

**A Papyrus Fragment of Cicero**

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The last papyrus which the late Professor David M. Robinson acquired for his collection is a small fragment of a codex, purchased from Cairo in 1955, bearing on each face parts or traces of nine lines of Cicero, *In Catilinam* 1.13 and 14–15 respectively.<sup>1</sup> For reasons to be discussed below, it is probably our earliest witness to the text of the Catilinarian orations.

In the order of its text, the page written on vertical fibers (the verso) precedes that on horizontal (the recto). Measuring 3.5 cm. in height by 2.6 cm. in breadth, the fragment preserves on an average only eight or nine letters from the middle of each line. From a calculation of the lacunae required to complete the extant lines, the average length of line may be estimated at 33 or 34 letters. Since sixteen lines of this length are required to fill the lacuna between the last line of the verso and the first of the recto, the original page must have borne 25 lines, each measuring approximately 8.75 cm. in length. Average height of the lines preserved on the verso is .443 cm., of those on the recto .457. The estimated height of the written page, therefore, is 11.25 cm. If only minimal upper, lower, and side margins of one cm. each are allowed, we may conjecture a leaf measuring at least  $13.25 \times 10.75$  cm., or more likely *ca.*  $14 \times 11$  cm. The page was written in single column.

The complete text of the First Catiline would occupy 23 such pages or twelve leaves—hardly enough to constitute an independent codex. In the same format, the text of all four Catilinarians, computed from the Teubner edition,<sup>2</sup> would

<sup>1</sup> The Cicero fragment bears the number *PRob. Inv.* 201. The Robinson Papyri are now at Duke University. For a general description of the Robinson Papyri, see W. H. Willis, "The New Collections of Papyri at the University of Mississippi," *Proceedings of the IX International Congress of Papyrology* (Oslo 1961) 381–82. The collection contains no other Latin papyrus.

<sup>2</sup> In the edition of P. Reis (Leipzig 1933), with an average of 44 letters a line, *In Cat.* 1 is printed in 428½ lines (*ca.* 18,854 letters), 2 in 403 lines, 3 in 421 lines, 4 in

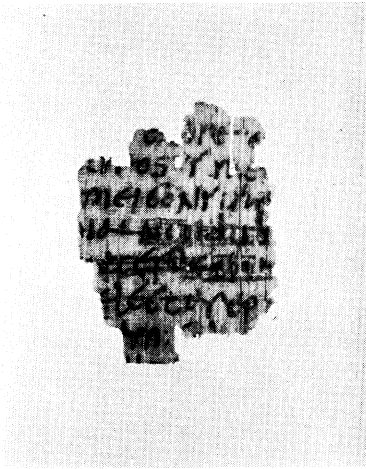
require from 85 to 88 pages, or a codex of 44 leaves, a size which lies well within the customary limits. By similar computations, we can determine that from 200 to 206 lines of the First Catiline preceded the beginning of our fragment, hence eight pages or four leaves, or a few lines more. Presumably the Robinson papyrus, then, is a fragment of the fifth inscribed leaf of the codex, from its upper half.<sup>3</sup>

The fragment is written in dark brown ink (virtually raw umber) on light brown papyrus almost beige in color, though the ink has cast a brownish shadow between letters within the lines of writing. Its brevity affords only three lectional signs: a raised dot in verso line 5 apparently borrowed from the lacuna of line 1 (see below); and a double dot (verso line 8) and a raised single dot (recto line 5) which must serve as word dividers, though they do not occur regularly. All principal textual pauses occur within lacunae, where they are indicated in the transcription by traditional punctuation.

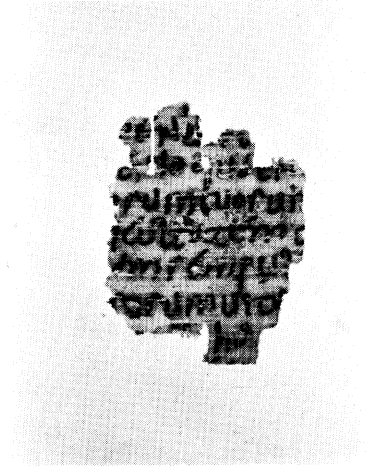
The hand is a clear, well-formed proto-minuscule with occasional ligatures of adjacent letters (see plate). It brings us a welcome new example of an early Roman hand which we now can recognize readily enough but do not yet know how to name, for palaeographers have given us almost as many names as we have examples. It is of course Thompson's "mixed uncial and minuscule bookhand," Kirchner's "semiuncialis antiquior," Schiapparelli's "semionciale arcaico," Lowe's "early half uncial" or "cursive half uncial," the "minuscola primitiva" of Cencetti or "minuscule antique" of the French. More recently Jean Mallon has shown us how to cut through the tangle of terms

