

A stylized map of the Mediterranean region, showing the coastlines of Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. The map is rendered in shades of blue and green, with the landmasses in a light green and the sea in a light blue. The map is centered on the Mediterranean Sea.

**Accounting in the Roman Army**  
**Some Remarks on PSI II 119r + Ch.L.A. IV 264**

**Ornella Salati**

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Irene Pajón Leyra, José-Domingo Rodríguez Martín & Marco Antonio Santamaría

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**Accounting in the Roman Army**  
**Some Remarks on PSI II 119r + Ch.L.A. IV 264\***

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1. Introduction

In 1903, in the third volume of *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, A. S. Hunt published a fragment containing sections of Plato's *Gorgias* (P.Oxy. III 454). In 1913, four other fragments from the same roll were published by T. Lodi as PSI II 119v and afterwards, in 1977, three further fragments were joined to the same group by R. Pintaudi, namely P.Laur. IV 134v.<sup>1</sup> The Platonic dialogue –in order P.Laur. IV 134 + P.Oxy. III 454 + PSI II 119v–<sup>2</sup> was written around the late second century CE on the verso of a papyrus roll which bears on the recto, along the fibres, an account book in Latin. Interest in the *Gorgias* has overshadowed the interest in the Latin document. Only in 1967 did R. Marichal publish the recto of P.Oxy. III 454 as Ch.L.A. IV 264,<sup>3</sup> and just very recently PSI II 119r came to light.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, P.Laur. IV 134r still lies unpublished, but for a good reason: in antiquity, the roll was subjected to considerable tearing, and, in some parts, it was covered by sheets from several Greek documents.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, the recto of this papyrus has been lost.<sup>6</sup>

Now, the recent publication of PSI II 119r requires a closer reconsideration of the whole roll. PSI II 119r and Ch.L.A. IV 264 were written by the same hand and feature two different sections of an account book that can be dated with accuracy: in Ch.L.A. IV 264 there is evidence for six units and, in l. 10, the *cohors I Lusitanorum* is mentioned. This cohort made its first appearance in Egypt in 105 CE at the latest,<sup>7</sup> and this date can thus be assumed as a certain *terminus post quem*. Moreover, in PSI II 119r, fr. a l. 17, the abbreviation of the *legio III Cyrenaica* can be found. The movements of this legion have been quite widely discussed, but, according to a recent, commonly held, view,<sup>8</sup> in 125 CE it was permanently transferred to Arabia.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pintaudi (1977) 111-115. He also re-edited the papyrus in 1983 as P.Laur. IV 134.

<sup>2</sup> Re-edition in Carlini / Violante (1999) 70-78 (= TM 62613, LDAB 3798, MP<sup>3</sup> 1414.1). On the dating of the re-use, which perhaps occurred after an interval of 15/20 years after the Latin side was written, see Lama (1991) 98-99.

<sup>3</sup> Ch.L.A. IV 264, 78-80 (= TM 69879).

<sup>4</sup> Salati (2017) 71-111. A brief reference to this papyrus can be found in Ch.L.A. XLVII 1461, 116 (= TM 70149).

<sup>5</sup> See Pintaudi (1977) 12, n. 14-15; Puglia (1997) 45, 52, n. 98. In general, on factors which could cause the deterioration of papyrus, see Leach / Tait (2000) 239-243.

<sup>6</sup> Together with P.Laur. IV 134r also PSI II 119r, in particular fr. d, has been partially covered by a small piece of a Greek document, orientated at a right angle to the Latin text.

<sup>7</sup> Lesquier (1918) 92; Daris (1988) 760-761; Alston (1995) 175-176.

<sup>8</sup> Gatier (2000) 341-349. See also Speidel (1977) 691-697; Cizek (1983) 463; Alston (1995) 25, 73.

<sup>9</sup> The palaeographical features are also consistent with the early second century CE. See Marichal (1950) 123; Ch.L.A. IV 264, 79; Ch.L.A. XLVII 1461, 116.

Furthermore, and more importantly, this account book is clearly related to the Roman army, but the hypothesis suggested by Marichal –that it was kept in an office of the central administration, probably that of the *idios logos*–<sup>10</sup> appears hard to confirm.

