

# The Asklepiades and Athenodoros Archives: A Case Study of a Linguistic Approach to Papyrus Letters

*Delphine Nachtergaele*

**T**HE ARCHIVE of Asklepiades and the archive of Athenodoros both date (mainly) to the first century B.C. and come from mummy cartonnages which were found in Abusir El-Melek in the Herakleopolite nome. Because of their identical geographical and chronological context, 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.”<sup>1</sup>

The archive of Asklepiades is thought to consist of twelve papyri dated between 29 and 23 B.C., and was for the most part edited in the Berlin collection.<sup>2</sup> The documents are cen-

<sup>1</sup> R. S. Bagnall and R. Cribiore, *Women's Letters from Ancient Egypt* (Ann Arbor 2006) 114, 123.

<sup>2</sup> 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 1203–1209 (Trismegistos 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18653–18659) and published them as the archive of Asklepiades; he further mentioned three very fragmentary and still unpublished letters of the same archive (P.Berl.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). Whenever a document is referred to for the first time in this article, it is accompanied by its Trismegistos reference number, if available ('TM'). For the Trismegistos database see [www.trismegistos.org](http://www.trismegistos.org), where one can access the texts ([www.trismegistos.org/arch/detail.php?tm=111&i=1](http://www.trismegistos.org/arch/detail.php?tm=111&i=1) for Asklepiades, [www.trismegistos.org/arch/detail.php?tm=26&i=1](http://www.trismegistos.org/arch/detail.php?tm=26&i=1) for Athenodoros).

tered around a certain Asklepiades, to whom various letters were written. He came from a wealthy family in the Herakleopolite nome who drew income from agricultural activities, such as the production of wheat and wine, the drying of vegetables, and land lease.<sup>3</sup> It seems that the family properties were scattered all over the Herakleopolite nome.<sup>4</sup> Asklepiades himself was active in the shipping business.<sup>5</sup> Especially the intimate letters from Asklepiades' sister (wife?)<sup>6</sup> Isidora have been widely studied (and will be central in this study as well).

In the archive of Athenodoros, all 75 texts date between the beginning of the first century B.C. and A.D. 5. The archive is a heterogeneous collection of private, business, and official letters, as well as petitions, lists, and accounts from the Herakleopolite nome.<sup>7</sup> The archive is named after the central figure Athenodoros, who was *epistates* and *dioiketes* of a district in the Herakleopolite nome. Apart from those official functions, it is clear from an official letter to the prefect of Egypt (*BGU XVI* 2605; TM 23328) that he was also the *φροντιστής* of the properties of a certain Asklepiades in the Herakleopolite nome.<sup>8</sup> Athenodoros also appears to be a trader: several letters suggest that he was involved in shipping.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *BGU XVI* 2665.16–17.

<sup>4</sup> Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters* 114.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. B. Olsson, *Papyrusbriefe aus der frühesten Römerzeit* (Uppsala 1925) 24 (“Reeder”).

<sup>6</sup> The kinship term ἀδελφός with which Isidora addresses Asklepiades is used between siblings, spouses, and friends: E. Dickey, “Literal and Extended Use of Kinship Terms in Documentary Papyri,” *Mnemosyne* 57 (2004) 131–176, at 154–161. As there is no way to determine their connection, I will assume a literal use of ἀδελφός and refer to Isidora as Asklepiades' sister.

<sup>7</sup> In this collection there are 59 letters; the line between official and private letters is often hard to draw.

<sup>8</sup> See W. Brashear, *The Archive of Athenodoros* (= *BGU XVI* [Berlin 1995]) 80–81.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. 2604.7–9 (TM 23327): ἐάν σοι φαίνεται τῶι Σκ[α]λίφωι γράψαι περὶ τοῦ πλοίου καὶ ἐμοῦ ἵνα με σὺν τῶι πλοίωι ἀπολύσῃ.

All of the above goes to show that the social and business contexts of the two archives are very similar. Moreover, the fact that a person named Asklepiades appears in the Athenodoros archive hints at a close connection between the two collections. In the following sections I investigate onomastics in the two archives more deeply, and will also present linguistic features which are present only in the two archives or significantly more than in other papyrus letters, much more even than in letters of similar provenance and date.<sup>10</sup> This will establish the interconnection which has until now been only a hypothesis.<sup>11</sup>

### The Formulaic Language of the Letters

#### 1. The health wish with a comparative subclause

##### *The Asklepiades archive and Isidora's writing style*

Some texts in the Asklepiades archive give us a unique insight into the intimate contact of Asklepiades with his sister Isidora, who wrote him four letters (plus two so far unpublished). Isidora's apparent literacy strengthens the case that this is the archive of a wealthy family. However, the fact that she could read and write does not mean that all her letters are autographic: as Bagnall and Cribiore pointed out, 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:<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> This investigation is part of a large study of all private papyrus letters (300 B.C.–A.D. 800, approximately 4500 in total), which I have assembled in a database and of which I am studying the epistolary formulas from a sociolinguistic perspective. This work is being funded by the Flanders Research Foundation.

<sup>11</sup> To begin with, a word of caution: in this section I try to convincingly link the two archives on the basis of shared linguistic evidence. Inevitably, this investigation is based on the published papyri. I am fully aware that the discovery and publication of new texts could challenge the case presented here.

<sup>12</sup> Bagnall and Cribiore, *Women's Letters* 6.

Some women, it turns out, were able to write with ease, but they are also the most likely to have been able to afford to own or hire an amanuensis. It is, ironically, those most capable of writing who are least likely to do so.

