μοι περὶ ὧν βούλει ὅς (= ὡς) ἥδιστα ποιήσονται”
(P.Brem. 21; TM 19606; ll. 9-11)

One other attestation is a private letter from the archive of Eutyichides:

“[καὶ] προτρέπομαί σε τὸ αὐτὸ ποιεῖν ὑ[π]ὸ χεῖρα ἐπι[τρ]έπειν τε μοὶ περὶ ὧν ἐὰν
θέλης ἥδιστ[α] ποιήσονται” (P.Sarap. 103 *ter*; TM 17147; ll. 4-6)

In these three occurrences the middle *προτρέπομαι* occurs. The formula in P.Sarap. 103 *ter* is similar to that of P.Brem. 21: *προτρέπομαι* is the main verb of the so-called ‘courtesy formula’ in which the sender asks out of politeness if there is anything he can do for the addressee. Courtesy phrases are not an essential part of the private letter: my corpus only has about 200 letters with courtesy phrases⁵³ The phrase never developed into a conventionalized expression. Often the sender just uses an imperative, e.g.: “ὧν ἄλλων θέλεις, γράφε μοι ὡς ἥδιστα ποιήσονται” (P.Brem. 22; TM 19607; ll. 10-12); more

⁵² P.Giss. I 68 might have been written by Arsis herself, as its hand is unpracticed (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 159), but P.Brem 57 “was dictated to a scribe who was used to writing literary texts. It is written in a small round hand, attractive and very regular. Practically all the characters are separated. This is the most formal hand found in this archive, besides some chancery hands.” (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2008: A7.6 no. 36).

⁵³ In the Roman period, there is an increased use of courtesy phrases, which is perhaps a result of Demotic influence (Depauw 2006: 221).

indirect and polite phrases are for instance “καὶ σὺ δὲ γράφεις [πε]ρὶ ὧν ἂν θέλῃς” (BGU XVI 2656; TM 23380; ll. 12-13) or “καλῶς [ο]ὔν ποιήσεις γράφω[ν] ἡμῖν περὶ ὧν ἂν χ[ρ]εῖαν ἔχῃς τῶν ἐνταῦθα ἡδέως γάρ σοι πάντα ποιήσομεν” (P.Cair.Zen. V 59843; TM 1467; ll. 1-6). Προτρέπω is uncommon in this phrase: it only appears in two other courtesy formulas⁵⁴.

Also the rest of the formula, and especially the use of the verb ἐπιτρέπω, is similar in P.Brem. 21 and P.Sarap. 103 *ter*. Like προτρέπω, ἐπιτρέπω seems to be linked to official documents. It appears regularly in petitions, official letters and other official documents which give a formal permission: the derived noun ἐπιτροπή even denotes a type of document, e.g. SB XXVI 16584 (TM 97087). In private letters it is often found in a formulaic genitive absolute in which the subject are the gods; I quote the attestations of the archives of Apollonios and Eutychedes:

“καὶ ἐντυγχάνω ἐμὲ θεῶν ἐπιτρεπόντων τὸ ἐπι<v> καὶ σὲ τ. [. (?)]. υσα[. . . .] ἐκ γράμ[μ]ατος [-ca.?-] . ι. [.] . υ” (P.Brem. 10; ll. 5-8)

“[ἐὰν δὲ] ὁ θε[ὸ]ς ἐπιτρέψῃ πολλὴν ῥύσιν [ἔσσεθα]ι εἰς ἔτους, τάχα διὰ τὴν ἐσομέ[ν]ην εὐω[ν]ίαν τοῦ γενήματος ἀ[θ]υμῆ[σουσι οἱ γ]εοῦχοι, δι’ ἣν ἔξομεν εὐω[νεῖν κατ’ ἐπι]θυμίαν σου” (P.Giss. I 79; ll. 12-16)

“ἀμεριμνῶ (= ἀμεριμνῶ) νομίζων σε καλῶς τὰ ἔργα ποιεῖν καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς δάκνομαι ὅτι μοι τὰ πράγματα τῆς ἐπικρίσεως οὔτε μοι ἐπιτρέπ[ι] ἐξελθῖν οὔδε (= οὔτε) Ἥλιοδ(ώρω) θεῶν δὲ ἐπιτρεπ[όν]των αὔριον πρ[ό]ς σε ἦξι (= ἦξει) Ἡ[λιό]δωρος” (P.Sarap. 103 *bis*; TM 17146; ll. 2-8)

But in the last example, ἐπιτρέπω is attested in another context as well: in the phrase “μοι ἐπιτρέπ[ι] ἐξελθῖν” (ll. 5-6), it has clearly a different meaning than in the stereotypical phrase “θεῶν δὲ ἐπιτρεπ[όν]των” in line 7. Similarly in P.Brem. 15, ἐπιτρέπω appears in a request for permission to undertake a journey:

“παρακαλῶ σε οὔν, κύριε, ἐπιτρέψαι μοι πρὸς τὰς διακένους ἡμέρας κατελθεῖν πρὸς τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἰερακίωνος τῷ πλοίω[ι]” (ll. 18-21)

⁵⁴ I.e. in P.Oxy. XLII 3067 (TM 30334) and SB IV 7335 (TM 14010). The verb is found in a slightly different context in P.Haun. II 16 (TM 26598): “ἐκαμέν (= ἐκάμομέν) σε ἐγνωκέναι τὴν αἰτίαν τοῦ βραδέ[ω]ς ἡμᾶς ἐπιστέλλειν σοι δι’ οὗ ὁ ἐτέρος (= ἐταῖρος) ἡμῶν Ὑπατο[ς] ἐν Ἀρσινοεῖτη (= Ἀρσινοῖτη) ὧν ἔγραψέ σοι ἐπιστολίου. οὐδὲν δὲ ἦττον κοινῇ καὶ νῦν ἐπιστέλλομέν σοι προτρεπόμενοι σε συνεχῶς τὸ αὐτὸ ἡμεῖν (= ἡμῖν) ποιεῖν” (ll. 3-8). In P.IFAO II 15 (TM 30346), P.Mich. VIII 496 (TM 27106) and in PSI 12 1247 *verso* (TM 30631), προτρέπω appears in the request for a reply, in which the sender urges the addressee to write about his health: “κα[ὶ] ἦ[δ]η[η] προτρ[έ]πομαι ἐπιστέλλειν ἡμῖν περὶ τῆς υγείας (= υγείας) σου” (P.Mich. VIII 496; ll. 4-6; cf. *supra*, § 1).

Above in P.Brem. 21 and P.Sarap. 103 *ter*, we have also seen ἐπιτρέπω is used in the courtesy formulas: in both cases, ἐπιτρέπω appears in the courtesy formula where it is the verb of the *AcI* governed by προτρέπομαι.

Courtesy formulas with ἐπιτρέπω are rare: apart from P.Brem. 21 and P.Sarap. 103 *ter*, they occur only in four other letters, two of which are again from the Apollonios archive:

“vac.? περὶ δὲ ὧν [-ca.?-]ν θέλεις, ἐπίτρεπέ μοι” (P.Alex.Giss. 42; TM 27564; ll. 7-8; official letter)

“καὶ σὺ δέ μοι, ἄδελφε, π[ε]ρὶ ὧ[ν] θέλεις, ἐπίτρεπε” (P.Brem. 9; ll. 20-21; a letter of recommendation addressed to Apollonios in his function as *strategos*)

In other words, out of the six occurrences of ἐπιτρέπω in the courtesy formula, three come from this very archive, and one from the archive of Eutychides⁵⁵. Further, the combination of προτρέπω and ἐπιτρέπω does not occur in the courtesy formulas except in P.Brem. 21 and in P.Sarap. 103 *ter*. This is probably not a coincidence: this shared phraseology seems to further imply that there were linguistic overlaps between the two archives.

⁵⁵ The other occurrences are two business letters, P.Oslo III 156 (TM 28917) and SB XVI 13058 (TM 16360), both dated to the 2nd century AD. Further, the courtesy formula with ἐπιτρέπω also appears in the official letter SB XVI 12835 (TM 14678).

Chapter 9 The (socio)linguistic approach to archive studies

1. Asklepiades and Athenodoros¹

The archives of Asklepiades and of Athenodoros both date (mainly) to the 1st century BC² and come from mummy cartonnages which were found in Abusir El-Melek in the Herakleopolite nome. The archive of Asklepiades is thought to consist of twelve papyri dated between 29 and 23 BC³. The documents are centered around a certain Asklepiades, to whom various letters were written. He came from a wealthy family that drew income from agricultural activities, such as the production of wheat and wine, the drying of vegetables, and land lease⁴. Asklepiades himself was active in the shipping business (Olsson 1925: 24).

The archive of Athenodoros is a heterogeneous collection of 75 private, business, and official letters, as well as petitions, lists, and accounts from the Herakleopolite nome. The central figure Athenodoros was *epistates* and *dioiketes* of a district in the Herakleopolite nome. Apart from those official functions, it is clear from BGU XVI 2605 (TM 23328), an official letter to the prefect of Egypt, that he was also the *φροντιστής* of the properties of a certain Asklepiades in the Herakleopolite nome (Brashear 1995: 80-

¹ This case study of the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives has been published in GRBS 53 (2013) (i.e. Nachtergaele 2013: 269-293). This section is not a complete study of the language of the Athenodoros archive: in chapter 10, § 1.2, I will investigate some uncommon polite phrases attested in the archive.

² The texts from the Athenodoros archive date between the beginning of the 1st century BC and AD 5.

³ Apart from the marriage contract BGU IV 1098 which is not certain to belong to the Asklepiades archive, the collection consists of eleven private letters. Wilhelm Schubart saw the connection between letters BGU IV 1203-1209 (TM numbers 18653-18659) and published them as the archive of Asklepiades; he further mentioned three very fragmentary and still unpublished letters of the same archive (P.Berl. ined. 13152c, 13153b, 13153c). A further papyrus in the archive was later edited as BGU XVI 2665 (TM 23389).

⁴ Cf. BGU XVI 2665, ll. 16-17. The family properties were presumably scattered all over the Herakleopolite nome (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 114).

81). Athenodoros also appears to be a trader: several letters suggest that he was involved in shipping⁵.

All of the above goes to show that the social and business contexts of the two archives are very similar. Given the similar geographical, chronological and business contexts and especially since a person named Asklepiades appears in the Athenodoros archive, the hypothesis has been proposed that the two archives could be interrelated:

“there is a real possibility that Asklepiades is the same person as the strategos mentioned in the archive of Athenodoros ... but this cannot be demonstrated.”
(Bagnall, Criore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 114 and 123)

In the following sections I investigate this hypothesis from a linguistic perspective.

1.1. Linguistic overlaps between the archives

The phraseology of the health wishes in the Athenodoros archive shows similarities to the Asklepiades archive. In the final health wish, several documents show a rather peculiar wording: in chapter 6, I have identified the relative clause, added to the final health wish, as a shared linguistic feature in the two archives, e.g.:

“[τὰ δὲ] ἄλλα χαριεῖ τοῦ σώμα(τος) [ἐπι]με(λόμενος) ἵν’ ὑγιένης (= ὑγιαίνης), ὃ δὴ μέγιστον ἠγοῦμαι” (BGU IV 1208; TM 18658; ll. 48-50)

Such an extension is not attested elsewhere but in the Athenodoros and Asklepiades archives (cf. *supra*, chapter 6, § 1.4.1). Also in the initial health wish, the phrases of both archives are similar. As I have shown in chapter 4, a comparative subclause was sometimes added to the initial health wish of the type ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 2.2.3). In fact, all 23 occurrences of the phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν with comparative subclause either belong to the Asklepiades or the Athenodoros archive.

In addition to these two formulas, the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives also share two minor lexical features.

1.1.1. Word string θεὸς καὶ κύριος

The first linguistic element to be considered is the word group θεὸς καὶ κύριος used for the characterization of the addressee in the opening formula, e.g.:

⁵ E.g. BGU XVI 2604 (TM 23327): “ἔάν σοι φαίνηται τῷ Σκ[α]λίφωι γράψαι περὶ τοῦ πλοίου καὶ ἐμοῦ ἵνα με σὺν τῷ πλοίωι ἀπολύσῃ” (ll. 7-9).

“Στίλβων Ἀθηνοδώρωι τῶι θεῶι καὶ κυρίωι χαίρειν καὶ διευτυχεῖν” (BGU XVI 2604; ll. 1-2)

In the edition of the Athenodoros archive, Brashear already noted that this word string was used more than once: he refers to BGU XVI 2600 and 2604 of this archive, but also to the petitions BGU IV 1197 (TM 18647; 7-4 BC) and 1201 (TM 18651; May/June 2 BC) (Brashear 1995: 83), which are two isolated texts that have not been linked to any archive so far. My investigation in the Papyrological Navigator has revealed no attestations of a correspondent being called θεὸς καὶ κύριος other than in those four documents; only these four documents seem to share this polite opening phrasing. Further, the texts all come from the Herakleopolite nome and are dated to the Augustan period. Should we consider this feature a shared lexical element which only occurs in texts involving Athenodoros and his social circle? That would mean that the four documents are related to each other and, consequently, that BGU IV 1197 and 1201 were part of the collection as well. To my mind, that is plausible, certainly since there are other hints that BGU IV 1197 and 1201 are connected to the two archives.

First, Brashear had already suggested that the Asklepiades mentioned in BGU IV 1197 and 1200 (TM 18650) might well be the same Asklepiades as the one in the Athenodoros archive (Brashear 1995: 85). On my hypothesis that the Asklepiades and Athenodoros archives are connected, the Asklepiades of BGU IV 1197 and 1200 is thus possibly the same person as the central figure of the Asklepiades archive. If that is the case, BGU IV 1197, 1200 and 1201 would then constitute the official and professional part of Asklepiades' collection, whereas BGU IV 1203-1209 and BGU XVI 2665 reflect his personal life. Further, not only does the name Asklepiades appear in the two isolated letters, also Soterichos is mentioned in BGU IV 1201⁶. The name Soterichos is attested in both the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives (Nachtergaele 2013: 288-290). The recurring names (Asklepiades and Soterichos) and the lexical feature θεὸς καὶ κύριος seem to suggest that BGU IV 1197, 1200 and 1201 are three more texts associated with Asklepiades.

1.1.2. Intensifier διὰ παντός

In the initial health wish of the type ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν an intensifier is often found in the second part of the formula, which emphasizes the verb ὑγιαίνειν (or lexical variants). Often that intensifier is διὰ παντός (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 2.2.4), e.g.:

⁶ The name Soterichos is also attested in BGU IV 1198 (TM 18648), but this person appears to be a priest; it is therefore unlikely that the priest is the same person as the addressee in BGU IV 1201 and the person in the Athenodoros archive. For further onomastic evidence supporting the connection between the two archives, see Nachtergaele 2013: 286-291.

“Σινθῶνις Ἄρποχρᾶτι τῷ υἱῷ πλεῖστα χαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὑγιαίνειν” (P.Oxy. XXII 2353; TM 22223; ll. 1-2)

However, in three letters of the Athenodoros archive διὰ παντός appears on an unusual place:

“Ἀχιλλεὺς Ἀθηνοδώρῳ τῷ ἀδελφῷ χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν διὰ παντὸς ὡς βούλομαι” (BGU XVI 2625; ll. 1-3)

“Ἰσχυρᾶς Ἀθηνοδώρῳ τῷ ἀδελφ(ῶ)ι [χαί]ρ[ειν] καὶ ὑγιαίνειν διὰ παντὸς ὡς βούλομα[ι]” (BGU XVI 2635; ll. 1-3)

“Μενέλαος καὶ Ἡράκλεια Ἀθηνοδώρῳ τῷ υἱῷ πλεῖστα χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρωμένῳ διευτυχεῖν αἰεὶ καὶ διὰ παντὸς κ[α]θάπερ εὐχόμεθα” (BGU XVI 2615; ll. 1-4)

The intensifier follows, rather than precedes, the infinitive expressing the health wish. In the corpus of private letters, there are 66 letters in total with διὰ παντός in the health wish, and in 61 of them the intensifier precedes ὑγιαίνειν. Consequently, the usual word order is for the intensifier to come first, followed by the verb of the health wish. In BGU XVI 2615, a letter from Menelaos and Herakleia to their ‘son’ Athenodoros, the intensifier receives much attention: not only the special position, but also the use of two intensifiers is notable. Menelaos and Herakleia may have chosen an unusual phraseology, viz. the health wish with a comparative subclause and the end position of the intensifiers, in order to express their affection for Athenodoros.

Besides the three examples from the Athenodoros archive, the two other instances of the uncommon place of διὰ παντός are BGU IV 1204 and 1207 of the Asklepiades archive, e.g.:

“Ἰσιδώ[ρα] Ἀσκληπιάδῃ τῷ ἀδελφῷ χαίρ[ειν] κα[ὶ] ὑ]γιαίνειν διὰ παντός”(BGU IV 1204, ll. 1-2)⁷

In other words, only in these two archives, the word order in which the verb of the health wish is followed by the intensifier, occurs. In conclusion, an intensifier following the verb of the health wish was a way of emphasizing the wish and may therefore be considered a philophronetic element; further, since this feature was only preserved in the Asklepiades and Athenodoros archives, it convincingly links the two collections.

1.2. Isidora’s language

The Asklepiades archive has received a great deal of scholarly attention since it gives us a unique insight into the intimate contact of Asklepiades with his ‘sister’ Isidora, who

⁷ BGU IV 1207 is, apart from spelling mistakes, identical.

wrote him four letters (plus two so far unpublished ones). Isidora appears to be literate but the fact that she could read and write does not mean that all her letters are autographic: members of the upper class were likely to have enjoyed an education, but despite being literate, they often clung to the aristocratic tradition of calling for a scribe to write letters for them (cf. *supra*, introduction, § 1.2.2). Accordingly, Isidora’s letters can be divided into two groups, non-autographic and autographic letters. BGU IV 1204 (TM 18654) and 1207 (TM 18657) are written by a professional scribe in clear business Greek. Apparently one scribe –referred to as “Hand a” by Schubart in the edition of BGU IV– was responsible for the two letters as well as for BGU IV 1203, a letter to Tryphon (perhaps from Asklepiades). An important characteristic here is the fact that Asklepiades is addressed by his full name. BGU IV 1205 (TM 18655) and 1206 (TM 18656) are autographic letters from Isidora –“Hand b”–, and they use the shortened form of Asklepiades’ name, Asklas (White 1986: 104). This feature can perhaps be regarded as a trace of Isidora’s loving attitude toward her ‘brother’: since the letters penned by scribes do not have the nickname, its presence in the autographs is presumably a deliberate choice of Isidora, perhaps to add a personal touch to her letter. The use of a nickname for Asklepiades is not the only interesting linguistic feature which distinguishes the autographic letters of Isidora from those written by a scribe: only in the autographs BGU IV 1205 and 1206 Isidora uses the initial health wish with a comparative subclause:

“Ἰσιδώρα (= Ἰσιδώρα) Ἀσκλάτι τῷ ἀδελφῷ χαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὑγειαί (= ὑγιαίνειν) καθάπερ εὔχομαι” (BGU IV 1206; ll. 1-3)

Apart from spelling, the formula is identical in both letters. To my mind, the use of this specific health wish in the more personal autographic letters of Isidora cannot be a coincidence: both the nickname and the comparative subclause give the letters an philophronetic and affectionate tone. The subclause occurs in two other letters of the Asklepiades archive, BGU IV 1203 (TM 18653)⁸ and 1205 p.347⁹. This last letter is interesting, as it has the same combination of nickname and comparative subclause:

⁸ This letter was probably addressed to Tryphon, but the name of the sender is lost. Since this is the only letter in the archive not addressed to Asklepiades, it is believed to be a draft from Asklepiades, which would explain why it remained in his possession. The relationship between Tryphon and Asklepiades is unclear: although Tryphon addresses Asklepiades in several letters as ἀδελφός, the kinship term should in this case probably not be interpreted literally. However, Tryphon must have been close to Asklepiades’ family since palaeographic investigation has shown that Tryphon was the writer of BGU XVI 2665, a letter from Tryphaina to her son Asklepiades (cf. www.trismegistos.org/arch/archives/pdf/111.pdf). Although this does not confirm the thesis that the comparative clause in the health wish is a philophronetic element, it certainly does not take the edge off this hypothesis.

“ἡ μήτηρ Ἀσκλαῖτι χάρει[ιν] καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὑγιαίν[ειν] καθάπερ εὔχομαι”

The close connection between sender and addressee can be derived from the fact that the sender does not mention her proper name and only identifies herself as ‘mother’ (Dickey 2004b: 165). Here again, this linguistic choice is probably meant to convey a warm and loving tone.

Yet, also Isidora’s letters penned down by scribes have an unusual initial health wish: as quoted above, BGU IV 1204 and 1207 lack the comparative subclause, but have the intensifier διὰ παντός in the unusual place:

“Ἰσιδώ[ρα] Ἀσκληπιάδῃ τῶι ἀδελφῶι χάρει[ιν] κα[ὶ] ὑ]γιαίνειν διὰ παντός”(BGU IV 1204, ll. 1-2)¹⁰

In other words, both in the autographs and in the dictated letters there was a peculiar phraseology in (the opening formula and) the initial health wish. How should we evaluate this contrast between the dictated letters and the autographs? Why did Isidora use a nickname in her autographs, but does the full name appear in the letters penned by scribes? Did the scribes alter the nickname into a full name or was it Isidora who alternated between the nickname and the full name? Similar questions can be asked about the difference in the health wishes (with or without comparative subclause). A first hint that the difference in language should be attributed to Isidora and not to the scribe, is the observation that BGU IV 1203, which was written by the same scribe as Isidora’s dictated letters (cf. *supra*), did have a comparative clause. So, since the scribe was familiar with the extended initial health wish with comparative clause subclause, there is no reason to assume that he would not have penned a similar health wish if Isidora had dictated it to him. However, in order to determine as to whether the scribe contributed to the message and altered it, I investigate other parts of Isidora’s letters. There are several idiosyncratic expressions occurring both in the autographs and in the letters dictated by a scribe. Firstly, the verb διανδραγαθέω is “a very rare verb characteristic of Isidora’s letters” (Bagnall, Criore, and Ahtaridis 2008: A3.1, nr. 16). Indeed, my investigation has revealed that it appears only three times: in BGU IV 1204 and 1206, two letters from Isidora, and in P.Dryton I 36 (TM 290). In the two letters by Isidora, the verb occurs in the same context, viz. as an imperative:

“καὶ σὺ δὲ διανδραγάθει, ἕως οὔ ἄν παραγένῃται” (BGU IV 1204; ll. 6-7)

⁹ This last letter, too fragmentary to be individually edited, was published jointly with BGU IV 1205 (cf. Olsson 1925: 28-29). I treat them as two separate attestations of this phrase since they are the openings of different letters.

¹⁰ BGU IV 1207 is, apart from spelling mistakes, identical.

“σὺ δὲ καὶ Ἀραμώιτης (= Ἀραμώτης) διανδραγα[θ]εῖτε ἐν τῇ εἰσαγῆι (= εἰσαγ<ωγ>ῆι) τῆς τιμῆς [τ]οῦ φακοῦ καὶ ὀλύρας” (BGU IV 1206; ll. 12-15)

The fact that the verb is present in both an autograph (BGU IV 1206) and a dictated letter (BGU IV 1204) shows the negligible contribution of the scribe. Further, also the variant ἀνδραγαθέω appears in Isidora’s letters, more specifically in the autograph BGU IV 1205 and in the dictated letter BGU IV 1207, respectively:

“μόνον ἀνδραγάθι (= ἀνδραγάθει) ἐν τῇ ἀριθμήσ[ει] καὶ ἐν [τ]ῇ εἰσαγωγῆι, ὅπως μὴ παραγενομένου Πανίσκου εἰς Μενφίς (= Μέμφιν) ἐπέσης” (ll. 13-17)
“σὺ οὖν καὶ [Ἀραμώιτης] ἀνδραγαθεῖτε καὶ εἰσάγεσθε [τ]ιμὴν φ]ακοῦ ὀλυρίω (= ὀλυρίου)” (ll. 10-12)

Like the attestations of διανδραγαθέω, the verb ἀνδραγαθέω occurs in the imperative in Isidora’s letters. This verb is not commonly found in the papyri either: it is attested in only two other documents, viz. P.Oxy. II 291 (TM 20562) and P.Oxy. XLII 3069 (TM 30336)¹¹. Again, this idiolectic feature is preserved, regardless of the hand they were written in.

Another idiosyncratic expression in Isidora’s letters is attested at the end of BGU IV 1206 (autograph) and 1207 (dictated letter), respectively:

“ἐάν τι ἄλλο προσπέση σημανῶνι (= σημανῶ) σοι” (ll. 15-16)
“ἐάν δέ τι προσπ[έ]ση σημανῶ ὑμεῖν (= ὑμῖν), [εἰ δ]οκεῖ ἄγεςθε (= ἄγεσθαι) ἕως \[. . . \]/ γράψω” (ll. 15-16)

Such a formula with σημαίνω and προσπίπτω does not appear elsewhere in the papyrus letters, and seems to be typical of Isidora’s epistolary language.

A possible third recurring word in Isidora’s letters is the adverb κατασπουδαίως. It is attested in the autograph BGU IV 1206:

“ὁ ἀδελφούς (= ἀδελφός) Πανίσκος γέγραφε Νουμήνιν πεπομφέναι Φίλωνα (= Φίλωνα) τὸν οἰκονόμον ἐπ’ αὐτὸν κατασπουδέως (= κατασπουδαίως) ἐπεὶ (= ἐπὶ) τὴν διοίκησιν, οὕπω (= οὕπω) σεσήμαγκε τί ἐκβέβη[κ]ε” (ll. 4-9)

Further, κατασπουδαίως is reconstructed in BGU IV 1207, which was written by a scribe:

“περὶ δὲ Πανίσκου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ πέπομφε Νουμήνι[ος] Φ[ί]λωνα τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπ’ αὐτὸν κα[τασπουδαίως] ἐπὶ τὴν διοίκησιν” (ll. 7-10)

Given the fact that the two sentences deal with the same matter in similar wordings, the reconstruction of κατασπουδαίως seems plausible to me. If this conjecture is accepted,

¹¹ The derivation ἀνδραγαθία appears once in BGU II 531 (TM 25648).

BGU IV 1207 would be the only other attestation of this adverb in the papyri: *κατασπουδαίως* is not attested in any other papyrus than in the letters by Isidora.

The fact that different idiosyncratic elements recur in the body of both the autographs and the dictated letters of Isidora, do not only further attest to Isidora's uncommon language, but they also show that the influence of the scribe on Isidora's letters was limited, if not non-existent. To return to my starting point, I do not think that the scribe would have altered the opening formula nor have changed a nickname into a full name; whereas Isidora's motives for using a certain variant are probably beyond retrieval, it seems clear that Isidora chooses a slightly different register in the formulaic parts of her dictated letters in comparison with her autographs¹².

2. Thermouthas¹³

Nachtergaele found a connection between P.Mich. III 201 (TM 21340), SB V 7572 (TM 27328) and P.Wisc. II 69 (TM 13725), three letters from late 1st and early 2nd century AD Philadelphia (Nachtergaele 2005: 83-88). In P.Mich. III 201 Antonios —the husband of the dossier's protagonist Thermouthas— writes to Apuleios and Valerias, who are —according to Nachtergaele— Thermouthas' parents, and, thus, Antonios' parents-in-law. In P.Wisc. II 69, Antonios only addresses his mother-in-law and in SB V 7572 Thermouthas writes to her mother. Azzarello later argued that three other letters should be included in the dossier of Thermouthas, viz. P.Mich. III 202 (TM 21341; dated on May 5, 105 AD), BGU I 261 (TM 41596) and BGU III 822 (TM 28093) (Azzarello 2008b: 23-39). In P.Mich. III 202 Thermouthas and Valeria, who seems to be Thermouthas' sister¹⁴, offer a certain Thermouthas a job as a wet nurse. This document was apparently kept in the house of Thermouthas' parents, Valerias and Apuleios; the four documents thus constitute a small archaeological archive.

Both in BGU I 261 and BGU III 822 a certain Thermouthas writes to a certain Apollinarios, whom she calls her 'brother', but who may not be a relative. Through various arguments, Azzarello suggested that BGU I 261 and BGU III 822 dealt with the same people as the documents of the Thermouthas archive¹⁵. Firstly, there are a couple of recurring names: apart from Thermouthas, the name Taesis occurs in SB V 7572 of Nachtergaele's collection, as well as in BGU I 261 and BGU III 822. Further, the geography

¹² Of course, the two so far unpublished letters might shed new light on Isidora's linguistic usage.

¹³ This section was published in *Mnemosyne* 68 (2015) (i.e. Nachtergaele 2015b: 53-67).

¹⁴ Nachtergaele thought that Valeria was the mother of Valerias, and thus the grandmother of Thermouthas, but Azzarello argued that Valeria was a young woman. It is thus more likely that she was Thermouthas' sister than her grandmother (Azzarello 2008b: 34).

¹⁵ Yet, it is not clear whether these texts were part of the archaeological archive (cf. www.trismegistos.org/archive/525).

of the newly added letters fits in closely with the four other letters, as BGU I 261 and BGU III 822 were found in the Arsinoite nome. At first sight, however, the chronology seems to be a problem, since palaeographic research had previously dated BGU I 261 and BGU III 822 to the 2nd or 3rd century AD. But Azzarello dated them to the early 2nd century AD¹⁶ (Azzarello 2008b: 32-33).

Although Azzarello's evidence is suggestive, I will show in the next paragraphs that there are other —perhaps even more conclusive— arguments in favor of the inclusion of BGU I 261, BGU III 822 and P.Mich. III 202 in the Thermouthas dossier. I will also suggest to add three new letters to the collection.

2.1. Further evidence in favor of the inclusion of P.Mich. III 202, BGU I 261 and BGU III 822 in the Thermouthas dossier

2.1.1. The bond between the women of the Thermouthas dossier and greeting formulas

The documents in this dossier show a remarkable bond between the female protagonists. Their strong ties are clear from the intimate details in their correspondence: in the letter SB V 7572, Thermouthas shares her feelings with her mother:

“Οὐαλέριν τὸν κυρν (= κύριον) μου ἐπιθυμο (= ἐπιθυμῶ) αὐτὲν (= αὐτὸν) εἶν (= ἐν)
το (τῷ) νο (= νῶ)” (ll. 10-12)

Such “touches of idiosyncrasy” are rather uncommon in private papyrus letters (Turner 1968: 130). Furthermore, the friendship between Thermouthas and Valeria can even be discerned from their specific way of composing a letter. In BGU III 822 Valeria was apparently sitting next to Thermouthas when the latter was writing her letter to Apollinarios: Valeria takes the opportunity to send greetings to a certain Zois:

“ἀσπάζεται Ζοῖδᾶ Οὐαλερίᾳ” (l. 23).

¹⁶ Azzarello drew a causal relationship between SB V 7572 written on October 4 (the year is not specified), and P.Mich. III 202, dated May 5, AD 105. In P.Mich. III 202, Thermouthas has apparently given birth as she wants to hire a wet nurse for her baby. Given the similar content and context of pregnancy in SB V 7572 and P.Mich. III 202, Azzarello suggested that SB V 7572 was written in AD 104. Of course, it is conceivable that the two letters deal with two different children of Thermouthas, born in an interval of possibly several years. Therefore, the exact date of SB V 7572 remains uncertain. This, however, does not affect the validity of the hypothesis that SB V 7572 and P.Mich. III 202 are dealing with the same protagonists and thus belong to the same archive.

As discussed in chapter 3, salutations from an acquaintance of the sender to someone from the addressee's social circle instead of to the addressee himself —as in the phrase ἀσπάζεται Ζοῖδᾶ Οὐαλερίᾱ— are unconventional and appear only nine times (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 4)¹⁷. As it is usually the sender who greets relatives of the addressee, Valeria is acting here as the sender in the letter of her sister. A similar, though slightly different exception is BGU I 261, another letter from Thermouthas (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 2.3:

“ἀσπάζεταιί σε καὶ Ζοιδᾶν τὴν ἀδελφὴν αὐτῆς” (ll. 29-31)

This phrase deviates from the standard salutations from the sender's social circle to the addressee on two levels: first of all, it is strange that the name of the bystander who is sending his/her regards is not mentioned, since this is obviously essential information (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 2.3). Apparently it was clear to the addressee who had uttered this message: it is generally thought that it was Valeria (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 189). The other element is, again, that Valeria sends her regards to a third person. In this letter, however, she greets the addressee as well, which was not the case in the previous instance. Salutations from the someone of the sender's social circle to the addressee as well as to the addressee's relatives are less rare than the formula attested in BGU III 822; but instances such as BGU I 261 are still only preserved seventeen times (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 4)¹⁸. Thus, Valeria also acts in this text as if she were the (co-)author of the letter, which was in fact sent by her sister. Given that BGU I 261 was written in an inexperienced hand and BGU III 822 was penned by a professional scribe (Azzarello 2008b: 30), the scribe could not have anything to do with these uncommon greetings. Further, this idiosyncrasy is not typical of salutations uttered by Valeria; in P.Wisc. II 69, a letter from Antonios to Valerias, also Thermouthas uses a phrase similar to that in BGU I 261:

“ἀσπάζεταιί σοι (= σε) Θερμουθαῖς καὶ Οὐαλερ<ι>αν καὶ των (= τὸν) πατέραν (= πατέρα) ἀτῆς (= αὐτῆς) καὶ Οὐαλερον (= Οὐλέριον) καὶ Δινουσίαν (= Διονυσίαν) καὶ Δημητραν (= Δημητρίαν) καὶ τοὺς ἐν ὄκῳ (= οἴκῳ) πάντα” (ll. 13-16)¹⁹

¹⁷ In some other instances, the sender greets a group of people (e.g. in P.Tebt. II 413; TM 28426): these occurrences have not been taken into account.

¹⁸ Again, when not a specific person of the addressee's social circle is saluted, but a general group of people, the occurrence is not taken into account.

¹⁹ The writer of this document made several mistakes in rendering the personal names, especially unaccented syllables tend to be left out, e.g. Οὐαλερον for Οὐαλέριον, Δημητραν for Δημήτριαν. Nachtergaeel therefore wonders if Οὐαλερᾶν does not actually refer to Οὐαλερίᾱ (although here, the ι is accented) (Nachtergaeel 2005: 84 and 86). In my opinion, this is a plausible hypothesis as in that case Thermouthas would send greetings to all relatives living in Philadelphia. The fact that Thermouthas does not greet Apollinarios in this letter does

Like Valeria in BGU I 261, Thermouthas does not only greet the addressee Valerias, but also her social circle. The uncommon salutations from someone of the sender's social circle to the addressee's social circle may be a shared element of Valeria's and Thermouthas' writing style, which points to the connection between P.Wisc. II 69, BGU III 822 and BGU I 261. It seems to testify to the special bond between Valeria and her sister: in Thermouthas' letters, Valeria can easily take up the role of sender, just like Thermouthas can do in the letter sent by her husband Antonios. In fact, other phrases in BGU I 261 show as well that Thermouthas regards Valeria as a co-author of the message:

“γινώσκειν (= γινώσκειν) σε θέλω ἐγὼ καὶ Οὐαλερία [...]” (l. 4)
 “ἀπόδος × Ἀπολιναρίῳ ἀπὸ Οὐαλερίας καὶ Θερμουθαῦτος” (*verso*)

Also the bond between Thermouthas and her parents seems to have been close, as the sending of regards in P.Mich. III 201, a letter of Antonios to Apuleios and Valerias, illustrates:

“ἀσπάζεται ἡμᾶς (= ὑμᾶς) Θερμουθαῦς πολλὰ πλο/λλὰ καὶ μέμφαιταί (= μέμφεται) σαι (= σε) πολλὰ ὅτι (= ὅτι) οὐ πείμπις (= πέμπεις) αὐτῇ ἐπιστωλὴν (= ἐπιστολὴν) καὶ τὴν ἀντιφώνησιν” (ll. 15-18)

The repetition of the intensifier *πολλά*, and especially the reproach of negligence within the greetings are not widespread: usually, only the sender utters a reproach of negligence, mostly at the beginning of the letter (White 1972a: 19-21), but here, a member of the sender's social circle, Thermouthas, expresses the reproach and the *topos* is integrated into her greetings. I was unable to find another instance in my corpus of private letters where this *topos* is used in the greetings of a bystander. This phraseology confirms the special bond between the women of the Thermouthas dossier: they can utter longer and more idiolectic messages in the greeting section than the average bystander who just sends his regards.

2.1.2. Ἀμφοτέρως in the opening formula²⁰

The opening formulas of P.Mich. III 201 and 202 are very similar:

“Ἀντώνις Ἀποληρίῳ καὶ Οὐαλεριᾶτι ἀμφοτέρως (= ἀμφοτέροις) χαίριν (= χαίρειν) καὶ διὰ παντὸς οἴγενιν (= ὑγιαίνειν)” (P.Mich. III 201; ll. 1-3)
 “Οὐλερεία καὶ Θερμουθαῦς ἀμφοτέρως αἱ δύο Θερμουτεῖῳ τῇ ἀδε[λ]φῇ χαίριν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Mich. III 202; ll. 1-3)

not imply that he was not a relative. Greeting him would have been illogical, since Apollinarios did not live in Philadelphia, but probably in a village near Karanis (Azzarello 2008b: 30).

²⁰ For more information on this adjective, see appendix I.

Ἀμφότεροι is often used in opening formulas of petitions and receipts (Leiwo 2003: 91), but it is rather rare in private letters. In total, 187 private letters are addressed to more than one addressee —the *conditio sine qua non* for the use of ἀμφότεροι— but only sixteen of them have an opening formula with ἀμφότεροι. Ἀμφότεροι can also be used to indicate multiple senders (e.g. in P.Mich. III 202): in 93 letters there is more than one sender, but in only three of those, the multiple senders identify themselves as ἀμφότεροι.