The present paper aims to analyse the evidence in order to describe the exact nature of the document and clarify its purpose. Given their different contents, PSI II 119r and Ch.L.A. IV 264 raise different questions and therefore they will be examined separately. Here attention will be paid only to the salient points. In the final part of the paper, considerations of the evidence as a whole will reassess the theory of the original setting of the roll and will support the alternative explanation of it as a specific military account book.

## 2. PSI II 119r (fig. 1)

The literary content of the verso, arranged in columns of standard width of 5.7 cm, with standard intercolumnium of 1 cm, allows us to reconstruct the format of the roll and to work out the place of all the fragments within it. Here it is sufficient to say that, according to my reconstruction,<sup>11</sup> the height of the roll was about 31 cm, and its length was about 10 m, which were typical measures.<sup>12</sup> In particular, PSI II 119r was likely to stand at a distance of ca. 20 cm from the beginning of the roll. It consists of four fragments,<sup>13</sup> in which parts of three columns have survived. Since fr. a is the best preserved, my analysis will focus mostly on this item. The text runs as follows:

- - -

1                   ]s . . [ . ] [ . . ] . [   
*K(alendis) Aprilibu[s]*   
*ratori pa[ . ] . . [*   
*praef(ect-) castr(orum) [*   
5                   *firme . . . . . [*   
                  *(denar-) arg(ent-) et aur[*   
X[ . ] . . [ . ] . . . . . [                   ±16                   *e]x epistu[la*   
                  *r . . [                   ±20                   ] . u . ri [p]raef(ecti) castr(orum)]*   
                  *sum[ma                   ±18                   ]is f(it) · Aug(ust-) III[                   ±5 ]*   
10                   *defun[ct- . . . ] . . . . [                   ±5 ] . . [ . . . ] . . . . [ . . . ] . . . rē . [                   ±3 ]*   
                  *ipse sa[ . . . ] . . [ . ] . at propos[ . . ] . . [ . ] . . [ . ] . o . . . [                   ±4 ]*   
                  [ . . . ] *es prebant bona                   (vac.)                   ad k(astra)*   
                  *XIII K(alendas) M[ai]i[a]s i . ti . m[ . ] u . r . . ex epistu[la P]etroni praef(ecti)*   
                  *castr(um) ex b[oni]s . erv . [ . . ] m XIII qui mortem*   
15                   *sibi conscit exit auri ob debi[um] (vac.) ad k(astra)*   
*VIII K(alendas) Mai(as) Valerio Capitori (centuria) Papiri heredi Valeri ca[ . . ]*   
                  *dr(achm- )*   
                  . . . . m[ . . ] *leg(io-) III Cyr(enaica-) ex epistu[la P]etroni praef(ecti) castr(orum)*   
                  [*ex bonis*] . *ervilum XXV qui mortem sibi conscit*   
                  [*exit auri*] *ob debi[um]                   (vac.)                   ad k(astra)*

<sup>10</sup> Marichal (1964) 110-111; Ch.L.A. IV 264, 79.

<sup>11</sup> Salati (2017) 72-79.

<sup>12</sup> On this point see Puglia (1996) 56, who equally speaks about roll length; Johnson (2004) 141, 192, 221 indicates ca 27.9 cm in height and 8 m in length.

<sup>13</sup> The fragments are, unfortunately, numbered with respect to the text on the verso and therefore come in reverse order with regard to this text.

Here the greater part of one column is visible and just the upper margin is missing. The information is grouped into four distinct blocks that are arranged under the days of the months. The opening of each entry is indicated by *ekthesis* of the first line. In addition, the scribe left blank spaces at the end of entries (ll. 12, 15, 19) to highlight certain elements of the document. This layout is standard among military papyri and is employed in different kinds of records, such as morning reports (e.g. PSI XIII 1307, mid-first century CE) and lists (e.g. P.Dura 97, 251 CE).