384 lines. All four together comprise *ca.* 72,000 letters. These, distributed at 34 letters a line, would yield 2,118 lines (85 pages at 25 lines a page); if at 33 letters a line, 2,182 lines (88 pages). Of course we cannot be sure that our scribe produced lines of uniform length or pages with a consistent number of lines (scribes rarely did), or wrote a text substantially agreeing with the Teubner, or did not make other errors such as that described below on the verso. Estimates for our hypothetical codex are *exempli gratia*.

<sup>3</sup> This is not to rule out the possibility that the codex began with one or more blank leaves, or cover sheets, as was often the case. There is no evidence for determining the size of the quires, nor can anything be deduced about their composition from the fact that vertical precede horizontal fibers in our fragment. Normally the folios were laid recto (horizontal fibers) uppermost, so that our leaf would likely be in the left half of its quire, but the reverse practice is also attested (cf. Willis, *op. cit.* [above, note 1] 387, and F. G. Kenyon, *Books and Readers in Ancient Greece and Rome* [Oxford 1951] 105-8).

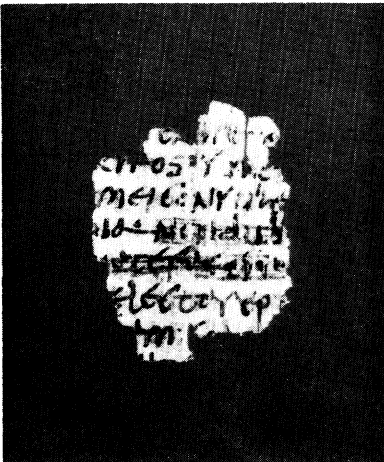


VERSO

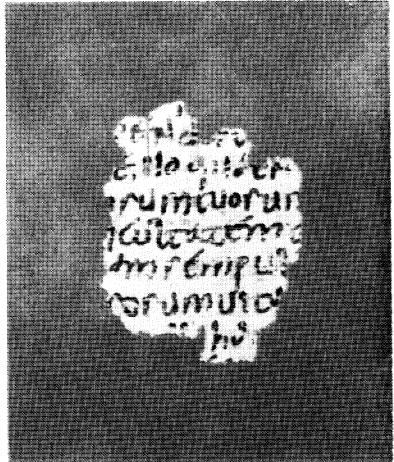


RECTO

*(tungsten photographs, actual size)*



VERSO



RECTO

*(infra-red photographs, actual size)*

resting upon the awkward notions of "half-uncial" and "minuscule" by defining two principal types of Roman hands—the "écriture commune classique," lasting until the second century, and its outgrowth and successor, the "nouvelle écriture commune," beginning in the second century and carried forward through modifications into the well-known "national scripts" of the Middle Ages.<sup>4</sup> Our hand, then, is a rather early example of the "nouvelle écriture commune," of which we have a number of examples dated variously from the ii/iii to the v/vi century. The problem is to focus the date more precisely.

The confident dating of literary hands even in Greek, where papyri outnumber Latin examples by a factor of at least 30 to 1, is notoriously difficult: by 1957 Cavenaile could collect only 101 Latin literary fragments for his *Corpus*. Very few of these offer any external evidence for dating; in some cases the subjective judgment of editors varies by as much as two or three centuries. Generally, a new find is dated by a comparison with its apparently closest parallels published previously, which in turn had been dated in the same way, and so on back to the beginning. That is to say, our system for dating rests on progressively weaker evidence and ultimately on judgments made at a time when still fewer examples of Latin papyri had come to light and much less could be known about early Roman palaeography.