No less than sixteen of those nineteen private letters which use ἀμφότεροι to refer to multiple senders or addressees, were found in the Eastern Desert²¹ —many of which are from the Dioskoros dossier (cf. Bingen et al. 1997: 43). In those letters, there are often more than two addressees, e.g.:

“Πατρεμπαβάθης τρι[ς] τρισι Βησαριων (= Βησαρίωνι) καὶ [. .]εμων (= [. .]εμονι) καὶ Ἐρμῖνος (= Ἐρμίνω) ἀμφοτερο (= ἀμφοτέροις) χάριεν” (O.Claud. II 272; TM 29689; ll. 1-4)

Here, ἀμφότεροι does not translate as ‘both’, but it is semantically extended to mean ‘all (together)’ (cf. Leiwo 2003: 81).

However, in the letters of the Thermouthas dossier, ἀμφότεροι applies to two people and has its traditional meaning ‘both’. In other words, there are only a few attestations of ἀμφότερος outside the Eastern Desert, and its meaning ‘both’ is uncommon in papyrus letters. Since P.Mich. III 201 and 202 were clearly penned by two different hands²², the repetition of ἀμφότερος in the two letters cannot be due to accidental scribal influence, but the occurrence of this feature in the two letters links them convincingly and was probably a shared linguistic item in the dossier.

2.2. New documents in the Thermouthas dossier: P.Corn. 49, P.Mich. VIII 464 and P.Col. VIII 215

My investigation has revealed that there are three more documents, other than the letters discussed in the Thermouthas dossier so far, which are dated around AD 100 and involve a certain Thermouthas.

²¹ In the Eastern Desert, the difficult conditions of getting a letter delivered perhaps resulted in a sender writing to multiple addressees in one single letter, or in different senders gathering together to collectively write a letter.

²² Cf. <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/i/image/api/image/apis/X-1339/122R.TIF/full/large/0/native.jpg> and <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/i/image/api/image/apis/X-1335/121R.TIF/full/large/0/native.jpg>; cf. also www.trismegistos.org/archive/525 (accessed on April 21, 2015).

In P.Mich. VIII 464 a certain Apollonous writes to her brother (husband?) Iulius Terentianus, a soldier away on service in Karanis, the place where this letter was found (Bagnall, Criore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 347). The document was written on March²³ 16, AD 99. Apollonous reassures Terentianus that she has everything under control in his absence: the children are doing fine, and Apollonous is coping well. Further, she was glad to hear from a certain Thermouthas that Terentianus had obtained a couple of belts. In P.Col. VIII 215 Apollonous addresses her mother Thermouthas. According to Gonis, the sender of this letter also wrote P.Mich. VIII 464:

“Comparison of PCol 8.215 with PMich 8.464 of 99, a letter of Apollonous to the soldier Iulius Terentianus, whom she calls her ‘brother’, suggests that both letters were sent by the same person; they share the following features: (1) The name of the sender. (2) PMich 8.464.17 refers to a Thermuthas; the recipient of PCol 215 is called Thermuthas, and another Thermuthas occurs in 26-7. (3) The request for a visit at the end of the letters, couched in virtually identical words [...]. (4) The body of both letters starts off in a similar fashion: θέλω σε γινώσκειν ὅτι (PCol 215.4-5) γινώσκιν σε θέλω ὅτι (PMich 464.3-4). (5) Apollonous uses the same expressions to urge her correspondents to look after themselves: ἐπιμέλου ἐατῆς (PCol 215.9-10), ἐπιμέλου σαυτοῦ (PMich 464.16).” (Gonis 2003: 165)

Although the hypothesis is tempting, the arguments about the epistolary phrases in the letters (nos. 3-5) are not convincing: as Gonis himself admitted, all of the quoted phrases (nos. 4 and 5 in the quotation) are commonplace epistolary expressions²⁴ and should not be regarded as typical elements of Apollonous’ writing style²⁵. However, the ἐπιμέλου phrase deserves in my opinion some more scholarly attention: not so much its appearance (as Gonis saw it), but its place in the two letters is, to my mind, striking. In both P.Mich. VIII 464 and P.Col. VIII 215 this epistolary formula occurs in the body of the letter, whereas in other documents this formula is used at the end, right before the closing formula. A health wish in the body of a letter is attested only nine times in the entire letter corpus (cf. *supra*, chapter 6, footnote 1). It is thus plausible that P.Mich. VIII 464 and P.Col. VIII 215 are related²⁶.

²³ The month is not certain, as many characters of this word are lost. This is one of the rare letters where the name of the emperor is mentioned in the date.

²⁴ For the θέλω σε γινώσκειν see ‘The disclosure formula’ in White 1972a: 2-5; for the ἐπιμέλου σεαυτοῦ phrase in Exler 1923: 113-116.

²⁵ More interesting is the request to pay a visit (number 3), since this phrase (in contrast to numbers 4 and 5) is not one of the standard set of formulas in the body of the letter.

²⁶ Since the two letters are not written in the same hand, this linguistic similarity cannot be ascribed to scribal influence, but may indeed be an idiolectic element, typical of Apollonous’ letters. Cf. <http://ipap.csad.ox.ac.uk/Michigan-colour/72dpi/P.Mich.VIII.464r.jpg> and <http://www.columbia.edu/cgi-bin/dlo?obj=columbia.apis.p250&size=300&face=f&tile=0> (accessed on April 21, 2015).

To my mind, linking P.Mich. VIII 464 and P.Col. VIII 215 is only a first step; several elements further seem to link P.Mich. VIII 464 and P.Col. VIII 215 to the Thermouthas dossier. Both letters were sent around AD 100, and the external address of P.Col. VIII 215 shows that the addressee Thermouthas lived in Philadelphia²⁷. In other words, the letters fit in with the chronology and the geography of the Thermouthas dossier: Thermouthas, who first lives in the north of the Arsinoite nome with her husband Antonios, returns to Philadelphia after AD 105 (Azzarello 2008b: 38-39). This would imply that P.Col. VIII 215, now vaguely dated around AD 100, was in fact written after AD 105. This can be substantiated by the contents of the letter: Apollonous expresses her concern for ἡ μικρά, perhaps Thermouthas' baby daughter (l. 10)²⁸. This baby girl is also mentioned in lines 21-24: Apollonous wishes that Thermouthas could see the child three times a day. Does this imply that a wet nurse is taking care of this baby? As an isolated document, this passage of P.Col. VIII 215 is rather obscure, but if one considers the document in the same context of wet-nursing as in P.Mich. III 202, it could make sense. Possibly, P.Col. VIII 215 was written (shortly) after Thermouthas' delivery in AD 105 when she was staying in her hometown Philadelphia. Of course, ἡ μικρά may as well refer to another child of Thermouthas'. The date of P.Col. VIII 215 thus remains uncertain, but this does not affect the general hypothesis that the document may be connected to the Thermouthas archive. This thesis is supported by other evidence as well: in P.Col. VIII 215 Apollonous sends her regards to several people, e.g. Apollinarios (“ἀσπαζόμεθα Ἀπλονάριν”, l. 32) and Heras (“ἐπισκοποῦμε (= ἐπισκοποῦμαι) Ἡρᾶν”, l. 34). The name Apollinarios recalls the name of Thermouthas' 'brother', the addressee in BGU I 261 and BGU III 822. Like Apollinarios, a certain Heras also appears in BGU I 261. In P.Col. VIII 215, several people send their regards to Thermouthas as well, including a certain Diogenas. The name Διογενᾶς (l. 32) is an onomastic variant of Diogenes²⁹.

Also in P.Corn. 49, the last letter under consideration here, a certain Diogenes writes his mother (?) Thermouthas. Although Diogenes/Diogenas is not an uncommon name³⁰, there are other indications that link this document to the Thermouthas dossier. This short letter mainly consists of philophroneic epistolary formulas. Some of the phrases are not standard in letters from the 1st century AD; the word group δι' ἐπιστολῆς is such an uncommon element, e.g.:

²⁷ Cf. “ἀπόδ(ος) εἰς Φιλαδέλφειαν Θερμουθαῖτι” (ll. 35-36).

²⁸ The enunciation on this little girl reads: “ἔρωτῶ σε μεγάλως καὶ παρακαλῶ, ἐπιμέλου ἐατῆ (= ἐαυτῆς) ἅμα καὶ τῆς μικρᾶς” (ll. 8-10).

²⁹ http://www.trismegistos.org/ref/ref_list.php?namvar_id=9353: accessed on November 16, 2012.

³⁰ The name Diogenes appears 1183 times according to TM People:

<http://www.trismegistos.org/nam/detail.php?record=2791>, accessed on November 16, 2012.

“[πρὸ π]άντων ἀναγκαῖόν [ἔστι]ν³¹ δεῖ (= δι’) ἐπιστολῆς, σὲ [ἀσπ]άσασθαι” (ll. 3-5)

The phrase is common in the Late Antique period but is only attested in 24 letters before the 3rd century AD, including in P.Mich. III 201 of the dossier³²:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων σαι (= σε) ἀσπάσαιθε (= ἀσπάσατε) δι[ἄ] στωλῆς (= ἐπιστολῆς)” (ll. 3-4)

A second rather peculiar feature is the use of the verb μελέω which recurs in both documents:

“μελήσι (= μελήσει) δ’ αὖ γινώσκιν (= γινώσκειν) τί οἱ ἡμέτεροι πράσσουσιν” (P.Corn. 49; ll. 5-7)

“καλῶς ὄν (= οὖν) ποιήσεται (= ποιήσετε) μελήσαιτε (= μελήσετε) ἡμῖν περὶ τῶν ἀλ[ο]υρῶν τῶν δουω (= δύο)” (P.Mich. III 201; ll. 4-6)³³

Usually, a similar idea is expressed with the verb ἀμελέω in a litotic construction: “μὴ ἀμελήσης οὖν est une des caractéristiques principales des lettres papyrologiques grecques” (Steen 1938: 162)³⁴, e.g.:

“μὴ οὖν ἀμελήσης, τέχνον (= τέκνον), γράψε (= γράψαι) μοι περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας [σ]ου” (BGU II 380; TM 31263; 3rd century AD; ll. 19-21)

It is probably not a coincidence —although we cannot rule this out, and the data can always be skewed by the preservation— that P.Corn. 49 shares two linguistic peculiarities with P.Mich. III 201 of the Thermouthas dossier³⁵. The use of rather uncommon *topoi* and formulas in P.Corn. 49 and in the Thermouthas dossier, as well as

³¹ cf. *BL* 2, p. 50.

³² Δι’ ἐπιστολῆς and variants are only attested in a total of nineteen salutations from the sender and his social circle to the addressee and his social circle. Most of them are from the Late Antique period and only five occurrences are dated to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 6.5). Yet, as described in footnote 170 of chapter 3, δι’ ἐπιστολῆς and variants appear more often in a type of greeting that has not been discussed in this thesis, viz. greeting formulas that express the need to salute the addressee. It is also in such a salutation that the word group appears in P.Corn. 49, so I also took the nineteen occurrences of δι’ ἐπιστολῆς in these greetings (in letters dated before the 4th century AD) into account. In total, there are thus 24 occurrences, that are dated before the 3rd century AD and that appear in different types of greeting formulas.

³³ The specific μελήσετε is not attested besides in P.Mich. III 201, and μελήσει is only attested in three other letters. In addition, there are 21 occurrences of the form μελησάτω.

³⁴ Whereas Steen dated this expression to (mainly) the 3rd and 4th centuries AD (with some occurrences in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD), my investigation shows that there are already occurrences in the 3rd century BC (e.g. P.Cair.Zen. III 59375; TM 1018).

³⁵ Unfortunately, the digital image of P.Corn. 49 does not allow to conclude whether or not this letter was written in the same hand as that of P.Mich. III 201 (cf. http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/i/image/api/image/apis/X-1257/C2_17R.TIF/full/large/0/native.jpg; accessed on April 21, 2015).

the recurring names support the hypothesis that P.Corn. 49 might deal with the same persons as the people from the Thermouthas dossier. If the hypothesis is correct and this letter belongs to the Thermouthas dossier, the dating of this letter could be refined. Up until now, P.Corn. 49 was not precisely dated: according to the editor, the document was written somewhere in the course of the 1st century AD. Linking this document to the Thermouthas dossier would imply that this letter was probably written at the end of the 1st century AD.

Chapter 10 Politeness and conversational strategies

1. Polite directives

Generally, letters attest to a friendly contact between two parties (Koskenniemi 1956: 35). This is reflected in the language, which is characterized by politeness. Brown and Levinson 1987 defined politeness as the effort to maintain ‘face’, which is an individual’s reputation and respect. For instance, the use of the epistolary framework serves to convey politeness in the letters: by using the conventionalized expressions such as opening and closing formulas, and by following the cultural norms for letter-writing, one creates a polite letter (cf. *supra*, chapter 1, § 1.2.2). However, in the body of the letter, the sender sometimes needs to discuss face-threatening subjects. Requests, for example, potentially undermine an interlocutor’s face (cf. Ferri 2012: 115). As letters often include requests, the directive expressions in the body of the letter are an interesting research topic. Steen 1938 and Leiwo 2010 listed some of the most common directives found in private letters: depending on the hierarchical relationship between the correspondents, different strategies are used. Imperatives or future indicatives are attested between peers or in letters from ‘high to low’. It seems to be a widespread (perhaps universal?) feature that letters from superiors to their subordinates express orders in the imperative, rather than using the polite formula with ‘please’ (Clarysse *forthc.*); requests can be softened by adding a polite conditional sentence, e.g. ἐάν θέλῃς or εἴ σοι δοκεῖ (and similar constructions) (cf. Steen 1938: 126-128). Other common directives in *koinē* Greek are ἐρωτάω and παρακαλέω, which are probably translations from the respective Latin request formulas *rogo* and *oro* (Dickey 2010b: 208-220). Yet, the most common polite phrase is καλῶς ποιήσεις and its variants (Leiwo 2010: 97-114), e.g.:

“καλῶς οὖν πο[ιή]σεις γράψας τὸ τάχ[ος] ὅπως ἂν μὴ κατέχηται ὁ Καλλικῶν”
(P.Lond. VII 2033; TM 1595; ll. 5-7)

Like in the quote above, polite phrases usually appear in the future tense: *καλῶς ποιήσεις* occurs almost 400 times in my corpus. The potential optative *καλῶς ἂν ποιήσῃς* appears over 100 times and seems to be confined to the 3rd century BC (Steen 1938: 139)¹. Less common variants to *καλῶς ποιέω* are, for instance, *ὀρθῶς ποιέω* and *εὖ ποιέω*.

Whereas most letter writers combine different polite expressions, some others stick to one particular phrase. For example, in the archive of Epagathos —the estate manager of Lucius Bellienus Gemellus— there seems to be a remarkable consistency in the polite phrases (cf. Clarysse *forthc.*). Conclusions about his language are only provisional, since only part of the archive has been published: in my database I have included eleven letters from Lucius Bellienus Gemellus to Epagathos and to his son Sabinus (who acted as manager of his father’s farms in an earlier period and is treated as a subordinate in the letters)² and two from his son Bellienus Sabinus —one to Epagathos and one to Geminus, another estate manager (a colleague of Epagathos or his successor)³. Further, Bellienus Sabinus is addressed by a certain Harpokration in P.Fay. 123 (TM 10788). P.Fay. 124 (TM 28617), a letter from a certain Theogiton to a certain Apollonios, was found with the Gemellus papyri, but as far as we know the persons concerned were not members of the family. Apart from the two last occurrences, these letters are all written from high to low. Most orders are given in the imperative, as expected, but the first command is often phrased with the polite *εὖ ποιήσεις/εὖ ποιήσῃς*⁴. In fact, only in P.Fay. 117, another politeness strategy is attested:

“αἰάν (= ἔάν) συ δώξῃ (= δόξῃ) (l. 6)”⁵

In all other letters, *εὖ ποιέω* is the only polite phrase used. Seemingly, the personal preference of Lucius Bellienus Gemellus influenced the linguistic usage of his son; a shared language seems to have developed in this way⁶.

¹ Other tenses and moods, e.g. *καλῶς ποιεῖς*, are attested as well.

² I.e. P.Fay. 110 (TM 10775), 111 (TM 10776), 112 (TM 10777), 113 (TM 10778), 114 (TM 10779), 115 (TM 10780), 116 (TM 10781), 117 (TM 10782), 118 (TM 10783), 119 (TM 10784), 120 (TM 10785).

³ I.e. P.Fay. 121 (TM 10786) and 122 (TM 10787).

⁴ In P.Fay. 110, 112, 113 (in this letter the form *εὖ ποιήσῃς* appears in the body of the text, not in the first command), 114, 116 (*εὖ* is supplemented in this phrase), 120, 121 and 122.

⁵ Similarly, P.Fay. 123, the sender writes the parentheses *ἔάν δοκῇ σοι* (l. 11) and *ἔάν δόξῃ σοι* (l. 14).

⁶ In chapter 3, I pointed to a possible other element of shared language in this archive, viz. the peculiar position of the salutations just after the closing formula, and just before the date (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, footnote 7). Further, in the salutations of the letters from this archive are the only ones to preserve the intensifier *πρὸς ἀλήθειαν* (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 6.6.1). The publication of the so far unpublished letters might confirm the consistent politeness strategies of Lucius Bellienus Gemellus and Bellienus Sabinus. The language of the letters in the Epagathos archive seems to have a number of other idiosyncratic features as well, but given the

1.1. Polite directives in the letters of Apollonios *dioiketes*⁷

About seventy letters of Apollonios, the *dioiketes* of Ptolemy II, have been preserved in the Zenon archive. Although Apollonios was (presumably) fully literate, it is not likely that he would have written every single letter by his own hand: being the Minister of Finance, he had his own staff which dealt with the drafting of communications. This is clear from the palaeography of Apollonios' letters: the letters are written in different, often very elegant hands of the professional scribes in the service of the *dioiketes*. Further, Apollonios probably did not dictate his letters *verbatim*; he would only have given general indications of the letters' content⁸ and he would have entrusted the scribes with the exact wordings of the letters (Evans 2010: 57-58). Yet, traces of the sender's voice can probably be discerned in politeness strategies of Apollonios, as I will show.

In P.Ryl. IV 560 (TM 2416), a letter from Apollonios to Zenon, the polite formula ὀρθῶς ἐποίησας is used to pay a compliment on a successful shipment:

“ὀρθῶς ἐποίησας ἀποστείλας τὸν ἐρέβινθον εἰς Μέμφιν” (ll. 1-3)

Ὀρθῶς ποιέω only appears eighteen times in all papyri, i.e. in seven official letters⁹ and in ten private letters¹⁰ and in P.Bodl. I 57 (TM 41505), which is too fragmentary to define its text type. No less than five of the private letters are letters from Apollonios to Zenon. Apart from P.Ryl. IV 560, ὀρθῶς ποιέω appears in the following letters by Apollonios:

“ὀρθ[ῶς] ἐποίησας συντάξας εἰς τὸν παράδεισον τῶ[ν ἡμέ]τερον τῆς καλλιελαίου ἐλαίας καὶ τῆς δαφνίδος τὰ μοσχεύματα ἐμβαλεῖν” (P.Cair.Zen. I 59125; TM 774; ll. 1-4)

“ὀρθῶς ἐποιήσατε δόντες τὰ Μιλήσια ἔρια ταῖς ἐμ (= ἐν) Μέμφει παιδίσκαϊς” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59142; TM 790; ll. 1-2)

“ὀρθῶς ἐποίησα[ς] εἰς τὴν δέσμευσιν τοῦ χόρτου δούς τὰς διακοσίας δραχμὰς τοῦ χαλκοῦ” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59180; TM 826; ll. 1-3)

pending publication of the rest of the archive, conclusions would only be provisional; I have therefore not included the linguistic study of these elements in this thesis.

⁷ This section was published in ZPE 190 (2014) (i.e. Nachtergaele 2014a: 219–222).

⁸ Perhaps Apollonios wrote draft letters first or maybe he orally passed on the main message to the scribes.

⁹ P.Amh. II 38 (TM 43900), P.Eleph. 9 (TM 5843), P.Tebt. I 19 (TM 3655), BGU VIII 1755 (TM 4837), BGU VIII 1784 (TM 4865), P.Sorb. I 39 (TM 3154) and P.Sorb. I 45 (TM 3160).

¹⁰ SB XVIII 13171 (TM 2518), P.Heid. III 232 (TM 5137), SB V 7524 (TM 5694), P.Cair.Zen. III 59330 (TM 973), P.Michael. 7 (TM 5246) and in the five letters from Apollonios to Zenon (P.Cair.Zen. II 59202 (TM 847), P.Cair.Zen. II 59180 (TM 826), P.Cair.Zen. I 59125 (TM 774), P.Cair.Zen. II 59142 (TM 790) and P.Ryl. IV 560 (TM 2416)).

“ὀρθῶς ἐποίησας συλλαβῶν τὸν ἐκ τοῦ ζυτοπωλίου ταμίαν” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59202; TM 847; ll. 1-2)

Ὄρθῶς ποιέω is in general mostly used as a polite order: ten of the eighteen attestations have ὀρθῶς ποιέω in the present or future indicative, e.g.: “ὀρθῶς οὖν ποιεῖς” in P.Bodl. I 57 (TM 41505; l. 3)¹¹ and ὀρθῶς ποιήσεις (P.Sorb. I 45; TM 3160; ll. 4-5)¹². In the above quotes from Apollonios’ letters, the phrase ὀρθῶς ποιέω is in the past tense to express the approval of the addressee’s actions and to pay a compliment. This use is even less widespread than the polite orders ὀρθῶς ποιεῖς/ὀρθῶς ποιήσεις: in total, the past tense is found in seven attestations¹³, including all five letters from Apollonios. So, we can make two observations: first, Apollonios’ letters make, relatively speaking, quite extensively use of the unusual phrase ὀρθῶς ποιέω. Moreover, in Apollonios’ letters, the phrase ὀρθῶς ἐποίησας seems to be a set expression: the adverb ὀρθῶς is exclusively preserved with a past tense of ποιέω, never with a present or a future tense; and *vice versa*, whenever the past tense ἐποίησας appears as a polite phrase in Apollonios’ letters, the adverb ὀρθῶς is used, and not καλῶς. Hence, since the set expression καλῶς ἐποίησας is generally popular than ὀρθῶς ἐποίησας, there seems to be a distinction between Apollonios’ consistent use of ὀρθῶς ἐποίησας and other formulas with ἐποίησας: in all papyri, καλῶς ἐποίησας is attested 25 times, including in two documents from the Zenon archive:

“καλῶς ἐποίησας χιάσας [-ca.-] . . . γματᾶτ . . ἀκατίων κεραιῶν του [-ca.-ε]υθυνομένου ἄβαρις ὦν” (P.Iand.Zen. 36; TM 110088; col. V; ll. 2-3)

“καλῶς οὖν \ἐποίησας/ [[π[ο]ιεῖς]] ἀποστείλας ἡμῖν” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59164, a letter from Panakestor to Zenon; TM 811; ll. 1-2)

So, the phrase καλῶς ἐποίησας does appear in the Zenon archive, but Apollonios’ letters all have the less common variant ὀρθῶς ἐποίησας. This idiosyncratic feature was preserved, even when the letters were not penned by one and the same scribe¹⁴. In other words, the use of the expression cannot be attributed to scribal influence; it probably reflects the language of the Apollonios himself. Consequently, the *dioiketes* probably had

¹¹ The present tense also appears in P.Eleph. 9.

¹² The future tense is also attested in SB XVIII 13171, P.Heid. III 232, P.Sorb. I 39, P.Tebt. I 19, SB V 7524, BGU VIII 1755 and 1784. The attestations are dated between the 3rd and the 1st centuries BC.

¹³ The two other attestations are the official letter P.Amh. II 38 (TM 43900), the private letter P.Michael. 7 (TM 5246). Further, the past tense is also attested in two epigraphical letters. In the last occurrence, However, in P.Cair.Zen. III 59330, ὀρθῶς ποιέω is not a polite phrase: it is used to refer to actions of third persons, which in this case are not approved of by the sender: “καὶ περὶ τούτων οὖν πλεονάκις ἐπεμαρτυρόμην Ἰάσονι ὅτι οὐκ ὀρθῶς ποιούσιν συμπεφωνηκότες” (ll. 6-7).

¹⁴ Compare the scripts of P.Cair.Zen. II 59125, P.Cair.Zen. II 59180 and P.Cair.Zen. II 59202 in Seider (images 60, 64 and 68 respectively (cf. Seider 1990: 263-265, 274-275 and 280-281).

a particular preference for this expression. This shows that even in the case of delegation, (traces of) the voice of the sender can (at least in some instances) be heard.

This is not to say that the word string *καλῶς ποιέω* does not appear in Apollonios' letters; the phrase is attested, but it is not common. There are only two (more or less) certain attestations:

“καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις ἀγοράσας ἡμῖν” (P.Mich. I 48; TM 1948; l. 3)

“[κα]λῶς ποιήσεις συντάξας τὰ γενήματα [δια]τηρήσαι” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59179; TM 825; ll. 11-12)

The adverb *καλῶς* is supplemented by the editors in two other letters, viz. in P.Cair.Zen. II 59153 (TM 801) and in P.Cair.Zen. IV 59562 (TM 1196). In these four attestations, *καλῶς ποιέω* appears in the future tense, i.e. in the construction of a soft command. That explains the low number of occurrences of this phrase: Apollonios usually formulates orders in the imperative; as a high-ranked person mostly writing to inferiors, he does not often say ‘please’ (cf. *supra*, § 1). Although the low number of attestations makes drawing firm conclusions difficult, there seems to be a dichotomy in the use of *καλῶς* and *ὀρθῶς* in Apollonios' letters: whereas Apollonios completes the latter with *ἐποίησας* to give his approval, he combines the former with a future tense to give a polite command. In my opinion, this difference might be due to the different contexts in which the two phrases were written. As said above, the phrases with *ὀρθῶς ποιέω* probably reflect the language of the *dioiketes*. He probably instructed his scribes: “Write to Zenon that he has done right in...”, and he presumably used the words *ὀρθῶς ποιέω* in his instruction to his staff. The choice of *καλῶς ποιέω*, on the other hand, is probably of a different nature: Apollonios probably simply uttered the order; it was the responsibility of the scribes to choose the right words. Depending on the circumstances and on the addressee, the scribes might have used an imperative or a polite order with the common *καλῶς ποιέω*, e.g.:

“[Ἀπο]λλώνιος Κραταιμένει χαίρειν. ἐπειδὴ οἱ [συ]νταξάμενοι οὐ συνήντησαν ἐπὶ τὴν [κρίσιν περὶ] τῶν ἀμφιζβητουμένων ἀμπελώνων, [κα]λῶς ποιήσεις συντάξας τὰ γενήματα [δια]τηρήσαι” (P.Cair.Zen. II 59179; ll. 8-12)

vs. “[Πα]ραμόνωι. ἐπειδὴ οἱ κληροῦχοι ἐπιβεβηκ[ότες εἰς] τὴν ἡμῖν δεδομένην γῆν ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέ\ως/ οὐ σ[υνην]τήκασιν ἐπὶ τὴν κρίσιν πρὸς Κραταιμ[ένην, ἐπι]μελές σοι γενέσθω ὅπως τὰ γενήμα[τα συ]ναχθέντα διατηρηθῆι” (idem; ll. 13-18)¹⁵

¹⁵ Clarysse observed the difference in politeness in those two letters and stresses that details in phraseology, such as whether or not to use a polite ‘please’ formula, clearly mattered in the hierarchy of officials and managers surrounding the minister (cf. Clarysse *forthc.*).

P.Cair.Zen. II 59179, a letter from Apollonios to Zenon, deals with a dispute over vineyards which were part of Apollonios' *dorea* in the Memphite nome, but which certain cleruchs claimed as their property. This dispute was taken to court. Krataimenes, the addressee of the first letter quoted here, was the judge. At this point, the judge had not come to a definite decision yet and the trial had been postponed. Pending the decision of the judge, Apollonios wanted his crops to be safe. He had written about this to judge Krataimenes and to Paramonos, who was perhaps an overseer of the Memphite *dorea*. These two letters were copied into the letter to Zenon. Whereas the subject is identical, the language of the two letters is quite distinct¹⁶: Apollonios makes a polite request with *καλῶς ποιέω* to Krataimenes in the first letter, whereas in the second one, he simply gives an order to an employee (*ἐπιμελής σοι γενέσθω*). Probably, Apollonios instructed the scribes to “tell Paramonos to make sure that the crops are inspected” and to “request Krataimenes to order the inspection of the crops”. In the latter, Apollonios' instruction to the scribes probably did not contain the polite phrase *καλῶς ποιέω*: it was the scribe who added this phrase, since a polite register might have seemed appropriate when writing to a judge.

In conclusion, the reason behind the use of distinct polite phrases in the letters by Apollonios can perhaps be explained by the situation in which the letters were composed. The two phrases probably ended up in Apollonios' letters in two different ways: *καλῶς ποιέω* seems to have been the result of delegation, whereas *ὀρθῶς ποιέω* presumably reflects Apollonios' personal language, since “you did right in ...” was an essential part of the message Apollonios wanted to convey. The fact that Apollonios used *ὀρθῶς ποιέω* consistently whenever paying someone a compliment, is probably due to Apollonios' personal preference. In other words, even in letters penned by scribes, idiosyncratic features of the sender's own language can be preserved.

1.2. Polite directives in the Athenodoros archive

In the Athenodoros archive, different variants of polite phrases are used, e.g.:

“καλῶς ποιήσεις διὰ τὴν ἔχουσάν μ\ε/ [η] ἔνστασιν καὶ διὰ τὸ νεμεσῆν (= νεμεσᾶν), ὅτι ἐνκέκλεισμαι εἰς τὸ ἱερόν, \διατάξας τὰ τῆς διμήνου ὀψώνια/” (BGU XVI 2606; TM 23329; ll. 7-10)

“εὖ οὖν πο<ι>ήσεις, ἀδελφέ, γράψας τοῖς σοῖς ἵνα αὐτὸν εἰσδέξωνται” (BGU XVI 2647; TM 23371; ll. 6-8)

¹⁶ These different contexts are not only reflected in the wording of the order concerning the inspection of the crops, but perhaps also in the opening formula. The letter to Krataimenes has a full opening formula, whereas the one to Paramonos looks more like a draft with only the addressee's name. However, we should be careful to draw conclusions, since those two texts were copied into a letter to Zenon.

“ἀξιῶ σε παρακα\(\λῶν)/ παρ\α/δοῦναι τὸ πλοῖ<ο>ν ὃ ἐὰν βοῦλη” (BGU XVI 2606; TM 23329; ll. 11-12)

“ἔρωτῶ οὖν σε συντάξαι τῶν συνεκδήμων μου ἀποσκέσθαι ἢ ὅτι παροπλιεῖς με” (BGU XVI 2613; TM 23337; ll. 5-7)

“δέομαι δέ σου μὴ [μη] ἐπιλαθέσθαι ἧς μοι ὠμολογήσας ρύσασθαι ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας” (BGU XVI 2614; TM 23338; ll. 6-8)

“διὸ ἐὰν φαίνεται σοι σήμενον (= σήμανον)” (BGU XVI 2608; TM 23331; ll. 5-6)

Whereas the variants above are well-attested outside the Athenodoros archive (cf. *supra*, § 1), this is not the case for the phrases in the following three letters:

“πρ[οσ]επιπαρακαλῶ{ι} ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς [. . .].” (BGU XVI 2648; TM 23372; ll. 6-7)

“ὀρθῶς δὲ χρῆση τὸν Διογένη(ν) μοι ταχύτερον ἀπολύσας” (BGU XVI 2636; TM 23360; ll. 13-14)

“ὀρθῶς χρῆση δοὺς Ἀντωνίῳ ἀντὶ τῶν τὰς ἴσας ὧν ἔσχον παρ’ αὐτοῦ ἐν το (=τῷ) ὕηρακλεοπολίτου (=Ἡρακλεοπολίτῳ) \ἀπὸ λόγου ἀριθμητικοῦ κατοίκων/ ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς δισχιλίας [ἀπὸ λόγου ἀριθμητικ.] ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς δισχιλίας (γίνονται) (δραχμαὶ) Β” (BGU XVI 2652; TM 23376; ll. 2-5)

The verb *προσεπιπαρακαλέω* is preserved only in two papyri: in the private letters BGU XVI 2648 of the Athenodoros archive and BGU I 249 (TM 25656). Only in the occurrence in the Athenodoros archive, the verb is used as a polite order.

Also the phrase *ὀρθῶς χρῆση* in BGU XVI 2636 and 2652 is rare¹⁷: as said, *ὀρθῶς* appears sometimes with *ποιέω*, but the expression *ὀρθῶς χρῆση* is otherwise not attested in the papyri¹⁸. BGU XVI 2652 was an official letter by Athenodoros to Eurylochos; BGU XVI 2636 is a draft, addressed to Ischyron. Given the fact that this draft was preserved in the Athenodoros archive, Athenodoros might have been the sender of BGU XVI 2652¹⁹.

2. Hierokles’ variation in the initial health wish and register²⁰

In chapter 4 (cf. *supra*, § 1.1.2.1), I discussed the letters from Hierokles in the Zenon archive, which often use the uncommon verb *ἀπαλλάσσω* in the initial health wish. Six

¹⁷ The editor did not comment upon this phrase (Brashear 1995: 133-134 and 153-154).

¹⁸ The closest parallel is found in the private letter P.Petaus 28 (TM 8847): “οὐ καλῶς μοι ἐχρήσαστε (= ἐχρήσαθε) μὴ καταστήσαντες αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν τόπον αὐτοῦ” (ll. 21-23).

¹⁹ However, since the two letters are penned by the same scribe (cf. Brashear 1995: 91), this uncommon linguistic element cannot simply be ascribed to Athenodoros himself and conclusions about a possible preference of Athenodoros cannot be drawn.

²⁰ This section was published in ZPE 190 (2014) (i.e. Nachtergaele 2014b: 223-226).

of the fourteen letters from Hierokles had the initial health wish with ἀπαλλάσσω²¹. In P.Cair.Zen. I 59098 (TM 750), this phrase is convincingly supplemented, and I proposed a similar conjecture for P.Cair.Zen. II 59285 (TM 929) (cf. *supra*, chapter 4, § 1.1.2.1), e.g.:

“εὖ ἂν ἔξοι (= ἔξοι) εἰ τῶι τε σώματι ὑγιαίνεις καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις κατὰ λόγον ἀπαλλάσσεις. ὑγίαινον δὲ καὶ ἐγώ (= καὶ ἐγώ)” (P.Lond. VII 1979; TM 1542; ll. 1-2)

In other words, eight letters by Hierokles might have had the ἀπαλλάσσω phrase. Yet, Hierokles' language is thought to be a combination of uniformity and variation (Evans 2005: 307): in the other letters, the initial health wish is phrased differently or is simply left out²². Why would Hierokles deviate from his favorite health wish with ἀπαλλάσσω and use other phrases, or no initial health wish at all? This seems to undermine that Hierokles had a particular preference for the ἀπαλλάσσω phrase. If we want to make a probable case that he had a preference for this particular initial health wish, we should also try to explain why we do not find the ἀπαλλάσσω formula in every single one of his letters. In the following paragraphs I will try to find some motives for this variation and investigate which conversational and politeness strategies might have been at the basis of the use of different formulas.

P.Cair.Zen. I 59060 (TM 718), an autographed letter from Hierokles to Zenon, has the common initial health wish “[εἰ ἔ]ρρωσαι, ἔχοι ἂν καλῶς” (l. 1). P.Cair.Zen. I 59060 is connected to two other letters sent to Zenon, viz. P.Cair.Zen. I 59061 and P.Lond. VII 1941, also written by Hierokles himself (Evans 2007: 306, footnote 16)²³: all three letters were written within days from each other and P.Cair.Zen. I 59060 was probably the last one (Evans 2005: 156). At first sight, the link with the two other letters makes the use of the phrase εἰ ἔρρωσαι, ἔχοι ἂν καλῶς in P.Cair.Zen. I 59060 even more complex, since P.Cair.Zen. I 59061 and P.Lond. VII 1941 have the ἀπαλλάσσω phrase. Why would Hierokles use his favorite formula only in two of the three letters in this cluster? I think that the answer lies in the short period of time the letters were written in²⁴: in his first

²¹ I follow other scholars in considering P.Cair.Zen. III 59349 (TM 992) as a letter of another person named Hierokles (cf. Evans 2005: 156).

²² Two letters are severely damaged in the opening lines and are therefore excluded from this overview, i.e. P.Cair.Zen. V 59811 (TM 1435) and P.Cair.Zen. III 59452 (TM 1091). The latter certainly had an initial health wish, as its second part with the information about the sender's health is still legible.

²³ The linguistic variation is thus not due to scribal influence on the language.

²⁴ There is perhaps a loose parallel to our present-day e-mails. These means of communication, like the papyrus letters, have philophroneic formulas, such as an opening and closing phrase. But, when we repeatedly e-mail back and forth with someone, we do not always insert these polite formulas in full. Personally I tend to shorten the opening and closing formulas, when replying multiple times to the same person in a short time span. I would, for instance, abbreviate the standard Dutch closing formula *met vriendelijke groeten* ('kind regards') to *mvg*. The same mechanism might also have influenced Hierokles' epistolary language.

two letters, Hierokles followed the rules of politeness by using the full introductory phrase εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἀπαλλάσσεις κατὰ νοῦν, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι. In his third letter, he might have felt that such an elaborate phrase was no longer really necessary and might have shortened the initial health wish to εἰ ἔρρωσαι, ἔχοι ἂν καλῶς. So, the absence of Hierokles' typical formula with ἀπαλλάσσω in P.Cair.Zen. I 59060 probably does not conflict with the idea that the writer favors that phrase and likes uniformity in his letters.