Focusing attention on the language, entries 3 (ll. 13-15) and 4 (ll. 16-19), the best preserved, make it evident that the present document deals with payments relating to soldiers who had died by suicide. All details point to the military sphere exclusively. In particular, entry 3 contains the following salient elements: date (1), mention of written instruction (*ex epistula*) by the prefect of the camp (2), reference to some goods followed by figures (3), and, at the end, the information that the suicidal soldier owed an amount of gold, expressed with the partitive *auri*, to the camp to cover his debt (4).<sup>14</sup> Entry 4 follows a similar pattern but, after the date, it makes mention of one Valerius Capito, who belonged to the *centuria* of Papirius and who was appointed as heir to a homonymous Valerius. At the end of l. 16 the abbreviation of drachmae occurs, but no figures survive at all. At the beginning of l. 17 the mention of the *legio III Cyrenaica* is found. On the one hand, the content of this latter entry might recall that of another military record, P.Mich. VII 435 + 440, which lists inheritances and payments of the *vicesima hereditatum* and concerns the *legio III Cyrenaica* as well. On the other hand, one should note that the Michigan papyrus consists only of autographed receipts, written by different hands, in which the content appears quite fixed and suicide is never mentioned as the cause of death. In this light, it is evident that the present papyrus is unique in its genre and a very important document. Indeed, it is the only papyrological source attesting to cases of self-killings within the Roman army. What is more, it gives a clear insight into the financial outcomes of these suicides.<sup>15</sup>

It is worth remembering that Roman law did not punish suicide, but, as is well known, there were situations in which it caused juridical complications.<sup>16</sup> If the accused committed suicide before the court had come to a verdict, this was thus to be interpreted as a confession, and the Roman state confiscated his goods as if he had been condemned.<sup>17</sup> As for soldiers, given their special relationship with the state, suicide was regarded as a form of desertion and, consequently, there was a general tendency by the state to discourage it.<sup>18</sup> Financial penalties, among others, were employed for this purpose.<sup>19</sup> In view of the date of the roll, we should note that an important change in the law occurred in the early second century CE, when the emperor Hadrian narrowed down the valid and invalid motives for suicide (*distinctio*

<sup>14</sup> For this meaning of the verb *exeo*, see OLD, s.v. 6b, with the example of Cic.Ver. 2.61: *nummos qui per simulationem ab isto exierant revertisse*.

<sup>15</sup> For a full discussion of the topic from a legal point of view, see Mentxaka (2010); Manni (2013) 293-374, with earlier bibliography. In general, for the suicide in antiquity, see Gris  (1982); van Hooff (1990); Veyne (1990).

<sup>16</sup> See van Hooff (1990) 83; Manni (2013) 296-297.

<sup>17</sup> On this point, see Wacke (1980) 52-61; Volterra (1999) 187-189, 193-207; Manni (2013) 293-315 with a discussion of relevant passages from Digesta.

<sup>18</sup> Veyne (1981) 266-268; Manni (2013) 339, 349-350.

<sup>19</sup> A complete list of military penalties is provided by Dig. 49.16.3.1 (Mod. 4 de poenis): *Poenae militum huiusmodi sunt: castigatio, pecuniaria multa, munerum indictio, militiae mutatio, gradus deiectio, ignominiosa missio. Nam in metallum aut in opus metalli non dabantur nec torquentur*. On this, see the remarks of Manni (2013) 339 n. 147, with further bibliography.

*causarum*).<sup>20</sup> The fullest evidence of this is provided by a section of the *Digesta*, in which Ulpianus is analysing the opinion of Sabinus about wills.<sup>21</sup> In a letter to the governor of Britannia, the emperor distinguished the cases in which a soldier could keep his testamentary rights. This was possible if the suicide was committed because of the burden of age (*taedium*) or grief (*dolor*). In addition, Hadrian established that, without a legal will and heirs, his goods went to the camp as a whole.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, when we compare the imperial disposition with the present papyrus two points of interest come to light. First, the document does not contain any reference to the reasons for the suicide. Second, unlike the instance of Valerius Capito, legitimate offspring of dead Valerius, no mention of heirs can be found for suicide cases. For these features, the record would seem to predate Hadrian's regulation (119 CE). Unfortunately, the evidence is not sufficiently explicit to support this assumption. Moreover, this omission can be easily explained by the fact that the soldier was in debt (*ob debitum*) with the legionary cash. Given its nature and purpose, the document considers only the economic aspects. And, thereby, it gives us a glimpse into the Roman idea of army properties.