Accordingly, Isidora's letters can be divided into two groups, non-autographic and autographic. *BGU IV* 1204 (TM 18654) and 1207 (TM 18657) are written by a professional scribe in clear business Greek. An important characteristic here is the fact that Asklepiades is addressed by his full name. On the other hand, 1205 (TM 18655) and 1206 (TM 18656) are autographic letters of Isidora, and they use the shortened form of Asklepiades' name, Asklas.<sup>13</sup> This feature can be regarded as a trace of Isidora's loving attitude toward her brother: since the scribe does not use the nickname, its presence in the autographs is clearly a deliberate choice of Isidora to add a personal touch to her letter.<sup>14</sup>

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: also the terms of address are markedly different. In both 1204 and 1207 Isidora addresses him as Ἰσιδώ[ρα] Ἀσκληπιιάδη τῶι ἀδελφῶι χαίρει[ν] καὶ ὑγιαίνειν διὰ παντός. Apart from spelling, the formula is the same in both letters. In the other two autographic letters, by contrast, the phrase is more elaborate: Ἰσιδώρα Ἀσκληᾶτι τῶι ἀδελφῶι χαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντός ὑγιάι(νειν) καθάπερ εὐχομαι.<sup>15</sup> The phrase καθάπερ εὐχομαι is a comparative subclause expressing a wish. This can be expressed by other variants, including among others ὡς θέλω, καθὼς εὐχομαι, ὥσπερ εὐχομαι, and ὡς εὐχόμενος διατελῶ. 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 subordinate clause are

<sup>13</sup> Cf. J. L. White, *Light from Ancient Letters* (Philadelphia 1986) 104.

<sup>14</sup> I discuss below the shortening of names and the name Asklepiades/Asklas more specifically.

<sup>15</sup> 1206.1–3 and 1205.2–4, the same except for spelling variants.

part of Isidora's philophronetic, affectionate tone. The subclause occurs in two other letters of the Asklepiades archive, 1203 (TM 18653)<sup>16</sup> and 1205 p.347.<sup>17</sup> This last letter is interesting: the same combination of the nickname and comparative clause appears in the opening: ἡ μήτηρ Ἀσκληᾶτι χαίρει[ν] καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὑγιαίν[ειν] καθάπερ εὐχομαι.<sup>18</sup> 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."<sup>19</sup> Here again, this linguistic choice probably served to express a loving and intimate atmosphere.

*The Athenodoros archive*

The phraseology of the health wishes in the Athenodoros archive shows similarities to the Asklepiades archive, as my linguistic investigation of the archive has revealed: the health wish with comparative subclause frequently occurs in the Athenodoros archive (21 times, to be precise).<sup>20</sup> Is the use of a

<sup>16</sup> 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 probably not be interpreted literally in this case (cf. Dickey, *Mnemosyne* 57 [2004] 164). However, Tryphon must have been close to Asklepiades' family since palaeographical 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](http://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.

<sup>17</sup> This last letter, too fragmentary to be individually edited, was published jointly with *BGU IV* 1205 (cf. Olsson, *Papyrusbriefe* 28–29)

<sup>18</sup> I treat the two occurrences of the comparative subclause in 1205 as two separate attestations of this phrase since they are the openings of different letters.

<sup>19</sup> Dickey, *Mnemosyne* 57 (2004) 165.

<sup>20</sup> *BGU XVI* 2600 (TM 23323), 2607 (TM 23330), 2608 (TM 23331),

comparative clause typical for those two archives alone, a shared linguistic feature linking the collections? Or is the comparative clause widespread in the papyri? In order to answer this, I have assembled all private letters from the Herakleopolite nome dating from the period of the two archives (I B.C.–I A.D.): this resulted in a representative reference corpus of 15 private letters.<sup>21</sup> In 10 of these, the opening has been preserved,<sup>22</sup> but none of those papyri has a health wish with a comparative subclause. This means that the use of a health wish with a comparative subclause was probably not a regio-lectic or a short-lived local fashion. Nevertheless, this specific feature is not confined to the two archives. My investigation has revealed that it is attested 71 times in total—without exception in documents dated between III B.C. and the Augustan period and almost always in private letters. Out of a total of 1204 private letters from that same period, the percentage of documents with a comparative clause in the health wish is low (5.9%). In the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives, the percentage is 5 to 7 times higher:  $4/9 = 44.4\%$  Asklepiades,<sup>23</sup>

2610 (TM 23333), 2611 (TM 23334), 2614 (TM 23338), 2615 (TM 23339), 2617 (TM 23341), 2620 (TM 23344), 2622 (TM 23346), 2623 (TM 23347), 2625 (TM 23349), 2635 (TM 23359), 2642 (TM 23366), 2643 (TM 23367), 2644 (TM 23368), 2649 (TM 23368), 2650 (TM 23374), 2651 (TM 23375), 2656 (TM 23380), 2659 (TM 23383).

<sup>21</sup> *BGU* XIV 2419 (TM 4015), 2420 (TM 4016), 2422 (TM 4018), VIII 1871 (TM 4950), 1872 (TM 4951), 1873 (TM 4952), 1874 (TM 4953), 1878 (TM 4957), 1881 (TM 4960), IV 1141 (TM 18585), VIII 1875 (TM 4954), 1876 (TM 4955), XIV 2421 (TM 4017), *SB* XXIV 16293 (TM 25456), III 7268 (TM 18870). The latest letter but one was written at the end of I A.D., the latest is dated A.D. 98–117: the time in which those two letters were written thus differs to a degree from that of the Asklepiades and Athenodoros archives.

<sup>22</sup> *BGU* XIV 2419, VIII 1871, 1872.6, 1873, 1874, 1878, 1881, IV 1141, *SB* XXIV 16293, III 7268.

<sup>23</sup> The number includes only the published letters: possibly the unedited letters, too, attest of health wishes with comparative subclauses; since we do not have information on this matter at the moment, the three unedited letters are not taken into account. Also the one document in the archive which

21/66 = 31.8% Athenodoros.<sup>24</sup> Out of the 71 health wishes with a comparative subclause found in all private letters, 25 come from our two archives (35.2%), so we can safely state that the extensive use of this particular type of health wish contrasts sharply with common usage. Especially if we focus on the first century B.C. and the beginning of the first century A.D.—the period to which the two archives belong—the contrast between the use of the comparative subclause in the archives and in other letters is remarkable: of the 27 occurrences of the comparative subclause from that period, no less than 25 are from either the Asklepiades or the Athenodoros archive, while only two documents from outside those archives contain it.<sup>25</sup> This means that 92.6% of all occurrences of this kind of health wish, between 100 B.C. and the early first century A.D., come from the two archives. The preference for an otherwise not popular phrase is a sign that the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives are linked.