In three other letters by Hierokles —P.Lond. VII 1945, P.Cair.Zen. II 59283 and 59284— the initial health wish is missing²⁵. Again, there might be reasons for the deviation from the ἀπαλλάσσω phrase and for the absence of the initial health wish in these documents. Regarding content, the three letters are similar: they are letters of recommendation. In such text type, a separate initial health wish is not a standard element (Kim 1972: 25). Perhaps the absence of an initial health wish, and thus of the ἀπαλλάσσω phrase, is not due to variation in Hierokles' writing style but to an unwritten rule —at least to Hierokles' way of thinking²⁶— that the initial health wish should not be added to letters of recommendation. However, in P.Lond. VII 1946, another letter of recommendation, Hierokles does insert his initial health wish with ἀπαλλάσσω²⁷. Does this undermine my hypothesis? No, in fact, it only illustrates even more that there might be several distinct factors influencing the language choice. P.Lond. VII 1945 and 1946 form a pair: in both, Hierokles recommends a certain Apollodoros —P.Lond. VII 1945 is addressed to Zenon and P.Lond. VII 1946 to Nikanor, who is the *strategos* at Herakleopolis²⁸. Whereas the subject is identical and both letters are autographs (Evans 2007: 306)²⁹, the style of the two letters varies significantly. Not

²⁵ The three letters were penned by different hands: whereas P.Lond. VII 1945 is an autograph, P.Cair.Zen. II 59283 and 59284 were written from dictation by two different scribes (Evans 2005: 155). One can thus assume to hear Hierokles' language in all three letters.

²⁶ I do not imply that every sender of a letter of recommendation would have followed the same 'unwritten rules'; in order to substantiate such a claim, a more extensive sociolinguistic study would have to be conducted.

²⁷ The initial health wish of P.Lond. VII 1946 is: “εἰ ἔρρωσαι καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἀπαλλάσ[σεις κατὰ νο]ῦν, καλῶς [ἂν] ἔχοι. ὑγιαίνω δὲ καὶ αὐτός” (ll. 1-2). P.Lond. VII 1946 itself is torn on the right. In his edition, Skeat based his reconstruction of that part of the text on P.Lond. VII 1945. However, a new reading of these lines was provided by Cowey. The scholar convincingly linked the papyrus fragment P.Zaki Aly 15 b to P.Lond. VII 1946: P.Zaki Aly 15 b appears to be the right part of the first three lines of the letter from Hierokles to Nikanor (Cowey 1998: 201-209).

²⁸ The external addresses on the back of the letters were accidentally switched. This is the reason why the two letters ended up in the Zenon archive: presumably the mistake was discovered when Apollodoros presented the wrong letter to Zenon. The other letter then might have been opened too, and kept in the Zenon archive. Perhaps, a new letter was written to be sent to Nikanor after all (cf. Skeat 1974: 33).

²⁹ Here again, scribal influence cannot explain the linguistic variation.

only does Hierokles provide more information to the *strategos* (e.g. insertion of the sentence “ἔστιν γὰρ αὐτῶι ἐκεῖ κληρο[ς]” in line 3), he also changes the word order:

“[ὅπως ἂν χρήσων]ται αὐτῶι εὐγνωμόνως” (P.Lond. VII 1945; ll. 4-5)

“ὅπως ἂν εὐγνωμόνως χρήσονται” (P.Lond. VII 1946; l. 6)

The letter to Nikanor has a more classical word order, as the verb is placed at the end of the clause (cf. Dik 2007: 38). Further, Hierokles informs his correspondent in both letters that he also contacted the other: that phrase is the end of P.Lond. VII 1945. In P.Lond. VII 1946, however, one and a half lines of polite phrases, including a courtesy formula, follow:

“ταῦτα δὲ ποιῶν σφόδρα μοι χαριεῖ. γρ[άφε δὲ σὺ ὧν ἂν χρειάν] ἔχης. πάντα γὰρ σοι ποιήσομεν ἐκθύμωσ” (ll. 8-9)

While interpreting the presence of the initial health wish in P.Lond. VII 1946, we should thus keep in mind that the letter observes the rules of politeness and *philophronesis*. The *formula valetudinis* clearly serves the same goal.

The same politeness strategy was perhaps used by Amyntas, an important member of Apollonios’ household in Alexandria (Clarysse 1981: 284): in two letters of recommendation to Zenon³⁰ and in one to the στολάρχης Kriton³¹, Amyntas omits the initial health wish; but in the letter of recommendation P.Cair.Zen. I 59046 (TM 706) to Apollonios, Amyntas does insert such a philophronetic phrase³². Zenon, Amyntas and Kriton are all in the service of Apollonios, and Apollonios is obviously superior to the three men. Like Hierokles, Amyntas might have altered the language of his letters of recommendation depending on the person he was writing to, and he might only have written an initial health wish when the addressee was a high(er)-ranked person³³.

Overall, in P.Lond. VII 1946 Hierokles polishes his language to send a correct and polite letter to someone as important as the *strategos*. Since Zenon is an acquaintance of Hierokles, the latter applies ‘his standard rules’ for writing letters of recommendation, viz. he does not include an initial health wish, and he does not make an extra effort in

³⁰ I.e. P.Cair.Zen. I 59042 (TM 702) and P.Cair.Zen. I 59045 (TM 705).

³¹ I.e. P.Cair.Zen. V 59805 (TM 1429). As a στολάρχης, Kriton was in command of Apollonios’ small *flotilla*, and was in charge of the organization of river transport and communications. He was probably one of Apollonios’ most trusted employees (cf. Hauben 2006: 175).

³² This letter was written by a scribe who was also responsible for at least six other documents (P.Lond. VII 1935 (TM 2379), P.Cair.Zen. I 59038 (TM 698), 59044 (TM 704), 59053 (TM 712), 59066 (TM 723) and 59110 (TM 760) (Evans 2010: 62). Since these letters do not have an initial health wish, it seems unlikely to me that scribal influence could explain this pattern. Other linguistic elements such as the substandard form ἀφέσταλκα for ἀπέσταλκα show that the scribes copied from dictation (Evans 2010: 66).

³³ Of course, this might also be the accidental result of factors of preservation.

P.Lond. VII 1945. That may be the reason why Hierokles does not insert philophroneic formulas such as the initial health wish. It could also explain why the letter to Nikanor was not sent once the mistake with regard to the external address was discovered (cf. *supra*, footnote 28) since Hierokles had made an extra effort to polish the letter to Nikanor, he wanted this letter to be delivered as such, and he did not settle for a less polite letter, such as P.Lond. VII 1945, to send to Nikanor.

In sum, Hierokles' letters have an interesting number of idiolectic features. However, the fact that a sender has a preference for a certain formula, does not imply that he blindly writes that phrase in every letter. Hierokles seems to have used his favorite phrase with ἀπαλλάσσω, except in those cases where the context urges another formula. Hence, other factors, such as register of a certain text type, viz. the letters of recommendation (use-related variation) or the addressee (user-related variation) and conversational strategies influence the writing style as well. The motives behind the choice of a specific formula are, in other words, complex and difficult to retrieve, as different principles probably intervened with each other and factors of preservation might have seriously influenced our picture.

3. Claudius Tiberianus' 'code alternation' as conversational strategy

The 2nd century AD archive of Claudius Tiberianus has two main *dramatis personae*: Claudius Tiberianus, the owner of the archive, and Claudius Terentianus³⁴. Terentianus was until recently believed to be Tiberianus' son, given their identical *nomen* 'Claudius' and Terentianus' way of addressing Tiberianus as *pater* and πατήρ. Yet, Strassi argued that Claudius was a very common name among soldiers and that the kinship term should not be interpreted literally. She suggested that Terentianus was connected to Tiberianus by patronage (Strassi 2008: 109-126).

Alongside the relationship between the two protagonists, also the archive's unusual linguistic situation with an alternation between Greek and Latin was a topic of many studies in the past few decades³⁵: seven letters were written in Latin³⁶, the rest was

³⁴ Hereafter referred to as Tiberianus and Terentianus respectively.

³⁵ Adams' 1977 study initiated the investigation of the Tiberianus archive. Adams 2003: 593-597 resumed his earlier work. Langslow described the case from a sociolinguistic angle, but did not attempt to solve the problem of language choice (Langslow 2002: 40-41). Dickey referred to the linguistic usage in the archive at various times (e.g. Dickey 2002: 87; Dickey 2004b: 139ff.). Halla-aho quoted excerpts from the letters (e.g. Halla-aho 2009: 49-50), but she did not go into depth on the code alternation; her main focus was on the use of scribes in the letters and their skills (Halla-aho 2003b: 244-252). Youtie and Winter 1951, and Luiselli 2008 only touched upon this archive.

composed in Greek. Probably all Latin letters but one were sent by Terentianus to Tiberianus³⁷. Also several Greek letters were sent from the former to the latter³⁸. Both men thus were clearly bilingual³⁹. In Adams' opinion, Tiberianus was a native Latin speaker –an Italian immigrant who married a Greek-speaking woman in Egypt. Assuming that Tiberianus was the father of Terentianus, he argued that, whereas Greek was Terentianus' everyday language (Adams 1977: 66), Latin was the language he would speak to his father. Nevertheless, Greek would have been used between the two men when serious or administrative matters had to be dealt with (Adams 2003: 596). In this view, Latin was considered appropriate for family and emotional affairs, and Greek was reserved for cases in which more distance was required (Adams 2003: 595; Clackson and Horrocks 2007: 249): the topic and tone of the letter determined which language the message should be written in. In sociolinguistics this concept is called 'discourse-related switching' (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 219). However, the subjects in the Latin and Greek letters are often similar, which the proponents of this hypothesis admit themselves: Luiselli stated that the reasons behind Terentianus' language choice are beyond retrieval (Luiselli 2008: 716). Adams also conceded that content alone is not sufficient to explain language alternation⁴⁰:

³⁶ ChLA V 299 (TM 69897), P.Mich. VIII 467 (TM 27080), 468 (TM 27081), 469 (TM 27082), 470 (TM 27083), 471 (TM 27084) and 472 (TM 27085). ChLA V 299, P.Mich. VIII 470 and are too fragmentary to include in this linguistic study.

³⁷ P.Mich. VIII 472 is certainly not a letter between the two protagonists: the letter was sent by Tiberianus to a certain Longinus Priscus. P.Mich. VIII 477 and P.Mich. VIII 478 are believed to be letters from Terentianus to Tiberianus, but the address is lost in both letters and the opening formulas are heavily damaged.

³⁸ P.Mich. VIII 476 (TM 27089), 477 (TM 27090), 478 (TM 27091), 479 (TM 27092) and 480 (TM 27093).

³⁹ The archive shows Tiberianus' receptive skills in Latin and Greek. We are, however, not well informed about Tiberianus' producing skills since the archive contains only one outgoing document from Tiberianus, i.e. the Latin letter P.Mich. VIII 472.

⁴⁰ He added other factors which may have influenced the language choice in papyri: "Language choice might [...] have been determined by such factors as the linguistic competence of the writer or the addressee, the competence of the scribes, or the whim of the writer on a particular occasion." (Adams 2003: 492). The first two criteria mentioned in the above quote, however, are not applicable to the Tiberianus archive: the linguistic competence of the correspondents is obviously not under discussion, as this case study is restricted to the letters from two bilingual correspondents, Terentianus and Tiberianus. The second criterion (the scribes' competence and monolingualism) was thoroughly investigated by Adams, since most letters were indeed penned down by scribes. Nevertheless, to Adams it seems unlikely that there were many scribes in Egypt who could only write Latin. In other words: "when Terentianus sent letters in Latin he must surely have had the option of using Greek" (Adams 2003: 542). Youtie and Winter proposed a chronological explanation: the choice of Latin was, in their opinion, influenced by the context of the army, whereas later letters were drawn up in Greek reflecting the reduced military pressure on language choice (Youtie and Winter 1951: 16). But, as was rightly argued by Adams, it is not the case that the Latin letters were written while Terentianus was in service, whereas the Greek ones were composed after he had left the army (Adams 2003: 594).

“It is sometimes difficult at the level of everyday practical communication to detect any functional differentiation of Greek and Latin among soldiers and ex-soldiers in Egypt.” (Adams 2003: 492)

By addressing the problem from a different angle I hope to propose an explanation for the linguistic choices in the Tiberianus archive⁴¹. I adopt the sociolinguistic term ‘code alternation’ which denotes the use of two or more languages by one speaker —not in one single text as in code-switching— but in different contexts e.g. with different interlocutors (Thomason 2003: 697). Sociolinguists have emphasized the impact of addressees and all other participants on the language:

“For bilinguals, choice of language can be significant for presentations of identity and intergroup or interpersonal relations [...] the major reason is the symbolic value of speaking that language in the multilingual context” (Mullen 2012: 24)

In bilingual situations ‘audience design’ is an important concept:

“audience has always been recognized as a crucial factor in language choice” (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 205)

The impact of the language competence or preference of the interlocutors on the message is called ‘participant-related switching’ —as opposed to ‘discourse-related switching’ in which the topic and the context determine the language (cf. Adams’ view) (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 219). Those ‘interlocutors’ need to be understood in a broad sense. As has been pointed out in the introduction, scholars have recently started to emphasize that writing a letter was not a product involving only the sender and the addressee —and possibly a scribe— but an activity involving other members of the community. Especially in the salutations, the bystanders could actively take part in the composition of the letter (cf. *supra*, chapter 1, § 1.2.2). The greetings in the letters from Terentianus are therefore the starting point for this case study⁴². By doing so, I investigate whether the code alternation in the Claudius Tiberianus archive can be explained by ‘participant-related switching’.

⁴¹ Yet, it needs to be admitted that, whereas “it is tempting to assume that there must always be a significance to changes of language in a bilingual community, [...] that assumption is probably not justifiable. Certainly in military settings in Egypt there is evidence for what might be called a mundane practical or transactional bilingualism. We find certain individuals communicating in both languages under (as far as we can tell) unchanging circumstances on the same everyday topics with the same addressees” (Adams 2003: 589).

⁴² I only discuss the salutations from the sender to the addressee’s social circle and not, for instance, greetings from the sender’s social circle to the addressee, since those are not relevant to ‘participant-related switching’.

3.1. Greek Letters

In the Greek letters, an imperative ἀσπάζου/ἄσπασαι + accusative was often used in greetings from the sender to the addressee's relatives and friends (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 1). In Terentianus' letters to Tiberianus, salutations to the addressee's social circle are attested in the P.Mich. VIII 476, 477, 478 and 479⁴³:

- P.Mich. VIII 476 (ll. 23-24): “ἄσπασαι πάντες (= πάντας) τοὺς ἐκ τοῦ Καισαρείου κατ' ὄνομα. ἄσπασ[αι] Δίδυμον τὸν νομικὸν πανοικί”⁴⁴
(l. 31): “ἄσπασαι πάντες (= πάντας) τοὺς φιλοῦντες (= φιλοῦντας) [ἡμᾶς] κατ' ὄνομα”
- P.Mich. VIII 477 (ll. 43-44): “ἄσπ[ασαι] πάντες (= πάντας) τοὺς φιλοῦντέ[ς] (= φιλοῦντας) σε] κ[ατ'] ὄν[ομα]”
- P.Mich. VIII 478 (l. 45): “ἄσπα[σαι] τὴν μητέ[ρα] καὶ κυρίαν μ[ο]υ πολλά”
- P.Mich. VIII 479 (ll. 20-21): “ἄσπα[σαι] πάντες (= πάντας) τοὺς φιλοῦντές (= φιλοῦντας) σε κατ' ὄνομα”

The formulas are remarkably similar: in three of the four letters, the phrase ἄσπασαι πάντας τοὺς φιλοῦντάς σε (or ἡμᾶς) κατ' ὄνομα appears. Formulas in which all friends (of the sender or the addressee) are greeted (τοὺς φιλοῦντας and variants) are only attested in about 65 instances (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 6.1.3) out of a total of more than thousand greeting formulas (cf. *supra*, chapter 3). Variations are possible, e.g. πᾶς can be left out, the word order can differ (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 6.1.3). In Terentianus' letters, the formula gives the impression of being copy-pasted: besides πάντας τοὺς φιλοῦντάς σε, the phraseology with the consistent use of the verb form ἄσπασαι, the word order, the addition of κατ' ὄνομα and even the confusion between the nominative and accusative in the word string πάντας τοὺς φιλοῦντάς σε, are identical⁴⁵. Only the object

⁴³ No salutations are found in the Greek P.Mich. VIII 480. The code alternation thus cannot be explained by ‘participant-related switching’, and perhaps Terentianus has no deliberate motives as why he chooses to write in Greek. As described earlier, Greek is the most obvious choice for letter-writing: Greek is Terentianus' mother tongue and a logical choice for letter-writing; the Greek letters inform about many subjects covering different aspects of everyday life. P.Mich. VIII 480 is strikingly similar to P.Mich. VIII 477: both documents begin by describing the difficulties Terentianus encountered when registering documents. P.Mich. VIII 480, unfortunately, is incomplete; we do not know how the message proceeds, but it is plausible that the letter continued –similar to P.Mich. VIII 477– with other practical issues, greetings and a closing formula. P.Mich. VIII 480 thus confirms the hypothesis that in this archive Greek was used to deal with day-to-day worries. In other words, whereas the main hypothesis of this case study is that ‘participant-related switching’ might have influence the language choice, ‘discourse-related switching’ remains a plausible explanation (for other documents) as well.

⁴⁴ The Latin and Greek quotes are copied from Strassi 2008.

⁴⁵ Writing –ες instead of –ας, i.e. using the nominative plural for the accusative plural is common (Gignac 1981: 215).

of φιλοῦντας might have differed —but not necessarily: the phrase might have included σε in all occurrences. My observations of Terentianus’ uniform salutations are in line with the conclusions of previous studies on Terentianus’ language. In discussing the opening lines (i.e. the opening formula, initial health wish and *proskynema*) of Terentianus’ Greek letters, Halla-aho remarked similar linguistic unity (Halla-aho 2003b: 245-246). Adams came to the same conclusion about Terentianus’ Latin letters: among the recurring elements are the demonstrative *ille*, and stock phrases such as *scias me pater accepisse* or *misisse* (Adams 1977: 84). Scholars have remarked that this uniformity should be attributed to Terentianus’ himself, and cannot be due to scribal interference: the handwriting varied (almost⁴⁶) from letter to letter; both for his Latin and his Greek letters, Terentianus used scribes to whom he seems to have dictated his message⁴⁷ (Youtie and Winter 1951: 16; Adams 1977: 3; Halla-aho 2003b: 245; Evans 2012b: 523).

Yet, this does not imply that Terentianus used this one salutation in all of his letters: in P.Mich. VIII 481, a letter from Terentianus to his sister Tasoucharion⁴⁸, the greetings are different:

“ἄσπασαι Π. [.] κράτην σὺν ὄλω τοῦ οἴκου [αὐτο]ῦ καὶ Πτολεμαῖον τὸν Ἀρίου σὺν γυναιξὶ καὶ τῶις [τέκν]οις. ἄσπασαι Πτολεμαῖον καὶ Τιβερίνον καὶ Τιεπ. . .” (ll. 29-31)

Many people are greeted by name and there are no general greetings with οἱ φιλοῦντες πάντες. What is the reason for this difference in phraseology? It is admittedly speculative to formulate theories about why a certain phraseology was used, but a hint at a possible hypothesis may lie in the lines following the greetings:

“ . . . κει[. . .] ἀσπ[αρά]γου πέμψαι νέσ[ο]ν [. . .] ἰν διὰ Μέλανος, ὅτι ἐρωτῶμέν σε, πατήρ, πέμψ[ο]ν [. . .] ἰν [ἔν] . ἀσπάζονται σε οἱ ἐν τῇ συνοικίᾳ πάντες [.] ἰ κατ’ [ᾠ]σμα” (ll. 32-35)

Before the salutations which Terentianus’ social circle sends to Tiberianus, a practical request is made. Although the papyrus is heavily damaged, the comparison with other letters from the hand of Terentianus is fruitful: in P.Mich. VIII 478 Terentianus first greets his mother (cf. *supra*) and then immediately proceeds with practical issues:

⁴⁶ For the Greek letters, one scribe was probably responsible for both P.Mich. VIII 476 and 478 (Youtie and Winter 1951: 54; Halla-aho 2003b: 245; Strassi 2008: 46-58).

⁴⁷ Adams considered the possibility that some letters could be copied from Terentianus’ own writing (Adams 1977: 48-49).

⁴⁸ Strassi, interpreting the kinship term ἀδελφή literally, considers Tasoucharion the sister of Terentianus (Strassi 2008: 138).

“κ[α]ἰ ἐρεῖς αὐτῇ τοῖς [. . .].ι.[.]ς πέ[μψ]αι μ[ο]ι τὸ φοῦνδίν μ[ο]υ” (ll. 45-47)

Perhaps, in P.Mich. VIII 481, likewise, someone was greeted and was given an assignment at the same time. It is therefore prerequisite that this person (like Terentianus’ mother in P.Mich. VIII 478) can hear the message. One of the reasons why people are mentioned by name in the greetings may be to involve them in the communication. This is not to deny that greetings primarily have a social function, viz. to maintain family and friendship ties. Yet, they can have an appellative function as well: by greeting a person by name, a sender may indicate in some cases that the letter contains valuable information for that person. By contrast, in letters with general greetings, only the addressee is personally addressed. Consequently, only the social function of greetings applies, not the appellative one.

3.2. Latin Letters

In Latin, greetings are commonly expressed with the imperative form *saluta* + accusative. In Terentianus’ letters to Tiberianus, greetings to the addressee’s relatives and friends are attested in the Latin documents P.Mich. VIII 467, 468 and 469⁴⁹.

3.2.1. P.Mich. VIII 467 and 468

In the Latin letters P.Mich. VIII 467 and 468 from Terentianus to Tiberianus, the greetings are as follows:

“*ṣa[luta et Ap]hro[disia]m et Isitychen e[t -ca.?-] . [- ca.11 - S]er[en]um s[c]ribam et Marcellum collegam tuum et Tere[ntium] collegam tuum et omnes contubernaes tuos”* (P.Mich. VIII 467; ll. 33 -35)

“*ṣal[u]ta Aprodia (= Aphrodisiam) eṭ Isituchen (= Isitychen). sal[ut]a Arrium centurionem con (= cum) suis ed (= et) Saturninum scriba (= scribam) con (= cum) suis et Capitonem centurione (= centurionem) con (= cum) [s]u[i]s et Cassium optionem con (= cum) suis [et T]urranium (= Turannium) optionem (= optionem) con (= cum) suis [et Sal]ustium con (= cum) [s]uis et Terentiūm gubernatorem [e]t Frontone (= Frontonem) con (= cum) suis et Sempronium Hitalicum (= Italicum) et Puplicium (= Publicium) et Severinu (= Severinum) eṭ Mar[c]ellu (= Marcellum) collega (= collegam) tuum et Lūcium saluta Serenum scriba (= scribam) [co]n (= cum) suis saluta omnes contubernaes nostrous (= nostros)”* (P.Mich. VIII 468; ll. 48-62)

⁴⁹ As said before, ChLA V 299 and P.Mich. VIII 470 are too fragmentary to be included in this study; moreover, the letters do not preserve greetings to Tiberianus’ relatives and friends. No regards are found in the Latin letter P.Mich. VIII 471. Here, the code alternation thus cannot be explained by ‘participant-related switching’. Below, I discuss the choice for Latin in P.Mich. VIII 471 (cf. *infra*, footnote 57).

The number of persons greeted by name is much higher than in their Greek counterparts. The Latin greetings make up a large part of the letter, especially in P.Mich. VIII 468 where they are written over 15 of the total of 65 lines (i.e. 23%). Further, all men in question have Latin names⁵⁰ and are explicitly addressed by their titles, e.g.: “*Arrium centurionem*”, “*Saturninum scriba*”, “*Terentium gubernatorem*”. Such references to the functions of the members of the addressee’s social circle are uncommon in Greek private letters, (appendix I, footnote 72) since mostly friends and relatives are greeted and in such a context, no reference to their job is required.

Besides regards to individuals, a group of people is greeted under one general heading —just as in the Greek letters. There is, however, a major difference: in Greek, the generic term for the group is πάντας τοὺς φιλοῦντας, whereas in the Latin letters the *contubernales* are addressed. Greeting *contubernales* is certainly not uncommon in Latin: the Vindolanda tablets provide a number of parallels to the Latin letters of Tiberianus archive, e.g.:

“*saluta [...]ndem Elpidem Iu[...]enum Tetricum et om[n]es c[ont]ubernales cum quibus [o]pto felicissimus vivas*” (T.Vindol. II 346; ll. 7-11)

The editors of the Vindolanda text remark that, given the military context of the document, the term *contubernalis* should be taken literally, as referring to the *contubernium* (‘tent-companionship’, cf. Lewis and Short Latin dictionary, s.v. *contubernium*). As in the Vindolanda tablets, the Latin greetings in Terentianus’ letters probably emphasize the military identity of the people concerned. In P.Mich. VIII 468 one even gets the impression that the individuals are in fact mainly saluted because of their military status, rather than because of their friendship or kinship with the sender as in the Greek letters. Also in the content, the greater part of the letters is dedicated to the developments in the military: Terentianus reports his own situation (P.Mich. VIII 467, l. 8: *s[cias] autem [ra]pi me in Syriam exiturum cum vexillo*) and that of comrades (P.Mich. VIII 467, ll. 12-13: *p[ro]b[ave]r[e] se in cl[asse] A[u]g(usta) Alex(andra) [et] Kalab[el] et Deipist[us]*). Terentianus also reveals his aspirations:

“*et si deus volueret (= voluerit), spero me frugaliter [v]iciturum (= victurum) et in cohortem [tra]nsferri*” (P.Mich. VIII 468; ll. 35-38)

He is well aware that it will take letters of recommendation and money to achieve his goal of joining the cohorts:

⁵⁰ By contrast, in the Greek letters from Terentianus to Tiberianus, only one person is mentioned by name, viz. Didymos in P.Mich. VIII 476 (*supra*).

“*hic a[ut]em sine (= sine) aer[e] nihil fiet neque epistulae commendaticiae (= commendaticiae) nihil valunt (= valent) nisi (= nisi) si qui sibi adiutaveret (= adiutaverit)*”
(ll. 38-41)

To my mind, lines 35 to 41 are the key to understand the letter, and even to explain the language choice in this archive. The passage reveals the main message that Terentianus wanted to communicate in his letter. He seems to have deliberately worked towards it: in lines 31-35 —just before he mentions his own personal military ambition— Terentianus formulates a request for a reply and voices his concern about Tiberianus’ health, which may (partly) have been a rhetoric trick to conciliate the latter. Further, the people who Terentianus greeted individually and with a reference to their military titles, are probably individuals who could carry weight in decisions made in the army: he sends his regards to two *centuriones*, two *optiones*⁵¹ and a *gubernator*. In my view, the greetings are a crucial element in Terentianus’ attempt to obtain support for his military ambition. By saluting the military men by name, Terentianus may have wanted to appeal to them: he probably hoped to receive letters of recommendation (and perhaps money). Since Tiberianus holds a higher social and military rank than Terentianus, the latter tries to develop his professional network through the former: by greeting Tiberianus’ acquaintances, Terentianus puts himself on the map. Overall, Terentianus proves to be aware of the power of epistolary *topoi* —and more specifically of the appellative function of greeting individuals by name— and he knew how to turn this to his advantage.

If I am correct in thinking that seeking support for his military ambition was the primary goal of the letter, the linguistic choice for Latin is not surprising and is a part of the sender’s politeness strategy. To start with, Terentianus probably considered the linguistic competence of the people who he wanted to reach and who were present when the letter was read out loud upon receipt: the bilingual Tiberianus —the addressee of the letter— would not have minded to be addressed in Greek, but perhaps (some of) the individuals greeted were more familiar with Latin. Terentianus’ linguistic accommodation is a form of politeness:

“the Greek who speaks Latin to a Roman practices accommodation, whereas the Greek who speaks Greek to a monolingual Latin speaker may be acting aggressively.” (Adams and Swain 2002: 8)

Moreover, the symbolic value of Latin as the language of the military was presumably decisive in Terentianus’ language choice.

⁵¹ An *optio* is the right hand of the *centurio*.

“though Greek was the predominating daily language in eastern areas, Latin was available [...] to symbolize Roman military identity in the most potent way” (Adams 2003: 761)

Since Terentianus was well aware of the beneficial effects of deliberately addressing his audience, he must also have realized that the same message can come across differently in another language. As military ambition is behind P.Mich. VIII 468, the use of Latin emphasizes Terentianus’ Roman military identity. So, not only in conveying greetings to fellow military men, but also in his language choice Terentianus presents himself as a member of the Roman army. Thus, the sending of regards in the two above-mentioned letters and the choice for Latin are probably to be seen as a conversational and politeness strategy for developing professional relationships within the military.

3.2.2. P.Mich. VIII 469: a language play?

P.Mich. VIII 469, the third and last Latin letter from Terentianus to Tiberianus, differs in content from P.Mich. VIII 467 and 468: its only subject is Terentianus’ mother asking Tiberianus for several goods. The initiative for writing the letter seems to come from her, rather than from Terentianus himself. Terentianus is only the means by which she hopes to reach her goal. Further, also the composition of the letter is different from all others: whereas the body of the letter is written in Latin, in the address Terentianus switches to Greek⁵². This is, however, not the only trace of the blending of the two languages. In line 21, one reads the following greetings:

“*saluta qui nos [a]mant*”

Contentwise, this formula is parallel to its Greek counterpart ἄσπασαι πάντας τοὺς φιλοῦντάς ἡμᾶς. It is one of the many examples of interference of Greek in Terentianus’ Latin (cf. Adams 2003: 79-80; Halla-aho 2009: 53). The fact that Greek interferes to a large extent in this Latin letter, supports the idea that Terentianus’ mother tongue was Greek. Nevertheless, there must be a reason why Terentianus takes the challenge and the trouble to write in Latin rather than in his native language.

If the choice for Greek or Latin is only determined by the type of letter (private or (more) official), i.e. by ‘discourse-related switching’ as Adams and the other scholars propose, it seems illogical that this letter is written in Latin: the greetings are reminiscent of the Greek ones and convey an informal tone. The same goes for the opening formula. Terentianus simply refers to Tiberianus as ‘his father’ (*patri suo*), without including a polite form of address such as *dominus* or κύριος which is found in

⁵² (ll. 23-24): “Κλαυδίω [Τιβεριανῶ] σπεκουλ(άτορι)”.

most other letters⁵³. Also the favor Terentianus is asking for, is clearly private request on behalf of his mother. In sum, also in this letter, the idea that the Greek and Latin letters from this archive can be explained by ‘discourse-related switching’ alone is not tenable.

But what can the actual effect of writing in Latin be? In the previous paragraph, I concluded that Latin can be used for its symbolic function as language of the military. From that point of view, the use of Latin elevates the purely personal matter discussed in P.Mich. VIII 469: it is put on a par with Terentianus’ military requests. Through his language choice, Terentianus presents himself thus implicitly as a peer of Tiberianus, both members of the Roman military elite; this way, he (and his mother) perhaps hoped to be more successful in their appeal.

Just like in P.Mich. VIII 468, Terentianus probably tried to achieve his goal through a deliberate language choice. Further, this is the only letter in the archive which Terentianus seems to have written by his own hand (Clackson and Horrocks 2007: 249-250; Strassi 2008: 27)⁵⁴. This effort may be interpreted as a part of Terentianus’ communication strategy as well. Moreover, the sender seems to have consciously selected some other epistolary *topoi* to be as polite as possible in the hope of subtly influencing his addressee⁵⁵. The above-mentioned phrase introducing the subject of the letter, *salutat te mater mea et or[at] te...*, is a fine example: not wanting to come across as rude, Terentianus does not come straight to the point by immediately asking a favor for his mother, but he starts off with a philophroneic greeting formula as a kind of *captatio benevolentiae*. Such salutations to the addressee at the beginning of the letter are not attested in any other letter by Terentianus.

Similarly, at the end of the letter, Terentianus inserts another philophroneic phrase expressing that he and his mother hold Tiberianus in affection after god, just like he does⁵⁶:

“*eni (= enim) habemus sequundu (= secundum) deum te et tu nos*” (ll. 20-21)

⁵³ Compare, for example, with the opening formula of P.Mich. VIII 467 (ll. 1-2): “*Claudius [T]er[en]tianus Claudio Tiberiano domino et patri karissimo plurimam salutem*”.

⁵⁴ The handwriting of P.Mich. VIII 469 lacked scribal training (Halla-aho 2003b: 248-249). Nevertheless, we cannot simply assume that every letter written by a non-professional hand, is penned by the sender himself. We cannot exclude that a colleague or a friend of Terentianus was the one who wrote the letter.

⁵⁵ It has been remarked before that Terentianus letters have many philophroneic formulas so that he would please Tiberianus (Halla-aho 2003a: 28-29); Halla-aho did not discuss the phrases which I investigate in this paragraph.

⁵⁶ A similar affectionate phrase is not found in any of the other letters from Terentianus to Tiberianus.

This way, the request is surrounded by phrases that should propitiate Tiberianus. In different aspects of his letter, Terentianus adapts his language to his audience to maximize the effect of his message⁵⁷.

3.3. Conclusion

In the Tiberianus archive, participants (i.e. the persons greeted) seem to have played a role in the language choice of the communication between bilinguals: the ‘code alternation’ can be explained by ‘participant-related switching’ in addition to the ‘discourse-related switching’, in which topic and tone are the most important factors for language choice and which is usually thought to explain the case study of the Tiberianus archive.

Greek is Terentianus’ mother tongue and a logical choice for letter-writing. There are therefore no deliberate motives as to why he chooses to write in Greek. When he switches to Latin, Terentianus seems to have adapted his language to the participants as a communicative strategy in order to increase his chances of achieving his goals. One gets the impression that Terentianus was well aware of the power of language and style: he seems to have developed conversational and politeness strategies in his communication and he tailored his language to the circumstances and to his audience. Especially P.Mich. VIII 468 shows the effect participants have on the language choice — or rather the effect Terentianus wants his language choice to have on the participants. He probably considered practical matters such as the linguistic abilities of the participants: not all people greeted in the letters may have been as fluently bilingual as Terentianus and Tiberianus. This is known to be a universal politeness strategy. Terentianus also played with the symbolic value that Latin has to his audience in order to reach the goals of his letters. Terentianus chose Latin to present himself, in front of a military audience, as a Roman soldier and as part of the elite in order to develop his professional network or to get favors.

⁵⁷ The Latin letter P.Mich. VIII 471 is, to my mind, very similar to this letter: just like in P.Mich. VIII 469, Terentianus’ mother takes a central place in this letter in which Terentianus reports about the trouble he and his mother have encountered. Unfortunately, the first lines of P.Mich. VIII 471 are not legible. It is, however, plausible that P.Mich. VIII 471 had the same structure as P.Mich. VIII 469: the opening formula, possibly a health wish and greetings, immediately followed by a request. Although this is merely a hypothesis —no request has been preserved— the legible part of the letter reads as a request in times of trouble. The fact that it is a letter of request would explain the language choice: in an attempt to enforce his request, Terentianus switched to Latin to ask Tiberianus for help in some personal or family problems, just like in P.Mich. VIII 469. Admittedly, it is hard to judge the contents of a damaged letter, but nevertheless, P.Mich. VIII 471 seems to confirm my hypothesis on the linguistic choice for Latin.

Conclusion

“Theodor Mommsen is credited with saying the following: the nineteenth century has been the century of epigraphy, the twentieth century will be the century of papyrology” (van Minnen 1993: 5). In the twenty-first century, papyrology is undergoing a methodological change and is beginning to explore its rich linguistic resources, an evolution to which this thesis aims to contribute. Papyrology has become a multidisciplinary research field: it interacts with modern linguistic theories such as historical sociolinguistics, it has embraced new technology (resulting in extremely useful databases and search engines such as the Papyrological Navigator and Trismegistos) and it has adopted new approaches such as corpus linguistics to conduct this kind of (socio)linguistic research.

Using this new approach, I have applied the theoretical framework of variationist (socio)linguistics to the entire corpus of so far edited private papyrus letters (ca. 4350 texts), in an attempt to study the phraseological variation in the formulaic language of the private papyrus letters, both from a diachronic and a synchronic point of view. I have sought to evaluate the diachronic variation and change in the formulaic phrases as reflections of changing cultural patterns and practices, and to appreciate the synchronic variations as expressions of the language of an individual (or of a group) and as elements in deliberate conversational and politeness strategies. Variation in the epistolary phrases of the private papyrus letters has thus been central in this study. With this approach this thesis distinguishes itself from past studies on papyrus letters.

The combination of my large corpus and my variation-based approach has enabled me to describe the diachronic variation in the formulaic phrases more in detail than in previous studies. In the first and main part of this thesis, I have selected six common epistolary *topoi* which had a formulaic way of being expressed.

The first two chapters have dealt with greeting formulas, i.e. the opening formula—in which the sender greets the addressee (chapter 2)—and the salutations—in which the sender and his social circle send regards to the addressee and his social circle (chapter 3). In the salutations, the different verbs used seem to be functionally and

chronologically coexisting variants; only Herennia seems to have had a preference for the verb ἐπισκοπέω instead of ἀσπάζομαι and also Terentianus was consistent in his use of the expression ἄσπασαι πάντας τοὺς φιλοῦντάς σε (or ἡμᾶς) κατ' ὄνομα. When it comes to the opening formula, however, various formulaic phrases were already described as functional variants in past studies: according to the social context (writing from 'high to low' or from 'low to high'), one can alternate between, for instance, ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν and τῷ δεῖνι ὁ δεῖνα χαίρειν. My study has been the first to systematically analyze the private letters containing an opening formula that was inspired by the standard phrase used in petitions: τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα. Not only have I shown that the use of this formulaic expression was confined to the 3rd century BC, but I have also revealed its functional context: unlike previously thought, the phrase is not only found in private letters that are content-wise close to petitions —such as private letters of request— but it also appears in business correspondence. It is always used from 'low to high', and it seems that the senders were not very high on the social ladder. Further, given the fact that many senders provide additional personal information to identify themselves, there seems to be a large social distance between sender and addressee, who might not have known each other personally. I have concluded that the phraseology τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα was a blending of the registers of the private letter and the petition in order to compose a very polite letter. Also asyndetic opening formulas were not studied before and seem to have been a short-lived variant: all occurrences date to the early Ptolemaic period.