### 3. Ch.L.A. IV 264 (fig. 2)

According to my reconstruction, Ch.L.A. IV 264 comes from an outer portion of the roll. The estimated loss between PSI II 119r and this fragment is about 154 cm.<sup>23</sup> The text as a whole reads:

- - -

1                   ] . [  
                   Iri[naeo Aug(usti) l(iberto)  
                   cartu[  
                   in bassi[ ]c . [  
 5   XII K(alendas) 'Kal(endas)' Decembres[ ±9 r]atio[  
           reliqua[ ex d[                   ±9                   ] . . et ra[tione  
           Irinaeo Aug(usti) l(iberto) [   ±7   ]gentos [ ]  
           et d[i]stributo[                   ±8                   ]uris  
           missae ab Vale[rio Perp]etuo c(enturione) de chor[ibus et alis i(nfra) s(criptis)]  
 10   coh(ortis) I Lus[ ]tanor]um (vac.) d(enari) [  
           coh(ortis) II [ ]turaeo]rum [  
           c[oh(ortis)] II [ ]hebae]orum [  
           a[ ]lae Vocon]tiorum [  
           a[                   ±9                   ]orum [  
           ]

<sup>20</sup> For a concise picture of the emperor and his juridical activity, see Manfredini (2008) 132-138. Full bibliography in Mentxaka (2010) 114 n. 14. Disagreement on this point is expressed by Volterra (1999) 191, who attributes these juridical changes to the reign of Tiberius.

<sup>21</sup> Dig. 28.3.6.7 (Ulp. 10 ad Sab.): *quam distinctionem in militis quoque testamento divus Hadrianus dedit epistulam ad Pomponium Falconem, ut, si quidem ob conscientiam delicti militaris mori maluit, irritum sit eius testamentum: quod si taedio vitae vel dolore, valere testamentum aut, si intestato decessit, cognatis aut, si non sint, legionis ista sint vindicanda*. Scholars generally agree on the authenticity of this section: see Wacke (1980), 66 and n. 172, Volterra (1999) 190-191; Manni (2013) 341-342. Specifically, for an overview of the different explanations of the section, see Manni (2013) 307-308, 340.

<sup>22</sup> More concisely, the same disposition can be found also in Dig. 29.1.34 pr. (Pap. 14 quaest.): *eius militis, qui doloris impatientia vel taedio vitae mori maluit, testamentum valere vel intestati bona ab his qui lege vocantur vindicari divus Hadrianus rescripsit*. Further evidence is collected and analysed by Manni (2013) 298-306.

<sup>23</sup> Salati (2017) 78-79.

15                    *coh(ortis) I [Flavi]ae Cilicum [*  
*item [a]llatae [ ±8 ] per Livium . [*  
                          [[*(centurionis) p(rimi)pili sc . [ ±9 ] son . . lum[*  
  [[ . . . . . ]

(vac.)

*summa ac[cep]ta d[racm(arum)] CLXXXV[*  
20        *et quae p[er B]rutu[m] latae erant [*  
          *fiunt dr[acm(ae) Aug(ustae) . . ] CXXXVIII[*  
                      *et calcul[atae sunt dr]acm(arum) Aug(ustarum) [ ±5 argenti]*  
                      *Tyri XVI · aeris Italic[i*

On the basis of the text on the verso, we may conclude that the papyrus preserves the greater part of the column, and presumably only the top margin and the first two lines of the text are missing. The layout, which emphasises the various steps taken by the scribe, resembles that of several military lists.<sup>24</sup>

As for the content, in his excellent edition Marichal summarises the evidence as follows: «the accounts record receipts from six detachments of troops stationed in Upper Egypt, from the exploitation of the salt monopoly and perhaps also the patrimonium».<sup>25</sup> He believes that the expression *in bassilic* in l. 4 alludes to the βασιλική γῆ and suggests a restoration such as *in basilicis agris*. From his point of view, this would refer to receipts from the imperial estates. Moreover, unlike the present edition, in l. 16 he reads the sequence *linae* and restores the word [*sa*]*linae*. In Roman Egypt, as is well known, the production, trade, and distribution of salt were carefully controlled by the state, because of its link with taxation.<sup>26</sup> These two kinds of payments thus lead the scholar to the conclusion mentioned in the introduction, according to which the register was deposited in an office of the central administration, perhaps recognizable as that of the *idios logos*.<sup>27</sup>