*The phraseology of the comparative subclause in the health wish*

Also on the lexical level, there is an important overlap between the two archives: just as in the comparative subclause in Isidora's letters and in the letter from Asklepiades' mother, several letters from the Athenodoros archive use the conjunction *καθάπερ*. This is remarkable because *καθάπερ* is far less popular than *ὡς* in the comparative subclause:<sup>26</sup> out of all 71

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is not a letter but a marriage contract, *BGU IV 1098*, is not included, as health wishes do not occur in contracts. Further, I consider the two opening formulas published as *IV 1205* as separate. This brings the total to nine, four of which have the comparative subclause (*IV 1203*, *1205.2–4*, *1205 p. 347*, *1206*).

<sup>24</sup> In the total I omitted the lists and accounts of this collection as they do not have health wishes. I did include the petitions, since their phraseology is sometimes very similar to that of the letters. In the petition *BGU XVI 2600*, for example, a health wish with comparative clause occurs.

<sup>25</sup> *BGU VIII 1770* (TM 4851, 7 April 63 B.C.) and *VI 1301* (TM 7340, second or first century B.C.).

<sup>26</sup> In *BGU IV 1203.1–2*, the fourth and last letter from the Asklepiades

documents with a comparative subclause, ὡς appears in 61, but καθάπερ in only seven—four times in private letters, twice in official letters, and once in a petition. All texts are from the first century B.C.

The draft of an official letter *BGU VIII 1770* (63 B.C.) is the earliest attestation of this conjunction: Ἡρακλείδῃ ἀρχιερεῖ μαχειροφόρων τῷ ἀδελ(φῶι)/ χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρωμένωι διευτυχεῖν καθάπερ εὐχομαί. In *XVI 2651* (9 August 22 B.C.), an official letter of the Athenodoros archive, Asklepiades addresses Herakleides: Ἀσκληπιάδῃς Ἡρακλείδῃ τῷ ἀδελφῶι χαίρειν καὶ [διὰ] παντὸς ὑγιαίνειν καθάπερ εὐχομα(ι). The conjunction also appears in the petition *XVI 2600* of the same archive (4 August 13 B.C.), in the private letter 2615 of the same collection sent by Menelaos and Herakleia, and finally, as discussed above, three times in the letters from Isidora and from Asklepiades' mother. All private letters with καθάπερ in the comparative subclause were sent by women, except for 2615, which was jointly sent by Menelaos and Herakleia, so it cannot be demonstrated that precisely Herakleia was responsible for the choice of καθάπερ. Only one letter sent by a woman, 2617, contains ὡς in the comparative subclause. Men, by contrast, mainly use the standard ὡς. In the Asklepiades archive there is only one letter with a comparative subclause sent by a man, *BGU IV 1203*. In that text, we should probably restore ὡς in the comparative subclause (see n.26). In the Athenodoros archive, men use ὡς in 13 out of the 16 cases.<sup>27</sup> In one letter, *XVI 2656*, the male sender uses ὥσπερ, and in two καθάπερ (*VIII 1770*, *XVI 2651*, cf. above). Overall, we get the im-

archive with a comparative subclause, the editor restored καθῶς: [Ἀσκληπιάδῃς Τρύφῳ]νι τῷ ἀδελφῶ[ι χαίρ]ειν [καὶ ὑγιαίνειν καθῶ]ς [ε]ὔχομαι. My investigation, however, has shown that καθῶς is not used elsewhere in the comparative subclause. Given the popularity of ὡς in this phrase, this seems the more probable restoration.

<sup>27</sup> *BGU XVI 2607*, 2608, 2610, 2611, 2614, 2620, 2622, 2623, 2625, 2635, 2642, 2650, 2659.



pression that men preferred the traditional and standard ὡς, whereas καθάπερ was favored by women.

This is consistent with the findings of Willi, according to whom καθάπερ originally occurred only in legal and official domains, but later its use broadened, stimulated by women.<sup>28</sup> Willi argued that this pattern provides evidence that women's language was innovative. Indeed, it has been acknowledged in sociolinguistic studies of modern languages too that women often take the lead in linguistic innovation.<sup>29</sup> The private papyrus letters also seem to point in the same direction as Willi's data: the earliest attestations of the comparative subclause with καθάπερ are linked to a legal and official context. Nevertheless, as the role of ancient women in the process of language change is much debated, and the evidence is limited and inevitably biased by the chances of preservation, we should be careful not

<sup>28</sup> In "fourth-century Greek, possibly intruding from Ionia, καθάπερ 'like' spreads as a comparative conjunction equivalent to ὡς(περ). Attic 'official-ese' used it earlier. In Aristophanes, καθάπερ occurs 4 times, once in its old domain in a legal text, once spoken by a slave, and twice used by women in the initial scene of *Ecclesiazusae*. Their speech may be ahead of its time": A. Willi, *The Languages of Aristophanes. Aspects of Linguistic Variation in Classical Attic Greek* (Oxford 2003) 192.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. L. Milroy and M. Gordon, *Sociolinguistics. Method and Interpretation* (Malden 2003) 102. On the other hand, the speech of women in antiquity is also often described as conservative. Plato's comment on female speech in *Cratylus* (418C) has become iconic as a reference to women's conservatism, μάλιστα τὴν ἀρχαίαν φωνὴν σφύζουσι: M. E. Gilleland, "Female Speech in Latin and Greek," *AJP* 101 (1980) 180–183; D. M. Dutsch, *Feminine Discourse in Roman Comedy. On Echoes and Voices* (Oxford 2008) 200–201. Clackson suggested that the emancipation of women was a major impulse for female linguistic innovation; in antiquity, by contrast, women did not have freedom of choice regarding work or marriage, which may, he felt, have resulted in female linguistic conservatism: J. Clackson, "Language Maintenance and Language Shift in the Mediterranean World during the Roman Empire," in A. Mullen and P. James (eds.), *Multilingualism in the Graeco-Roman Worlds* (Cambridge 2012) 36–57, at 53. It is thus clear that the influence of women on language change in ancient times is far from straightforward; too little is known about this subject to draw firm conclusions.

to draw too far-reaching conclusions. In any case, it is plausible that the use of *καθάπερ* in the comparative subclause in the Asklepiades and Athenodoros archives spread from the official letters (cf. *BGU XVI* 2651) to the private documents in the two collections (whether stimulated by women or not). It may have been favored by women just because it was far more unusual than the standard conjunction *ὥς*. Again, this feature may have been a deliberate linguistic choice by women who knew the power of epistolary language and who knew how to choose the right words in order to convey an individual message.