As Mallon wisely remarks,<sup>5</sup> it is often very difficult from the hand alone to date to a single century examples of this style presumably characteristic of the third, fourth, and fifth centuries. In the case of another style of hand,<sup>6</sup> previously considered fifth century but fixed in the fourth by the subsequent discovery of dated examples, he has noted that our earlier acquaintance with late hands has exercised on palaeographers an attraction toward giving early examples dates later than they deserve. Experience with Greek book hands provides a parallel: early editors showed the same tendency to ascribe late dates.

Among the now fairly numerous examples of the *nouvelle écriture commune*, none seems to provide a precise parallel to our

<sup>4</sup> Jean Mallon, *Paléographie romaine* [Scripturae Monumenta et Studia III] (Madrid 1952), Chapters iii and iv and Plates xvii–xx, xxii, xxiv No. 2, xxix with notes.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.* (above, note 4) 181 concerning Pl. xviii No. 2.

<sup>6</sup> That of the Abinneus archive; see Mallon (above, note 4) 182 concerning Pl. xxi.

fragment either in its inventory of letter forms or in its over-all style. Hardly calligraphic, it is nevertheless a firm, practiced, and confident bookhand, consistent and smooth as far as our meager sample goes. It is less bold but shares many letter forms with the celebrated *Epitome* of Livy, firmly dated to the third century (at the latest) from the Greek text on its verso and now considered the earliest extant example of the *nouvelle écriture*.<sup>7</sup> Stylistically it has more in common with *PRyl.* 472, a Christian liturgical fragment dated by its editor (in 1938) to the iii–iv century,<sup>8</sup> sharing its characteristic *g* and *t* and closely resembling most of the other letter forms except *a*, *e*, and *l*. This hand is somewhat more open and irregular, however, and offers no such ligatures as our continuous *-cultatem* in recto line 5. By contrast, our papyrus seems clearly earlier than *PSI* 142, a Vergil fragment dated by its editor in 1913 (though probably too early) to the iii–iv; noteworthy are its later *g* and *n*, and downward sloping ligatures from *e* and *f*. There are other analogues<sup>9</sup> not quite so close as *PRyl.* 472, dated by their editors from the fourth to the sixth century, in some cases probably much too late.

The Robinson fragment, however, may give us some external evidence of its approximate date, and so may contribute a degree of control to its closest parallels. It was found between the leaves of the Crosby Codex, a papyrus codex in Coptic now at the University of Mississippi dated independently to the third century,<sup>10</sup> and part of the Greek and Coptic early Christian library from Upper Egypt, most of which was acquired by the

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Mallon (above, note 4) 80–89 and comment on Pl. xvii, 1 and 3, pages 180–81. Mallon (in 1952) dated the *Epitome* to ii/iii.

<sup>8</sup> The date was assigned after comparison with the *Epitome*, at a time when the *Epitome* itself was still considered to belong to iii–iv. Of it Grenfell and Hunt had said in 1904: “The Livy *Epitome* must therefore have been written not later than the beginning of the fourth century and it more probably belongs to the third” (*The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* iv, page 91). *PRyl.* 472 should now perhaps be dated simply to iii.

<sup>9</sup> *PSI* 20, another Cicero fragment, which bears a less close resemblance in style (though close in letter forms) and is no doubt later, was dated by its editor (in 1912) much too late, to the sixth century. But the features by which the editor fixed its date (“majuscule” *N*, both “majuscule” and “uncial” *t*, “uncial” *c* and *e* with “half-uncial” *e* and *g*, and “minuscule” *r*) can all be paralleled in either the *Epitome* or *PRyl.* 472. The papyrus is quite different in style (and period) from the Vatican St. Hilarion Codex (Mallon [above, note 4] Pl. xxix No. 3), dated A.D. 509–10, which the editor took as a parallel. Mallon has redated this hand iv–v. I should prefer iv.

<sup>10</sup> Willis (above, note 1) 383–89.

Bibliothèque Bodmer in Geneva.<sup>11</sup> How can one explain the presence of a Latin fragment of Cicero between the leaves of an anthology of Christian and Biblical texts, all pertaining to the Pascha? Was it a fragment of some crumbling codex used as a bookmark? It is perhaps useless to speculate; for the Latin fragment might have been inserted adventitiously after its discovery in the middle 1950's. If inserted in antiquity, as seems more likely, a reader might have dropped it into the Crosby Codex at any time within the period when the library was in active use. Presumably this period can be defined as the third and fourth centuries, possibly the early fifth: these encompass the range of dates of the Bodmer-Mississippi codices. The Cicero codex, however, must have been disintegrating at the time of the insertion, and therefore must antedate the last use of the Crosby Codex. Hence, it seems reasonable to assign to the Robinson papyrus a date of the third or fourth century. Meantime, it is interesting to consider that the Bodmer-Mississippi find included not only Christian codices in Greek and Coptic and such classical codices as that containing Menander's *Dyscolus* and another containing a part of Thucydides, but possibly also a Latin codex of Cicero as well.