However, the evidence cannot support this view. First, as far as the word *bassilic-* is concerned, the loss of the context warns us to be cautious: in general, we cannot be sure about its exact meaning and use. In addition, if the adjective concerns a specific land category, one should take into account the most recent debate on the categorization and status of land in Roman Egypt. Several essential studies have shown the crucial distinction between the Ptolemaic fiscal settlement and that introduced by Augustus, especially regarding terminology and the conception of the properties.<sup>28</sup> The old Ptolemaic royal land was transformed into *ager publicus*, and was placed under the control of the prefect and his subordinate in charge of fiscal responsibilities, the *dioiketes*. The adjective βασιλικός ('royal') was replaced by the new δημόσιος, implying a reference to the *populus Romanus*,<sup>29</sup> and was used in opposition to the adjective ἰδιωτικός, that is the equivalent to the Latin *privatus*. Since in fact βασιλικός continued throughout the Roman period, its use broadly

<sup>24</sup> Among financial documents, comparisons can be made with P.Fay. 105, bank deposits of the riders of an *ala* (120-150 CE), and with Ch.L.A. III 203, a receipt for hay from a *turma* (130 CE). In the third century CE a further parallel is provided by P.Oxy. IV 735, a receipt for wheat for cavalrymen and infantry (4 Sept 205 CE).

<sup>25</sup> Ch.L.A. IV 264, 79.

<sup>26</sup> Adams (2013) 272-274.

<sup>27</sup> On the jurisdiction and responsibilities of the *idios logos*, see Swarney (1970).

<sup>28</sup> Parássaglou (1978); Rathbone (1993); Rowlandson (1996); Lo Cascio (2000) 122-130; Monson (2012).

<sup>29</sup> Rathbone (1993) 85; Rowlandson (1996) 39 n. 35, 93. By contrast, according to Lo Cascio (2000) 127 n. 85, the adjective δημόσιος cannot be regarded as the equivalent of the Latin *populus Romanus*; rather, it basically indicated that the land was under the control of the emperor.

overlapped with that of δημόσιος.<sup>30</sup> In the papyrological documents, it is not always self-evident that it refers to a category of land and the use of a classification term such as *bassilic-* does not find parallels in Latin papyri. Last and not least, the word *bassilic-* could have another meaning and, as the use of the preposition *in* suggests, mean a real place. As an abbreviation of a toponym, *Basil(-)* occurs in P.Oxy. XIV 1659. l. 27 (218-221 CE) and BGU XIII 2365. l. 8 (late third century CE), where it refers to a village of the Herakleopolite nome, perhaps of the Koites toparchy.<sup>31</sup> Alternatively, it would mean a specific building of the fort, the so-called *basilica exercitatoria*. Such buildings have been identified in legionary fortresses, but their purpose has not been confirmed: the *basilica* was used as drill-hall, but, in some camps, it was also a sort of granary (*horreum*) or workshop (*fabrica*).<sup>32</sup>

As for l. 10, direct inspection of the papyrus cannot confirm the reading *linae* suggested by Marichal and thus a reference to the salt monopoly; the scribe clearly wrote *llatae*.<sup>33</sup> Since these letters are preceded by a very small lacuna,<sup>34</sup> a possible restoration is [*a*]llatae. The verb thus would refer to the transfer of drachmae through Livius, like in l. 20. In the light of this, it seems reasonable to conclude that the present account is not a list of revenues held by the *idios logos*. It is, rather, a list of income of the camp. In order to corroborate this interpretation, comparative evidence can be used. In particular, the last entry (ll. 21-23), which gives the total amount expressed first in drachmae, the normal currency of Egypt, and then in other coinage, finds close parallels in some financial accounts from Vindolanda.<sup>35</sup> The tablets prove that the military clerks were accustomed to counting large sums in cash and converting money.<sup>36</sup> In addition to the bureaucratic documents, the extensive use of coin is clearly shown by the archaeological evidence. Vast quantities of coins, even of high value, have been discovered in military sites on the northern frontier.<sup>37</sup> A comparison with what we know about the economic activities of the Roman army thus confirms that the present account pertains to military matters.