In conclusion, both elements, the use of the comparative subclause and of *καθάπερ* there, do occur outside of the two archives (e.g. *BGU VIII* 1770), but their popularity in the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives is unparalleled. The fact that *καθάπερ* does not appear elsewhere in private letters supports the hypothesis of a link. To my mind, the use of the health wish with a comparative subclause, and even the use of *καθάπερ*, is part of an epistolary language shared between the protagonists of the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives.

## 2. Health wish with a relative clause

The initial health wish is not the only feature in which the two archives deviate from standard phraseology. Also in the health wishes at the end of the letter, some documents show a rather uncommon phraseology: *καὶ σεαυτοῦ ἐπιμελοῦ ἴν' ὑγιαίνης, ὃ δὴ μέγιστόν ἐστι*" (*BGU IV* 1204.7–8). The closing formula *ἔρωσο* immediately follows this phrase.<sup>30</sup>

As in the initial health wish with a comparative subclause, this variant extends the standard Ptolemaic formula (in this case *καὶ σεαυτοῦ ἐπιμελοῦ ἴν' ὑγιαίνης*) by adding a subordinate clause (a relative subclause). Apparently, the addressee's well-being is very important to the sender, since the relative subclause puts extra emphasis on the wish for good health: it thus seems that, like the initial health wish with a comparative subclause, this extension is used for philophronetic reasons.

<sup>30</sup> In *BGU XVI* 2661 there is no closing formula.

In the Athenodoros archive, no less than 11 instances of this *topos* are attested.<sup>31</sup> The Asklepiades archive is represented as well: in two letters, *BGU* IV 1204 and 1208 (TM 18658), a relative clause is added to the final health wish. Wilcken observed the great number of attestations in those two archives and suggested that it was an example of “lokalen Eigentümlichkeiten.”<sup>32</sup> In fact the case is even stronger: there are no other attestations of the final health wish with a relative subclause—not in the reference corpus of 15 texts for this region and period, nor in any other papyrus letter preserved between 300 B.C. and A.D. 800—except for those in the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives. It is thus plausible that this phrase originated in the two archives:<sup>33</sup> one of the letter writers of the two archives probably innovated by extending the closing formula in order to emphasize his/her concern for the addressee’s health. This novelty may then have spread to other writers in the archives—in other words, this feature is a link between the two archives. The spread of this innovation might have been stimulated and facilitated by the fact that the extension of the initial health wish with a comparative subclause was already widely used by those writers. The two subclauses added to the health wishes function in the same way: by enlarging the health wish, the sender emphasizes the importance of the addressee’s health to him and he makes his letter less of a cliché.

<sup>31</sup> *BGU* XVI 2600, 2617, 2622, 2624 (TM 23348), 2630 (TM 23354), 2631 (TM 23355), 2643, 2644, 2659, 2661, 2663 (TM 23387).

<sup>32</sup> U. Wilcken, “Papyrus-Urkunden,” *ArchPF* 6 (1920) 268–301, at 283.

<sup>33</sup> Whereas the development of a relative subclause in the final health wish is probably to be ascribed to the writers of the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives, there were other letter writers innovating and trying to make their letters more personal and original as well. In *P.Diosk.* 15 (TM 44730; 30 or 31 August 155 B.C.) the final health wish is expressed (25–29): ἐπιμελόμενος σδῶ, ἵνα ὑγιαίνων ἔρχῃ πρὸς τε τὴν ἀδελφὴν καὶ τὰ παιδιά καὶ πάντα τοὺς φίλους. τούτου γὰρ ἡμῖν, μὰ τὸν Ἡρακλῆ, οὐθὲν μέγιστόν ἐστίν. It is notable that the sentence immediately precedes the final health wish, as in the Asklepiades and Athenodoros archives.

As there are no attestations outside of the two archives, the innovation probably did not spread (or not to a large extent) to other writers. That is no surprise, since the final health wish καὶ σεαυτοῦ ἐπιμελοῦ ἵν' ὑγιαίνης, to which the relative clause was added, did not survive long in the Roman period: my investigation has revealed that the combination of that standard Ptolemaic final health wish with the closing formula ἔρρωσο died out in the course of the first century A.D.—there are only three occurrences from that century.<sup>34</sup> In most other letters, the closing formula ἔρρωσο was maintained, but the link between the closing formula and the final health wish became weaker: other formulas, such as the sending of regards, often stood between them.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, in the first centuries A.D. the new closing formula ἐρρῶσθαί σε εὐχομαι gained more and more ground. That phrase was, I believe, the deathblow for the ἐπιμέλου-formula: it is more elaborate than the old ἔρρωσο and it emphasizes the aspect of prayer for the addressee's health. That renders a separate health wish at the end of the letter superfluous—and the addition of a relative subclause to this final health wish is certainly too much of a good thing. In other words, the new final health wish with an added relative clause did not have much chance to become widespread; it died out together with the health wish to which it was attached.

*The relative subclause in the initial health wish: a Latin borrowing?*

There is, however, another group of documents with a relative subclause in the health wish—in the *initial* health wish, in fact, not in the final health wish as in the Asklepiades and Athenodoros archives. This group consists of 9 documents, of

<sup>34</sup> *P.Oxy.* IV 746.9–11 (TM 20444; A.D. 16), τὰ δ' ἄλλα σεαυτοῦ ἐπιμέλου ἵν' ὑγιαίνης. ἔρρωσο; *SB* XX 14280.7–9 (TM 23704; A.D. 20), ἐπιμέλου δὲ σεαυτῆς ἵνα ὑγιαίνης. ἔρρωσο; *P.Oxy.* LXXV 5049.3–5 (TM 128890; A.D. 59), τὰ δ' ἄλλα χαριε[ῖ] σεαυτοῦ ἐπι μελόμ[ε]νος. ἔρρω(σο).