Overall, the changes in the phrasings of the opening formula and the salutations mainly seem to have been internal Greek developments¹: in the opening formula, the more direct variants χαῖρε and χαίροις with vocative were probably an attempt to bring the letters' opening in line with the direct tone of the rest of the letter, where vocatives were commonly found. Similarly, the eventual loss of the opening formula can be explained as a last step in the (unsuccessful) process of finding an opening formula with a phraseology that suited the changing cultural norms of society.

In the second part of the diachronic study, contact-induced variation plays a more prominent part and seems to have determined many of the changes in phraseology. In past studies, different variants had already been shown to be of Egyptian origin, e.g. the increasing tendency to advertise one's religion. This study has contributed to this research by supporting evidence for the hypothesis that the *topos* 'to find the addressee well' was contact-induced as well. Yet, as a classicist, my main interest is in Latin and

¹ However, the verb ἐπισκοπέω was in previous studies already identified as a contact-induced variant and a loan translation from Demotic and the use of the *topos* of sending regards itself was also stimulated by Egyptian traditions.

Greek language interference. In the four chapters dealing with different *topoi* expressing the wish for the addressee's well-being, I have argued that a number of variants are due to interference from Latin —this thesis thus supports other recent studies that have emphasized that language contact between Latin and Greek was more two-way traffic than previously thought: it was not just Greek that influenced Latin, the latter, for its part, also left its mark on the evolution of the Greek language. For instance, an expression that is found in both the Latin and the Greek epistolary framework and that had been thought to be an element of Greek interference on Latin, is the relative subclause which is added to the initial health wish and which stresses the importance of the health wish (chapter 4, § 3.3.2). It was previously thought to be found only in the (Latin and Greek) letters from Terentianus. Since his native language seems to be Greek and various *graecisms* are found in his Latin texts, this relative subclause was probably explained in the same way. Yet, my data have revealed new attestations of this formula, both in Latin and in Greek letters. Some of the Latin letters are from Egypt, but a similar *topos* is attested in Vindolanda tablets. Given that the use of this phrase in Roman Britain cannot be explained by influence from Greek, it seems that Latin has developed this *topos* first; the uniform formulas —Terentianus only uses one expression in his Greek letters, and the same wordings appear in an ostrakon from Didymoi— may suggest that the relative subclause had a more fixed phraseology in Latin than in Greek.

Also in other aspects of the initial health wish, Terentianus' language again appears to be very uniform: for example, the *topos* in which the sender provides information about his well-being. This phrase is a remnant of the older Ptolemaic initial health wish, where such an 'information formula' was a standard part of the expression. The *topos* was thought to have almost completely disappeared, but I found no less than 21 occurrences, including three letters by Terentianus and one from Papirius Apollinarius to Tiberianus preserved in the same archive (chapter 4, § 3.3.1). The letters from the Tiberianus archive as well as a large part of the attestations of this *topos* occur in letters that seem to be linked to a 'Latinized' environment. Apparently, the formula in which the sender gives information about his own health was favored in contexts where there might have been interference from the Latin counterpart *si vales, bene est; ego valeo*, which was still in use in the Roman period.

A third and last possible contact-induced variant in the initial health wish is the choice for certain infinitives in the formulaic expression $\pi\rho\delta\ \mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omega\nu\ \epsilon\ddot{\upsilon}\chi\omicron\mu\acute{\alpha}\iota\ \sigma\epsilon\ \upsilon\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\iota\nu\epsilon\iota\nu$; especially with regard to $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\rho\omega\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ there seem to be indications of possible interference from Latin (chapter 4, § 3.2.2.3). Many of the attestations have a Latin background, including texts from the Karanis archives of Saturnila and of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris. However, the exact linguistic situation is unknown —the archives only preserve Greek texts— and the motives for choosing the typical verb of the closing formula might be diverse and not only restricted to the Latin habit of making the initial health wish and the closing formula resemble each other. Nevertheless, the fact that the

two collections share another feature —viz. the use of the verb ἐρωτάω in the request for a reply— which has been shown to be contact-induced, leads me to two conclusions: on the one hand, it seems to confirm that the Roman protagonists of the two archives were, to some extent, acquainted with Latin (epistolary phraseology) —this first conclusion shows that the detailed linguistic study of formulaic language has the potential to reveal the possible bilingual background of other collections as well². On the other hand, the occurrence of different (probable) contact-induced variants in the same texts and archives, makes the case stronger for linguistic interference in each single potential contact-induced phenomenon; it thus seems reasonable that the choice for the infinitive ἐρρωσθαι instead of ὑγιαίνειν was (in some cases) due to interference from the Latin formulaic phrases.

In the *proskynema* formula (chapter 5), which is itself a *topos* developed under the influence of the Egyptian tradition, Latin seems to have interfered in the formulaic wordings: whereas past studies focused on the references to gods in this formula, this study has been the first to investigate the language of the *proskynema* formula which has resulted in a number of interesting findings, including elements of Latin interference. The middle forms ποιοῦμαι and ποιούμενος instead of the usual active, are rather frequently found in texts with a Latin background: for instance, Terentianus consistently phrased the *proskynema* with the participle ποιούμενος. Not only Terentianus developed an idiosyncratic and consistent phraseology, also in the Saturnila archive and in the archive of Apollonios, there seems to be a shared uncommon language with the respective formulaic expressions ἅμα δε καὶ τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιοῦμαι ἡμερησίως παρὰ τῷ θεῷ and οὐ διαλείπω τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶν παρὰ τῷ θεῷ.

In the final heal wish (chapter 6) and the closing formula (chapter 7), the most important observations concern the language of the individual. With regard to the relative subclause added to some final health wishes, I have found evidence that points away from Wilcken's hypothesis that this was a regiolectic feature: in fact, its use seems to be limited to the archives of Asklepiades and Athenodoros, and seems to be a shared language rather than a regiolect. In the closing formula, Sempronios' language is remarkable since he consistently prefers ἔρρωσο over ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, and adds the *dativus commodi* μοι in all instances.

This overview should not give the false impression that every kind of variation in the health wish formulas is contact-induced; in fact, the *communis opinio* agrees now that πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν is an internal Greek development, not a loan from

² Of course, this thesis was not intended as an investigation to reveal the linguistic background of archives. A close study of other linguistic aspects of the archives is needed to substantiate this hypothesis.

Latin as was previously argued. In my thesis, I have uncovered the different phrases that led to this new formula: in the comparative subclause added to the initial health wish from the 3rd century BC onwards, both the verb εὔχομαι and the infinitive construction were already in use. It thus seems likely that this comparative subclause evolved into the separate wish πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν. This also enabled me to answer a research question that was thought to be irretrievable: the initial health wish of the type πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὔχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν was first (appearing as early as the 2nd century BC), and from the (late) 1st century AD onwards the closing formula ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι was formed by analogy only, and not the other way around.

In the diachronic study (part I), I have referred to a number of cases where an individual (or a group) developed an idiosyncratic formulaic linguistic usage. In part II of this thesis, I have focused more closely on these case studies and have also approached other archives in the same way. Unlike older studies, I assume that letter writers can express themselves in their own idiosyncratic wordings. In my opinion, following the culturally defined rules about how a letter should be structured and how it should sound, does not imply that there is no room for originality or individuality. Whereas in past studies deviations from the standard phrasings were regarded as indications of the uneducated background of the writer, in this study individual writers are acknowledged as creative persons. This creativity can appear in two different ways: either, the sender develops a preference for a certain linguistic formula and uses it consistently —this type of individual language was studied in a number of past case studies— or the sender adapts the stereotyped formulas to specific circumstances to create an *ad hoc* idiosyncratic language —research into this kind of formulaic creativity is still relatively new. The language of the individuals of the archives of Saturnila and of Apollonios *strategos* has been studied in chapter 8. The linguistic performances of Sempronios (Saturnila archive) and Eudaimonis (Apollonios archive) can be called idiosyncratic and idiolectic, but they reveal themselves in two very different ways. The language of Sempronios is characterized to a great extent by uniformity (e.g. his closing formula and his use of ἀνόκτως in a request for a reply), whereas that of Eudaimonis, in a manner of speaking, never seems to use the same phraseology twice. In her letters, variation appears to be triggered by the circumstances: Aline’s impending delivery, the threat of the Jewish revolt or the anxiety about Apollonios’ illness may be reflected in (some of) her uncommon health wishes.

Yet, in both archives, some atypical linguistic elements and formulaic expressions are not confined to the language of one individual, but are used by a group of letter writers and are a shared language between the senders of an archive: in their deviation from standard formulas and their use of uncommon expressions, letter writers show unity as a group. For instance, many of the elements of the language of the Saturnila archive that I discussed *supra*, did not only appear in Sempronios’ language, but were also

shared by other relatives, perhaps under his linguistic influence as the most important person of the family. This is the case for the initial health wish ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, the uncommon *proskynema* formula (cf. *supra*) and the request for a reply (e.g.: “ἔρωτηθεῖς’ (= ἔρωτηθεῖσα), ἡ κυρία μου, ἀνόκνως μοι γράφειν περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν, ἵνα κἀγὼ (= καὶ ἐγὼ) ἀμεριμνότερα διάγω” in SB III 6263, ll. 1-17; TM 27792; ll. 8-10). All in all, the letters writers of the Saturnila archive seem to have appreciated uniformity in their correspondence.

Also the archive of Apollonios contains —besides variations in Eudaimonis’ phrasings— a level of linguistic unity as well, and preserve a number of uncommon expressions that appear in letters by different senders, e.g. the complex *proskynema* οὐ διαλείπω τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶν and the uncommon word ἀπρόσκοπος which is used by different letter writers in the archive of Apollonios.

Both collections also resemble each other in the fact that they share a number of uncommon elements with texts that do not belong to the archive: the fact that the Saturnila archive has linguistic overlaps with the archive of Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris seems to point to a similar ‘Latinized’ background (cf. *supra*). Several linguistic peculiarities found in the Apollonios archive are attested in the archive of Eutychides as well. Here too, the fact that the letters in the archives of Apollonios and Eutychides share a number of features (the uncommon ἀπρόσκοπος, the expression ἐπ’ ἀγαθῶ, the courtesy formula with the combination of προτρέπω and ἐπιτρέπω, the indirect references to gods in the *proskynema*, the closing formula with ὑγιαίνω and with προκόπτω in the infinitive clause, the closing formula with the addressee’s name in the vocative) is probably due to a similar sociohistorical and socioeconomic background, in this case the language of upper-class Hermopolis.

In other words, individual and personal variation may affect the language of others. Although we can mostly only hypothesize about the process of this language change, we can see the result in the papyrological data: different members of a close-knit group may share unique features in their epistolary language (shared language). This observation has revealed the potential for the study of archives, as I have illustrated with three case studies in chapter 9.

In past studies, it was suggested that the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives are connected. Scholars based their hypotheses on the fact that the documents come from a similar geographical and chronological context, and on recurring names and topics in the archives. Their theses, however, were hard to prove. Yet, in my opinion, it is the linguistic evidence presented in my study that has been the decisive factor in ascertaining that both archives are connected. The texts from the Athenodoros archive have not only been shown to share some uncommon linguistic elements (e.g. the relatively frequent use of the verb(s) (δι)εὐτυχέω and the set expression ἄριστ’ ἐπανάγω in the initial health wish), but there are also some formulaic overlaps with the

Asklepiades archive: the comparative subclause in the initial health wish and the relative subclause in the final health wish are not preserved anywhere else but in these two collections. In the archives, the place of the intensifier *διὰ παντός* in the opening lines is strikingly similar its deviation from the usual phraseology as well. Similarly, linguistic arguments can strengthen Azzarello's hypothesis that Nachtergaeel's original Thermouthas dossier of three letters should include three other letters as well. In several epistolary formulas, the letters have been shown to deviate in an identical way from the standard and clichéd patterns: *ἀμφοτέρως* in the opening formula is found twice in these texts, whereas it is rare outside the Eastern Desert; also the specific phraseology of Valeria's and Thermouthas' greetings shows a striking resemblance.

The linguistic investigation of the archives has also had another result as it has enabled me to add new documents to the known collections: the rare expression *θεὸς καὶ κύριος* suggests that three new documents should be included in the collection of Asklepiades and Athenodoros: presumably BGU IV 1197, 1200, and 1201 provide information about Asklepiades, more specifically about his professional activities, whereas the current collection mainly informs us about his private life (cf. the intimate letters of Isidora). Further, three more letters possibly belong to the Thermouthas dossier: P.Corn. 49, P.Mich. VIII 464 and P.Col. VIII 215. First of all, the geography and chronology match with those of P.Mich. VIII 464 and P.Col. VIII 215. With regard to P.Corn. 49 (previously vaguely dated to the first century AD), I suggest a refined date: this document was supposedly written at the end of the 1st century AD. Besides content, also several recurring names —such as Thermouthas, Diogenes, Apollinarios and Heras— sustain the hypothesis that the different letters deal with the same people. Here again, a close linguistic investigation of the letters' phraseology has —to my mind— proved to be a successful approach: several rather uncommon epistolary phrases suggest a link between the documents (the position of the final health wish in the body of the letter in P.Mich. VIII 464 and P.Col. VIII 215, and word group *δι' ἐπιστολῆς* and the verb *μελέω* in P.Corn. 49 and P.Mich. III 201). This thesis is the first to systematically make use of the linguistic data in letters to assemble scattered texts; whereas the hypotheses cannot go beyond the level of probability —we should always keep in mind that factors of preservation may to a certain extent have skewed our picture— I am convinced that this new approach has a great deal to offer to archival studies.

In chapters 8 and 9, I have analyzed the formulaic uniformity in the language of different individuals; in chapter 10, I have studied variation —and especially the motives that explain variation— in the individuals' linguistic performances. Those motives involve elements of conversational and politeness strategies. Like in the previous chapters, it departs from the assumption that letter writers had control over their epistolary language and that they could adapt their linguistic usage to the circumstances in order to create a socially acceptable letter. As I have remarked before,

the first thing in writing a polite letter is to include the most important formulaic phrases, such as the opening and the closing formulas. Secondly, the letter must be adapted to the social context: writing from ‘high to low’ should result in a different phraseology than writing from ‘low to high’ –not only in the opening formula, but also in body text, especially when it comes to ‘face-threatening’ subjects such as requests. In the case study of the letters of Apollonios *dioiketes*, I have come to the conclusion that it was the scribes who decided whether to simply formulate the order with the imperative, or to include a polite phrase such as *καλῶς ποιήσεις*. In other words, they probably made choices concerning politeness strategies in Apollonios’ name. Further, also the decision as to whether or not to include an initial health wish, and in what wordings such a *topos* should be formulated, is part of the sender’s conversational strategy. Hierokles, for instance, shows both characteristics of uniformity (e.g. the preference for the formulaic initial health wish with the verb *ἀπαλλάσσω*) and of variation, since he does only insert this phrase in six (certain, and two other possible) of his fourteen letters. Whereas this is admittedly tentative, I have tried to find patterns in his inclusion or omission of the initial health wish. The data seem to suggest that Hierokles generally uses a phrase with his favorite expression featuring *ἀπαλλάσσω*. Under certain circumstances (*in concreto*, the sending of multiple letters to one addressee in a short period of time) and in letters of recommendation, he inserts –here too, there are exceptions– a shorter phrase or no initial health wish at all. These possible explanations, speculative as they are, perhaps give us some more insight into the complicated linguistic choices letter writers in Antiquity –as well as today– make, often probably unconsciously. Finally, also the language choice of bilinguals can be studied as part of the sender’s conversational strategy. This is what I proposed as an alternative explanation for the code alternation in the letters of Terentianus: the fact that he writes to his ‘father’ Tiberianus in Greek as well as in Latin, made scholars put forward a number of hypotheses. The –not really satisfying– *communis opinio* is that language choice is defined by the content and the topic of the letter, i.e. ‘discourse-related switching’. In my opinion, also the different participants in the communication should be taken into account when trying to explain patterns of language choice, i.e. ‘participant-related switching’; this is not only the sender and addressee, but also the persons that are saluted by the sender since they are thought to be present and listening to the letter upon reception. In his Latin letters, Terentianus probably wanted to address Tiberianus’ social circle of influential military men, who could help his career. In his choice for Latin over Greek, Terentianus probably considered practical matters such as the linguistic abilities of the participants (linguistic accommodation):

not all people greeted in the letters may have been as fluently bilingual as Terentianus and Tiberianus; but equally (or even more) important was the symbolic value of Latin as the language of the Roman rulers. Throughout this study, Terentianus' language has been shown to be very uniform: he seems to have developed a personal style³, and was apparently well aware of the power of a politely phrased letter. Admittedly, it might be impossible to detect in every letter what motives might have driven Terentianus to choose one language over the other, but I am convinced that a view which takes into account the sociohistorical context of letter-writing, and of networking through salutations can offer a tempting alternative.

Throughout chapters 8, 9 and 10 —and to a minor extent, the chapters in part I— I have ascribed certain formulaic expressions to the language of one (or more) individual(s). Such hypotheses are not possible without studying the palaeographical background of the documents under discussion. The study of (possible) scribal influence is not only a necessity in each case study; the joint investigation of all those case studies is, to the best of my knowledge, the most extensive study of scribes in the private papyrus letters so far⁴; the importance of the research question about scribes thus goes beyond the conclusion of each individual case study. Overall, my investigation has shown that both the uniform formulaic style of (an) individual(s), as well as the *ad hoc* variants are retained, regardless of the hand they were written in. This suggests that the language of the sender is heard in the private letters and that scribal influence is rather small. Drawing general conclusions based on the evidently limited amount of papyrus material is never easy and we should be careful not to make hasty generalizations.

In the case study of Isidora, I therefore conducted a more detailed study about possible scribal influence: it had been remarked before that Isidora's two autographs deviate from the two letters penned by scribes in the fact that the former ones shorten the name of the addressee Asklepiades to Asklas, whereas the latter ones do not. I have observed a similar distinction between the two groups of letters, being the addition of a comparative subclause to the initial health wish (only in the autographs) as well as the uncommon place of the intensifier διὰ παντός (in the dictated letters only). At first sight, such a rigid division between the autographs and the letters written by scribes suggests scribal influence. Yet, the fact that other peculiar and uncommon words and

³ Admittedly, some of the uncommon features that Terentianus consistently used in his epistolary language might be loan translations from Latin (e.g. ἀντιγράφω instead of the common γράφω in the request for a reply after the Latin *rescribo*), rather than a deliberate choice to create linguistic unity.

⁴ Bagnall and Cribiore only make a general statement about possible scribal influence on the language of private letters (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 8); it seems to be beyond the goals of their work to investigate the language and the palaeography of every letter as a whole with regard to the research question on scribes.

phrasings are attested in both an autograph and a dictated letter (the rare verbs *διανδραγαθέω/ἀνδραγαθέω* and the adverb *κατασπουδαίως*), contradicts this. This is further suggested by the fact that the scribe responsible for Isidora's letters —i.e. the letters without comparative subclause— also penned BGU IV 1203, a letter addressed to Tryphon that did have such an extension. As a consequence, scribal influence seems to be excluded, and the variation in language and style should be attributed to Isidora; even though the motives behind Isidora's stylistic variation are beyond retrieval, the case study supports the general hypothesis about the limited scribal influence in private letters.

Only in one archive, scribes have been shown to have considerably contributed to the message: the letters of Apollonios *dioiketes* were not only written down, but also composed after Apollonios' instructions. However, even in the case of delegation, one can still hear the sender's voice in the body of the letter —the part where Apollonios gives instructions. The uncommon set expression *ὀρθῶς ἐποίησας* to give a compliment appears so often in Apollonios' letters that coincidence or the accidental use of the phrasing by different scribes, does not seem probable.

Yet, the material studied for this research question mainly consists of letters from literate senders; the possibility remains that the scribe penning down a letter for an illiterate person could have had more impact on the language. Further research on this topic might shed new light on this matter —for instance the new (and pending) editions of the ostraca from the Eastern Desert are an interesting corpus since it attests to the fact that literates take up the pen for their illiterate friends.

Finally, this study aims to reach a practical goal as well. In order to delineate my corpus of private letters, I have listed a number of (linguistic and non-linguistic) criteria to distinguish between private letters and other related text types, such as official letters and petitions. I hope that this might be a first step towards a more standardized classification and a more consistent terminology to refer to different text types. Further, for about 140 letters —which are listed in appendix III— I have proposed a new reading. In addition to that, a handful of letters have received a new or refined date. With regard to many other documents, I have called the current readings into question, but (due to the often fragmentary nature of the texts) I have been unable to suggest a better supplement myself.

Appendix I Description of the correspondents

Private letters give a unique chance to study the way people presented themselves (and each other):

“As we engage with one another, we are always positioning ourselves and positioning each other in a social landscape” (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003: 59)

“Πλεῖστον δὲ ἐχέτω τὸ ἠθικὸν ἢ ἐπιστολή, ὡσπερ καὶ ὁ διάλογος· σχεδὸν γὰρ εἰκόνα ἕκαστος τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ψυχῆς γράφει τὴν ἐπιστολήν. καὶ ἔστι μὲν καὶ ἐξ ἄλλου λόγου παντὸς ἰδεῖν τὸ ἦθος τοῦ γράψαντος, ἐξ οὐδενὸς δὲ οὕτως, ὡς ἐπιστολῆς.” (Demetr. *Eloc.* 227)¹

Especially the opening and the closing formulas, and the salutations offer opportunities to investigate the relationship between sender, addressee and their social circles². In the opening and closing formulas, mainly the sender(s) and the addressee(s) are involved. In the regards, on the other hand, also friends and relatives of the sender and the addressee come on the scene. In this chapter, I give an overview of how letter writers typify themselves, the addressee and their social circles by means of kinship terms, polite terms and other characterizations³. I describe the most common

¹ Translation (Ceccarelli 2013: 4): “The letter, like the dialogue, should be strong on characterization; for a person writes a letter almost drawing an image of his own soul. In every other form of composition, it is possible to discern the writer’s character, but in none so clearly as in the letter”.

² In other formulaic phrases of the private letter, characterizations occur only in a limited number of cases and are therefore not included in this study, e.g.: “πρὸ μὲν πάντων ἐῤ[ο]μαι τῷ θεῷ περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν καὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου Στεφάνου” (P.Oxy. XLII 3065; TM 30332; ll. 3-4), for the characterization of someone from the addressee’s social circle (Stephanos) as ἀδελφός.

³ These are not the only types of information letter writers give about themselves, the addressee and their social circles; sometimes, a reference to a person’s function and occupation is found. These references have not been included in this study.

characterizations⁴ diachronically and according to the context in which they occur, unlike previous studies in which characterizations of the sender, the addressee and their social circles were discussed without distinction.

1. Kinship terms

1.1. Kinship terms in the opening formula

1.1.1. Kinship terms for the addressee in the opening formula

With about 800 occurrences, dating from the 3rd century BC until the 6th-7th century AD, ἀδελφός/ἀδελφή is the most common kinship term to refer to the addressee in the opening formula⁵, e.g.:

“Κέλερ Πλουτίωνι τῷ ἀδελφῷ χαίρειν” (SB XIV 12032; TM 15515; ll. 1-2)

In the quote above, ἀδελφός is an apposition to the personal name of the addressee. In this case —as in most other cases— the kinship term was used “extendedly”, to adopt the phraseology of Dickey: ἀδελφός is a part of the sender’s politeness strategy. It does not reflect an actual blood relationship between the sender and the addressee, but the recipient is nevertheless addressed as if he were the sender’s own blood (Dickey 2004b: 136)⁶. Ἀδελφός in its extended use does not imply a close relationship between the sender and the addressee: it is also found in business communication between colleagues, for instance. Completely different are the (less numerous⁷) cases in which the sender uses kinship terms like ἀδελφός independently. Then, we should take the kinship term literally (Dickey 2004b: 142-143)⁸. An example of this is PSI IV 331 (TM 2025), a letter from Epharmostos to his (actual) brother Zenon:

“Ἐφάρμοστος τῷ ἀδελφῷ χαίρειν” (l. 1)

⁴ I do not list all occurrences of every single variant. Since the study of the characterizations is not the main goal of this thesis, it would lead me too far to discuss all variants.

⁵ The diminutive ἀδελφίδιον is attested in P.Laur. III 106 (TM 41442): “Ἀμμωνιανὸς Ἀρείῳ τῷ ἀδελφιδίῳ χαίρειν” (ll. 1-2).

⁶ The extended use of the kinship terms appears from the early periods onwards (Dickey 2004b: 155). But we do not have many attestations from the 3rd century BC: one clear example is the use of ἀδελφός in its extended use in the correspondence between the colleagues Milon and Andron (e.g. P.Eleph. 13; TM 5847). After that period, the number of occurrences grows rapidly until the Late Antique period.

⁷ The independent use of ἀδελφός/ἀδελφή is only attested about 25 times.

⁸ The interpretation of ἀδελφός is often difficult, since the terms ἀδελφός/ἀδελφή can also refer to spouses.

Also other family designations are often found in opening formulas from the 3rd century BC until the end of the papyrological millennium⁹: πατήρ is attested for the addressee in more than 200 opening formulas and μήτηρ in about 100 openings. About 130 times, the addressee is referred to as υἱός and approximately twenty times as θυγάτηρ. Σύμβιος occurs in fifteen letters. Paniskos consistently refers to his wife Ploutogenia as σύμβιος, sometimes including her first name, sometimes not:

“Πανίσκος Πλ[ο]υτογενητι (= Πλουτογενία) τῆ συμβίω χαίρειν” (P.Mich. III 217; TM 21347; ll. 1-2)

“Πανίσκος τῆ συμβιυ (= συμβίω) πολλὰ χαίρειν” (P.Mich. III 218; TM 21348; l. 1)

Γυνή occurs in three letters, and ἀνὴρ appears only in P.Laur. IV 191 (TM 35446; 5th century AD). The addressee is called τέκνον nine times and παιδίον twice. Γονεύς is preserved in three letters, and μάμμη is only attested in P.Oxy. LIX 4001 (TM 33122; 4th century AD). Θεία only occurs in P.Bour. 25 (TM 32904) and θεῖος in P.Oxy. LVI 3862 (TM 33603).

However, not every kinship term carries the same emotional charge:

“Whereas ἀδελφός is clearly used without any particular emotional tie, most of the other terms seem to imply a genuine closeness. This is particularly true of the feminines: extended μήτηρ, θυγάτηρ, and ἀδελφή are almost always found in intimate, affectionate contexts very different from the business letters in which ἀδελφός is so common.” (Dickey 2004b: 162)

In this respect, kinship terms can be revealing to define the text type of a certain document (cf. *infra*, appendix II).

In about thirty letters dated from the 2nd century AD onwards¹⁰, μου is added to the kinship terms¹¹, e.g.:

“Εἰρήνη τῆ ἀδελφῆ μου Ἀσφαλία πλῖστα (= πλεῖστα) χαίρειν” (P.Köln V 239; TM 33497; ll. 1-2)

⁹ Of course, variants with a low number of attestations are sometimes preserved during a more restricted period. In those cases, it is not clear whether the limited chronological distribution is due to factors of preservation or to an actual diachronic evolution.

¹⁰ This is consistent with the findings of Cuvigny (Cuvigny 2002: 151).

¹¹ In some letters the dative μοι seems to have the same function as the usual μου: ἀσπάζεται σε ἢ μήτηρ μ[ου] καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί μοι (= μου)” (SB XIV 11646; TM 41797; ll. 12-13). In other letters, the genitive is not corrected into a dative: “ἄσπασον traces τὴν ἀδελφὴν μοι καὶ” (P.Haun. II 18; TM 30121; ll. 25-26) and “ἔρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, τιμιώτατέ μοι (= μου; my remark) ἄδελφε” (P.Brem. 21; TM 19606; ll. 12-13). Similarly, in some letters, the dative σοι has not been corrected into σου: “πρὸ μὲν πάντων ἀσπάζομέ (= ἀσπάζομαι) σοι (= σε) παρὰ τοῖς πατρώοις θεοῖς κ[αὶ] τὰ ἀσπασκάντα (= ἀβάσκαντά) σοι (= σου; my remark) πεδία (= παιδία)” (SB XVIII 13593; TM 30995; ll. 3-5). So, this kind of confusion is not limited to a specific personal pronoun, to a specific formula or to kinship terms, but appears in different contexts where a personal pronoun in the genitive is added.

The first person perspective of μου seems to be at odds with the third person perspective of the opening formula ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν¹². Yet, the addition of μου is a more widespread phenomenon, and it may have been transferred from other contexts to the opening formula: it also occurs in combination with a number of polite terms and characterizations (cf. *infra*)¹³. Mou has been recognized as a borrowing of the Latin *mi* (Dickey 2001: 10)¹⁴. Ἡμῶν appears three times¹⁵, e.g.:

“τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ πατρὶ ἡμῶν ἀγαπητῷ Νεφερῷ Παῦλος” (P.Neph. 3; TM 33557; ll. 1-2)

1.1.2. Kinship terms for the sender in the opening formula

Whereas kinship terms are popular in connection to the addressee, in only about forty letters, especially from the 3rd century AD onwards, kinship terms are used to refer to the sender¹⁶, e.g.:

“τῷ ἀ[δ]ελφῷ μου Εὐδαίμωνι Ἀντι[ου]ρίου (= Ἀντιούριος) ἀδελφὸς χαίριν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Col. VII 190; TM; 4th century AD; ll. 1-2)

¹² Therefore, the supplement in SB III 6222 (TM 31054) is strange: “[τῆ αὐτ]οῦ [ἀ]δελφῆ Σοφρ[όν]η Δῖος χαίρειν” (l. 1). Yet, the third person seems to appear in P.Flor. II 180 (TM 11039), although this is not clear: Ἀπολλώνιος Ἡ[ρ]ωνεῖνῳ τῷ πατρὶ(?) ἀ(ὐτοῦ) χ[α]ίρειν.

¹³ In P.Iand. II 12 (TM 31280), μου is added to the addressee’s personal name: “χαίροις, Ἀφῦ μου, παρὰ Σωιρίδος (= Σοηρίδος)” (ll. 1-2). The extension ἐμός and ἡμέτερος are attested with the same function as μου in SB XXIV 16337 (TM 21089, l. 1, “Ἡρακλείδης Σαραπάτι τῷ ἐμῷ[ι] χ[α]ίρειν”) and in BGU IV 1079 (TM 9456; ll. 1-2, “Σαραπίων Ἡρακλείδη τῷ ἡμετέρῳ χα(ίρειν)”).

Like μου, there might be Latin influence in the use of ἐμός and variants (Cuvigny 2002: 149). Yet, the possessive pronouns such as ἐμός and ἡμέτερος, and the genitives μου and ἡμῶν might also be an internal Greek evolution, since they are already found in Plato (Cuvigny 2002: 149-150).

Ἐμός also appears in combination with a kinship term, viz. in SB XX 14727 (TM 38521): “τῷ ἐμῷ ἀδελφῷ (= ἀδελφῷ) Θεοδοσί(ω) παρ’ Ἀλεξάνδρου” (l. 2). Ἡμέτερος not found in combination with a kinship term.

¹⁴ In one opening formula, σου is added: “κυρίῳ μου ἀδελφῷ Εὐδαίμωνι καὶ τῇ ἀγαπητῇ ἀδελφῇ μου Ἀπία συμβίος (= συμβίω) σου Ταουὰκ’ ἐν Κ(υρί)ῳ χέρειν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Neph. 18; TM 33569; ll. 1-4). Since kinship terms usually reflect the relationship between the sender and the addressee, the second person pronoun seems odd. Here, however, the sender adopts the point of view of the first addressee, when referring to “your wife”. Cf. translation: “To my lord brother Eudaimon and my beloved sister Apia your wife” (Bagnall, Cribiore, and Ahtaridis 2006: 207). Ἡμῶν, σός and ὑμέτερος are not attested in combination with a kinship term.

¹⁵ The two other attestations are P.Lond. VI 1919 (TM 16857) and P.Neph. 6 (TM 33560). The use of first person possessives is regarded deferential (Cuvigny 2002: 146).

¹⁶ The kinship terms preserved for the sender are πατήρ, μήτηρ, μάμμη, υἱός, θυγάτηρ, ἀδελφός and ἀδελφή. Sometimes, ἀδελφός is not a kinship term apposed to the sender’s name, but it serves as identification: “Ζήνωνι χαίρειν Πάεις (= Πάις) ὁ τοῦ Πάτειτος (= Πάτιτος) ἀδελφός” (P.Lond. VII 2045; TM 1607; 3rd century BC; l. 1). These occurrences have not been taken into account.

In this case, it is not clear whether the sender and the addressee are blood relatives or whether ἀδελφός functions extendedly. In P.Oxy. LVI 3858 (TM 33599), on the other hand, the kinship terms should definitely not be taken literally:

“τῷ ἀγαπητῷ καὶ πατρὶ Διογένῃ (= Διογένει) Βαρύς ὁ ἀδελφὸς ἐν κ(υρ)ίῳ χαίρειν (= χαίρειν)” (ll. 1-3)

In other instances, kinship terms are used independently and are probably to be interpreted literally, e.g.:

“κυρίῳ μου υἱῷ Διονυσοθέωνι ὁ πατήρ χαίρειν” (P.Oxy. I 123; TM 31349; ll. 1-2)

In four opening formulas from the 4th century AD onwards, σου is added to the kinship term, e.g.:

“τῷ ὡς ἀληθῶς τιμι[ο]τάτῳ καὶ ἐναρέτῳ πατρὶ ὁ υἱός σου Μαρτύριος χαίρειν” (P.Oxy. XVI 1873; TM 35602; l. 1)¹⁷

In SB XIV 11437 (TM 32924; 4th-5th century AD), σός appears in the same meaning:

“τῇ κυρίᾳ μου θυγατρὶ Σουσάννᾳ Μαρτύριος ὁ σὸς πατήρ” (ll. 1-3)

Ἰμῶν occurs in two letters, e.g.:

“τοῖς θαυμασιωτάτοις (= θαυμασιωτάτοις) καὶ ἐναρέτοις μου υἱοῖς Μαρκελλίνῳ καὶ Ἀγατολίῳ) παρὰ Μακαρίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ Μαξιμίνου ἀδελφοῦ ἡμῶν χαίρειν” (P.Heid. IV 333; TM 35413; 5th century AD; ll. 2-3)¹⁸

1.2. Kinship terms in the salutations¹⁹

1.2.1. Kinship terms for the addressee in the salutations

The addressee is often saluted by the sender and/or by the sender’s social circle (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 3 and § 2). Mostly, the addressee is simply referred to by a personal pronoun (σε or ὑμᾶς, cf. *supra*, chapter 3)²⁰. In the salutations, kinship terms for the

¹⁷ The other instances are SB XVI 12572 (TM 34884), BGU III 948 (TM 33251) and P.Ross.Georg. III 10 (TM 32908). The reconstruction of [ὁ σο]ῦ υἱός in the opening formula of SB XXVI 16687 is unconvincing: “[† κ]υρίᾳ μου μητρὶ [ὁ σο]ῦ υἱὸς ἐν κ(υρ)ίῳ χέ(ρ)ειν (= χαίρειν)” (TM 77998; ll. 1-2). In all other occurrences, σου follows the substantive.

¹⁸ The other occurrence is P.Grenf. I 61 (TM 38215; 6th century AD). Ἰμέτερος is not attested here. The first person pronouns μου and ἡμῶν and the first person possessives are not found either.

¹⁹ Kinship terms in the description of the sender of the salutations are unattested as the sender simply speaks in first person, or formulates the greetings in the imperative (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 1).

²⁰ *Infra*, in § 3.2.1.2, I discuss the description of the addressee in Late Antique letters.

addressee are not common. Yet, in fifteen letters, dated between the 2nd and the 6th centuries AD, a kinship term in the vocative is used to address the recipient. Ἀδελφός is found in ten letters, mostly in greetings from the sender to the addressee, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζομέ (= ἀσπάζομαι) σε ἄδελφε” (P.Mert. I 28; TM 31542; l. 3)

In P.Oxy. LXXIII 4965 (TM 118655), the vocative appears in combination with the imperative in the following construction:

“αὐτός, κ[ύριέ] μου ἄδελφε, προσαγόρευε ἡμῖν τοὺς παρὰ σοὶ πάντας ἐκλεκτούς τε καὶ κατηχουμένους καθ’ ἕκαστον καὶ μάλιστα τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν Θε[ό]δωρον, εἰ ἐστὶν παρὰ σοί, καὶ τὸν σιον Θεογνώστον καὶ ἐπαφροδιτικῶς του[.]” (ll. 18-27)

In P.Oxy. XII 1593 (TM 33662), the vocative ἄδελφε appears in an excursion:

“ἀσπάζομαι τὸν πατέρα ἡμῶν, τουτέστιν σόν, ἄδελφε” (l. 16)²¹

Πάτερ is found three times, and μήτηρ and θυγάτηρ once, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζομαί σε, μήτηρ, διὰ τῶν γραμμάτων τούτων ἐπιθυμοῦσα ἤδη θεάσασθαι” (P.Oxy. VI 963; TM 28344; ll. 3-4)

1.2.2. Kinship terms for the addressee’s social circle in the salutations

In the salutations from the sender (and his social circle) to the addressee’s social circle (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 1 and § 4), the addressee’s relatives and friends are mostly referred to by their personal names, but kinship terms are added: they appear in about 400 letters from the 2nd century BC until the end of the papyrological millennium:

“ἀσπάζου τὸν πατέρα Σαπρίωνα” (P.Oxy. XLIV 3199; TM 26699; ll. 15-16)

“ἀσπάζου τὴν [μ]ειτέρα (= μητέρα) μου καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφούς” (P.Köln V 226; TM 3187; ll. 9-10)

As these instances show, the kinship terms are used both independently and extendedly.