Despite this, certain crucial points of the text remain unclear, in particular the source of payments. As an alternative to the collection of taxes, suggested by Marichal, one might suppose that these cash sums were connected with some financial activity of the units or with the supply system paid in money instead of in kind. Together with the *annona*, special levies could also be demanded by the army.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, the extant evidence does not allow for a more precise interpretation. Moreover, some details of the money collection by soldiers cannot be securely inferred. In addition to the six auxiliary units listed in ll. 10-15, specific ranks are mentioned. Firstly, the centurion Valerius Perpetuus named in l. 9 took care of the carriage of the cash, as the phrase *missae ab* would suggest. Secondly, the *primus pilus*

<sup>30</sup> As Rowlandson (1996) 40 points out, in most instances «it was essentially an arbitrary choice of one description rather than the other». For an overview of the use of category terms in official tax documents and of the specific difficulties in their meaning in Oxyrhynchite evidence, see pp. 31-62.

<sup>31</sup> Pruneti (1981) 38; Falivene (1998) 58.

<sup>32</sup> For the basilica as drill-hall, see Collingwood / Richmond (1969) 17, 23, 41-42, 45. For instance, it was employed in the camp of Lambaesis for this purpose; see Le Bohec (2008) 257-259. In contrast, the basilica of the fort of Inchtuthil has been interpreted as granary or workshop by Pytts / Joseph (1985) 123-128.

<sup>33</sup> The confusion is easy to explain: the *I* read by Marichal corresponds to *L* with a short and almost horizontal second stroke (a comparable letter shape can be seen in the word *pilis* in l. 17); then, the scholar mistakes the letters *AT* for *N*, because the horizontal stroke of *T* has almost fully vanished.

<sup>34</sup> The hole of the lacuna accommodates just one letter or two very narrow ones.

<sup>35</sup> T.Vindol. II 178; T.Vindol. II 185. ll. 28-29; T.Vindol. II 191. ll. 14-15; T.Vindol. II 192. ll. 9-10; T.Vindol. II 201. l. 11

<sup>36</sup> Bowman (1998) 34-35.

<sup>37</sup> See Alston (1995) 102, who points out that the Roman army was an important market and source of coinage.

<sup>38</sup> These kinds of levies are well documented from the legal sources and papyri; on the topic, see Isaac (1990) 285-291.

recorded in l. 17 likely played an active role as well, but in this passage the reading remains rather uncertain and does not supply the details of his task. Thirdly, one can find two men, Brutus and Livius, in ll. 16 and 20. Their names are very usual and neither the rank nor the unit to which they belonged are stated. Perhaps both could be ordinary soldiers in charge of carrying specific, more abbreviated account books.<sup>39</sup>

Lastly, a further point of interest concerns the role of Irinaeus *Augusti libertus* mentioned twice, in ll. 2 and 7. Given the condition of the item, his role remains here unclear, but this detail can be explained and reinterpreted in the light of my new interpretation. Military evidence from different contexts clearly witnesses the presence of imperial slaves or freedmen and their involvement both in the supply system and in commercial transactions with the Roman army.<sup>40</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

If we look at the evidence as a whole, we do not find any data to support the view that the roll comes from the office of the *idios logos* or any other civil department. It must rather be placed in a military context. Specifically, PSI II 119r and Ch.L.A. IV 264 feature an account book or ledger related to different aspects of the internal administration of the Roman army. This account book combines special records about inheritances and debts of soldiers who died and those who committed suicide (PSI II 119r), together with payments and summaries of revenues (Ch.L.A. IV 264). It might have come from the camp at Nicopolis, or more likely from the governor's headquarters, since soldiers from several units are mentioned.

Furthermore, the evidence provides us with a stimulating body of new data relating to the military life of the second century CE: PSI II 119r throws light on the juridical condition of the soldiers and their property after suicide and provides the unique papyrological attestation of the phrase *qui sibi mortem conscit*.<sup>41</sup> It adds a new *praefectus castrorum* to our list, and also elucidates some administrative tasks which he undertook.<sup>42</sup> Ch.L.A. IV 264 enriches our knowledge of the financial and economic activities of the soldiers. It shows a variety of military ranks involved in the different stages of collecting the revenues in cash.

If my interpretation is right, this account book offers further evidence of the meticulous paperwork carried out within the Roman army and may be of more general relevance for the imperial military history.

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<sup>39</sup> Marichal in Ch.L.A. IV 264, 79, who quotes Cic. Ver. 1.100. As regards the first instance, he is in doubt whether Livius was the messenger or the administrator. See also T.Vindol. II 190, a long daily account of foodstuffs, in which, besides other entries, a similar notation *per Privatum* can be found. According to Bowman (1998) 35, the servile status of Privatus is suggested by his name and the use of the word *dominus* (l. 31).