<sup>35</sup> E.g. *BGU* IV 1078.11–14 (TM 9455; A.D. 38), τὰ δ' ἄλλα ἐπιμελωσθε ἀτῶν, ἵν' ὑ[γ]ιαίνητε. ἀσπάζου τὰ παιδία καὶ πά[ντας] τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ καὶ Πανεχώτην. [ἔ]ρρω(σο).

the second to fourth centuries A.D.<sup>36</sup> Since I have argued that the relative subclause in the final health wish died out in the early first century A.D., that phrase cannot be the predecessor of the new phrase that arose from the second century onwards. The question thus arises as to the origin of the relative subclause in the initial health wish.

Let us first consider the 9 attestations. As with the relative subclause in the final health wish, archives are here an important source as well: four attestations are from the Claudius Tiberianus archive (*P.Mich.* VIII 476–479) and two from the Iulius Sabinus and Iulius Apollinaris archive (465–466). Both archives come from a Latin context. In the bilingual Claudius Tiberianus archive, the relative clause appears in the Greek letters as well as in the Latin ones, and the similarity between the phraseology in the two languages is striking: VIII 468.3–4 (= *C.Epist.Lat.* 142; TM 27081) *ante omnia opto te bene [u]alere, quem [i]hi ma]xime uota [su]nt* vs. 476.3 *πρὸ μὲν πάντων εὐχομαί σε ὑγιαίνειν καὶ εὐτυχεῖν μοι, ὃ μοι εὐκταῖόν ἐστιν*. It has been suggested that Latin borrowed this phrase from Greek,<sup>37</sup> which conflicts with my view that the earlier relative subclause—the one attached to the closing formula—had fallen out of use.

In any case—even if one does not accept that the earlier relative clause has died out—for several reasons it is hard to regard the relative clause in the initial health wish as an evolution from the earlier relative clause, and to argue that Latin borrowed this phrase. First of all, there is no chronological continuity between the first and the second group of attestations. Second, the place of that formula in the second-century letters deviates from the earlier Greek health wishes with a relative clause. Should we allow that the papyri preserved are not

<sup>36</sup> *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), *BGU* I 332 (TM 28252), *SB* XIV 11957 (TM 34797).

<sup>37</sup> P. Cugusi, “Un’ insolita formula valetudinis latina,” *ZPE* 40 (1980) 184–186; H. Halla-Aho, *The Non-Literary Latin Letters. A Study of their Syntax and Pragmatics* (Helsinki 2009) 50.

representative and that there was indeed a continuity in the use of the relative clause from the first century B.C. to the second A.D.; and should we allow that the shift in location was the result of a no longer attested internal evolution in Greek? In other words, is it possible that—without any external impulse at all—sometime between the first century B.C. and the second A.D., the relative subclause shifted from the end of the letter to the opening; from being attached to the closing *formula valetudinis* to the initial *formula valetudinis*, without any documents preserved that attest this evolution? And is it then pure coincidence that the position of the *topos* at the beginning of the letter is exactly the same as that of its Latin counterpart?

Or is it more likely that an external (Latin?) factor influenced the appearance of the new relative clause? An answer to these questions can be found in the Vindolanda tablets, where a similar phrase is used. *T. Vindol.* II 299.1–2 has the formula *quod est principium epistulae meae te fortem esse*, “which is the principal reason for my letter (to express the wish?) that you are vigorous.”<sup>38</sup> The letter is badly preserved, as many Vindolanda letters unfortunately are, but it is clear that the formula appears in the opening of the letter, in the initial health wish. Since the Vindolanda tablets are written in a variant of Latin which was not exposed to the Greek language, it seems that the natural and original position of the relative subclause in Latin was at the beginning of the letter. Consequently, this Vindolanda example shows that Latin developed the element of adding a relative clause to a health wish independently,<sup>39</sup> and Greek did not influence Latin in this matter. Thus, the Vindolanda tablets provide an answer as to why a relative subclause in the Greek letters appeared in the initial position from the second century A.D. onwards: it is not related to the former relative clause in the final health wish, but is a borrowing from Latin. Neverthe-

<sup>38</sup> A. K. Bowman, J. D. Thomas, and J. N. Adams, *The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets* II (London 1994) 272.

<sup>39</sup> This is not surprising, since adding a relative subclause to a health wish seems a rather universal *topos*.

less, the development of the Greek phraseology did play a role in this process: the acceptance of the new relative subclause was, in my view, facilitated by the fact that it was not uncommon in Greek epistolography to extend the initial health wish by adding some kind of subclause: we have seen that until the Augustan period, a Greek letter could have a comparative subclause as an addition to the health wish. After the Augustan period, when the comparative subclause was no longer used, the relative subclause could easily fill the gap under the influence of the Latin epistolary tradition. In conclusion, my evidence points in another direction than the view that the evolution of the Latin relative subclause was influenced by Greek, as it seems to have been the other way round.

### 3. Lexical variation in the archives

In addition to several similar (variants on) formulas, the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives also share minor lexical features.

#### *The intensifier διὰ παντός*

First of all, let us examine the health wish from another angle and consider the letter openings of the type ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν/ἐρρῶσθαι. Often, an intensifier is found in the second part of the formula, which emphasizes the verb ὑγιαίνειν/ἐρρῶσθαι (or lexical variants). In almost all cases<sup>40</sup> that intensifier is διὰ παντός. It is found for example in *BGU VIII* 1871.1–2 (TM 4950; 61 B.C.): Ἀπολλώνιος Ἡλιοδώρῳ πλεῖστα χαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντός ὑγιαίνειν.

In the letters of the two archives, the intensifiers are sometimes found in an uncommon place. For example in *BGU IV* 1204 and 1207 of the Asklepiades archive, the opening is: Ἰσιδώ[ρα] Ἀσκληπιάδῃ τῷ ἀδελφῷ χαίρε[ιν] κα[ὶ] ὑγιαίνειν διὰ παντός. The intensifier follows rather than precedes the infinitive expressing the health wish.

In the corpus of private letters, there are in total 76 letters

<sup>40</sup> The only exception πρὸ παντός is discussed below.

with *διὰ παντός* in the opening formula, and in 71 this precedes *ὑγιαίνειν/ἐρρῶσθαι*. The variant *πρὸ παντός*, attested only once (*P.Mich.* VIII 464; TM 17238; A.D. 99), also follows this pattern. It is thus perfectly reasonable to conclude that the usual word order is for the intensifier to come first, followed by the verb of the health wish.