The most widespread kinship terms are ἀδελφός/ἀδελφή (about 200 attestations)²², μήτηρ (about 100 attestations), πατήρ (about fifty attestations), θυγάτηρ (about thirty

²¹ In P.Herm. 6 (TM 21125), the variant ἀδελφός ψυχῆς appears. A vocative with a kinship term is supplemented in P.Vars. 25 (TM 27538) “ἀσπάζομ[αί σε ἄδελφε -ca.?-]” (l. 3). In my opinion, this supplement is not plausible as the reference to the addressee by means of a kinship term is not common and ἀδελφός is not attested in the rest of the letter.

²² Ἀδέλφιον occurs in P.Oxy. X 1300 (TM 35577).

attestations) and υἱός (about thirty attestations). Different terms are used to indicate children: παιδίον (about ninety occurrences), τέκνον (about seventy occurrences) and τεκνίον²³, παῖς²⁴ and ἔκγονος²⁵.

Other less common kinship terms to refer to the addressee's social circle are, for example, σύμβιος²⁶, γαμβρός and γαμβρά, ἀμμά, ἀνήρ, γυνή and σύνευνος. In the Roman period ἔλευθέρα has the meaning of 'married woman', 'wife' (LSJ, s.v. ἐλεύθερος), e.g. in P.Oxy. XVI 1872 (TM 35601).

Often, the extensions σου, μου, ἡμῶν and ὑμῶν are added to the kinship terms. The same is done —to a lesser extent— with the possessive pronouns ἐμός and σός²⁷, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζου τὴν [μ]ειτέρα (= μητέρα) μου καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφούς” (P.Köln V 226; TM 3187; ll. 9-10)

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων πολλὰ προσαγορεύω τὴν σὴν μητρικ[ὴν -ca.-] καὶ Θέκλαν τὴν ἐμὴν ἀδελφήν” (P.Lond. V 1789; TM 36950; ll. 1-2)

“ἐπισκοποῦμαι τὴν σὴν σύνβιον καὶ τοὺς φιλοῦντάς σε πάντας” (P.Giss. I 12; ll. 7-9)

Not only the first and the second person, but also the third person personal pronouns are attested, e.g.:

“ἀσπάζω τω (= τὸν) πατρι (= πατέρα) μου Ψύρος (= Ψῦρον) καὶ τὴν σύνβιον αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ παιδιά αὐτοῦ” (P.Oxy. LVI 3859; TM 33600; ll. 30-31)

“ἐπισκοποῦμεθα Ἀμμίαν καὶ τὸ τέκνον αὐτῆς” (P.Col. VIII 215; TM 17627; ll. 32-33)

“ἀσπάζου Στράτ[ο]ν καὶ Στρατονεινκη (= Στρατονίκην) καὶ τὰ πεδ[ί]α (= παιδιά) αὐτῶν” (P.Oxy. XII 1489; TM 31746; ll. 9-10)

1.2.3. Kinship terms for the sender's social circle in the salutations

Common greeting *topoi* are the regards from the sender's social circle to the addressee and, to a lesser extent, to the addressee's relatives and friends (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, § 2 and § 4), e.g.:

“ἀσπάζετέ (= ἀσπάζεται) σε ὁ γλυκύ[ατο]ς υἱὸς Δε[κ]ένβερ” (P.Oxy. LVI 3860; TM 33601; l. 4)

As this quote shows, also the relatives and friends of the sender can be referred to by kinship terms. The kinship terms appear in about 100 letters and are similar to those

²³ This diminutive is found in P.Iand. VI 116 (TM 45340), P.Flor. III 365 (TM 31148) and P.Oxy. XIV 1766 (TM 31808).

²⁴ This noun is found in SB XX 15091 (TM 38535) and P.Herm. 14 (TM 33472).

²⁵ This kinship term is only attested in SB XVIII 13303 (TM 25345).

²⁶ In P.Ross.Georg. III 1 (TM 17951), συμβίωσις seems to be used as a synonym to σύμβιος.

²⁷ Ὑμέτερος and ἡμέτερος are not preserved in this construction.

described above: πατήρ, μήτηρ, ἀδελφός and ἀδελφή, υἱός, θυγάτηρ are commonly attested. Children are referred to as παιδίον, τέκνον, τεκνίον (only in P.Oxy. XLIX 3507; TM 15656), παῖς (only in SB XVIII 13762; TM 36300) and θρεπτάριον (only in P.Paris 18 *quater* (S. 422); TM 26155). Other kinship terms such as σύμβιος, ἀμμά, ἀνήρ, γυνή, πενθερά (once in SB XIV 12178; TM 30922) and πάπας (only in P.Giss. I 80; TM 19469) are less widespread. Here too, extensions such as μου and σου, ἡμῶν and ὑμῶν, αὐτοῦ, αὐτῆς and αὐτῶν can be added to the kinship terms²⁸, e.g.:

“ἄσπάζεται σε Σιτέλκας καὶ τὰ παιδιά α[ὐ]τοῦ κατ’ [ὄ]νομα” (P.Mich. VIII 500; TM 27110; ll. 21-22)

1.3. Kinship terms in the closing formula

Only for the addressee, kinship terms are found in the closing formula. A reference to ἀδελφός/ἀδελφή is found in about sixty letters from the 1st until the 6th centuries AD. In the same period, πατήρ is attested about 25 times; its occurrence in BGU II 665 (TM 25650) is remarkable because of the addition of ῶ:

“ἐρρωσθ[αί σε] εὔχ(ομαι), ῶ πάτερ” (ll. 7-8)²⁹

Another occurrence of πατήρ is probably found in SB X 10277 (TM 16754):

“[ἐρρωσό μοι] κύριε πα[-ca.?-]” (ll. 23-24)

The editor suggest to read the beginning of a date in the characters πα (e.g. Παχῶν or Παῦνι). However, dated are not often found in private letters (cf. *infra*, appendix II). Hence, I suggest another possibility: not only the combination of κύριος with πάτερ in other closing formulas (e.g. P.Warr. 13; TM 27219 and SB III 6262; TM 31055), but also the opening formula Ἡρᾶς Ἐπαφροδίτῳ τῷ κυρίῳ πατρὶ χαίρειν (ll. 1-3), which reveals the relationship between the correspondents, makes πάτερ a plausible emendation, as far as I am concerned.

Μήτηρ occurs in eleven letters³⁰. Τέκνον is found in seven letters, and υἱός has six attestations; θυγάτηρ is only preserved twice (in P.Oxy. LIX 3998; TM 33119 and SB XIV 11437; TM 32924).

²⁸ The possessive pronouns are not attested in combination with the kinship term in this formula.

²⁹ In two letters, the erroneous πατήρ for the vocative πάτερ has not been reconstructed by the editor: “ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι πάτηρ” (P.Flor. II 180; TM 11039; l. 11) and “ἐρρωσθαί σ’ εὔχομαι, πάτηρ, πολλοῖς ἔτεσιν” (P.Gen. I (2e éd.) 75; TM 32145; ll. 16-18). Given the fact that the replacement of the vocative with the nominative, is a more widespread phenomenon (cf. Maysers 1970b: 11), I did not include this in the appendix III.

There is no certain attestation of μου added to one of the kinship terms referring to the addressee³¹. This observation renders the following conjectures doubtful:

“ἔρρωσθα[ί σε εὔχο]μα[ι, πά]τερ μ[ου -ca.?-]” (P.Mert. I 22; TM 28778; ll. 18-19)
“ἔρρωσθα[ί (= ἔρρωσθαί) σε εὔχομαι] ἀδελ[φέ μου]” (CPR VI 80; TM 26648; ll. 23-24)

Both letters are dated to the 2nd century AD, when the addition of μου to kinship terms, but also to polite terms (cf. *infra*), was not very common yet.

2. Polite terms³²

Whereas kinship terms are attested for the sender (although not often), for the addressee and for their relatives in the opening and closing formulas and the salutations, polite terms do not appear in combination with the sender: not in the opening and closing formulas³³ nor in the salutations.

2.1. Polite terms for the addressee in the opening formula

A common polite extension is κύριος, which can perhaps be compared to “Mr.”/“Mrs.”³⁴. Κύριος appears as a characterization of the addressee in the opening formula of more than 400 private letters dated from the 2nd century BC until the 8th century AD. This polite term is a Latinism (White 1986: 2 and 200; Dickey 2001: 11). Sometimes, κύριος is the only extension in the opening formula; in other cases it appears in combination with a kinship term (or with other characterizations), e.g.:

“Ἐπαφρόδειτος Ἀπολλωνίω τῶι κυρίωι χαίρειν” (P.Giss. I 13; TM 19415; ll. 1-2)
“τῷ κυρίῳ μου συνβίῳ (= συμβίῳ; my remark) Τίρωνι Ταῆσις πλιῖστα (= πλεῖστα) χαίρειν” (P.Oxy. LVI 3860; TM 33601; l. 1)

³⁰ In P.Rein. II 116 (TM 32061), the nominative appears instead of the vocative “ἔρρωσό μοι [κυρία μ]ήτηρ” (ll. 9-10). Μήτηρ is rightly remarked to be an itacist form of μήτηρ, but the correct form is μήτηρ. In P.Berl.Zill. 12 (TM 30581) and P.Oslo III 161 (TM 31642), the nominative has not been corrected into a vocative, respectively: “ἔρρωσθέ (= ἔρρωσθαί) σε εὔχομε (= εὔχομαι, κυρία μου μήτηρ (= μήτηρ; my remark)” (ll. 20-22) and “ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις, κυρία μου μήτηρ” (ll. 10-12). Given the fact that the replacement of the vocative with the nominative, is a more widespread phenomenon (cf. Mayser 1970b: 11), I did not include this in the appendix III.

³¹ Other genitives of the personal pronoun such as σου, or possessive pronouns such as ἐμός are unattested.

³² Cf. Dickey 2001: for general studies of the origin, the meaning and the semantic change of the polite terms.

³³ The only exception is perhaps the damaged opening formula of P.Col. XI 300 (TM 34019): “κύρι . μου ἀδελφ [-ca.?-] κυρι . ου υἱός . λ . . νος χ[αίρειν.]” (ll. 1-2).

³⁴ The weakening of words with the meaning “master”, “lord” seems to be a universal phenomenon. It is also attested in French (*monsieur*), German (*Herr*) and Dutch (*mijnheer*) (cf. Dickey 2001: 1).

“Σεμπρώνι[ος] Σατορνίλα τῆ μητρὶ καὶ κυρίᾳ [πλειῖς]τα χαίρειν” (P.Mich. XV 751; TM 28820; ll. 1-2)

Whereas in P.Oxy. LVI 3860 is used as an adjective subordinate to the kinship term σύμβιος, in P.Mich. XV 751 κύριος is a noun, linked to μήτηρ with the coordinating conjunction καί. The first, asyndetic construction is by far the most frequently used one when κύριος is combined with another characterization.

As in P.Oxy. LVI 3860 quoted above, μου is often added to κύριος. The earliest attestation of κύριός μου is dated to the 1st century BC³⁵, but it becomes particularly popular from the 3rd century AD onwards. From that period onwards, κύριός μου has more attestations than the simple κύριος. In addition to κύριός μου, also κύριος ἡμῶν appear, although less often³⁶: this combination is attested three times in letters from the 4th and 5th centuries AD, e.g.:

“τῶι κυρίῳ ἡμῶν καὶ δεσπότῃ πατρ[ὶ] Θεοφάνει Ἡφαιστ[ίῳ] τε καὶ Ὠρ[ιγέ]νης σφ[ό]δρα [χαίρει]ν” (P.Ryl. IV 624; TM 32762; ll. 1-2)³⁷

Another variant is κύριός (μου) τῆς ψυχῆς (μου), found twice in letters from the 4th century AD, e.g.:

“τῷ δεσπότῃ μου καὶ ἀδελφῷ καὶ κυρίῳ τῆς ψυχῆς μου Κοπρέα Ἐρμαπόλλων” (P.Lond. III 1244 (S. 244); TM 33790; ll. 1-2)³⁸

P.Grenf. I 61 (TM 38215) preserves the otherwise unattested variant κύριός μου τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν³⁹.

With the passage of time, other polite characterizations started to appear: the use of δεσπότης as a polite term occurs from the 4th (or perhaps the 3rd) century AD onwards (Dickey 2001: 1-11). It is attested more than 60 times for the addressee in the opening formula. Also the feminine equivalent δέσποινα occurs twice in letters from the 4th and 5th centuries AD:

“τῆ δεσποίνῃ μου vac.? μητρὶ καὶ κυρίῳ ἀδελφῷ Σαρμάτῃ vac.? Διόσκορος χαίρειν” (P.Oxy. LV 3820; TM 22531; 4th century AD ll. 1-2)⁴⁰

³⁵ Given the low number of occurrences dated before the 3rd century AD, the following vocative found in the body of the 1st century AD letter P.Horak 67 (TM 78412), is not convincing: “κύ[ριέ] μου (?) πάτηρ (= πάτερ)” (ll. 3-4).

³⁶ Other genitives of the personal pronoun such as σου, or possessive pronouns such as ἐμός are unattested.

³⁷ The two other attestations are P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 209 (TM 35249) and P.Iand. VI 119 (TM 17339).

³⁸ The other occurrence is P.Neph. 9 (TM 33562).

³⁹ Other genitives of the personal pronoun such as σου, or possessive pronouns such as ἐμός are unattested.

⁴⁰ The other occurrence is PSI IV 301 (TM 35218; 5th century AD).

Like the later attestations of κύριος, δεσπότης is usually accompanied by μου⁴¹:

“τῷ δεσπότῃ μου vac.? Πausανία Γενᾶ χαίρειν” (P.Kellis I 5; TM 33297; ll. 1-3)

Also the variant κύριός (μου) τῆς ψυχῆς (μου) has a counterpart in δεσπότης μου τῆς ψυχῆς (μου), which occurs five times from the 4th until the 6th centuries AD⁴².

Πάτρων appears in twelve opening formulas from the 3rd-4th until the 6th centuries AD. It is always found in combination with κύριος or δεσπότης, e.g.:

“τῷ κυρίῳ μου καὶ πάτρωνι Ἀβεννέῳ πραιπ(οσίτῳ) Σαραπίων πλεῖστα χαίρειν”
(P.Abinn. 25; TM 10023; ll. 1-2)⁴³

“τῷ δεσπότῃ μου καὶ πάτρωνι πραιποσίτῳ κάστρων Διονυσιάδος Θαραεώτης ἐν
θ(ε)ῶ χαίρειν” (P.Abinn. 31; TM 10028; ll. 1-3)

2.2. Polite terms in the salutations⁴⁴

2.2.1. Polite terms for the addressee in the salutations

Like the kinship terms, polite terms are not often found in combination with the addressee in the salutations either. Κύριος (μου⁴⁵) is used as a vocative in only eight letters dated between the 3rd and the 6th centuries AD, e.g.:

“πολλά σε ἀσπάζομαι, κυρία, εὐχομένη σοι τὰ κάλλιστα” (P.Oxy. XIV 1679; ll. 3-4)

In one of those occurrences, κύριος is combined with another polite term, δεσπότης:

“πολλά δὲ προ[σ]αγ[ορ]εύου (= προσαγορεύω) τὴν σὺν (= σὴν) θεωσέβιαν (= θεοσέβειαν), κυρι<ε> δέσποτα” (P.Oxy. XVI 1871; l. 7)

Apart from P.Oxy. XVI 1871, δεσπότης appears in eight other letters dated between the 1st-2nd and the 7th centuries AD⁴⁶, e.g.:

⁴¹ Only four letters have the simple δεσπότης. Also one of the two attestations of δέσποινα, PSI IV 301 (TM 35218), is extended with μου. Other genitives of the personal pronoun such as σου, or possessive pronouns such as ἐμός are unattested.

⁴² Out of the seven occurrences of δεσπότης/κύριός μου τῆς ψυχῆς (μου), six date to the 4th (or 4th-5th) century AD. Whereas scholars previously doubted the occurrence of this word string in the 4th century AD and suggested a later date (Tibiletti 1979: 34), my new data support Bruggisser's hypothesis that this phrase can have occurred in the 4th century AD (Bruggisser 1989: 236).

⁴³ Πάτρων itself is never extended with μου, but the exact opposite is true for the other polite terms (κύριος or δεσπότης) with which πάτρων is combined.

⁴⁴ The kinship term πάτρων is not preserved in the salutations.

⁴⁵ Most letters from the 3rd century AD onwards, have κύριός μου instead of κύριος which is consistent with my finding above. Other genitives of the personal pronoun such as σου, or possessive pronouns such as ἐμός are unattested.

“πρὸ τῶν ὄλων ἀσπάζομαί σε, δέσποτα” (P.Giss. I 17; TM 19419; l. 3)

In other words, δεσπότης is found earlier in the salutations for the addressee than in the opening formula (cf. *supra*, § 2.1).

2.2.2. Polite terms for the addressee’s relatives in the salutations

In the references to the addressee’s social circle, κύριος is quite common with more than eighty attestations from the 1st century BC until the 8th century AD, e.g.:

“πολλὰ προσαγορεύω τὸν κύρ(ιόν) μου Ἀντωνίνον καὶ τὴν τούτου μητέρα καὶ πάντας ὑμᾶς” (SB XIV 11437; TM 32924; ll. 19-22)

Similar to the evolution of this polite term in the opening formula, the variant κύριός μου outnumbers the simple κύριος from the 3rd century AD onwards. Κύριος ἡμῶν is found in P.Mert. I 22 (TM 28778) and in P.Oxy.Hels. 46 (TM 24976) and κύριός σου occurs in P.Mil. II 81 (TM 33514) and κύριος ὑμῶν in P.Oslo II 64 (TM 35471)⁴⁷.

Also δεσπότης is attested for the addressee’s social circle in about ten salutations. It follows the evolutions described above for the opening formula, viz. it only appeared from the 4th century AD onwards and is mostly extended with μου. Another variant is ἐμὸς δεσπότης⁴⁸, e.g.:

“καὶ ἀσπάζομαι ἐκθύμωσ τὴν ὑ<μ>ετέραν πατρικὴν διάθεσιν μετὰ τῶ[ν] σὺν αὐτῇ πατέρων τε καὶ ἀδελφῶν, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τὸν ἐλλογιμώτ(ατον) σχολαστικὸ[ν ὑ]μῶν υἱὸν Διόσκορον ἐμὸν τε δεσπότην” (P.Cair.Masp. I 67064; TM 19015; ll. 12-14)

Δέσποινα and its variants δέσποινά μου and δέσποινά σου⁴⁹ occur four times⁵⁰.

2.2.3. Polite terms for the sender’s relatives in the salutations

The only polite term preserved for the sender’s relatives is κύριος: in only nine attestations dated between the 1st and the 6th centuries AD⁵¹, κύριος, and its variants κύριός μου⁵² and κύριος ἡμῶν, are found⁵³, e.g.:

⁴⁶ None of the attestations are extended with μου or other genitive personal pronouns or possessive pronouns. However, ἐμὸς δεσπότης is perhaps attested in P.Iand. II 22 (TM 20183): “πρὸ μὲν πάντων γράφω προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζο[μαί σε τὸν ἐμὸν] δεσπότην” (l. 1), where the accusative seems to be used in the same way as of the vocative.

⁴⁷ The genitives of the third person personal pronouns and the possessive pronouns are not attested.

⁴⁸ Other genitives of the personal pronoun, or possessive pronouns are unattested.

⁴⁹ I.e. in P.Apoll. 62 (TM 39121).

⁵⁰ Other genitives of the personal pronoun, or possessive pronouns are unattested. The kinship term πάτρων is not found.

“προσαγορεύει ὑμᾶς ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ἀδελφὸς Φίλιππος” (CPR V 23; TM 34843; ll. 14-15)

“ἀσπάζετέ (= ἀσπάζεται) σοι (= σε) ἡ κυρία ἡμῶν καὶ Μάξιμος καὶ ἡ σύμβιος αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ Γέμελλος καὶ Ἰούλιος καὶ ἡ σύμβιος αὐτοῦ καὶ Ἑλένη καὶ τὰ πεδία (= παιδιά) πάντα κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Mich. III 209; TM 28798; ll. 18-22)

The last instance shows the difficulty of interpreting the identity of the person sending the regards when κύριος is used independently. Yet, since this letter is preserved in the archive of Saturnila, it is most likely that she was the one referred to by ἡ κυρία ἡμῶν.

2.3. Polite terms in the closing formula

Κύριος is found as a vocative in the closing formula of almost 200 letters, dating between the 1st and the 6th centuries AD, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσό μοι, κύριε, πολλοῖς χρόνοις εὖ [πρά]ττοντα (= πράττων) διὰ βίου” (P.Oxy. XX 2275; TM 32726; ll. 20-22)

Given the popularity of this vocative, the form κύριε may also be supplemented in SB VI 9017 Nr. 11 (TM 25239):

“ἔρρωσο κυρι. . .” (l. 9)

In SB III 6263 (TM 27792), the article ἡ is added to κυρία:

“ἔρρωσό μοι ἡ κυρία μου διὰ παντός” (l. 17)

This phrase illustrates the phenomenon that the nominative often appears where one would expect a vocative (cf. *supra*). In P.Mich. III 209 (TM 28798), a letter from Saturnilos to his elder brother Sempronios preserved in the Saturnila archive, the adjective κύριος appears in the superlative form:

“ἔρρωσθαί σοι (= σε) εὐχομαι, ἀδελφε κυριώταται (= κυριώτατε)” (l. 26)

This wording seems to reflect the fact that Sempronios was, as the oldest son, the most important member of the family.

In about ninety of the attestations of κύριος, μου is added, e.g.:

⁵¹ Further, in PSI XIV 1429 κύρα is interpreted as κυρία; perhaps also in SB VIII 9746 (TM 33802) κύρα should be read in the same way (cf. *supra*, chapter 3, footnote 47). This would bring the total number of occurrences to ten.

⁵² Perhaps also in SB XIV 11532 (TM 32935; 4th century AD), μου can be supplemented: “κ(ύριο)ς μ[- ca.16 -] ὁ καλὸς Φοιβάμμων καὶ πᾶσα ἡ οἰκία προσαγορεύουσιν ὑμᾶς.” (ll. 9-11).

⁵³ Other genitives of the personal pronoun, or possessive pronouns are unattested.

“ἔρρωμένην σε ὁ κ(ύριος) διαφυλάττοι μακροῖς καὶ εἰρηνικοῖς χρόνοις, κυρία μου”
(P.Bour. 25; TM 32904; ll. 16-18)

As observed above, the addition of μου mainly seems to be a later development, which has only a limited number of occurrences before the 3rd century AD. From that period onwards, κύριός μου becomes more or less equally popular as κύριος: it does not clearly outnumber κύριος as in the opening formula or the salutations (cf. *supra*, § 2.1 and § 2.2), which could of course be due to coincidence and to the relatively low number of occurrences. This is not to say that all later texts preferred the variant with μου. In fact, in the 4th century AD letter P.Kellis I 6 (TM 33298), the writer deletes μου for some reason:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, κύριέ [μου] ἄδελφε, πολλοῖς χρόνοις” (ll. 46-49)

In P.Wisc. II 74 (TM 32546), the variant κύριος ἡμῶν appears⁵⁴:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις, κύριε ἡμῶν ἀδελφαί (= ἀδελφέ)” (ll. 17-19)

The polite term δεσπότης is preserved in fourteen closing formulas and is almost completely supplemented in one other letter, e.g.:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, δέσποτά μου, πολλοῖς εὐτυχοῦντα χρόνοις” (P.Kellis I 5; TM 33297; ll. 24-27)

Μου completes this polite term of address in only four letters. The fact that this does not correspond to the observations of δεσπότης in the opening formula and the salutations, is perhaps due to coincidence and to the low number of occurrences in the closing formula. In P.Sijp. 60 b (TM 110227; 4th century AD), the variant δεσπότης τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς seems to appear⁵⁵:

“[-ca.?- (hand 2) ἔρρωμ]ένον σε καὶ [-ca.?- ὑγιαίνο]ντα ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ θ(ε)ῶ [-ca.?- εὔ]χομαι, δέσποτα [vac.? τῆς ἐ]μῆς ψυ vac.? χῆς” (ll. 10-13)

All occurrences of δεσπότης (and variants) in my corpus are dated from the 4th century AD onwards, but δεσπότης also seems to be attested in an unedited ostrakon letter from the 2nd century AD (Fournet 2003: 487).

Πάτρων occurs eight times from the 1st-2nd until the 6th centuries AD and is often combined with other polite terms, e.g.:

⁵⁴ Other genitives of the personal pronoun, or possessive pronouns are unattested.

⁵⁵ Δέσποινα is not preserved in this formula. Other genitives of the personal pronoun, or possessive pronouns are unattested.

“ἔρρωμένον σαι (= σε) καὶ εὐτύχοντα ἢ θία (= θεία) πρόνοια διαφυλάξιεν (= διαφυλάξειεν) ἐν μεγίστοις χρόνοις, δέσποτα πάτρων (= πατρῶν)” (SB XX 14506; TM 38467; ll. 6-10)

In its earliest occurrence, CPR V 19 (TM 24981), an article appears:

“τὰ δὲ ὅλα ἔρρωσό μοι, ὁ πά[τ]ρων μου καὶ τροφεύς” (ll. 17-19)

This is also the only occurrence of πατρῶν μου.

3. Other characterizations

3.1. Characterizations in Ptolemaic and Roman times⁵⁶

3.1.1. The addressee in the opening formula

Three characterizations frequently occur in the opening formulas from the 1st century BC onwards: φίλτατος has almost 300 occurrences from the 1st century BC until the 4th century AD; τιμιώτατος occurs approximately 170 times in letters from the 1st until the 6th-7th centuries AD and γλυκύτατος is preserved only about thirty times between the 1st-2nd and the 6th centuries AD. They seem to be typically ‘Roman’ characterizations: although the latest occurrences of τιμιώτατος and γλυκύτατος date to the end of the papyrological millennium, the use of all three characterizations start to decline from the 3rd century AD onwards.

The adjectives can be dependent on a substantive such as a kinship term, but can also be linked to the addressee’s name, e.g.:

“Χαιρήμων Διογένη τῷ τειμιωτάτῳ χαίρειν” (P.Mert. II 79; TM 28781; ll. 1-2)

“Σουχίων Ἀπολλωνίῳ τῷ ἀδε(λφῳ) φιλτάτῳ [πλεῖσ]τῶ χ[α]ίρει[ν]”
(P.Berl.Möller 9; TM 17458; ll. 1-2)

Τιμιώτατος is mainly used in polite contexts and is often a sign of respect for an addressee in a superior position (Koskenniemi 1956: 100-103)⁵⁷. Also φίλτατος does not express a close relationship between sender and addressee: it is for instance also used in letters from ‘low to high’ (Koskenniemi 1956: 98-99). This epithet is commonly found in

⁵⁶ This division between the Ptolemaic/Roman periods and the Late Antique period is, of course, somewhat artificial, since the characterizations used in Ptolemaic and Roman times do not suddenly stop being used in the 4th century AD, and *vice versa*, some of the tendencies described in § 3.2 have early occurrences in the 3rd century AD. Nevertheless, the 4th century AD seems to be a turning point; and that is the main thing I want to emphasize in this admittedly generalizing section.

⁵⁷ P.Lond. VI 1917 (TM 16855), the characterization τιμιώτατος παρὰ κυρίῳ θεῶ appears.

the opening formulas of the letters preserved in the Heroninos archive, especially in letters between equals such as the correspondence between Heroninos and his colleagues. The adjective is almost always linked to men: in a single letter, a woman is addressed as φιλτάτη:

“Ἰσιδώρα Ἄνιτι <τῆ> φιλτάτ[η] πλεῖστα χαίρειν” (SB XX 15069; TM 32206; ll. 1-2)

Γλυκύτατος belongs to a more intimate, family-bound register (Koskenniemi 1956: 103)⁵⁸: not surprisingly, it is often added to a kinship term. Τιμιώτατος and γλυκύτατος are extended with μου in a handful of cases —other personal pronouns in the genitive or possessive pronouns are not attested— but there are no such attestations of φίλτατος, perhaps due to factors of preservation. In my opinion, the fact that μου is far less common with these characterizations than with polite terms can be ascribed to a number of reasons. The main cause is that the use of φίλτατος, τίμιωτατος and γλυκύτατος starts to decline after the 3rd century AD, which is exactly the period in which the addition of μου becomes popular. Secondly, φίλτατος, τίμιωτατος and γλυκύτατος are in a number of cases combined with κύριός μου and then the writer usually does not add μου to both characterizations; since κύριος was likely to be the first part of the addressee’s description, μου was added here, e.g.:

“τῷ κυρίῳ μου τιμιωτάτῳ πατρὶ Παύλῳ τὸ κοινὸν τῶν ἀπὸ κόμης Νήσων”
(P.Neph. 19; TM 33570; ll. 1-3)

Ἰδιος appears eighteen times from the 1st until the 4th centuries AD⁵⁹, and it is reconstructed in two more opening formulas, viz. in P.Oxy. XII 1584 (TM 29009) and in P.Fay. 120 (TM 10785). The latter is a letter preserved in the archive of Epagathos, the estate manager of Lucius Bellienus Gemellus. In fact, no less than six of the eighteen attestations of ἴδιος come from that archive. Both Bellienus and his son Sabinus used it for their estate managers. The adjective sounds friendly and familiar, but at the same time it stresses the relationship of master and slave (Cuvigny 2002: 152). It is tempting to label the use of ἴδιος in this archive as shared language, but until the other preserved papyrus letters in this archive have been published, we should not draw any conclusions. Anyway, the numerous occurrences of ἴδιος in the archive support the supplement in the opening formula of P.Fay. 120 (Clarysse forthc.).

⁵⁸ Given the fact that the adjectives τιμιώτατος and γλυκύτατος are found together (cf. “Φλαούιος Ἡρκουλανὸς Ἀπλωναρίῳ τῆ γλυκυτάτῃ καὶ τειμιωτάτῃ πλεῖστα χαίρειν” P.Oxy. XIV 1676; TM 21966; ll. 1-3), we should not exaggerate the difference in register between the two words.

⁵⁹ Influence from the Roman *suus* is probable (Cuvigny 2002: 144).

Ἄμφοτερος is attested sixteen times in the description of the addressee⁶⁰, all but one (P.Mich. III 201; TM 21340) in letters from the Eastern Desert. At least seven of them are letters from Dioskoros, e.g.:

“Διόσκορος Δρακων (= Δράκωνι) καὶ Ερεμεσις καὶ Ἀμμωνιανος (= Ἀμμωνιανῶ) κουράτ(ορι) ἀμφοτέροις τοῖς φιλτάτοις πολλὰ χαίρ(ειν)” (O.Claud. II 228; TM 29651; ll. 1-4)

Dioskoros seems to have an idiolectic preference for this characterization (Leiwo 2003: 98). In Dioskoros' letters, ἀμφοτερος is used for more than two persons: it does not mean 'both', but is semantically extended to mean 'all (together)' (Leiwo 2003: 81). The fact that ἀμφοτεροι is incorrectly used to designate more than two people, is —according to the scholar— due to the fact that the sender did not know the exact meaning of the word (Leiwo 2003: 93).

Other adjectives seem to have been *ad hoc* innovations, rather than widespread extensions. I discuss the most remarkable ones. Ἀγαθώτατος is perhaps linked to one specific archive: it is only attested in two letters from the archive of the lawsuit of Isidoros vs. Tryphon⁶¹:

“Λυκαρίων Τρύφωνι τῶι ἀγαθωτάτῳ πλεῖστα χαίρει[ν] καὶ ὑγιαίνειν” (SB XXIV 15909; TM 41420; ll. 1-2)

“[-ca.?- Τρύφων]ι τῶι ἀγαθωτάτῳ γυμνασιάρχῳ [-ca.?- πλεῖστα χαίρει]ν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν” (SB XXIV 15910; TM 41421; ll. 1-2)

Similarly, φιλοστοργότατος only appears in a letter from Eudaimonis to her son Apollonios, preserved in the archive of Apollonios *strategos*:

“Εὐδαιμονίς Ἀπολλωνίῳ τῶι φιλοστοργοτάτῳ υἱῶι χ(αίρειν)” (P.Alex.Giss. 59; TM 27581; ll. 1-2)

In contrast to the popular φίλτατος, φίλος is only found as a description for the addressee⁶² in six opening phrases dating from the 2nd century BC until the 3rd century AD, including in two letters from a certain Eumelos to a certain Ammonios:

“Εὐμηλος Ἀμμωνίῳ τ[ῶ] τιμιωτάτῳ φίλῳ πολλὰ χαίρειν” (P.Princ. II 70; TM 27168; ll. 1-2)

⁶⁰ In three other cases, ἀμφοτερος is found in the description of the sender. These occurrences will be discussed *infra* (cf. § 3.1.5).

⁶¹ For more information about this archive, see www.trismegistos.org/archive/113 (accessed on May 21, 2015). Given the low number of occurrences and the fact that the names of the correspondents are lost in SB XXIV 15910, conclusions about the (shared or idiolectic) language of (an) individual(s) cannot be drawn.

⁶² It is also found as a reference to the sender (cf. *infra*, § 3.1.5).

“Εὐμηλος Ἀμμωνίῳ τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ φίλῳ πολλὰ χαίρειν” (SB XXIV 16267; TM 79415; ll. 1-2)

Since both letters are written in the same hand (Sijpesteijn 1996: 164), it is tempting to argue on the basis of those two identical phrases that Eumelos had a preference for this specific opening formula with φίλος. But as these are the only preserved letters of this sender, a firm conclusion about Eumelos’ linguistic usage is impossible. In P.Diosk. 15 (TM 44730), φίλος is not the only uncommon extension:

“Σῶσος Διοσ[κουρ]ίδῃ τῷ ἀδελφῷ τῷ φίλῳ πατρὶ τῇ ἐλπίδι τῇ ἐμῇ χαίρειν (= χαίρειν)” (ll. 1-3)

Ἐλπίς ἐμῇ is not found elsewhere in the papyrus letters. A personal and loving tone is also found in the opening formula of P.Oxy. XLII 3059 (TM 26811). The sender calls the addressee her ‘sun’:

“Διδύμη Ἀπολλωνίῳ τῷ ἀδελφῷ καὶ ἡλίῳ χαίρειν” (ll. 1-2)

PSI XIV 1445 (TM 30476) is the only letter which preserves the characterization ἑταῖρος:

“Αὐρήλιος Ἐπίμαχος Δημητρίῳ τῷ ἑταίρῳ εὖ πράτ’τειν” (ll. 1-2)

In P.Oxy. X 1298 (TM 21805), the addressee is described as a consolation for his friends:

“τῷ δεσπότη καὶ ἀσυνκρίτῳ καὶ παραμυθία τῶν φίλων Γονᾶτι Ἀμμων χαίρειν” (ll. 1-3)

In SB XVIII 13612 (TM 32984), the addressee is called εὐεργέτης.

Different from the friendly tone in the opening formulas above, is the description of the addressee in SB X 10557 (TM 30640)⁶³:

“Φοῦσκος Σαραπίωνι τῷ ἀληθινῷ μωρῷ πλεῖστα χαίρειν” (ll. 1-2)

The sender and the addressee were probably business partners, but their business did not go very well: the sender complains that the addressee did not follow his instructions potentially resulting in financial loss. To Van Rengen, the opening formula “*est teinté d’une ironie à la fois affectueuse et irritée qu’il n’est pas facile de rendre*” (Van Rengen 1968: 338).

⁶³ Similarly, in O.Did. 415 (TM 144976), an ostrakon from Didymoi, which is not part of my corpus, the addressee is described as τῷ μὴ ἀξιῳ.

3.1.2. The addressee in the closing formula

Also in the closing formula, the superlatives φίλτατος, τιμιώτατος and γλυκύτατος appear. Φίλτατος occurs in nearly a hundred letters dated to the 2nd and the 3rd centuries AD. Like in the opening formula (cf. *supra*, § 3.1.1), this characterization is especially popular in the Heroninos archive: 70% of all attestations of φίλτατος come from this archive. These letters are mostly correspondence between equals, for instance between the colleagues Syros and Heroninos, both local φροντισταί on the estate of Appianus; but the adjective also appears in letters from ‘high to low’, e.g. in letters from Alypios, the general manager, to Heroninos (e.g. SB VI 9415 (1); TM 14185). Τιμιώτατος is attested in about forty letters between the 1st-2nd and the 6th centuries AD. Γλυκύτατος is preserved in eight letters dated from the 2nd half of the 1st until the 4th centuries AD. In none of the characterizations μου or another genitive personal pronoun or a possessive pronoun is attested⁶⁴.

Especially loving and idiosyncratic characterizations are found in the following letters:

“ἔρρωσθαί σε θεοῖς πᾶσιν εὐχόμεαι πανοικησίᾳ τῶν ἱερέων τὸ ἀγλαΐσμα” (SB XII 10803; TM 32553; ll. 16-19)

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὐχόμεαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις, γνησίῳν ἄγαλμα” (PSI IV 318; TM 33126; ll. 10-12)

3.1.3. The addressee in the salutations

Like the kinship and polite terms (cf. *supra*, § 1.2.1 and § 2.1.1), a characterization of the addressee in the salutations is uncommon. It appears in only seven cases, both in salutations from the sender to the addressee as in regards from the sender’s social circle to the recipient:

“προηγούμενος σε πολλὰ προ[σ]αγορεύω, τιμιώτατε [πάτερ]” (P.Neph. 12; TM 33565; ll. 2-3)

“διερχόμενος ἰς (= εἰς) Θηβαΐδα ἀσπάζομαί σε ἡδιστ[α, γ]λυκύτατε Σαραπίων” (SB IV 7335; TM 14010; ll. 3-4)

“(hand 3) Ἱερακίων ἀσπάζομαί σε, γλυκύτατε” (P.Brem. 48; TM 19632; l. 35)

“ἀσπάζομα[ί] σαί (= σε) μακά[ριε] ἄπα Παι[ηοῦ]” (P.Lond. VI 1917; TM 16855; l. 2)

“Θεοδόσιος, [. . .]σθ[. . .], Ἀντίοχος, Δι[δ]ύμη, ἡ μήτηρ, πάντες οἱ τ[οῦ] ἡμετέρου οἴκου π[ολλά] σε καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν καὶ προσαγορεύομεν, [τιμι]ώτατε ἀγαπητῆ πά[τερ]” (P.Lond. VI 1929; TM 32662; ll. 17-19)

⁶⁴ I do not accept the supplement in SB XX 14249 (TM 26173): “ἔρρωσό μ[ου] γλυκύτατε” (l. 18) (cf. *supra*, chapter 7, § 4.6).