<sup>40</sup> As for the supply system, see P.Dura 64, a letter from the praepositus to the tribunus of the cohors Palmyrenorum (221 CE), which deals with the distribution of barley by an imperial freedman. As regards commercial transactions in the Vindolanda tablets, see Bowman (1998) 34. For Egyptian evidence, see the instance of Gaion καισαριανός provided by O.Claud. III 417, who was a freedman at the centre of a particular loan transaction. On this, see the remarks of Cuvigny (2000) 60-62.

<sup>41</sup> The sentence *qui sibi mortem conscit* is the traditional way to refer to self-killers. Latin, in fact, has no distinctive word to signify 'suicide' or 'self-murder'. For several phrases meaning 'to killing oneself', see van Hooff (1990) 139 n. 11, 272, 246-250 (Appendix C). Among these, the most common was just *adsciscere / conscicere sibi mortem*.

<sup>42</sup> A list of *praefecti castrorum* in the early principate is provided by Saddington (1996).

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Plates

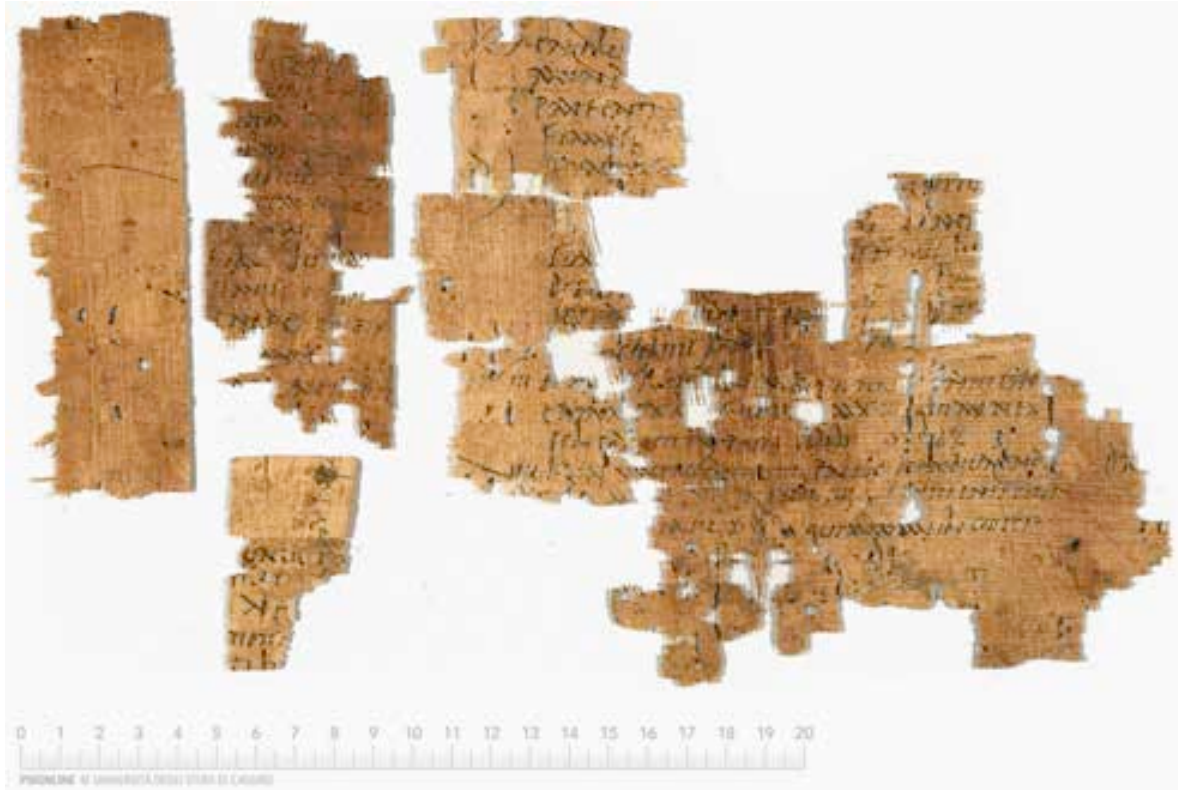


Fig. 1 PSI II 119r

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Fig. 2 Ch.L.A. IV 264

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