Let us now investigate the five instances which deviate from this pattern. I have already quoted two of them, *BGU* IV 1204 and 1207 of the Asklepiades archive. Is it a coincidence that precisely those are the dictated letters of Isidora? When it came to the use of nicknames and comparative subclauses in the health wish, there was a contrast between the dictated letters, which followed the standard phraseology, and the autographs, which departed from the common pattern. Here we see the opposite: in the autographs *διὰ παντός* appears in its common position;<sup>41</sup> that is no surprise, since the health wishes of the autographs are already marked by the use of the comparative subclause. The exceptional positioning of *διὰ παντός* in the letters written by a professional scribe may have been a deliberate choice by Isidora, in order to render her letter more vivid and personal. In other words, both in the autographs and in the dictated letters Isidora adopted an uncommon phraseology which made her letter unique.

Nevertheless, the reversed word order is not confined to Isidora's letters, for it also appears in the Athenodoros archive. In fact, all three other attestations come from that collection: the word order in which the verb of the health wish is followed by the intensifier thus occurs only in these two archives. In *BGU* XVI 2625 a certain Achilleus begins his letter: Ἀχιλλεὺς Ἀθηνοδώρῳ τῷ ἀδελφῷ χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν διὰ παντός ὡς βούλομαι. In 2635 the opening formula is Ἴσχυρᾶς Ἀθηνοδώρῳ τῷ ἀδελφ(ῶ) [χαί]ρ[ειν] καὶ ὑγιαίνειν διὰ παντός ὡς

<sup>41</sup> In the autographs, *διὰ παντός* precedes the verb of the health wish: *BGU* IV 1205.2–4, [Ἰσιδώρι]α Ἀσκλάτι τῷ ἀδελφῷ [χαίρειν] καὶ διὰ παντός ὑγιαί[ν]ειν καθάπερ [ε]ὔχομαι; 1206.1–3, Ἰσιδώρι]α Ἀσκλάτι τῷ ἀδελφῷ χαίρειν καὶ διὰ παντός ὑγίαι καθάπερ εὔχομαι.



βούλομα[ι]. The third instance, 2615, may be the most interesting; in this letter from Menelaos and Herakleia to their 'son' Athenodoros, the intensifier receives much attention: Μενέλαος καὶ Ἡράκλεια Ἀθηνοδώρῳ τῷ υἱῷ πλεῖστα χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρωμένῳ διευτυχεῖν αἰεὶ καὶ διὰ παντὸς κ[α]θάπερ εὐχόμεθα. Not only the special position but also the use of *two* intensifiers is notable. As in Isidora's letters, Menelaos and Herakleia may have chosen an unusual phraseology, the health wish with a comparative subclause and the end position of the intensifiers, in order to express their affection for Athenodoros. Hence, it is safe to conclude, first, that an intensifier following the verb of the health wish was a way of emphasizing the wish and may therefore be considered a philophroneic element, and, second, that the use of this feature, restricted to the Asklepiades and Athenodoros archives, convincingly links the two collections. These two elements are intertwined: one of the letter writers from either of these archives probably wanted to add a personal touch to his/her letter and innovated by reversing the word order of the intensifier. Other letter writers in the two archives may have liked this and took up the innovation when they wanted to give a special character to their message themselves.

*The word string θεὸς καὶ κύριος*

The second linguistic element to be considered is the word group θεὸς καὶ κύριος. 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 IV 1197 (TM 18647; 7–4 B.C.) and 1201 (TM 18651; May/June 2 B.C.),<sup>42</sup> two isolated texts which are not linked to any archive at the moment. A search in my own database of private letters on papyrus reveals no attestations of a correspondent being called θεὸς καὶ κύριος other than in those four documents. Further, the texts all come from the Herakleopolite nome and are dated to the Augustan per-

<sup>42</sup> Brashear, *Archive* 83.

iod. Should we consider this feature a shared lexical element which only occurs in the Athenodoros archive? That would mean that the four documents are related to each other and, consequently, that 1197 and 1201 were part of the Athenodoros collection as well. To my mind, that is plausible, certainly since there are other hints that 1197 and 1201 are linked 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.<sup>43</sup> On the hypothesis that the Asklepiades and Athenodoros archives are connected, the Asklepiades of 1197 and 1200 is possibly the same person as the central figure of our Asklepiades archive. If that is the case, 1197, 1200, and 1201 would then constitute the official and professional part of Asklepiades' collection, whereas 1203 to 1209 and XVI 2665 reflect his personal life.

Further, not only does Asklepiades appear in the two isolated letters, also Soterichos is mentioned in *BGU IV* 1201.<sup>44</sup> As we shall see, Soterichos is a name attested in both the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives. The recurring names (Asklepiades and Soterichos) and the lexical feature θεός καὶ κύριος suggest that 1197, 1200, and 1201 are three more texts associated with Asklepiades.

### Onomastics

In the introduction I mentioned that the name Asklepiades appears in the Athenodoros archive. I have also discussed the nickname Asklas in the Asklepiades archive, by which Isidora sometimes addresses her brother. Also in the Athenodoros archive this nickname appears. At *BGU XVI* 2607.10 a certain

<sup>43</sup> Brashear, *Archive* 85.

<sup>44</sup> The name Soterichos is also attested in 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 1201 and the person in the Athenodoros archive.

Asklas is mentioned, and some scholars have drawn a link with the Asklepiades archive. The data of the *Trismegistos People* database, however, show that Asklas is not just a nickname: since it appears in 430 papyri,<sup>45</sup> it was probably also used as a proper name.<sup>46</sup> We should thus be careful not to conclude too quickly that the Asklas of the Athenodoros archive was also called Asklepiades, and that he is the same person as the protagonist of the Asklepiades archive. So let us investigate the other occurrences of the name Asklas in the Athenodoros archive.