“ταῦτα γράψας πλεῖστα ὑμᾶς τοὺς λ[α]μπρότατους προσκυνῶ” (P.Oxy. I 158; TM 37147; l. 4)

“ταῦτα γράψας γνησίως ἀσπάζομαι τοὺς μεγαλοπρεπεστάτους ὑμᾶς †” (SB V 7655; TM 36225; ll. 33-34)

These characterizations are similar to the ones described above in § 3.1.1 and 3.1.2. Ἠδιστος does not often occur; μακάριος and ἀγαπητός, λαμπρότατος and μεγαλοπρεπέστατος are emblematic of the writing style of the Late Antique letters (cf. *infra*, § 3.2).

3.1.4. The addressee’s social circle in the salutations

Also the adjectives found in the greetings to the addressee’s social circle are similar to the ones described above. Yet, such characterizations are not commonly found⁶⁵: τιμιώτατος has four occurrences between the 2nd-3rd and the 4th centuries AD, γλυκύτατος appears sixteen times between the 2nd and the 8th centuries AD and φίλτατος is found seven times between the 2nd and the 5th-6th centuries AD⁶⁶, e.g.:

“Ἐλένην τὴν τιμιωτάτην πολλὰ ἀσπάζου καὶ Νείκην καὶ Ῥοδίνην καὶ Ἄττοῦν” (P.Hamb. II 192; TM 30461; ll. 25-28)

“ἀσπάζομαι τὴν Νόνναν καὶ τὸν γλυκύτατον Κωνστάντιν” (P.Abinn. 25; TM 10023; ll. 9-10)

“προσαγόρευε τὴν φιλάτην Διδύμην καὶ τὸν φίλτατον Φαβουρίνον” (SB VIII 9746; TM 33802; ll. 24-25)

It is remarkable that φίλτατος is not restricted to references to male relatives and friends of the addressee, as we would expect from the gender-specific use of this characterization in the description of the addressee in the opening formula (cf. *supra*, § 3.1.1)⁶⁷.

⁶⁵ Some other adjectives seem to be used to distinguish between namesakes, e.g. μικρός, μέγας, ἄλλος cf. “ἄσπασαι Ἀπῶνιν καὶ τὸν ἄλλον Ἀπῶνιν καὶ Ἀρριανὸν καὶ Σιλβανόν” (SB VI 9017 Nr. 31; TM 25257; ll. 21-25). Since they do not characterize the correspondents, they are not included in this overview. The references to jobs, which are not discussed in this appendix, do appear but are not common.

⁶⁶ A number of occurrences of γλυκύτατος are extended with μου. For φίλτατος, there is one attestation with σου and one with ὑμῶν: “προσαγορεύω [τὴν] σὴν διάθεσιν καὶ τὰ φίλτατά σου τὰ [πάν]τα” (P.Amh. II 145; TM 33624; ll. 22-24) and “τῆ<v>δὲ σεμνοπρεπεστατῆ <v> ἐλευθέραν καὶ τὰ φίλτατα ὑμῶν πεδία (= παιδία) ἐξ ἐμοῦ προσειπῖν (= προσειπεῖν) καταξίωσον (= καταξίωσον)” (P.Oxy. XVI 1872; TM 35601; ll. 7-8). The fact that these extensions are not attested for τιμιώτατος is no doubt due to coincidence. Genitives of other personal pronouns and possessive pronouns are not attested.

⁶⁷ SB VIII 9746 is not the only attestation of φίλτατος in salutations for a female relative of the addressee; this is also attested in P.Giss.Bibl. III 32 (TM 31822).

A common characterization is ἀβάσκαντος with more than forty occurrences from the 1st until the 4th-5th centuries AD⁶⁸. It is mostly found in combination with a reference to children, but also with other kinship terms or simply connected to a personal name, e.g.:

- “ἄσπασε (= ἄσπασαι) τὰ ἀβάσκαντά σου παιδία” (P.Lips. I 108; TM 29100; l. 9)
“ἄσπάζου τὸν ἀβάσκαντον υἱὸν καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ” (P.Oxy. XXXIII 2679; TM 26929; ll. 12-14)
“ἐπισκοποῦμαι σου τὴν ἀβάσκαντον σύμ[βι]ον” (P.IFAO II 17; TM 30347; ll. 14-15)
“ἄσπάζου Θέωνα τὸν κύριον καὶ Νικόβουλον καὶ Διόσκορον καὶ Θέωνα καὶ Ἐρμοκλῆν τοὺς ἀβασκάντους” (P.Oxy. II 300; TM 25673; ll. 6-9)

Μου is added to the characterization ἀβάσκαντος in P.Oxy. VIII 1159 (TM 31725), σου appears thirteen times⁶⁹; ἡμῶν occurs in P.Oxy. XIV 1666 (TM 31777) and ὑμῶν in P.Wisc. II 76 (TM 32548). Ἀβάσκαντος is twice extended with αὐτοῦ, three times with αὐτῆς and with αὐτῶν in P.Oslo III 161 (TM 31642)⁷⁰.

Other flattering adjectives for the addressee's social circle are φίλος⁷¹, καλός, συγγενής and ἀσύγκριτος.

3.1.5. The sender in the opening formula

Characterizations for the sender are rare in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods: only a few of the characterizations found in the description of the sender in the opening formula appear in combination with the sender (cf. Kim 2011: 134). In P.Oxy. VI 933 (TM 31322), the sender calls himself φίλος:

- “χαίροις, κύριέ μου Ἀπολινάριε, παρὰ Διογένους φίλου” (ll. 1-3)

Three attestations of ἀμφοτέρως are extensions referring to multiple senders, e.g.:

- “Οὐλερεία καὶ Θερμουθᾶς ἀμφοτέραι αἱ δύο Θερμουτεῖω τῇ ἀδε[λ]φῇ χαίριν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Mich. III 202; ll. 1-3)⁷²

⁶⁸ This characterization does not appear in the opening formula; it does sometimes appear in references to third persons in the closing formula, e.g. “ἔρρωσό μοι, κύριέ μου πάτερ, εὐτυχοῦντι μοι σὺν τοῖς ἀβασκάντοις μου ἀδελφοῖς, ὡς εὐχομαι, πολλοῖς χρόνοις” (SB III 6262; TM 31055; ll. 24-26).

⁶⁹ I have included SB XVIII 13593 in this total number of occurrences (cf. *supra*, footnote 11).

⁷⁰ The possessive pronouns are not attested for ἀβάσκαντος.

⁷¹ This word is found both as an adjective and as a substantive.

⁷² The other occurrences are O.Claud. II 267 (TM 23995) and P.Stras. IV 196 (TM 26974). Apart from kinship terms, polite terms and characterizations, also other extensions to the sender's name (such as information about the sender's job) are uncommon. Since sender and addressee mostly know each other, the sender usually just mentions his name.

3.1.6. The sender's social circle in the salutations

Like the description of the sender in the opening formula, also the sender's social circle does not often describe itself using characterizations⁷³. The superlative γλυκύτατος is attested in a handful of occurrences. Different members of the sender's social circle call themselves φίλοι and in one letter (P.Herm. 12; TM 28724) the φίλοι and the γνώριμοι are sending their regards to the addressee⁷⁴. Apart from ἀβάσκαντος (four attestations), also νήπιος occurs in reference to children:

“ἀσπάζεται σε τὰ ἀβάσκαντά σου παιδιά καὶ ἡ ἀδελφή σου καὶ οἱ φίλοι πάντες”

(P.Oxy. XXXI 2594; TM 26938; ll. 12-15)⁷⁵

“ἀσπάζονται σε τὰ νήπια παιδία” (SB XIV 11881; TM 32947; ll. 28-29)

3.2. Characterizations in Late Antique letters

The opening and closing formulas and the salutations reflect their time: documents from Late Antique period (i.e. dated between the 4th and the 8th centuries AD) deviate in writing style from documents from Ptolemaic and Roman times. The changed social and religious background (with the rise of Christianity) is (partly) responsible for this (Zilliacus 1949: 96). The typical epistolary phrases, including the opening and closing formulas themselves, came under pressure and started disappearing since they were no longer considered polite (cf. *supra*, chapters 2 and 7)⁷⁶. Alternative ways needed to be found to express politeness in the relationship between sender and addressee:

“Cette évolution tient à l'exacerbation bien connue des rapports hiérarchiques et à leur expression de plus en plus envahissante, mais elle doit aussi beaucoup au développement d'une politesse qui touche la sphère privée. S'affirme, même entre égaux, une forme de sociabilité qui se construit dans l'exaltation de l'autre et la dépréciation de soi, dont la conjugaison donne lieu à tout un vocabulaire, une phraséologie et une rhétorique qui imprègnent le style des correspondances privées.” (Fournet 2009: 43)

“Der wohl wichtigste Faktor für die Entwicklung der spätantiken Höflichkeit auf terminologischer und inhaltlicher Ebene war aber die Ausbreitung der christlichen Religion. Das Christentum erhob das Ideal der Demut und der Selbsterniedrigung zum Bestandteil seiner Lehre [...] Die Untertänigkeit der Schreiber der Papyrusbriefe ist zum

⁷³ Like in the salutations to the addressee's social circle, μικρός, ἄλλος and νεώτερος can be used to distinguish between namesakes.

⁷⁴ Φίλος also appears as a noun.

⁷⁵ Like in this occurrence, σου is added in one other attestation. Other personal or possessive pronouns are not attested.

⁷⁶ Admittedly, I summarize here a very complex cultural phenomenon that is not yet fully understood (cf. Papathomas 2010a: 29). It is however not the scope of this thesis to address this research question in depth.

größten Teil Ausdruck dieser Einstellung. [...] Die Unterwürfigkeit des Schreibers wird in der Regel mit der Erhöhung des Adressaten oder auch anderer Personen kombiniert.” (Papathomas 2007: 508)⁷⁷

3.2.1. The addressee (and his relatives) in Late Antique letters

3.2.1.1. (Christian) characterizations

In the Late Antique period, the addressee and his relatives are often referred to (only in the salutations) by a large number of new Christian expressions⁷⁸: the variation in the epithets increases dramatically during that period (cf. Zilliacus 1962: 172). One of the most popular adjectives is ἀγαπητός, with about sixty occurrences in the opening and closing formulas and the salutations of letters from the 3rd until the 6th centuries AD, e.g.:

“τῷ ἀγαπητῷ καὶ πατρὶ Διογένῃ (= Διογένει) Βαρύς ὁ ἀδελφὸς ἐν κ(υρὶ)ῷ χαίριν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Oxy. LVI 3858; TM 33599; ll. 1-3)

“τὸν ἀγαπητὸν Τιθοῆν ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ προσαγόρευε” (P.Oxy. LXI 4127; TM 33609; ll. 36-40)

“ἀσπάζο[με] (= ἀσπάζομαι) ὑ[μᾶς ἀγαπη]τοὶ ἡμῶν” (P.Ross.Georg. III 4; TM 30784; ll. 27-28)

“ἔρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι ἐν κ(υρὶ)ῷ, ἀγαπητὲ ἀδελ(φε)” (PSI IX 1041; TM 30662; ll. 15-17)

⁷⁷ I describe this new style as it appears in the opening and closing formulas and the salutations, since the epistolary formulas are the topic of this thesis. Of course, the features described *infra*, such as the abstract nouns to refer to the addressee, are not exclusively linked to these epistolary phrases: they also appear in the body of the letter and in the external address—in fact, as mentioned above, many Late Antique letters only consist of the body as they omit the epistolary framework of opening and closing formulas. Further, it needs to be remarked that not every letter from the Late Antique period will display (all) elements of the style described *infra*.

Here again, is not my goal to describe and discuss every variant, but rather to give a general impression of the characterizations in the Late Antique period. I refer to scholarly studies which dealt with various topics more in detail, e.g.: Zilliacus 1949, 1953, 1967; Papathomas 2007, 2010a; Fournet 2009: these works discuss different aspects of topics which I have only touched upon in this section. These studies also address questions as to why the language underwent such major changes, and show that not only the new Christian ideology, but also the letter’s structure, function, layout and goal are decisive elements.

⁷⁸ It is polite to adapt the letter’s phraseology to the prevailing world view, and especially with regard to religion (cf. Papathomas 2007: 503). The use of Christian *epitheta* is thus part of a politeness strategy. Further, due to the rise of Christianity, new Christian functions and titles came to the front, e.g. ἄππα in P.Lond. VI 1926. Other correspondents were μοναχοί, πρεσβύτεροι, etc. But, as mentioned before, this study does not discuss the different functions; other scholars discussed this matter, e.g. O’Callaghan 1964: about the personal names and the functions in the Christian letters.

Only in a handful of occurrences μου is added to this characterization. P.Ross.Georg. III 4 —if the reading of ἀγαπητοὶ ἡμῶν is correct— would be the only attestation of ἡμῶν in this characterization⁷⁹.

Other common epithets are, for instance, θαυμασιώτατος (seventeen attestations), ἐνάρετος (nine attestations) and παναρέτατος (only in SB XIV 11330 (TM 35119), λαμπρότατος (seven attestations), μεγαλοπρεπέστατος (five attestations), θεοφύλακτος (five attestations), θεοσεβέστατος (eight attestations) and θεοσεβής (only in P.Herm. 17 (TM 35415), εὐλαβέστατος (ten attestations) and ποθεινότατος (seven attestations). Only in two of all these occurrences, μου is added⁸⁰. Many of these new characterizations have a typical Byzantine word formation: the neologisms are often compounds (cf. Zilliacus 1967: 90).

3.2.1.2. Abstract nouns in the addressee's description

Until the Late Antique period, the addressee was referred to as σε or ὑμᾶς, both in the salutations to the addressee as in the closing formula (cf. *supra*, chapters 3 and 7)⁸¹. However, from the 4th century AD onwards, this started to change:

“besonders zu späteres Zeit nimmt der Gebrauch dieser abstrakten Prädikaten sowohl für den Adressaten als auch für dritte Personen in einem solchen Maß zu, daß es Briefe aus dem 6./7. Jh. gibt, in denen fast jeder Name oder jedes Substantiv von einem solchen Epitheton begleitet wird.” (Papathomas 2007: 499)

A common abstract noun is ἀδελφότης (Zilliacus 1962: 179), e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων γράφω προσκυνῶ καὶ ἀσπάζομαι τὴν ὑμετέραν γνησίαν ἀδελφ(ότητα) καὶ τὰ παιδιά αὐτῆς καὶ τῆς (= τὴν) ἐλευθέρ[α]ν καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἡμῶν καὶ ὄλους τοῦ οἴκου ἡμῶν ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου” (P.Vind.Worp 14; TM 36053; ll. 1-3)

To the popular διάθεσις, different adjectives can be added depending on the context, e.g.:

“προσαγορεύω [τὴν] σὴν διάθεσιν καὶ τὰ φίλτατά σου τὰ [πάν]τα” (P.Amh. II 145; TM 33624; ll. 22-24)

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων πολλὰ προσαγορεύω τὴν σὴν μητρικὴν διάθεσιν καὶ τῆς (= τὰς) εὐλαβεστάταις (= εὐλαβεστάτας) μου ἀδελφὰς Θεοτίμα (= Θεοτίμαν) καὶ Ταρίλλα (= Ταρίλλαν)” (P.Oxy. XLIII 3150; TM 35941; ll. 1-7)

⁷⁹ Other personal pronouns or possessive pronouns are not attested.

⁸⁰ The genitive of other personal pronouns is not attested, nor are the possessive pronouns.

⁸¹ Since in the opening phrases of the Late Antique period the addressee is (mostly) referred to in the third person, this does not apply to this epistolary formula.

“πρῶτη[γ]ονυμένω\ς/ [[σεω] προσαγορεύω τὴν ἀμίμητόν σου διάθεσιν (= διάθεσιν),
δ[έ]σποτα” (P.Herm. 9; TM 33468; ll. 4-7)

In P.Oxy. XLIII 3150, the description of ἡ σὴ μητρικὴ διάθεσις is equivalent to “your mother”. Further, different characterizations, that are attested for the characterization of the addressee and his social circle (cf. *supra*, § 3.2.1.1), are combined with διάθεσις, such as θεοφύλακτος (cf. also ἀμίμητος in P.Herm. 9).

Variants of διάθεσις are, for example, εὐγένεια, εὐλάβεια, μεγαλοπρέπεια, λαμπρότης, δεσπότης, θεοφιλία and φιλία, e.g.:

“πρὸ μὲν πάντων πόλλα σοῦ τὴν εὐγένειαν προσαγορεύω” (O.Douch I 2; TM 34338; ll. 2-3)

“προσκυνῖ (= προσκυνεῖ) δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς ἀνὴρ τὴν ὑμετέραν μεγαλοπρέπειαν (= μεγαλοπρέπειαν)” (P.Oxy. XXXIV 2732; TM 24890; ll. 10-11)

“πλῖστα (= πλεῖστα) προσκυνῶ τὴν ὑμετέραν ἀδελφικὴν λαμπρότητα” (P.Alex. 40; TM 35052; ll. 3-4)

“ἴ διὰ τῆ[ς] παρουσίας μου ἐπιστολῆς γράφω προσκυνούσα τὴν θεοφύλακτον ὑμῶν θεοφιλίαν” (SB VI 9397; TM 36836; l. 1)

As these instances show, there is a great deal of variation in the abstract nouns: some are, even in meaning, general and abstract e.g. διάθεσις; others are inspired by Christian views e.g. θεοφιλίαν⁸². Many of them are neologisms and show a clear parallel with the Late Antique characterizations described above (§ 3.2.1.1) and are in fact derived from the adjectives, e.g. λαμπρότατος and λαμπρότης (cf. Zilliacus 1949: 91).

To the abstract nouns, references to the addressee are added: most commonly this is expressed by the possessive pronouns σός or ὑμέτερος and only to a lesser extent by the genitives ὑμῶν or σοῦ —this use is thus contrary to the (relatively) frequent use of the genitives of the personal pronouns and the (relatively) small number of occurrences of the possessive pronouns in earlier periods. Despite the fact that the possessive pronouns are already attested in the Classical period (cf. *supra*, footnote 13), they seem to become more popular as a reference to the correspondents in later periods. The choice for the singular σός/σοῦ or the plural ὑμέτερος/ὑμῶν does not necessarily reflect a single addressee or multiple ones. The use of the plural ὑμᾶς for a singular addressee increases from the 3rd century AD onwards (Zilliacus 1953: 55), and in the 6th century AD, the plural address is applied generally and even between people of the same rank (Zilliacus 1953: 73; Zilliacus 1962: 180)⁸³. It seems that in the Late Antique period, ὑμᾶς became the

⁸² Cf.: “Ganz allgemein lässt sich sagen, dass die christliche Vorstellungswelt auch den gemeinsprachlichen Gebrauch von Abstrakta nicht unwesentlich gefördert hat” (Zilliacus 1949: 39).

⁸³ The same phenomenon is also observed in literary and official texts, and in Latin (Zilliacus 1953: 48-71).

V-form, a *pluralis reverentiae* —a more polite variant of the T-form σε⁸⁴: although Classical Greek did not have a T/V distinction and even though σε was used in both formal and informal contexts to refer to a single addressee and ὑμᾶς was restricted to the plural (Dickey 1997: 4-7), a new system with both T and V pronouns to refer to second person singular developed throughout the Byzantine period and is still found in Modern Greek.

3.2.1.3. Elaborate characterizations

Until roughly the 3rd century AD, the addressee and his social circle were described in the opening formulas and the salutations by name and by one or two characterizations at most. In later periods, however, the description is often very extensive, especially in the opening formula, e.g.:

“τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ καὶ χρηστοφόρῳ καὶ πάσης ἀρετῆς κεκοσμημένῳ Ἄππα Παφνουθις (= Παφνουθίῳ). Οὐαλερίᾳ ἐν Χριστῷ χέρειν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Lond. VI 1926; TM 32659; ll. 1-4)

“τῷ δεσπότη μου// ὡς ἀλιθῶς (= ἀληθῶς) κατὰ// πάντα μη (= μοι) // τιμιωτάτῳ πατρὶ Δωροθέου (= Δωροθέῳ) Ἀπάμμωνι (= Ἀπάμμων) ἐν κυρίου (= κυρίῳ) Θεοῦ (= Θεῷ) χέριν(= χαίρειν)” (P.Haup. II 25; TM 32377; ll. 2-4)

“καὶ ἀσπάζομαι ἐκθύμως τὴν ὑ<μ>ετέραν πατρικὴν διάθεσιν μετὰ τῷ[ν] σὺν αὐτῇ πατέρων τε καὶ ἀδελφῶν, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τὸν ἐλλογιμώτ(ατον) σχολαστικῶ[ν] [ὑ]μῶν υἱὸν Διόσκορον ἐμόν τε δεσπότην” (P.Cair.Masp. I 67064; TM 19015; ll. 12-14)

In P.Lond. VI 1926, quoted above, the addressee’s description includes a participle construction “πάσης ἀρετῆς κεκοσμημένῳ”. This phenomenon is also found elsewhere in other prescripts, e.g.:

“τῷ ποθινοτ[άτῳ ἐ]πιστήμης ὑπερβάλλοντι ἄππα Παπνο[υτίῳ] Πιάνιος ἐν κ(υρίῳ) Θε(ε)ῷ χαίρειν” (P.Lond. VI 1925; TM 32658; ll. 1-2)

“τῷ ἀγαπητῷ καὶ θεοσεβεστάτῳ καὶ θεοφιλεῖ (= θεοφιλεῖ) καὶ εὐλογημένῳ πατρὶ Παπνουθ[ί]ῳ Ἀμμώνιος ἐν κυρίῳ Θεῷ χαίρειν” (P.Lond. VI 1923; TM 32656; ll. 1-5)⁸⁵

“τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ καὶ ἀγαπημένῳ (= ἠγαπημένῳ) πατρὶ ἄππα [Πα]ιηους (= Παιηοῦτι) [ο] Χαρίσιος πλεῖστα χαίρειν” (P.Lond. VI 1918; TM 16856; ll. 1-2)⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Here, too, the Christian philosophy might have had an influence, as the *pluralis reverentiae* is found earlier and more often in Christian documents than in pagan ones (Zilliacus 1953: 78). The explanation for this lies in the Christian community itself: “Der Unterschied zwischen christl. u. heidn. Usus hängt vielleicht davon ab, daß der Leiter einer Gemeinde soziativisch mit seiner Herde irgendwie identifiziert wurde” (Zilliacus 1962: 180).

⁸⁵ The participle of εὐλογέω is also attested in P.Köln II 110 (TM 35435) and P.Amh. II 145 (TM 33624).

⁸⁶ The participle of the verb ἀγαπάω is used in the same context in P.Lond. VI 1928 (TM 32661): “τῷ παρὰ Θεῷ [ἠ]γαπημέ[ν]ῳ πατρὶ ἄππα Παπνουτίῳ vac.? Ἡρακλείδης” (ll. 1-2).

The style of this kind of letters is typical of the hyperbolic and extremely long phrases in Byzantine writing style (cf. Zilliacus 1949: 4: “*Er [the Byzantine writing style; DN] zeichnet sich vor allem durch Wortreichtum, Weitschweifigkeit und mangelndes Gefühl für die Präzision des einfachen Begriffswortes an*”). The Byzantine letters have features that belong to the literary register and deliberately aim for complicated phraseology:

“*À la conception purement utilitaire de la lettre, qui impliquait une langue sobre et sans apprêt, se substitue ou se superpose, selon les cas, une conception qui privilégie la forme – une forme travaillée, recherchée, qui est à la fois un don pour l’autre et un manifeste de sa propre culture*” (Fournet 2009: 46)

3.2.1.4. Intensifiers added to the characterizations

The increased length of the addressee’s description in the opening formula is not only due to the use of multiple characterizations and (long) participle constructions. Another reason is the fact that in letters dated between the 4th and the 6th centuries AD, an intensifier is sometimes added to the description of the addressee (mostly in the opening formula): these intensifiers do not stress the epistolary formula as a whole, as they normally do, but they are linked to a specific adjective.

Widely used intensifiers are (ὡς) ἀληθῶς and κατὰ πάντα, e.g.:

“[τῶ] ἀγαπητῶ καὶ ἀληθῶς (= ἀληθῶς) ἀδ[ε]λ[φ]ῶ Ἀβιννεας (= Ἀβιννέω) [ἄ]πα Μῆς [ἔ]ν κ(υρί)ῳ χαίρειν” (P.Abinn. 7; TM 10058; ll. 1-2)
 “ἀσπάζομαι σε πολλ[ά]κις, ἄδελφε ψυχῆ[ς] ὡς ἀληθῶς, καὶ πάντας τοὺς σὺν σοὶ κατ’ ὄνομα” (P.Herm. 6; TM 21125; ll. 31-32)

Κατὰ πάντα is combined with the dative μοι in five letters, for instance in P.Haun. II 25 (TM 32377), quoted *supra*, and P.Oxy. LVI 3864 (TM 35475). Both are letters from a certain Apammon to Dorotheus. These two letters probably form a cluster. According to Gonis, “the hand, the choice of certain conventional epistolary phrases, the idiosyncratic use of the double oblique dash, and the erratic grammar are likewise the same.” (Gonis 2000: 184). This is in my opinion confirmed by the use of the intensifier κατὰ πάντα, and the dativus ethicus μοι. Seemingly, the sender had a preference for this wording.

Other intensifiers are (τὰ) πάντα, διὰ πάντα, διὰ παντός and πολύ, e.g.:

“τῶ δεσπότη μου τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ πάντα τιμιωτάτῳ ἀδελφῶ Δημήτριος” (P.Stras. IV 286; TM 32703; ll. 1-3)
 “τῆ κυρία μου, τῆ διὰ πάντα θαυμασιωτάτ[η] μητρὶ μεγάλῃ Νόννα πεδιν (= παιδίον)” (SB VI 9158; TM 35103; ll. 1-2)
 “τῶ δε[σπότη] μου [[κ]] διαπαντός (= διὰ παντός; my remark) τιμ[ι]ωτάτῳ καὶ αἰδεσιμωτάτῳ πατρὶ Εὐτροπίῳ Ἀλεξάνδρα” (SB XIV 12085; TM 34814; ll. 1-3)

“τῷ πολὺ γλυκυτά[τ]ῳ μου ἀδελφῷ Παφνουτίου (= Παφνουτίῳ) παρ[ὰ] τοῦ ἀ[δ]ελφοῦ σου Ψεράκου ἀγουσταλίου (= ἀγουσταλίου) νουμέρ[ου] κυντανῶν vac.? χέριν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Ross.Georg. III 10; TM 32908; ll. 1-3)

Clearly, also the use of intensifiers to emphasize characterizations is part of the elaborate and polite writing style of the Late Antique period.

3.2.2. The sender (and his relatives) in Late Antique letters

In different sections, I have already remarked that the sender of Ptolemaic and Roman letters does not elaborate much on his own description (cf. *supra*): extendedly used kinship terms hardly occur until the Late Antique period, a polite term is perhaps attested once and characterizations such as τιμιώτατος are not widespread either.

This changes in the Late Antique period. In the opening formula of P.Oxy. XLIII 3149 (TM 34841), the sender identifies himself as χριστιανός:

“† ἐγὼ γράφω σοι, ἄπα Θέων, Ἡρᾶς χρητιανὸς (= χριστιανὸς) ἐν κυ(ρίῳ) θε(ε)ῷ χέρειν (= χαίρειν)” (ll. 1-5)

Further, the most obvious change in Late Antique letters, is that the sender often takes a humble attitude as a result of the Christian view of life: in letters dated between the 4th and the 6th–7th centuries AD, the sender sometimes refers to himself either in the opening formula or in the salutations as δοῦλος⁸⁷, e.g.:

“κυρίοις μου τιμιωτάτοις καὶ θαυμασιωτάτοις πατρὶ καὶ τῇ γλυκυτάτῃ μου μητρὶ καὶ τῷ θίῳ (= θείῳ) Θεοφανίῳ ὁ δοῦλος ὑμῶν καὶ προσκυνητῆς Φιλόξενος ἐν κυ(ρίῳ) θε(ε)ῷ χέριν (= χαίρειν)” (P.Oxy. LVI 3862; TM 33603; ll. 2-4)

“† τῷ μ(ε)τ(ᾶ) θε(ὸ)ν ἀγαθῷ μου δεσπό(τῃ) τῷ πανευ(φήμῳ) κ(αὶ) θεοφυλάκτῳ Κύρῳ παρὰ Εὐλογήτου ὑμετέρου δούλου. †” (P.Gen. I (2e éd.) 14; TM 34027; ll. 1-2)

“τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ ἀδελφῷ καὶ θε[ο]φιλ[ε]ῖ. Δωρόθεος ὁ Ὁξ[υ]ρρυγχείτης ὁ ἄχριος (= ἄχρειος) δοῦλος προσαγορεύει σε ἐν πν(εύματι) καὶ ἐν ἀγάπῃ Χ(ριστο)ῦ” (P.Lond. VI 1927; TM 32660; ll. 1-4)

“πολλὰ δὲ προσκυνεῖ ὑμᾶς Ἰουὰκ ὁ θυρωρὸς ὁ ὑμέτερος δοῦλος” (P.Grenf. II 91; TM 38222; ll. 7-8)

“[-ca.-] καὶ ὁ δοῦλ(ός) σου Ἰοῦστος Βίκτωρ δὲ ὁ ὑμέτερος δοῦλος πολλὰ ὑμᾶς [προσκυνοῦσιν]” (SB XVIII 13762; TM 36300; ll. 27-28)

⁸⁷ Δοῦλος also regularly appears in the external address of Late Antique letters, e.g.: “† τῷ ἐμῷ ἀγαθῷ δεσπό(τῃ) τῷ ἐνδοξο(τάτῳ) ἰλλ(ο)υ(στρίῳ) (καὶ) ἀντιγε(ούχῳ) † Μηνᾶς χαρτ(ουλάριος) ὑμέ(τερος) δο[ῦλ(ος)].” (P.Oxy. XVI 1859; TM 37865; l. 8). Other features of the Byzantine writing style are attested there as well (cf. ἐλάχιστος in PSI I 49 (TM 37094; l. 6): “† τῷ τὰ πάντα μεγαλοπρ(επεστάτῳ) καὶ περιβλέπτ(ῳ) κόμ(ιτι) Εὐλογίου (= Εὐλόγιῳ) π(αρά) Ἰσακίου ἐλαχ(ίστου) μονάζ(οντος)”).

In these instances, *δοῦλος* does not refer to actual slaves; it has a metaphorical meaning and expresses the idealized image of modesty (cf. Papathomas 2007: 509)⁸⁸. Often, a possessive pronoun (*ὕμέτερος* or *σός*) or, to a lesser extent, a personal pronoun in the genitive (*σοῦ* or *ὕμῶν*) is added to *δοῦλος*. In one closing formula, the sender (and his social circle) describe themselves *ἀμάρτωλος*:

“ὁ παντοκράτωρ Θεὸς διαφυλάξει σε ἐπὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἡμῖν τοῖς ἀμάρτωλοῖς, ἵνα διὰ τῶν σῶν ἀγιωτάτων (= ἀγιωτάτων) εὐχῶν διασωσθῶμεν (= διασωθῶμεν) διὰ τοῦ βίου” (P.Herm. 8; TM 33467; ll. 22-28)

The sender can stress his own inferior position with adjectives too (cf. also with the extension *ἄχρειος* in P.Lond. VI 1927, *supra*). *Ἐλάχιστος* (cf. Papathomas 2007: 499) appears in one salutation (P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 439; TM 33182) and in two opening formulas dating between the 4th-5th and the 6th or perhaps the 7th centuries AD:

“† τῷ ἀββᾶ Κοσμᾶ Ἐπίδιδι ἔλάχιστος” (SB XX 14923; TM 34163; ll. 1-2)
 “✠ κυρίῳ μο(υ) ἀδελφῷ Κορνιλείῳ (= Κορνηλίῳ) διάκονι παρὰ Σαβίνου ἔλαχίστο(υ)” (P.Iand. VI 103; TM 36108; l. 2)

Similarly, the sender assumes an inferior position in P.Lond. VI 1916 (TM 16854) by using the epithet *ὑποδεέστατος*:

“τοῖς παν[αγίο(?)]ις ἀγαπητοῖς [καὶ γλυ]κυτάτοις [Παι]ηοῦτι πρεσβ[υτέρῳ καὶ] Διοσκορο[ς (=Διοσκόρῳ) καὶ] Ἱεραξ (=Ἱέρακι) καὶ [-ca.-?] καὶ ἄπα Σ[ου]ροῦ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ἀδελ[φ]οῖς καὶ πᾶσι τ[οῖ]ς περὶ [ὕμᾶς] κατ’ ὄν[ο]μα Μωυση[ῆ]ς καὶ Ἐριηοῦς(?) οἱ] ὑποδεέστεροι ὑμῶν ἐν [κ(υ)ρίῳ χαίρειν]” (ll. 1-7)

4. Conclusion

In older studies, a list of the most common kinship terms, polite terms and characterizations was simply given without information about the textual context of these terms (e.g. Koskeniemi 1956: 95-104). In this short chapter, I have studied the extensions from the sociolinguistic perspective of the politeness theory by discussing them according to the person(s) who they describe. Consequently, it is clear that in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, the use of extensions was (mainly) limited to the characterization of the addressee and his relatives. This is what one expects: “Forms of address, that is words or parts of words that refer to the addressee, are a common place for languages to encode references to status and respect” (Dickey 2010a: 327).

⁸⁸ This and other characterizations should not be regarded as particularly deferential or servile; they are simply the polite expressions of their period (cf. Papathomas 2007: 512; 2010a: 30).

The overview of the kinship and polite terms and characterizations show that the language of the private letters becomes increasingly polite: most of the described characterizations are not well attested in the Ptolemaic period but flourish in Roman times. This observation is in line with the conclusions of the diachronic changes in the epistolary formulas. I have observed that throughout the papyrological millennium the standards of what defined a polite letter were subject to considerable change, for instance leading to the fronting of the addressee's name in the opening formula (cf. *supra*, chapter 2). Overall, in the Ptolemaic and especially the Roman periods, the politeness of a letter is defined both by the insertion of the traditional epistolary framework—such as the inclusion of an opening and closing formula—as well as by the addition of a reference to the addressee by means of various polite terms.

Around the 4th century AD, however, two drastic changes of a different nature occur: on the one hand, Christianity, with its ideology of humility, has a significant effect on the letters. On the other hand, the epistolary framework is no longer considered polite enough and does not reflect the changing norms of society anymore. As a result, new ways to express politeness in private letters were needed. Those two factors, combined with the changed function of a letter, which should not only convey information but also have literary aspirations, led to a new Byzantine writing style. This translates into the use of abstract nouns, elaborate characterizations of the addressee—which are often Christian in origin—and the sender explicitly taking a humble attitude. Nevertheless, these changes in style could not prevent that the opening and closing formulas gradually disappeared.

Appendix II Register analysis and the definition of private letters

In the introductory chapter, I have touched upon the problem of how to define private letters. This is rather challenging, since there are many overlaps between private letters, official letters, petitions, *hypomnemata* and *cheirographa*. One cannot easily determine text types, as they form a continuum and there are a great many intermediate forms (cf. Ceccarelli 2013: 8):

“It is important to see that the letter, even though it is a distinct type of text, [...] is also connected by some family-resemblances to other, non-epistolary types of text. This is [...] to note that several texts can display characteristics similar to or reminiscent of letters.” (Gibson and Morrison 2007: 14)

However, from a practical point of view, it is necessary to define the corpus of private letters as precisely as possible. In this chapter, I therefore list the (mainly linguistic¹) features which are (rather) characteristic of private letters on the one hand, and those typical of official letters, petitions, *hypomnemata* and *cheirographa* on the other. In this way, I have set (my²) criteria for the definition of private letters. This approach is not new. Exler, for instance, saw the typological power of epistolary formulas, although his observations are only impressionistic:

¹ In § 3 I refer to the content, the handwriting, the layout and the writing material as indicators for the different text types, cf.: “Official letters cannot only be recognized from their subject matter (taxes, public works, etc.) but also from their formatting (many letters were accompanied by an attachment, for instance), from their style, which is often rather cumbersome, with long sentences, and from typical expressions, such as οἱ ὑπογεγραμμένοι, οὐκ ἄγνοεῖς, ὡσαύτως δὲ καί etc.” (Clarysse 2010: 46).

² This is only a preliminary step to include linguistic evidence —which is confined in this thesis to epistolary language only— in the discussion of the definition of text types. Establishing a clear-cut definition of what a private letter exactly constitutes, has been above all a practical necessity, rather than a research goal *an sich*. Yet, in this aspect, this thesis aims to be a stimulus for the discussion about the definition of text types and about the importance of linguistic evidence in all this.