First, in *BGU XVI* 2646.34 (TM 23370) a certain Asklas appears to be Areos' agent. An Areos also appears in IV 1206.10 of the Asklepiades archive. Is it possible that Asklepiades, who is Athenodoros' superior (cf. XVI 2664.3; TM 23388), is at the same time Areos' agent? We lack the information to reject or confirm this. However, it should be pointed out that Ἄρηος is an obscure variant of the personal name Areios and that it appears only 23 times in *TM People*. This increases the probability—although this remains far from certain—that the Areos of 2646 and 1206 is one and the same person, and consequently that Asklepiades, the protagonist of the Asklepiades archive, is referred to by his short name in 2646 of the Athenodoros archive.

Second, in *BGU XVI* 2621.6 (TM 23345) from Apollon to Athas/Athenodoros, the name Asklas appears as well. From the usage Athas/Athenodoros, it is clear that the sender is familiar with the practice of shortening names. This gives a firmer basis to argue that in this letter Asklas is indeed a variant of Asklepiades. Apollon seems to have a predilection for shortened names, which also emerges from the name Apellas (7). This uncommon name<sup>47</sup> has the characteristics of a nick-

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.trismegistos.org/nam/detail.php?record=2362>.

<sup>46</sup> In my mother tongue Dutch, the same pattern has arisen: 'Marieke' originally means 'little Mary', but the name is no longer considered a diminutive of 'Marie', but it is now a fossilized form which is regarded as a standard proper name.

<sup>47</sup> The name appears only 23 times in *TM People*. The variant Ἀπελλῆς is

name: the ending *-ας* is typical of Hellenistic shortened names.<sup>48</sup> Apellas might therefore be a third short name in this letter.

Third, the remaining attestation of the name Asklas in the Athenodoros archive is the opening of his letter XVI 2659 to Soterichos: [Α]σκληῶς Σω[τηρίχῳ τῷ – – π]λείστα χαίρειν καὶ διὰ πα[ντὸς ὑγιαίν]ειν ὡς εὐχομαι. Here it is obvious that the Asklas of this document is identical with the one of 2621: both letters mention a Ptollas and an Apollon, which cannot be a coincidence in the context of an archive.

This Soterichos might have been the sender of the letters *BGU* XVI 2606 (TM 23329) and 2607 to Athenodoros. The sender refers to himself as Sotas, but Brashear suggested that this might be short for Soterichos,<sup>49</sup> i.e., the sender shortened his own name in this letter. This suggestion, however, cannot be proved. Sotas need not be the shortened form of the proper name Soterichos; it is far from uncommon as a personal name, appearing 799 times in *TM People*. The same applies to Ptollas: this name, too, has the characteristics of a nickname and could be short for Ptolemaios, but also Ptollas is widely used and might have evolved from a shortened form of Ptolemaios to a standard name. Also Ἰσχυρῶς has the *-ας* ending typical of nicknames (2635: 195 in *TM People*). In another case, it is certain that a short name was used as a nickname: in the opening formula of 2621, Athenodoros is referred to as Athas,<sup>50</sup> Ἀπόλλων Ἀθαῖ [τῷ] ἀδελ[φῷ πλ]εῖστα χαί(ρειν). It is evident that the short name is a second (unofficial?) name, for the docket gives the full name, [ἀπόδο]ς Ἀθηγ[οδώρῳ].<sup>51</sup> Thus, the nick-

attested 39 times.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. A. Debrunner, *Griechische Wortbildungslehre* (Heidelberg 1917) 82.

<sup>49</sup> Brashear, *Archive* 95

<sup>50</sup> Also in the address of 2647 (TM 23371) Athenodoros' name is shortened. The name of the sender has not been preserved.

<sup>51</sup> The address is damaged and does not preserve the whole word. But it is clear that the name in the address is not identical to that of the opening formula, viz. Athas. Comparison with other documents in this archive en-

name is used only in the closed and private inner text of the letter, which recalls Isidora's autographic letters with their familiar tone. Here, the short variant might be of philophroneic nature as in the Asklepiades archive: the sender, Apollon, asks for some favors, and the use of a sobriquet should be regarded as a *captatio benevolentiae*.

Is this practice of shortening a name something typical of the two archives under discussion—and thus, does it hint at a relationship between the two—or is it a widespread phenomenon? The answer is indefinite.<sup>52</sup> It is nevertheless clear that the use of short names was not confined to private letters. Shortened and double names occur also in, for example, *diagraphai*<sup>53</sup> or contracts.<sup>54</sup> Also comparing the practice in the archives to the reference corpus of 15 private letters does not shed much light on this matter: in those letters, there is only one name which has the characteristics of a shortened name, Ἀρχονᾶς (*SB* XXIV 16293; *TM* 25456). In other words, further onomastic investigation should show whether short names and nicknames are used significantly more in our two archives than in other papyrus documents. Nevertheless, in the case of Asklepiades, the use of his proper name as well as his shortened name in both archives hints at the link between the two collections, especially as the name appears in both archives in combination with an uncommon name like Areos.

Furthermore, other names recur in both archives. We have seen that some documents in the Athenodoros archive mention

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ables us to safely restore the name in the address as Athenodoros.

<sup>52</sup> The literature on this topic is rather limited; Brashear, *Archive* 80, gives about fifteen references to similar examples of nicknaming.

<sup>53</sup> P. van Minnen, "Gesuch um Bestellung eines Kyrios (P. Flor. III 318 + P. Lond. III 1164A)," *ZPE* 93 (1992) 191–204, at 203.

<sup>54</sup> T. Gagos, L. Koenen, and B. E. McNellen, "A First Century Archive from Oxyrhynchos or Oxyrhynchite Loan Contracts and Egyptian Marriage," in J. H. Johnson (ed.), *Life in a Multi-Cultural Society. Egypt from Cambyses to Constantine and Beyond* (Chicago 1992) 181–205, at 181; E. M. Hussemann, in *P.Michigan* V.2 (Ann Arbor 1944) p.15.

a Soterichos. The name appears in other documents from the same archive: *BGU XVI* 2629 (TM 23353), 2649, 2653 (TM 23377), 2654 (TM 23378), 2661 (TM 23385), 2663. More interesting is the attestation of this name in IV 1208 of the Asklepiades archive.<sup>55</sup> IV 1208, like 1209, is probably<sup>56</sup> a letter from Tryphon to Asklepiades. IV 1203 may have been written by Asklepiades to Tryphon.<sup>57</sup> Further, a Tryphon is mentioned in passing in XVI 2625,<sup>58</sup> which is part of the Athenodoros archive, a letter from Achilles to Athenodoros. Achilles as well may be attested in both archives: an Achilles is mentioned at IV 1205.27 from the Athenodoros archive. Could it be that the same three men—Soterichos, Tryphon, and Achilles—are attested in both collections? We cannot know for sure: the names are far from uncommon,<sup>59</sup> so it is statistically possible that there were two or more persons with the same name in the texts studied here. Indeed, we have seen that there are probably two different Soterichoi (n.44). But I am inclined to think that in the other instances, the names mentioned in the two archives may indeed refer to the same persons.