“With due allowance for exceptions we may perhaps say that familiar letters [which have the closing expression ἔρωσο or ἔρωσθε; DN] belong to the first group; that petitions and formal complaints [which have the closing expression εὐτύχει or διευτύχει; DN] belong to the second group; and that business communications of various kinds [which do not have any special closing expression at all and which lack the final salutations; DN] generally belong to the third group. Official letters ordinarily end with the phrase: ἔρωσο or its modifications; yet a large number of official letters are found without any final salutation” (Exler 1923: 69)

Contrary to Exler’s and other older works, this study is the first to use linguistic criteria intensively and on a large scale to clarify typology, and to rely on a methodological framework to do so. In the sociolinguistic theory of register analysis, the elements characteristic of each text type are called ‘register markers’ –but only if they are not found in any other text type. Therefore, register markers are rare: mostly, linguistic features of a certain text type are not exclusively linked to this one single text type in particular –this is also the case for private letters, hence the difficulty to define these texts. Yet, although the private letters cannot be defined by register markers, there are features which are common in –but not exclusively linked to– them: they are called ‘register indicators’ in this study. The register of the private letters will thus be defined by “the co-occurrence of entire sets of features, none of which may be exclusive to the register under consideration, even though the specific mixture and alternation of pattern are” (Willi 2010: 298-299). In other words, rather than determining the text type based on one particular formula –as Exler suggested in the quote above– in the theory of register analysis, the decision rests on the outcome of an entire set of (mainly) linguistic criteria. This method allows us to discard the idea of a strict division between the various epistolary types and replace it by a more flexible paradigm³.

³ Admittedly, this approach is not foolproof. Whereas the criteria enable us to easily ascertain the text type of a large number of documents, other papyri will pose more problems: this is especially true for damaged texts. There are also a number of transitional documents: in some private letters, the writer seems to have deliberately used the stock phrases of a petition, to create a very polite letter (cf. *supra*, chapters 2 and 7). My approach to these problematic and uncertain documents is rather pragmatic: I tend to include the doubtful cases in order not to exclude a possible private letter.

1. Linguistic features typical of the registers of petitions, official letters, *cheirographa* and *hypomnemata*

1.1. *Cheirographa* and *hypomnemata*

The *cheirographa* and *hypomnemata* (*memoranda*) have peculiarities which are different from the register of the private letters; their presence in a text suggests that the document is not a private letter. *Cheirographa* usually do not have a closing formula at the end, but they have a date instead—which is uncommon in private letters (Wolff 1978: 107; Yiftach-Firanko 2012: 1446)⁴. *Hypomnemata* open with the distinct opening formula τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος. Τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ ὁ δεῖνα is also found in the opening lines of private letters, but almost all attestations are dated after the 2nd century AD (cf. *supra*, chapter 2, § 3.1.1). Since the formula hardly occurs in private letters until the 2nd century AD, this knowledge is helpful to make determination easier. Sometimes the text type is even mentioned at the beginning of the document, e.g.:

“ὑπόμνημα Ζήνωνι παρὰ Διονυσίου” (P.Cair.Zen. III 59307; TM 951; ll. 1-3)

Further, there are some indications as to the text type in the body of the letter as well. For instance, in the body of epistolary receipts we find verbs like ἔχω, ἄπεχω, παραλαμβάνω or δέχομαι with παρὰ + genitive. Likewise, in epistolary contracts the verb συγχωρέω or ὁμολογέω just after the opening formula reveals the text type (cf. Yiftach-Firanko 2008: 325), and in *hypomnemata*-leases the phrase βούλομαι μισθώσασθαι is indicative (cf. Exler 1923: 65). Also the content of these legal documents is, of course, different from private letters. These elements enable us fairly well to distinguish between *cheirographa* and *memoranda*, on the one hand and private letters, on the other hand.

1.2. Petitions

1.2.1. Opening formula

There are two opening formulas for the petitions, viz. τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ ὁ δεῖνα and τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα, which respectively open a ὑπόμνημα-petition to an official, and an ἔντευξις to the king (Ziemann 1910: 258-263). As said, the opening formula τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ

⁴ Sometimes *cheirographa* have the distinct opening formula “ὁ δεῖνα καὶ ὁ δεῖνα ἀλλήλοις χαίρειν” (Wolff 1978: 107), which shows that this is not a real letter between absent parties, but a legal document in letter form.

ὁ δεῖνα hardly occurs in private letters before the 2nd century AD, which serves as a criterion to identify the text types. Also the phrase τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα is not widespread in private letters: it does not occur after the 3rd century BC (cf. *supra*, chapter 2, § 1.3). So, the presence of the τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα in documents dated after the 3rd century BC strongly suggests that the text is a private letter.

Further, petitions are addressed to the king or to an official, such as a στρατηγός. Perhaps the most telling register indicator for the petition is the fact that the addressee is written to in his capacity as office-holder and that his function is mentioned in the opening formula. Also certain epithets which are absent in the opening formula of private letters, are used (more) often to address an official. Κράτιστος, συγγενής and διασημώτατος, for example, are mainly attested in petitions (and official letters).

By adopting the petition's phraseology τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα and εὐτύχει and by thus creating a transitional form between the petition and the private letter, one can write a very polite private letter (cf. *supra*, chapters 2 and 7). But if such a letter with linguistic features of a petition is addressed to a private person, it does not seem to be an official petition; it is just a private letter in which the sender (probably deliberately) plays with the demarcation of text types.

Also the sender of a petition describes himself in a particular way in the opening lines: whereas senders of private letters do not characterize themselves and usually only give their name (cf. *supra*, appendix I), petitioners often give a detailed description of themselves, since this information is needed in the context of a petition: they do not only mention their names, but also their occupations and their provenance. The place of residence is often introduced by the words ἀπὸ κώμης + genitive, which is rather typical of petitions. In this respect, we can distinguish between petitions and private letters of request: when asking someone for a personal favor in a private letter, one is by definition acquainted with the addressee and there is no need to introduce oneself as 'mister X with profession Y from the village of Z'.

1.2.2. Closing formula

The standard closing formula for petitions is known to be εὐτύχει, and later διευτύχει (Exler 1923: 69; White 1972b: 18). This closing formula is not very common in private letters: it appears less than a hundred times and its occurrences mainly date to the 3rd century BC (cf. *supra*, chapter 7, § 3.3). Further, it is more common for petitions than for private letters to have a date at the end of the letter. Finally, they usually do not bear an external address, since petitions are not sent to the official, but are handed over directly to him.

1.2.3. Body of the petition

After the opening formula the sender gives a background sketch of his troublesome situation, often using the verb form ἀδικοῦμαι (or ἀδικούμεθα) (White 1972b: 28-30). The occurrence of this verb right after the opening formula seems to be characteristic of petitions. Further, the background sketch is often introduced by a time adjunct, e.g.:

“νυκτὶ [τ]ῆ φ[ερούση εἰ]ς τὴν κα τοῦ ὄντος μ[η]νὸς Πα]ῦνι ἐπῆλθάν τινες, οὓς [ἀγνοο]ῦμεν, οἷς γεωργοῦ[μ]ε[ν] [ιδ]ιωτικῶν ἐδφων περὶ κώμην Βουβάστον καὶ ἐβάσταξαν ἡμῶν θήκας λαχανοσπέρμ[ο]υ εἰς ἕτερον ψυγμὸν οὐκ [ἔλα]ττον θηκῶν δέκα δύο” (BGU II 454; TM 9185; ll. 7-15)

After the description of his difficulties, the sender utters the central part of his message and asks the addressee for a favor. The verbs δέομαι and ἀξιόω/καταξιώω are distinctive verbs used for formulating the request (White 1972b: 23-24). Often a sentence connector, such as οὖν or διό, is added to link the request to the previous background sketch. Moreover, in the body of petitions there can be a self-referential element referring to the act of petitioning: in a great many documents the verb ἐπιδίδωμι (‘to submit <a petition>’) is mentioned, often in combination with ἀξιόω (or one of its variants), e.g.:

“διὸ ἐπιδίδωμι (= ἐπιδίδομεν) καὶ ἀξιῶ (= ἀξιοῦμεν)” (BGU II 454; ll. 15-16)
“διὸ ἐπιδίδωμι τόδε τὸ βιβλίδιον ἀξιῶν ...” (BGU I 46; TM 9093; ll. 13-14)

Overall, there are several lexical criteria to differentiate between private letters (with a request) and petitions. Another important difference lies in the content (cf. *infra*, § 3).

1.3. Official letters

In its phraseology, the official letter closely resembles the private letter. In the opening formula, to begin with, the phrase ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν is most commonly used, but also the construction τῷ δεῖνι παρὰ τοῦ δεῖνος is widespread. These formulas both appear in private letters too (cf. Koskeniemi 1956: 158-159). Yet, like in the petitions, the description of the sender and the addressee in official letters differs from that in private letters: in official letters, the addressee holds an official function and is addressed in this way in the opening formula. In private letters, by contrast, addressees are generally addressed as private persons, even when they hold official functions. Similarly, certain epithets, like κράτιστος, are found in the official letters’ register (cf. *supra*). Also the sender (mostly) speaks from his public position and often gives additional information about his own rank (cf. Fournet 2003: 491). Sometimes this could have been necessary since the correspondents might not have known each other; in other instances the sender and addressee were probably acquainted, but by presenting

oneself in one's capacity as office-holder, the sender indicates the official tone of the correspondence⁵. Further, the closing formula—in its basic form— does not deviate substantially from the private letters' closing phrases—only the use of βούλομαι instead of εὔχομαι in the closing formula of the type ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι is generally linked to official communication (Luiselli 2008: 706). Finally, official letters are more likely to bear a date than private letters (Fournet 2003: 491); a date at the beginning of the document is thought to be almost exclusively linked to the official letters' language (Exler 1923: 99).

Overall, there are not a great many register indicators for official letters. More telling is the absence of features typical of the private letters' register. In the following section, I discuss how this kind of evidence can be helpful in discerning between private letters, official letters and petitions.

2. Linguistic features typical of the private letters' register

In the following section I investigate some linguistic elements which occur commonly in the private letters, but which are (virtually) absent in the other text types; my discussion is—given the topic of this thesis— confined to the epistolary formulas examined in the chapters of part I (cf. *supra*)⁶. These features are the register indicators for private letters.

My investigation is based on my corpus of about 10,000 documents which are classified typologically by the *Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis* (HGV) and by the Leuven *Trismegistos* project (TM):

⁵ Cf.: “an instructive instance came to light in the correspondence of the *basilikos grammateus* Hephastion (alias Ammonios), who in the year 194 CE also administered the vacant post of *strategos* of his district. Hephastion, acting as vice *strategos*, sent to himself in his position as *basilikos grammateus* letters and instructions, correctly using the polite phrases and other elements of official correspondence (SB XVIII 13175)” (Palme 2009: 376).

⁶ I am well aware that other linguistic elements may further help to delineate the register of private letters. For instance, it has been acknowledged that the so-called disclosure formula (γινώσκειν σε θέλω and variants) in the beginning of the letter's body mostly appears in private letters (White 1972a: 2-5), and is uncommon in other text types.

HGV typological classification⁷

<i>Brief (privat)</i>	3,510 occurrences
<i>Brief (amtlich)</i>	1,492 occurrences
<i>Brief (geschäftlich)</i>	534 occurrences
<i>Eingabe</i>	2,124 occurrences

TM typological classification⁸

Letter (private)	760 occurrences
Letter (business)	219 occurrences
Letter (official)	753 occurrences
Petition	1,481 occurrences

I only compare private letters with official letters and petitions. I have omitted the *cheirographa* and *hypomnemata*, since these text types are more easily discernible from private letters and since their number of occurrences is much lower, which makes such an investigation less telling.

In the following sections, I discuss the number of attestations of an epistolary phrase (e.g. the *proskynema*) or a linguistic element in an epistolary phrase (e.g. the intensifier *πολλά* in the opening formula) in the each of different text types (i.e. private letters, official letters, business letters and petitions). Then I compare these attestations to the total number of documents of each text type. For instance, in 203 papyri tagged by the HGV as private letters, the addressee is referred to as *πατήρ* in the opening formula (cf. *infra*, § 2.1.1); considering that the total number of HGV private letters is 3,510, this means that 5.8% of the private letters displays this feature. Like in this example, the percentages will be low. This is mainly due the fact that many papyrus texts are fragmentarily preserved. To get a more precise idea, I also provide a table with the distribution of the attestations across the different text types. For instance, the kinship term *πατήρ* is attested 212 times in total in the HGV private, business and official letters and petitions. Now, of those 212 occurrences, 203 were labeled as ‘private’ by the HGV (i.e. 95.8%).

⁷ Besides this, 1,588 papyri are classified in general terms as ‘*Brief*’; a limited number of documents are referred to as ‘*Schreiben*’, ‘*Korrespondenz*’ or ‘*Schriftverkehr*’. Those documents are not included in this section, since they are not relevant to distinguish between the typical features of the epistolary language in private letters and in other text types.

⁸ In the TM classification, 5,369 documents are simply tagged as ‘letter’. To distinguish elements typical of the private letters’ register that are rare in the official letters and petitions, these documents are not relevant. The other documents in the TM database have not been given a typological label and simply use the HGV data.

2.1. Opening formula

2.1.1. Kinship terms for the addressee

Private letters are by definition written to family, friends and acquaintances. In appendix I, we have seen that the addressee is often referred to by kinship terms in the opening formula.

Occurrences and distribution of *πατήρ* in the opening formula

Text type	Number of occurrences
HGV private letter	203 (203/3,510 = 5.8%)
TM private letter	59 (59/760 = 7.8%)
HGV official letter	4 (4/1,492 = 2.7%)
TM official letter	2 (2/753 = 2.6%)
HGV business letter	4 (4/534 = 0.7%)
TM business letter	3 (3/219 = 1.4%)
HGV petition	1 (1/2,124 = ~0%)
TM petition	1 (1/1,481 = ~0%)

The distribution of the attestations across the different text types is as follows:

Text type	Number of occurrences (cf. <i>supra</i>)	Number of occurrences / total occurrences
HGV private letter	203	203/212 = 95.8%
TM private letter	59	59/65 = 90.8%
HGV official letter	4	4/212 = 1.9%
TM official letter	2	2/65 = 3.1%
HGV business letter	4	4/212 = 1.9%
TM business letter	3	3/65 = 4.6%
HGV petition	1	1/212 = 0.5%
TM petition	1	1/65 = 1.5%

Occurrences and distribution of *ἀδελφός* in the opening formula

Text type	Number of occurrences
HGV private letter	655 (655/3,510 = 18.7%)
TM private letter	149 (149/760 = 19.6%)
HGV official letter	55 (55/1,492 = 3.7%)
TM official letter	27 (27/753 = 3.6%)
HGV business letter	28 (28/534 = 5.2%)
TM business letter	29 (29/219 = 13.2%)
HGV petition	10 (10/2,124 = 0.5%)
TM petition	10 (10/1,481 = 0.7%)

The distribution of the attestations across the different text types is as follows:

Text type	Number of occurrences (cf. <i>supra</i>)	Number of occurrences / total occurrences
<i>HGV</i> private letter	655	655/748 = 87.6%
TM private letter	149	149/215 = 69.3%
<i>HGV</i> official letter	55	55/748 = 7.4%
TM official letter	27	27/215 = 12.6%
<i>HGV</i> business letter	28	28/748 = 3.7%
TM business letter	29	29/215 = 13.5%
<i>HGV</i> petition	10	10/748 = 1.3%
TM petition	10	10/215 = 4.7%

Πατήρ only occurs in the opening formula of in one *HGV*/TM petition, viz. P.Oxy. LXIII 4393 (TM 35622). Yet, in this document, πατήρ is not used as a kinship term:

“Φλαο[υ]ῖ[φ] Φοι]βάμμωνι πολιτευομένω πατρὶ π[ό]λεως Ὀξ[υ]ρυγίτου παρὰ Ἀρηλίαις Ἀηοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς πόλεως” (ll. 1-2)

The same denotation πατήρ πόλεως appears in one of the official letters (SB XX 14987; TM 38527; dated to the 6th century AD) —which makes it a false positive as well. It is thus clear that πατήρ should be associated with the private letter’s register⁹.

Also ἀδελφός is much more represented in private letters than in official letters and petitions, and its occurrence seems to hint that the document is a private letter.

2.1.2. The variants χαῖρε and χαίροις with vocative

From the 1st and the 2nd centuries AD onwards, the imperative χαῖρε and the optative χαίροις begin to be used in the private letter’s opening (cf. *supra*, chapter 2, § 2). The imperative is attested 35 times in my corpus (cf. *supra*, chapter 2, § 2.1), viz. in 27 *HGV* private letters, in three *HGV* business letters, in one letter that was tagged as “privat oder amtlich” and in one document that was simply tagged as ‘*Brief*’. So, approximately 75% of the attestations of the imperative χαῖρε in the opening formula appear in private letters. Likewise, of the 31 letters with χαίροις preserved (cf. *supra*, chapter 2, § 2.2), most are *HGV* private letters¹⁰. The personal and direct tone of the χαῖρε and χαίροις

⁹ Yet, in some cases, e.g. in the archive of Adamas *sitologos*, πατήρ could refer to a senior official (cf. APIS remark).

¹⁰ Since TM has tagged far fewer letters than the *HGV*, the TM numbers are less relevant in this section and are therefore omitted.

opening formulas matches the private letter's register well. These opening formulas are thus register indicators for private letters.

2.1.3. Intensifiers

Intensifiers appear in various epistolary formulas in the papyrus letters. The two most popular intensifiers of the opening formula, viz. πολλά and πλεῖστα (cf. *supra*, chapter 2, § 4.1), seem to be linked to the private letters' register (cf. Ziemann 1910: 299-300):

Occurrences and distribution of πολλά

Text type	Number of occurrences (cf. <i>supra</i>)
HGV private letter	109 (109/3,510 = 3.1%)
TM private letter	25 (25/760 = 3.3%)
HGV official letter	5 (5/1,492 = 0.3%)
TM official letter	4 (4/753 = 0.5%)
HGV business letter	18 (18/534 = 3.4%)
TM business letter	2 (2/219 = 0.9%)
HGV petition	0 (0/2,124 = 0%)
TM petition	0 (0/219 = 0%)

The distribution of the attestations across the different text types is as follows:

Text type	Number of occurrences (cf. <i>supra</i>)	Number of occurrences / total occurrences
HGV private letter	109	109/132 = 82.6%
TM private letter	25	25/31 = 74.2%
HGV official letter	5	5/132 = 3.8%
TM official letter	4	4/31 = 12.9%
HGV business letter	18	18/132 = 13.6%
TM business letter	2	2/31 = 6.5%
HGV petition	0	0/132 = 0%
TM petition	0	0/31 = 0%

Occurrences and distribution of πλεῖστα

Text type	Number of occurrences (cf. <i>supra</i>)
HGV private letter	349 (349/3,510 = 9.9%)
TM private letter	84 (84/760 = 11.0%)
HGV official letter	25 (25/1,492 = 1.7%)
TM official letter	19 (19/753 = 2.5%)
HGV business letter	5 (5/534 = 0.9%)
TM business letter	18 (18/219 = 8.2%)
HGV petition	2 (2/2,124 = ~0%)
TM petition	3 (3/1,481 = 0.2%)

The distribution of the attestations across the different text types is as follows:

Text type	Number of occurrences (cf. <i>supra</i>)	Number of occurrences / total occurrences
HGV private letter	349	349/381 = 91.6%
TM private letter	84	84/124 = 67.7%
HGV official letter	25	25/381 = 6.6%
TM official letter	19	19/124 = 15.3%
HGV business letter	5	14/381 = 3.7%
TM business letter	18	18/124 = 14.5%
HGV petition	2	2/381 = 0.5%
TM petition	3	3/124 = 2.4%

The distribution of the two intensifiers is similar: intensifiers mostly occur in the private letters. They do appear in official letters, but far less often than in private ones. In petitions, intensifiers are almost non-existent.

2.2. Health wishes

Health wishes, both at the beginning and at the end of the letter, are considered distinctive of private letters (cf. Koskeniemi 1956: 131)¹¹:

¹¹ White acknowledged that health wishes are at odds with petitions: “the nature of the petitioner’s relation to the recipient, an inferior writing to a superior about some grievance, was a deterrent to expressions of familiarity, cordiality, and equality. It is for this reason that one never finds either an opening or a concluding wish of health in letters of petition” (White 1988: 91).

Text type	Number of occurrences
HGV private letter	627 (627/3,510 = 17.9%)
TM private letter	199 (199/760 = 26.2%)
HGV official letter	63 (63/1,492 = 4.2%)
TM official letter	65 (65/753 = 8.6%)
HGV business letter	45 (45/534 = 8.4%)
TM business letter	50 (50/219 = 22.8%)
HGV petition	0 (0/2,124 = 0%)
TM petition	3 (3/1,481 = 0.2%)

The distribution of the health wishes across the different text types is as follows:

Text type	Number of occurrences (cf. <i>supra</i>)	Number of occurrences / total occurrences
HGV private letter	627	627/735 = 85.3%
TM private letter	199	199/317 = 62.8%
HGV official letter	63	63/735 = 8.6%
TM official letter	65	65/317 = 20.5%
HGV business letter	45	45/735 = 6.1%
TM business letter	50	50/317 = 15.8%
HGV petition	0	0/735 = 0%
TM petition	3	3/317 = 0.9%

The health wish is rare in petitions. In other words, a document that, at first sight, looks like a petition because of some formal characteristics (e.g. the opening formula τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν ὁ δεῖνα), but which also contains a health wish, is in all likelihood actually a private letter with some formal features of the petition.

2.3. *Proskynema*

Also the *proskynema* formula is a good indicator for private letters (cf. Koskeniemi 1956: 145).

Text type	Number of occurrences
HGV private letter	202 (202/3,510 = 5.8%)
TM private letter	35 (35/760 = 4.6%)
HGV official letter	1 (1/1,492 = ~ 0%)
TM official letter	1 (1/753 = 0.1%)
HGV business letter	12 (12/534 = 2.2%)
TM business letter	0 (0/219 = 0%)
HGV petition	0 (0/2,124 = 0%)
TM petition	0 (0/1,481 = 0%)

The distribution across the different text types is as follows:

Text type	Number of occurrences (cf. <i>supra</i>)	Number of occurrences / total occurrences
HGV private letter	202	202/215 = 94.0%
TM private letter	35	35/36 = 97.2%
HGV official letter	1	1/215 = 0.4%
TM official letter	1	1/36 = 2.8%
HGV business letter	12	12/215 = 5.6%
TM business letter	0	0/36 = 0%
HGV petition	0	0/215 = 0%
TM petition	0	0/36 = 0%

Clearly, the *proskynema* formula belongs to the private letter register; and we might even label this formula as a ‘register marker’ exclusively linked to the private letters: in the TM classification, the *proskynema* formula only appears in the private letters (and in business letters, which are included in the corpus of private letters in this study, cf. *supra*, chapter 1). Admittedly, in the HGV classification, there is an official letter with this formula, viz. SB X 10278 (TM 16755). This however, is a doubtful case: the HGV labels it as “Brief (amtlich?)”. In this letter, a certain Horion writes to *strategos* Apollonios and asks him for a favor. His tone is therefore very polite and engaging: Horion not only wishes good health to Apollonios, but also to his family (e.g. his wife Aline), and he prays for them before Hermes (ll. 2-5). At the end of the letter, a certain Heraïdous also sends her regards to Apollonios. It is known that Heraïdous is the name of Apollonios’ daughter. The name is rare: it appears only ten times in all papyrus texts¹²; of which three occurrences are from the Apollonios archive. It is thus quite probable that the Heraïdous mentioned in SB X 10278 is part of Apollonios’ family. Given Horion’s reference to, and his concern for, Apollonios’ family in this letter, I would not consider this document as an official letter, but as private correspondence¹³. In sum, a text with a *proskynema* phrase is (almost) certainly a private letter.

¹² <http://www.trismegistos.org/nam/detail.php?record=9431> (accessed on January 15, 2013).

¹³ Also according to Fournet, the *proskynema* is at odds with official letters (Fournet 2003: 491).

2.4. Sending regards

Sending regards to the addressee's relatives or passing on greetings from your own family and friends to the addressee, is also regarded as typical of private letters (cf. Koskenniemi 1956: 149).

Text type	Number of occurrences
HGV private letter	969 (969/3,510 = 27.6%)
TM private letter	224 (224/760 = 29.5%)
HGV official letter	23 (23/1,492 = 1.5%)
TM official letter	9 (9/753 = 1.2%)
HGV business letter	37 (37/534 = 6.9%)
TM business letter	12 (12/219 = 5.5%)
HGV petition	2 (2/2,124 = ~0%)
TM petition	2 (2/1,481 = 0.1%)

The distribution of the greetings is as follows:

Text type	Number of occurrences (cf. <i>supra</i>)	Number of occurrences / total occurrences
HGV private letter	969	969/1030 = 94.1%
TM private letter	224	224/246 = 91.0%
HGV official letter	23	23/1030 = 2.2%
TM official letter	9	9/246 = 3.7%
HGV business letter	37	37/1030 = 3.6%
TM business letter	12	12/246 = 4.9%
HGV petition	1	1/1030 = ~0%
TM petition	1	1/246 = 0.4%

The philophroneic *topos* of sending regards does not seem to match the register of the official letters (cf. Fournet 2003: 491) or the petitions. Let me now investigate some of the official letters and petitions. First of all, the official letter BGU X 1913 (TM 4972) should, in my opinion, be omitted from this overview: the occurrence of greetings is doubtful as this phrase is largely supplemented (l. 7): “[-ca.?- ἀσπά]ζου”.

The only petition with greetings is SB VIII 9683 (TM 33801; late 4th century AD):

“πολλὰ προσαγωρεύω, δέσποτα ἀδελφε, προσαγωρεύω τὸν κύριον τὸν τριβοῦνον καὶ των Κωφίω καὶ πάντες ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ ἡμῶν” (ll. 25-27)

The greetings clearly do not show a personal bond between the sender and the addressee's relatives as is the case in the greetings of private letters. The philophroneic *topos* rather seems to be used to get in the addressee's good books.

In sum, sending regards to relatives and friends was merely a matter of private letters; only exceptionally does the sender greet acquaintances of the addressee in official letters or petitions.

3. Content and other indications of the text type

Private letters do not necessarily contain all of the above register indicators. This is particularly true for fragmentary letters, for private letters from the Ptolemaic or the Late Antique periods, and for documents written on ostrakon. Many philophroneic formulas typical of the private letter reach full bloom in the Roman period, e.g. the register marker of the *proskynema* formula (cf. *supra*, chapter 5). In earlier or later documents, it might sometimes be harder to find linguistic criteria to discern the text type. Further, the ostraca pose a specific problem: their writable surface is so limited that the sender does not include too many philophroneic formulas. This, too, hampers the identification of the text type. Therefore, content is another important indicator for the text type. Yet, as has been made clear in the introduction, my corpus of private letters is very heterogeneous; there is not some common subject that is found in every private letter. In fact, it has been observed that private letters have many different functions and topics: they quickly switch from one subject to another giving the impression of a stream of consciousness.

In this aspect, we can distinguish between private letters and petitions. Petitions usually only deal with one subject —which is the complaint and the request. Further, in petitions, there is always a third party who has done harm to the sender of the petition; private letters of complaint or request, on the other hand, mostly deal with a matter that only involves the sender and the addressee. For instance, the sender asks the addressee to give money, or complains that he has not (yet) received his wages. Other private letters of complaint discuss a conflict with a third party, which, however, is sought to be settled out of court: the addressee is then asked to intervene in the conflict.

Typical content-related features of official letters are, for example, the mention of third persons with their official functions or the forwarding of a copy (ἀντίγραφον).

Also the identity of the correspondents is meaningful: female senders only appear in private letters or petitions; female addressees are only found in private letters.

Further, also palaeography can be helpful (cf. Palme 2009: 376): P.Köln IV 186 (TM 65863), which is only fragmentarily preserved, should probably be considered as an official letter¹⁴ because of the literary hand the document is written in¹⁵. Also other

¹⁴ The *HGV* classifies it as a private letter.

¹⁵ Cf. <http://www.trismegistos.org/ldab/text.php?tm=65863> (accessed on February 25, 2013).

features of the layout hint at a particular text type: abbreviations, for instance, are more frequently found in official letters than in private letters, e.g. P.Mich. VI 364 (TM 12167):

Ἡρακλείδης Ἀμμωνίου δημοσιώνη(ς) καταλ(οχισμῶν) Ἀρσι(νοίτου) καὶ ἄλλων νομῶν τῷ τῆς Ἡρακλεί[δου] μ[ε]ρίδο(ς) συντακτικῶ χαίρειν. Γάιος Ἀπολινάριος Νίγερ Ἀντινοεὺς διὰ Οὐαλερί[ου] Σατορνίλου [ἀ]γξι(λημμένης) γῆς μετεπεγρά(ψατο) ὃ ἐκυρώθη τῷ ις (ἔτει) Μεχείρ (πρότερον) Ἡρωνο(ς) Πεκμήτιος κλήρου κατοικ(ικοῦ) (ἀρούρης) (ἥμισυ) (ὄγδοον), (γίνεται) σι(τικῆς) (ἀρούρης) (ἥμισυ) (ὄγδοον) . ἔρρωσο. (ἔτους) ιθ Αὐρηλίου Ἀντωνίνου καὶ Κομμ[ό]δ[ου] Καισ[άρ]ων τῶν κυρίων, Παῦνι ζ.

To some extent, also the writing material can be linked to text types: important documents such as petitions are only rarely written on ostrakon, which is considered an inferior writing material¹⁶.

4. Conclusion

Like the *hypomnema*, *cheirographon*, petition and official letter, also the private letter has some distinguishing elements typical of its register. Certain epistolary formulas can be regarded as register indicators for the private letter: this is the case for the health wishes and the salutations. In all likelihood, the *proskynema* formula does not occur in official letters or petitions, and it therefore seems to be a register marker for private letters. Also certain linguistic elements within an epistolary phrase —intensifiers, kinship terms and the opening formulas χαῖρε and χαίροις— occur far more often in private letters than in official letters or petitions.

The prototypical private letter, which has different philophroneic epistolary phrases such as health wishes and salutations, is of course easily recognizable. Other private letters only display (or preserve) one of the linguistic features typical of private letters. Sometimes the text type is not clear from linguistic features alone; then, content might shed light on the problem —although content as a criterion for distinguishing between text types is not unproblematic, as I have pointed out (cf. *supra*, chapter 1). Whereas these basic criteria have helped me in a practical way to delineate my corpus of private letters, the language of the private letters should be further investigated in order to even more accurately define the register of this text type.

¹⁶ Only a handful of petitions in my corpus were written in pottery and most of them were thought to be copies or drafts, not originals.

Appendix III Corrections and emendations

In this appendix I give an overview of the most important corrections to texts and dates proposed throughout the chapters of this thesis. I have not included doubtful editorial conjectures, for which I could not propose a more plausible supplement myself. Similarly, since my thesis has not focused on spelling mistakes and since editorial habits as to whether to correct such errors are not uniform, I have only corrected the phrases that could lead to confusion. For instance, spelling mistakes that result in forms that are non-existent in Greek, such as ἄσπασε for ἄσπασαι, do not pose any problems: the reader knows that ἄσπασε cannot possibly be the intended form, and can easily suppose that this un-Greek form must have been the result of the common confusion between ε and αι. Accentuation mistakes have been corrected tacitly and have not been included in this overview either.

1. Corrections with regard to the text

Opening formula

1. P.PalauRib. 28 (TM 26157; l. 1): “Θαῆσις Ἀρμιύσι τῶι ἀ[δε]λφῶι [-ca.?-]” → “Θαῆσις Ἀρμιύσι τῶι ἀ[δε]λφῶι [χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
2. O.Berenike II 189 (TM 89215; l. 1): “Σαμανητος Ἀμφ[ιώ]μει -ca.?-]” → “Σαμανητος Ἀμφ[ιώ]μει χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
3. O.Berenike II 194 (TM 89220; ll. 1-2): “Τρόφιμ[ος (Name) τῶ ἀδελ]φῶι [-ca.?-]” → “Τρόφιμ[ος (Name) τῶ ἀδελ]φῶι [χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
4. SB VI 9276 (TM 25296; l. 1): “[-ca.?-]ος Λογνί[νω (?) -ca.?-]” → “[-ca.?-]ος Λογνί[νω (?) χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
5. PSI VIII 974 (TM 25224; l. 1): “Νεαρχᾶς Εὐδαίμο[νι -ca.?-]” → “Νεαρχᾶς Εὐδαίμο[νι χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
6. P.Alex. 25 (TM 26994; ll. 1-2): “Δίος Ω[-ca.?-] ἀδελφῶ . [-ca.?-]” → “Δίος Ω[-ca.?-] ἀδελφῶ . [χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
7. SB XII 11253 (TM 16409; l. 1): “Πρόκλος Οὐαληρίω τ[ῶ -ca.?-]” → “Πρόκλος Οὐαληρίω τ[ῶ χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
8. P.Cair.Zen. III 59420 (TM 1060; l. 1): “Διονυσικλῆς Ζήνωνι [-ca.?-]” → “Διονυσικλῆς Ζήνωνι [χαίρειν -ca.?-]”

9. P.Cair.Zen. II 59165 (TM 812; l. 1): “Απολλώνιος Ζήν[ωνι -ca.?-]” → “Απολλώνιος Ζήν[ωνι χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
10. P.Cair.Zen. II 59171 (TM 817; l. 1): “Διότιμ[ο]ς Ζήνων[ι -ca.?-]” → “Διότιμ[ο]ς Ζήνων[ι χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
11. P.Cair.Zen. II 59185 (TM 831; l. 1): “Απολλώνιος Ζήν[ωνι -ca.?-]” → “Απολλώνιος Ζήν[ωνι χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
12. Cair.Zen. III 59380 (TM 1023; l. 1): “Αμμώνιος Ζή[νωνι -ca.?-]” → “Αμμώνιος Ζή[νωνι χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
13. P.Cair.Zen. III 59385 (TM 1028; l. 1): “Απολλόδοτος Δη[-ca.?-]” → “Απολλόδοτος Δη[-ca.?- χαίρειν]”
14. P.Cair.Zen. III 59390 (TM 1033; l. 1): “[Α]πολλώνιος Ζήνωνι [-ca.?-]” → “[Α]πολλώνιος Ζήνωνι [χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
15. P.Cair.Zen. III 59402 (TM 1044; l. 1): “[Αρτε]μίδωρος Ζήνω[νι -ca.?-]” → “[Αρτε]μίδωρος Ζήνω[νι χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
16. P.Cair.Zen. III 59505 (TM 1143; l. 1): “Πύθων Ζ[ήνωνι -ca.?-]” → “Πύθων Ζ[ήνωνι χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
17. P.Cair.Zen. III 59506 (TM 1144; l. 1): “Πύθων Ζήνων[ι -ca.?-]” → “Πύθων Ζήνων[ι χαίρειν -ca.?-]”
18. P.Sorb. III 138 (TM 121881; l. 1): “Γλαῦκος Ἡδίστη <χαίρειν>” → “Γλαῦκος Ἡδίστη”
19. SB VI 9487 (TM 27816 ; ll. 1-2): “Γέμεινος Παυλ[είνω]ι τῶι ἀδελφῶι χαί[ρειν π]ολ[λά]” → “Γέμεινος Παυλ[είνω]ι τῶι ἀδελφῶι χαί[ρειν. -ca. 1?-]ολ[-ca.?-]”

Salutations

1. SB VI 9017 Nr. 11 (TM 25239; ll. 6-7): “ἀσπάζαι (= ἀσπάζου / ἄσπασαι) Ἐρέννιν καὶ Ἀκύλαν” → “ἀσπάζαι (= ἄσπασαι) Ἐρέννιν καὶ Ἀκύλαν”
2. P.Col. VIII 225 (TM 27233; ll. 24-26): “ἀσπάζω (= ἀσπάζου) πολλὰ τὸν πατέρα (= πατέρα) μου Διογενᾶν καὶ τοὺς ἐν ὕκο (= οἴκῳ) πάντες (= πάντας) κατ’ ὄνομα” → “ἀσπάζω (= ἀσπάζω) πολλὰ τὸν πατέρα (= πατέρα) μου Διογενᾶν καὶ τοὺς ἐν ὕκο (= οἴκῳ) πάντες (= πάντας) κατ’ ὄνομα”
3. P.Lond. II 190 (S. 253) (TM 28020; ll. 25-26): “ἄσ[παζ]ε τοὺς παρ’ ἡμῶν πάν[τας]” → “ἄσ[παζ]ε (= ἄσπασε = ἄσπασαι) τοὺς παρ’ ἡμῶν πάν[τας]”
4. P.Bad. II 42 (TM 27859; ll. 20-21): “ἀσπάσω Μαρεῖν[ο]ν καὶ Σισοῦν τή(ν) μητέρα αὐτῶν” → “ἀσπάσω (= ἀσπάζω) Μαρεῖν[ο]ν καὶ Σισοῦν τή(ν) μητέρα αὐτῶν”
5. SB I 4317 (TM 23086; ll. 28-32): “ἀσπάσομαι Δῖον τὸν καὶ Κάστορα καὶ Πολυδεύκην καὶ Πεκῦσιν πολλὰ καὶ Ἀφροδίτην καὶ Ἐρμιονη<v> σὺν τεκνα (= τέκνοις)” → “ἀσπάσομαι (= ἀσπάζομαι) Δῖον τὸν καὶ Κάστορα καὶ Πολυδεύκην καὶ Πεκῦσιν πολλὰ καὶ Ἀφροδίτην καὶ Ἐρμιονη<v> σὺν τεκνα (= τέκνοις)”
6. PSI VIII 899 verso (TM 30708; ll. 21-24): “ἀσπάσεσθ[ε] καὶ Τεχ[ῶ]σιν καὶ Ἀγαθῖν[ον] κ[α]ί[ι] Διον[ύ]σιον καὶ Ἀβάσκαντα καὶ Ἐρμίαν” → “ἀσπάσεσθ[ε] (= ἀσπάζεσθε) καὶ Τεχ[ῶ]σιν καὶ Ἀγαθῖν[ον] κ[α]ί[ι] Διον[ύ]σιον καὶ Ἀβάσκαντα καὶ Ἐρμίαν”
7. P.Haun. II 18 (TM 30121; ll. 25-26): “ἄσπασον traces τὴν ἀδελφήν μοι” → “ἄσπασον traces τὴν ἀδελφήν μοι (= μου)”
8. P.IFAO II 27 (TM 35028; ll. 1-2): “✠ [-ca.?- πο]λλὰ προσκυνῶ καὶ προφθέγγομαι τ[-ca.?- τῶ ἀφ]θόνῳ αὐτῆς οἴκῳ κατ’ ὄνομα” → “✠ [-ca.?- πο]λλὰ προσκυνῶ καὶ προφθέγγομαι (= προσφθέγγομαι) τ[-ca.?- τῶ ἀφ]θόνῳ αὐτῆς οἴκῳ κατ’ ὄνομα”
9. P.Bodl. I 61 f verso (TM 10267; ll. 8-9): “[καὶ Σιλ]βανὸς ἀσπάσε[ται -ca.?-]” → “[καὶ Σιλ]βανὸς ἀσπάσε[ται (= ἀσπάζεται) ὑμᾶς οἱ σε -ca.?-]”