Finally, the name Tryphaina is also attested in both archives, in *BGU XVI* 2616 (TM 23340) and 2665. In the latter—belonging to the Asklepiades archive—she identifies herself as the mother of Asklepiades. Also, in 2616, one of the few personal letters in the Athenodoros archive, Athenodoros addresses his father; at the end of the letter he sends greetings to several persons, including a Tryphaina. Can the Tryphaina of

<sup>55</sup> In the damaged phrase *καταντή[σα]ς ἐκ τῶν ἄνωθεν [τόπων] [[ε]] κομισά[μη]ν διὰ Σωτηρίχου (2–3).*

<sup>56</sup> Also in this letter, lacunae in the opening formula hamper the reading: *[Τρύφω]ν τῶι ἀδελφῶ[ι] χαίρεν καὶ διὰ παντὸς [ύγιαίν]ειν.*

<sup>57</sup> Unfortunately, an important part of the opening formula is lost: *[Ἀσκληπιάδης Τρύφ]ωνι τῶι ἀδελφῶ[ι] χαίρ[ε]ιν [καὶ ύγιαίνειν καθὼς [ε]ύχομαι.*

<sup>58</sup> *σὺν τῶ[ι] τε[τ]άρτῳ ἀποκαταστήσαι Τρύφωνι τῶι ἀδελφῶ τὰ ἐκφόρια κατ– μίσθωσιν (15–18).*

<sup>59</sup> Tryphon 533 times in the papyri, Achilles 289.

the two letters and the two archives be one and the same person? This would imply that Athenodoros sent greetings to his superior's mother. That is not unlikely: in that case, Tryphaina would probably have been of more or less the same age (and social class) as Athenodoros' father and both the parents might have known each other.

Overall, onomastics cannot provide foolproof evidence for the link between the two archives. Nevertheless, this overview shows that there are strong indications for this hypothesis.

### Conclusion

The hypothesis suggested in earlier studies, that the Asklepiades and the Athenodoros archives are connected, is very likely to be right. Several scholars had already pointed to the fact that the documents stem from a similar geographical and chronological context. I have drawn attention to several recurring names in the archives. The decisive factor in proving the relationship between the two collections, however, is undoubtedly the linguistic evidence. Although the use of such proof is part of a fairly new approach to archive studies and to papyrology in general,<sup>60</sup> it is definitely a helpful and valid method to link documents together. In several epistolary formulas, the two archives deviate from the standard and clichéd patterns in an identical way, and they share uncommon philophroneic features. In this way the writers of the letters made their messages more personal and unique. On a lexical level, there are also remarkable shared elements in the archives, for example the place of the intensifiers in the opening formula. Moreover, the expression θεός καὶ κύριος suggests that further documents should be included in the collection of Asklepiades and Athenodoros: it is likely that *BGU* IV 1197, 1200, and

<sup>60</sup> E.g. the standard methodologies to link archives rely on archaeology or museum archaeology, prosopographical data, and—to a minor extent—on identifying real estate: cf. K. Vandorpe, "Archives and Dossiers," in R. Bagnall (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology* (Oxford 2009) 216–255, at 226–229.

1201 provide information about the protagonist Asklepiades, more specifically about his professional activities, whereas the current collection mainly informs us about his private life (cf. the intimate letters of Isidora).

It is this linguistic approach that has made it possible to establish convincingly the relationship between the Asklepiades and Athenodoros archives. Whereas non-linguistic arguments (the recurrent names of Asklepiades and Athenodoros, geography, chronology, etc.) are vague—they can equally be the result of coincidence—the exceptional language strengthens the hypothesis: comparison with reference material has made it clear that that coincidence is very hard to believe.

Finally, this study has led to two other conclusions. First, I have completed the picture of Isidora's idiolect: not only nicknames, but also the use of comparative subclauses in the initial health wish typify the language of her autographs. Even in the letters written by a professional scribe, Isidora uses uncommon language such as the reversed word order for the intensifier  $\delta\iota\alpha\ \pi\alpha\nu\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ . Those elements fit in with her loving attitude towards her brother (husband?). The same is true of the linguistic choices of Menelaos and Herakleia. Overall, the philophronetic strategies of the persons in our archives are now much clearer.

Second, the current interpretation on the language contact between Latin and Greek with regard to the relative subclause in the health wish has been challenged. Whereas it has been thought that the Greek formula influenced its Latin counterpart, I have suggested that the formulas initially developed separately. The Greek formula may have been an innovation from the Asklepiades and Athenodoros archives, but it was probably not widespread. Its Latin counterpart, by contrast, was successful, attested from northern Britain to Egypt. In Egypt, probably sometime in the first century A.D., Latin influenced the Greek epistolography, resulting in the addition of a relative subclause to the initial health wish.



In conclusion, this paper may be seen as a fruitful case study of a linguistic approach. The linguistic richness of the papyri has still barely begun to be exploited,<sup>61</sup> but this study, I hope, proves that there is a large potential for linguistically oriented research on the papyri.<sup>62</sup>

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Dept. of Ancient Greek Linguistics  
Ghent University  
Blandijnberg 2  
9000 Ghent, Belgium  
delphine.nachtergaele@ugent.be

<sup>61</sup> T. V. Evans, “Standard Koine Greek in Third Century BC Papyri,” in T. Gagos (ed.), *Proceedings Twenty-Fifth Internat. Congr. Papyrology* (Ann Arbor 2012) 197–206, at 197.

<sup>62</sup> I want to thank Marc De Groote and Willy Clarysse, as well as the anonymous referees of *GRBS* for their valuable comments on this paper.