10. SB VI 9017 Nr. 36 (TM 25262; l. 3): “ἀσπασετε (= ἀσπάσασθε) ικ. [-ca.?-]” → “ἀσπασετε (= ἀσπάζεται? ἀσπάζετε?) ικ. [-ca.?-]”
11. P.Mich. III 208 (TM 28797; ll. 8-11): “ἀσπάζε[τε ὑμᾶς πάν]τες κατ’ ὄνομα Ἡραίσκος καὶ ἀμμάς αὐτοῦ καὶ [- ca.14 -]όδορος καὶ Καλαθοῦς. ἀσπάζετε ὑμᾶς πάν[τας]” → “ἀσπάζε[τε (= ἀσπάζεται) ὑμᾶς πάν]τες κατ’ ὄνομα Ἡραίσκος καὶ ἀμμάς αὐτοῦ καὶ [- ca.14 -]όδορος καὶ Καλαθοῦς. ἀσπάζετε (= ἀσπάζεται) ὑμᾶς πάν[τας]”
12. O.Claud. II 283 (TM 29700; l. 11): “ἀσπάζετε Ἀπολλώνις” → “ἀσπάζετε (= ἀσπάζεται) Ἀπολλώνις”
13. SB VIII 9882 verso (TM 29273; ll. 5-7): “ἀσπάζετε σὲ ἀμμάς Θαυβάριν καὶ ἄππας Δῖος καὶ Ἡρων ὁ ἀδελφός μου καὶ Δῖος ὁ υἱός μου” → “ἀσπάζετε (= ἀσπάζεται) σὲ ἀμμάς Θαυβάριν καὶ ἄππας Δῖος καὶ Ἡρων ὁ ἀδελφός μου καὶ Δῖος ὁ υἱός μου”
14. SB XVIII 13590 (TM 25383; ll. 21-22): “ἀσπάζετό σε Τούρβων καὶ [Ἀ]μάραντος καὶ τὰ παιδία” → “ἀσπάζετό (= ἀσπάζεται) σε Τούρβων καὶ [Ἀ]μάραντος καὶ τὰ παιδία”
15. P.Oxy. LXII 4340 (TM 31664; ll. 28-32): “πολλά συ (= σε) ἀσπαζω καὶ τοὺς ὑμῶν πάντας. Ἡσεῖς πολλά συ (= σε) ασπ<αζ>ετε (= ἀσπάζεται) καὶ Θεονίλλα (= Θεωνίλλα) καὶ Νηιλ[ο]ῦς (= Νειλοῦς) Διδύμη” → “πολλά συ (= σοι = σε) ἀσπαζω καὶ τοὺς ὑμῶν πάντας. Ἡσεῖς πολλά συ (= σοι = σε) ασπ<αζ>ετε (= ἀσπάζεται) καὶ Θεονίλλα (= Θεωνίλλα) καὶ Νηιλ[ο]ῦς (= Νειλοῦς) Διδύμη”
16. P.PalauRib. 36 (TM 32152; ll. 16-17): “[-ca.?-] ἀσπάζετα[ι -ca.?-]” → “[-ca.?-] ἀσπάζετα[ί σε or ὑμᾶς -ca.?-]. Obviously, the reference to the addressee can be a variant of these personal pronouns and can also precede the verb of the salutation. The same is true for the three following cases.
17. SB VI 9017 Nr. 48 (TM 25274; ll. 8-10): “ἀσπάζετ[-ca.?-]. ἦρ μου καὶ ἡ μη. [-ca.?-]ου καὶ Διδυμ[-ca.?-]” → “ἀσπάζετ[αί σε or ὑμᾶς -ca.?-] ἦρ μου καὶ ἡ μη. [-ca.?-]ου καὶ Διδυμ[-ca.?-]”
18. P.Haun. II 36 (TM 26605; ll. 18-19): “[-ca.?-] ἀ[σπάζ]ετα(ι) [-ca.?-]” → “[-ca.?-] ἀ[σπάζ]ετα(ί) [σε or ὑμᾶς -ca.?-]”
19. O.Amst. 32 (TM 70379; ll. 7-8): “[-ca.?-] ἀσπάζε[ται -ca.?-]” → “[-ca.?-] ἀσπάζε[ταί σε or ὑμᾶς -ca.?-]”
20. P.Oxy. X 1299 (TM 33637; ll. 4-5): “ἀσπάζεταί σοι πολλά Θῶνις ὁ δελφός (= ἀδελφός) σου” → “ἀσπάζεταί σοι (= σε) πολλά Θῶνις ὁ δελφός (= ἀδελφός) σου”
21. SB V 8002 (TM 30792; ll. 27-30): “ἀσπάζετέ (= ἀσπάζεται) σοι Ἑρμοκράτης καὶ Ἑλένη καὶ Χρῆστος μεγάλως καὶ Ἀχιλλεὺς καὶ τοὺς ἡμῶν (= ὑμῶν) πάντας” → “ἀσπάζετέ (= ἀσπάζεται) σοι (= σε) Ἑρμοκράτης καὶ Ἑλένη καὶ Χρῆστος μεγάλως καὶ Ἀχιλλεὺς καὶ τοὺς ἡμῶν (= ὑμῶν) πάντας”
22. O.Claud. I 143 (TM 24155; ll. 10-12): “ἀσπάζεται σοι Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ Μεσκηνίω” → “ἀσπάζεταί σοι (= σε) Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ Μεσκηνίω”
23. P.Sarap. 89a (TM 17112; l. 11): “ὑγιαίνω[ν σε] ἀσ[π]άσομαι” → “ὑγιαίνω[ν σε] ἀσ[π]άσομαι (= ἀσπάζομαι)”
24. P.Lips. I 111 (TM 33705; ll. 18-19): “ἀσπάζ[ομ]έν σε πάντες (= πάντας) οἱ (= τοὺς) ἐν τ[ῆ] οἰκ[ί]α μικροὺς τε καὶ μεγάλους. [κατ] ὄνομα” → “ἀσπάζ[ομ]έν σε πάντες οἱ ἐν τ[ῆ] οἰκ[ί]α μικροὺς (= μικροί) τε καὶ μεγάλους (= μεγάλοι) [κατ] ὄνομα”
25. P.Harr. I 158 (TM 35408; l. 1): “ἐμ (= ἐν) μὲν πρώτοις προσκυνῶ καὶ αἰσπάζομεν (= ἀσπάζομεν) τὴν ὑμῶν φιλανθρωπίαν” → “ἐμ (= ἐν) μὲν πρώτοις προσκυνῶ καὶ αἰσπάζομεν (= ἀσπάζομαι) τὴν ὑμῶν φιλανθρωπίαν”

26. P.Dura 46 (TM 30498; l. 2): “ἐρωμένος (= ἐρρωμένος) σοι ἀσπάζομαι ἀπὸ Ἀντειοχεΐας” → “ἐρωμένος (= ἐρρωμένος) σοι (= σε) ἀσπάζομαι ἀπὸ Ἀντειοχεΐας”
27. P.Oxy. XXXI 2599 (TM 30439; ll. 26-29): “ἀσπάδομαι (= ἀσπάζομαι) συ (= σε), Κύρα, καὶ τὴν ἀδελφήν/ σου καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν τῆς μητρὸς σου” → “ἀσπάδομαι (= ἀσπάζομαι) συ (= σε), Κύρα (= κυρία), καὶ τὴν ἀδελφήν/ σου καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν τῆς μητρὸς σου”
28. P.Oxy. LVI 3864 (TM 35475; ll. 35-36): “πολλά συ (= σε) προσαγορεύω (= προσαγορεύω) ἡμᾶς[ς](= ὑμᾶς) [κατ’ ὄ]νομα ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ σου” → “πολλά συ (= σοι = σε) προσαγορεύω (= προσαγορεύω) ἡμᾶς[ς](= ὑμᾶς)[κατ’ ὄ]νομα ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ σου”
29. P.Giss. I 85 (TM 19472; ll. 11-12): “Ἐρμαῖος [ὁμοί]ως σ[ε ἀσπάζο]μαι” → “Ἐρμαῖος [. . .]ως σ[ε ἀσπάζο]μαι”
30. O.Claud. I 126 (TM 24138; ll. 11-12): “ἀσπάζου Σαβεῖνον τὸν [ἀδ]ελφόν μου καὶ πάντες” → “ἀσπάζου Σαβεῖνον τὸν [ἀδ]ελφόν μου καὶ πάντες (= πάντας)”
31. BGU III 874 (TM 33246; ll. 8-11): “πολλά δὲ προσαγόρευσον τὴν κυρίαν τὴν ὑμῶν μητέρα (= μητέρα) καὶ Ἥλιαν καὶ Ῥωμᾶνον τοὺς ἀδελφούς καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἀφθονημῶν (= ἀφθονήτω ὑμῶν) οἴκῳ καὶ τὸν κύριον Εὐφρόντιον καὶ τὰ γλυκύτατα αὐτοῦ παιδιά” → “πολλά δὲ προσαγόρευσον τὴν κυρίαν τὴν ὑμῶν μητέρα (= μητέρα) καὶ Ἥλιαν καὶ Ῥωμᾶνον τοὺς ἀδελφούς καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἀφθονημῶν (= ἀφθόνῳ ὑμῶν) οἴκῳ καὶ τὸν κύριον Εὐφρόντιον καὶ τὰ γλυκύτατα αὐτοῦ παιδιά”
32. BGU XV 2492 (TM 26497; ll. 21-23): “ἄσπασο(ν) Οὐαλέριον καὶ Ἐρμανι . . . ν καὶ τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ π[. . .]σ . . . μαα [-ca.-?]” → “ἄσπασο(ν) Οὐαλέριον καὶ Ἐρμανι . . . ν καὶ τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ π[αντα]ς . . . μαα [-ca.-?]”
33. BGU III 984 (TM 33256; ll. 21-26): “προσαγορεύω τὰ [τέκνα σ]ου καὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ ἡμῶν [. . .]ο() καὶ Ἀσάειν τὸν συνεπιθέτην [αὐτοῦ] καὶ Πετίριν τὸν σύσκηνον αὐ[τοῦ καὶ] πάντας τοὺς ἡμᾶς ἀγαποῦντας [φιλά(?)τους (?) εἰδίους (= ἰδίους)]” → “προσαγορεύω τὰ [τέκνα σ]ου καὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ ἡμῶν [. . .]ο() καὶ Ἀσάειν τὸν συνεπιθέτην [αὐτοῦ] καὶ Πετίριν τὸν σύσκηνον αὐ[τοῦ καὶ] πάντας τοὺς ἡμᾶς ἀγαποῦντας (= ἀγαπῶντας) [φιλά(?)τους (?) εἰδίους (= ἰδίους)]”
34. P.Oslo II 49 (TM 28898; ll. 9-10): “ἀσπάζου τούς σου (= σοὺς) πάντας” → “ἀσπάζου τούς σου πάντας”
35. SB VI 9017 Nr. 21 (TM 25248; ll. 12-15): “ἀσπάζου Ἄπω[-ca.-?] αριανον καὶ [-ca.-?] τοὺς παρ’ ἡμῖν (= ὑμῶν) πάντες” → “ἀσπάζου Ἄπω[-ca.-?] αριανον καὶ [-ca.-?] τοὺς παρ’ ἡμῖν (= ὑμῖν or ἡμῖν) πάντες (= πάντας)”
36. P.Iand. II 9 (TM 28201; ll. 36-40): “[ἀσ]πά[ζ]ου [Λο]γγεινίαν καὶ Νεμεσιανὸν καὶ Σεραπίο[ν]α καὶ τὴν μητέρα (= μητέρα) σου καὶ Ροῦφον τὸν ἀδελφόν σου καὶ Κ[υρι]λλοῦν κα[ὶ] π[ι]άντας [το]ὺς ἐν οἴκῳ κατ’ [ὄ]νομα [πλεῖσ]τα” → “[ἀσ]πά[ζ]ου [Λο]γγεινίαν καὶ Νεμεσιανὸν καὶ Σεραπίο[ν]α καὶ τὴν μητέρα (= μητέρα) σου καὶ Ροῦφον τὸν ἀδελφόν σου καὶ Κ[υρι]λλοῦν κα[ὶ] π[ι]άντας [το]ὺς ἐν οἴκῳ κατ’ [ὄ]νομα. [. . .]τα”
37. P.Giss. I 103 (TM 33138; ll. 3-6): “[π]ροηγούμε[ένως] πολλά σ[ε ἀσπάζομα]ι καὶ τὸν ἀδ[ελφόν] σου Ἰέ[ρακα πάντ]ω[ς]” → “[π]ροηγούμε[ένως] πολλά σ[ε ἀσπάζομα]ι καὶ τὸν ἀδ[ελφόν] σου Ἰέ[ρακα . . .]ς”
38. SB XVIII 13593 (TM 30995; ll. 3-5): “πρὸ μὲν πάντων ἀσπάζομέ (= ἀσπάζομαί) σοι (= σε) παρὰ τοῖς πατρώοις θεοῖς κ[αὶ] τὰ ἀσπασκάντα (= ἀβάσκαντά) σοι πεδία (= παιδιά)” → “πρὸ μὲν πάντων ἀσπάζομέ (= ἀσπάζομαί) σοι (= σε) παρὰ τοῖς πατρώοις θεοῖς κ[αὶ] τὰ ἀσπασκάντα (= ἀβάσκαντά) σοι (= σου) πεδία (= παιδιά)”

39. SB XIV 11532 (TM 32935; ll. 9-11): “κ(ύριο)ς μ[- ca.16 -] ὁ καλὸς Φοιβάμμων καὶ πᾶσα ἡ οἰκία προσαγορεύου]σιν ὑμᾶς” → “κ(ύριό)ς μ[ου- ca.14 -] ὁ καλὸς Φοιβάμμων καὶ πᾶσα ἡ οἰκία προσαγορεύου]σιν ὑμᾶς”

Initial health wish

1. P.Cair.Zen. V 59818 (TM 1442; l. 1): “[-ca.?- ἔ]ρρωσαι καὶ τὰ ἄλλ[λα -ca.?-]” → “[εἰ -ca.?- ἔ]ρρωσαι καὶ τὰ ἄλλ[λα -ca.?-]”
2. PSI VI 651 (TM 2252; l. 1): “[-ca.?- εἰ ἔ]ρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπά σου κατὰ τ[ρόπον συναντᾶι (?) -ca.?-]” → “[-ca.?- εἰ ἔ]ρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπά σοι κατὰ τ[ρόπον (?) -ca.?-]”
3. PSI IV 342 (TM 2030; l. 2): “εἰ εὐκαιρεῖς, καλῶς ποιή[σεις (= ποιήσεις)-ca.?-]” → “εἰ εὐκαιρεῖς, καλῶς ποιή[εις (?) (= ποιεῖς) -ca.?-]”
4. P.Cair.Zen. III 59405 (TM 1047; ll. 2-6): “καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι εἰ αὐτός τε ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ εἰ ἀλύπως ἀπαλλάττεις, [..] ἂν ἔχοι ὡς ἡ[μεῖς] βουλόμε[θα]” → “καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι εἰ αὐτός τε ἔρρωσαι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ εἰ ἀλύπως ἀπαλλάττεις, [εὔ] ἂν ἔχοι ὡς ἡ[μεῖς] βουλόμε[θα]”
5. P.Münch. III 57 (TM 78543; ll. 3-5): “εἰ ἔρρωσθε, ἦ (= εἴη) ἂν, ὡς <θέλω>. τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχομαι εἰδῖν (= ἰδεῖν) ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνοντας” → “εἰ ἔρρωσθε, ἦ (= εἴη) ἂν, ὡς τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχομαι εἰδῖν (= ἰδεῖν) ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνοντας”
6. P.Grenf. II 38 (TM 43916; ll. 1-3): “Πασίων Νίκ[ωνι τ]ῶι πατρὶ πολλὰ χαίρειν καὶ [διὰ παντὸς ἐρρ(?)ωμένων(?) διευτυχεῖ[ν]” → “Πασίων Νίκ[ωνι τ]ῶι πατρὶ πολλὰ χαίρειν καὶ [διὰ παντὸς ἐρρ]ωμένων (= ἐρρωμένων) διευτυχεῖ[ν]”
7. BGU IV 1203 (TM 18653; ll. 1-2): “[Ἀσκληπιάδης Τρύφ]ωνι τῶι ἀδελφῶ[ι χαίρ]ειν [καὶ ὑγιαίνειν καθῶς [ε]ὔχομαι” → “[Ἀσκληπιάδης Τρύφ]ωνι τῶι ἀδελφῶ[ι χαίρ]ειν [καὶ ὑγιαίνειν ὡς [ε]ὔχομαι”
8. BGU III 815 (TM 9366; ll. 1-2): “πρ[ὸ μ]ὲν πάντων εὐχομέ (= εὐχομαί) σοι [ὑ]γιαίν\ειν/” → “πρ[ὸ μ]ὲν πάντων εὐχομέ (= εὐχομαί) σοι (= σε) [ὑ]γιαίν\ειν/”
9. SB XIV 11901 (TM 30092; ll. 4-5): “... εὐχομένη σου τὰ κάλλιστα ἐμ (= ἐν) βίῳ” → “... εὐχομένη σοι τὰ κάλλιστα ἐμ (= ἐν) βίῳ”
10. SB X 10279 (TM 32650; ll. 2-4): “πρὸ μὲν παντὸς (= παντός) εὐχομέ (= εὐχομαι) σου (= σοι) τη (= τήν) ὠλοκληριάν (= ὀλοκληριάν) παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Θεῶ” → “πρὸ μὲν παντὸς (= παντός) εὐχομέ (= εὐχομαι) σου τη (= τήν) ὠλοκληριάν (= ὀλοκληριάν) παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Θεῶ”
11. SB XII 10840 (TM 32557; ll. 3-5): “πρὸ μὲν πατων (= πάντων) εὐχομαι τήν .ην ὀλοκλ[ηρία]ν σου παρὰ το (= τῷ) κυ(ρίῳ) θε(ῶ)” → “πρὸ μὲν πατων (= πάντων) εὐχομαι τήν [σ]ην ὀλοκλ[ηρία]ν σου παρὰ το (= τῷ) κυ(ρίῳ) θε(ῶ)”
12. PSI III 206 (TM 31222; ll. 6-8): “εὐχομαι [δέ σ]οι τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ἀγαθὰ ὑ[αρ]χθῆναι” → “εὐχομαι[νος (= εὐχομενος) σ]οι τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστα ἀγαθὰ ὑ[αρ]χθῆναι”
13. P.Sijp. 59 a (TM 110224; ll. 3-4): “[πρὸ μὲν πά]ντων εὐχομαι ἐρρω[μένόν σε καταλά]βι (= καταλαβεῖν) τὰ γράμματά μου” → “[πρὸ μὲν πά]ντων εὐχομαι ἐρρω[μένόν σε ἀπολά]βι (= ἀπολαβεῖν) τὰ γράμματά μου”
14. SB XXVI 16716 (TM 97320; ll. 4-8): “[πρ]ὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχο[μ]αι τῷ θεῷ ὑγιαίνουσης ἀ[ε]ῖ καὶ εὐθυμούσης ἀποδοθῆναί σου (= σοι) τὰ παρὰ μου γράμματά” → “[πρ]ὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχο[μ]αι τῷ θεῷ ὑγιαίνουσης (= ὑγιαίνουση) ἀ[ε]ῖ καὶ εὐθυμούσης (= εὐθυμούση) ἀποδοθῆναί σου (= σοι) τὰ παρὰ μου γράμματά”

15. SB III 6222 (TM 31054; ll. 2-4): “[πρὸ μὲν πάντων]ν εὐχομαι π[ερὶ] ὀλοκληρία[ς] πά[σης] τῶ . .]μ. [θ]εῶ ἔπιτα καὶ τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστά σοι [ὑπαρχθῆ]ναι” → “[πρὸ μὲν πάντων]ν εὐχομαι π[ερὶ] ὀλοκληρία[ς] πά[νελεήμο]γι [θ]εῶ ἔπιτα καὶ τὰ ἐν βίῳ κάλλιστά σοι [ὑπαρχθῆ]ναι”
16. BGU III 885 (TM 9398; l. 2): “περὶ πάντων[ν εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν]” → “περὶ πάντων[ν -ca.?-]”

Proskynema formula

1. P.Oxy. LIX 3993 (TM 27849; ll. 4-5): “τὸ προσκύνημα ὑμῶν ποιοῦμεν παρὰ τοῖς πατρώοις ὑμῶν θεοῖς” → “τὸ προσκύνημα ὑμῶν ποιοῦμεν παρὰ τοῖς πατρώοις ὑμῶν (= ἡμῶν) θεοῖς”
2. P.Giss. I 81 (TM 25461; ll. 3-4): “[καὶ τὸ προσ]κύ[νη]μά σου πο[ιῶ]ι πα[ρὰ] τοῖς θεοῖς” → “[καὶ τὸ προσ]κύ[νη]μά σου πο[ιῶ]ι πα[ρὰ] θεοῖς πᾶσι] οἱ πα[ρὰ] πᾶσι θεοῖς]”
3. P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 627 (TM 25575; ll. 2-3): “[-ca.?-] . προσκύνημά σου [-ca.?-] . ισ . . . ξε παρὰ θεοῖς [-ca.?-]” → “[-ca.?- τὸ] . προσκύνημά σου [-ca.?-] . ισ . . . ξε παρὰ θεοῖς [-ca.?-]”
4. SB VI 9017 Nr. 18 (TM 25245; ll. 2-3): “[-ca.?- προσκύνημά σου [-ca.?-]” → “[-ca.?- τὸ προσκύνημά σου [-ca.?-]”
5. BGU III 827 (TM 24886; ll. 2-3): “τὸ προσκύνημά σου παρὰ τῷ Δι τῷ Κασίῳ” → “τὸ προσκύνημά σου <ποιῶ> παρὰ τῷ Δι τῷ Κασίῳ”
6. O.Lund. 15 (TM 74876; ll. 7-9): “καὶ τὸ προσκύνημα ἡμῶν πάντων [-ca.?-]” → “καὶ τὸ προσκύνημα ἡμῶν (= ὑμῶν) πάντων [ποιῶ -ca.?-]”
7. P.PalauRib. 31 (TM 29463; ll. 3-5): “καὶ τὸ προσκύνη[μα -ca.?-] . [καθ’] ἐκάστην ἡμέραν [-ca.?-]” → “καὶ τὸ προσκύνη[μά σου οἱ ὑμῶν ποιῶ - ca.?-] . [καθ’] ἐκάστην ἡμέραν [-ca.?-]”
8. SB XXII 15454 (TM 79036; ll. 4-5): “καὶ τὸ{υ} προσκύνημά σου παιωμ (= ποιῶ) παρὰ τῆ Φιλοτέρᾳ” → “καὶ τὸ{υ} προσκύνημά σου παιωμ (= ποιοῦμαι) παρὰ τῆ Φιλοτέρᾳ”
9. P.Aberd. 71 (TM 28301; ll. 3-4): “καὶ τὸ προκύνημά (= προσκύνημά) σου ποιο[ῦμαι] παρὰ -ca.?-]” → “καὶ τὸ προκύνημά (= προσκύνημά) σου ποιο (= ποιῶ) [παρὰ -ca.?-]”
10. P.Col. VIII 216 (TM 17628; ll. 2-3): “πρὸ π[ά]ν[τ]ων εὐχ[ομ]α[ί] ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνειν (= ὑγιαίνειν) τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιοῦμε[ν] παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι” → “πρὸ π[ά]ν[τ]ων εὐχ[ομ]α[ί] ὑμᾶς ὑγιαίνειν (= ὑγιαίνειν) τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιοῦμε[νο]ς παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαράπιδι”
11. SB XII 11253 (TM 16409; l. 3): “τὸ προσκύνη[μα] (= προσκύνημα) [-ca.?-]” → “τὸ προσκύνη[μα] (= πρόσκυνημά) σου οἱ ὑμῶν -ca.?-]”
12. P.Oxy. XII 1482 (TM 28994; ll. 22-24): “τὸ προσκοίνημά (= προσκύνημά) σου (=σο<ο>) ποιῶ καὶ τῶν τέκνων σου π[ά]ντων [καὶ] τῶν ἀδελφῶ[ν] σου [πάντων] κ[αὶ] - ca.9 -]” → “τὸ προσκοίνημά (= προσκύνημά) σου (= σοι) ποιῶ καὶ τῶν τέκνων σου π[ά]ντων [καὶ] τῶν ἀδελφῶ[ν] σου [πάντων] κ[αὶ] - ca.9 -]”
13. P.Aberd. 188 (TM 28321; ll. 6-8): “[τὸ προσκύνημα ὑπὲρ] ὑμῶν ποιῶ [παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαρά]πιδι” → “[τὸ προσκύνημα] ὑμῶν ποιῶ [παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σαρά]πιδι”
14. SB XXVI 16758 (TM 97238; ll. 2-3): “[-ca.?- ὑπὲρ σου] τὸ προσκύνη[μα] -ca.?- ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς [-ca.?-]” → “[-ca.?-] τὸ προσκύνη[μά σου -ca.?- ποιῶ παρὰ τοῖς ἐνθάδε θεοῖς [-ca.?-]”
15. PSI III 206 (TM 31222; ll. 4-6): “καὶ τ[ὸ] προσκύνημά σου (= σοι) [π]οιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρ’ οἷς ἐπιξενού[μ]αι θεοῖς” → “καὶ τ[ὸ] προσκύνημά σου [π]οιῶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν παρ’ οἷς ἐπιξενού[μ]αι θεοῖς”

16. P.Mich. VIII 508 (TM 27118; ll. 2-3): “[τὸ] προσκύνημα ἡμῶν ποιῶ παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σα[ράπι]δι” → “[τὸ] προσκύνημα ἡμῶν (= ὑμῶν) ποιῶ παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ Σα[ράπι]δι”

Final health wish

1. P.Princ. III 186 (TM 17278; ll. 15-16): “τὰ δ’ ἄλλα σαυ[τοῦ ἐπιμέλο]υ ἵν’ ὑγιαίνεις” → “τὰ δ’ ἄλλα σαυ[τοῦ ἐπιμέλο]υ ἵν’ ὑγιαίνεις (= ὑγιαίνης)”
2. BGU XVI 2656 (TM 23380; ll. 18-19): “καὶ σεα[τοῦ ἐπιμ(έλου)] ἵν’ ὑγιαί[νεις]” → “καὶ σεα[τοῦ ἐπιμ(έλου)] ἵν’ ὑγιαί[νεις] (= ὑγιαίνης)”
3. UPZ I 61 (TM 3452; ll. 29-31): “ἐπιμέλου δὲ τοῦ σώματος, ὅπως ὑγιαίνοντας ὑμᾶς ἀσπασώμεθα πασώμεθα (= ἀσπασώμεθα)” → “ἐπιμέλου δὲ τοῦ σώματος ὅπως ὑγιαίνοντας ὑμᾶς ἀσπασώμεθα πασώμεθα (= ἀσπασώμεθα)”
4. BGU VIII 1875 (TM 4954; ll. 17-18): “[-ca.?- πάντ]ων δὲ μάλιστα χα[ρι]εῖ τοῦ σώ(ματος) [-ca.?- ἐπιμελόμενος] ἵν’ ὑ(γιαίνης)” → “[-ca.?- πρὸ πάντ]ων δὲ μάλιστα χα[ρι]εῖ τοῦ σώ(ματος) [-ca.?- ἐπιμελόμενος] ἵν’ ὑ(γιαίνης)”
5. P.Oxy. VII 1061 (TM 20350; ll. 24-26): “ἀσπάζεται σε Ἀθηναροῦς καὶ τὰ παιδιά τὰ λοιπά. ἐπιμέλου σεα(υτοῦ) ἵν’ ὑγι[α(ίνης)]” → “ἀσπάζεται σε Ἀθηναροῦς καὶ τὰ παιδιά. τὰ λοιπά ἐπιμέλου σεα(υτοῦ) ἵν’ ὑγι[α(ίνης)]”

Closing formula

1. P.Leid.Inst. 84 (TM 78489; l. 8): “ἐρ[ρῶσθαί] σε εὔχομαι. -ca.?-]” → “ἐρ[ρῶσο -ca.?-]”
2. P.Mich. VIII 502 (TM 27112; l. 20): “ἐρρωσθ()” → “ἐρρωσθ(αι)”
3. P.Oxy. XIV 1678 (TM 31786; l. 27): “ἐρῶστέ (= ἐρρῶσθαί) σε εὔχομε (= εὔχομαι) ὀλοκληρεῖν (= ὀλοκληροῦσαν)” → “ἐρῶστέ (= ἐρρῶσθαί) σε εὔχομε (= εὔχομαι) ὀλοκληρεῖν”
4. P.Oxy. XXXVI 2783 (TM 30385; l. 28): “ἐρρῶσθαί σε χομαι (= <εὔ>χομαι)” → “ἐρρῶσθαί σ’ εχομαι (= εὔχομαι)”
5. P.Oxy. LVI 3864 (TM 35475; ll. 36-37): “ἐρρισθε (= ἐρρῶσθαί) σϋ (= σε) εὔχομεν (= εὔχομαι) πολλυ (= πολλοῖς) χρόνης (= χρόνοις)” → “ἐρρισθε (= ἐρρῶσθαί) σϋ (= σοι = σε) εὔχομεν (= εὔχομαι) πολλυ (= πολλοῖς) χρόνης (= χρόνοις)”
6. P.Giss. I 97 (TM 27875; l. 16): “ἐρρῶσθαί συ (= σε) εὔχομαι” → “ἐρρῶσθαί συ (= σοι = σε) εὔχομαι”
7. P.Oxy. VII 1068 (TM 31315; ll. 28-29): “ἐρρῶσθαί σοι εὔχομαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις” → “ἐρρῶσθαί σοι (= σε) εὔχομαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις”
8. P.Oxy. VIII 1158 (TM 31724; l. 25): “ἐρῶσστεί (= ἐρρῶσθαί) σοι εὔχομαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις” → “ἐρῶσστεί (= ἐρρῶσθαί) σοι (= σε) εὔχομαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις”
9. SB VI 9400 (TM 36839; ll. 23-25): “ἐρρῶσθαί σοι εὔχομαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις, δέσποτα” → “ἐρρῶσθαί σοι (= σε) εὔχομαι πολλοῖς χρόνοις, δέσποτα”
10. P.Mil.Vogl. II 61 (TM 28833; ll. 28-29): “ἐρρῶσ(θαί) <σε> εὔχομ(αι), κύρι(έ) μου” → “ἐρρῶσ(θαί) εὔχομ(αι), κύρι(έ) μου”
11. SB XII 11128 (TM 26782; ll. 29-30): “ἐρρῶσθαί <σε> εὔχο(μαι) τιμιώτατ(ε)” → “ἐρρῶσθαί εὔχο(μαι) τιμιώτατ(ε)”
12. P.Iand. II 10 (TM 31278; l. 9): “[-ca.?- ἐ]ρρῶσθαί <σε> [εὔχομ]α[ι.]” → “[-ca.?- ἐ]ρρῶσθαί [εὔχομ]α[ι.]”
13. P.Lond. III 973 b (S. 213) (TM 33776; l. 13): “ἐρρῶσθ(αί) <σε> εὔχομ(αι)” → “ἐρρῶσθ(αι) εὔχομ(αι)”

14. P.Stras. IV 259 (TM 26985; l. 18): “ἐρρωσθ(αί) <σε> εὔχομ(αι)” → “ἐρρωσθ(αι) εὔχομ(αι)”
15. PSI IX 1042 (TM 30663; l. 15): “ἐρρωσθαί <σε> εὔχομαι” → “ἐρρωσθαι εὔχομαι”
16. SB XIV 11330 (TM 35119; l. 3): “ἐρρωσθαί <σε> ἐν κυρίου (= κυρίῳ) εὔχομαι” → “ἐρρωσθαι ἐν κυρίου (= κυρίῳ) εὔχομαι”
17. SPP XXII 61 (TM 27639; l. 7): “ἐρρωσθ(αί) <σε> εὔχο(μαι) τιμιώτ(ατε)” → “ἐρρωσθ(αι) εὔχο(μαι) τιμιώτ(ατε)”
18. P.Freib. IV 71 (TM 26509; l. 10): “[-ca.?- ἐρρωσθ]αι εὔχομαι” → “[-ca.?- ἐρρωσθαί σ]αι (= σε) εὔχομαι”
19. P.Neph. 7 (TM 33561; ll. 12-13): “ἐρρωμένον σε ψυχῇ καὶ σώματι ὁ κύριος φυλάξει” → “ἐρρωμένον σε ψυχῇ καὶ σώματι ὁ κύριος φυλάξει (= φυλάξει or φυλάξειε)”
20. SB XIV 11666 (TM 32942; ll. 15-17): “ἐρρωσθαί σε πολλοῖς χρόνοις εὔχομαι εὐδαιμονοῖς πανο[ι]κησίᾳ” → “ἐρρωσθαί σε πολλοῖς χρόνοις εὔχομαι εὐδαιμονοῖς (= εὐδαίμοσι) πανο[ι]κησίᾳ”
21. P.Sarap. 89 c (TM 17114; ll. 9-10): “ἐρρω[σθαί σε εὔ]χομαι, μήτηρ, καὶ διὰ παντὸς εὐτυχοῦσα” → “ἐρρω[σθαί σε εὔ]χομαι, μήτηρ, καὶ διὰ παντὸς εὐτυχοῦσα (= εὐτυχοῦσαν)”
22. SB XX 14506 (TM 38467; ll. 6-10): “ἐρρωμένον σαι (= σε) καὶ εὐτύχοντα ἢ θία (= θεία) πρόνοια διαφυλάξιεν (= διαφυλάξειεν) ἐν μεγίστοις χρόνοις, δέσποτα πάτρων (= πάτρων)” → “ἐρρωμένον σαι (= σε) καὶ εὐτύχοντα (= εὐτυχοῦντα) ἢ θία (= θεία) πρόνοια διαφυλάξιεν (= διαφυλάξειεν) ἐν μεγίστοις χρόνοις, δέσποτα πάτρων (= πάτρων)”
23. P.Oxy. II 292 (TM 20563; ll. 11-13): “πρὸ δὲ πάντων ὑγιάνειν (= ὑγιαίνειν) σε εὔχ[ο]μαι ἀβασκάντως τὰ ἄριστα πράττων” → “πρὸ δὲ πάντων ὑγιάνειν (= ὑγιαίνειν) σε εὔχ[ο]μαι ἀβασκάντως τὰ ἄριστα πράττων (= πράττοντα)”
24. SB XX 14249 (TM 26173; l. 19): “ἔρρωσό μ[ου γλυκύτατε]” → “ἔρρωσό μ[οι]”
25. P.Brem. 21 (TM 19606; ll. 12-13): “ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, τιμιώτατέ μοι ἄδελφε” → “ἐρρωσθαί σε εὔχομαι, τιμιώτατέ μοι (= μου) ἄδελφε”
26. SB X 10277 (TM 16754; ll. 23-24): “[ἔρρωσό μοι] κύριε πα[-ca.?-]” → “[ἔρρωσό μοι] κύριε πά[τερ -ca.?-]”
27. SB VI 9017 Nr. 11 (TM 25239; l. 9): “ἔρρωσο κυρι. . .” → “ἔρρωσο κύριε . . .”

Other phrases

1. P.Diosk. 15 (TM 44730; ll. 3-5): “λέγω δέ σοι 'εἰ ἐρρω[-ca.?-] οἱ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ πά[ν]τα κα[τὰ] λόγον ἐστί.'” → “λέγω δέ σοι 'εἰ ἔρρω[σαι -ca.?-] οἱ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ πά[ν]τα κα[τὰ] λόγον ἐστί.'”
2. P.Mich. VIII 491 (TM 27101; ll. 11-13): “καλῶς δὲ ποιῆς (= ποιήσ<εις>) γράψασσά (= γράψασά) μοι ἐπιστολὴν πε[ρ]ὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου καὶ τῶν σῶν πάντων” → “καλῶς δὲ ποιῆς (= ποιήσ<εις> or ποιεῖς) γράψασσά (= γράψασά) μοι ἐπιστολὴν πε[ρ]ὶ τῆς σωτηρίας σου καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου καὶ τῶν σῶν πάντων”
3. SB III 6263 (TM 27792; ll. 8-10): “ἐρωτηθεῖς' (= ἐρωτηθεῖσα), ἡ κυρία μου, ἀνόκνως (= ἀόκνως) μοι γράφειν περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν, ἵνα κάγῳ (= καὶ ἐγῶ) ἀμεριμνότερα διάγω” → “ἐρωτηθεῖς' (= ἐρωτηθεῖσα), ἡ κυρία μου, ἀνόκνως μοι γράφειν περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν, ἵνα κάγῳ (= καὶ ἐγῶ) ἀμεριμνότερα διάγω”

2. Corrections with regard to dating

1. P.Corn. 49 (TM 25711): 1st century AD → late 1st century AD
2. P.Oxy. I 120 (TM 31346): 3rd century AD → 4th century AD
3. SB XVIII 13273 (TM 2542): 399 - 1 BC → 1st century BC
4. P.Alex. Inv.Nr. 627: AD 1-399 → after AD 75

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