In so short a compass the text can hardly be expected to improve our received text of First Catiline. Its three apparently unique readings, *mei* for *me* (verso line 4), *non* for *num* (verso line 5) and possibly *et* for *ac* (recto line 5, apparatus), seemingly cannot be right. The first is probably a simple orthographical error, perhaps anticipated from the common *ei*-for-*i* orthography which apparently we must restore in the following word; the second is derived from a canceled passage which may or may not reflect an intentional reading; and the third rests upon a broken and doubtful letter. In all its five other variants (see apparatus) it agrees with group y, in all but one (*tuam*, recto line 4) with V. With A it agrees twice, is opposed three times—once when A stands alone in a reading surely wrong (see *istam*, verso line 8). In all these variants save one (*tuam*, recto line 4, which though in lacuna seems guaranteed by space) its text is sound.

Most interesting is the cancellation seen in lines 5 and 6 of the verso—a clear case of dittography from line 1 and the line which

<sup>11</sup> George D. Kilpatrick, "The Bodmer and Mississippi Collection of Biblical and Christian Texts," *GRBS* 4 (1963) 33-41 and 46-47.

preceded it (italicized in the transcription). Under the influence of the *quid est enim Catilina* of line 5, the scribe's eye by mistake lit upon the *quid est Catilina* above, and so he went on to repeat the *non dubitas . . . facere* which he presumably had written before. On proceeding to the *quod iam* which followed, he must have caught his error and recovered himself in time to return to the proper *quod te iam* in line 7—not, however, before filling the remainder of line 6 with the false *quod* from above. At that point he must have struck out the repeated words, or so the space of the lacuna would suggest. From his error in line 5 we may deduce that his model above had read *non dubitas* instead of *num dubitas*, and must have contained the raised dot, appropriate to line 1 but superfluous in line 5. But what did he write in the first lacuna of line 6? The space is too great for any attested reading, right or wrong; he must have either repeated from the lacuna of line 1 an otherwise unknown inflated reading or filled the space in further compounding his error by repetition.<sup>12</sup>

Such, then, is our oldest scrap of Cicero's most celebrated oration. In popularity among readers in Egypt second only to Vergil, who is represented by thirteen papyri,<sup>13</sup> Cicero now has contributed his eighth papyrus, the third of the Catilinarians, the second of First Catiline.<sup>14</sup> Of these eight, three also were of

<sup>12</sup> The referee of this paper has suggested an ingenious and possible solution. "Let us suppose," he writes, "that after writing *non dubitas* at the end of line 5, the scribe immediately cancelled these words and began again at the beginning of line 6 with *num dubitas* and so produced the following, which he then cancelled also:

[[*num dubitas id me imper*]ante facere [*quod*]]

If this were the true sequence of events, we should not only eliminate the puzzle of seemingly excess space in line 6, but we should also be relieved of the necessity of supposing the scribe to have written *non* in line 1." Assuming in the lacuna the attested *id me imper*], the excess space unaccounted for would accommodate  $10 \pm 1$  letters, which *num dubitas* would neatly fill.

<sup>13</sup> Taking *PRyl.* 3.478, *PMil.* 1, and *PCaire* 85644 A and B as one (*CPL* 1–3) and not counting an *Aeneid* glossary (*CPL* 8) and three writing exercises (*CPL* 14, 18, and 19). Cf. R. Cavenaile, *Corpus Papyrorum Latinarum* (Wiesbaden 1956) Nos. 1–19 with his comments, pages 7 and 70.

<sup>14</sup> Counting *POxy.* 8.1097 and 10.1251 (both = Milne, *Catalogue* 143) as the same papyrus. For the known Cicero papyri, see *CPL* Nos. 20–27; R. A. Pack, *The Greek and Latin Literary Texts from Greco-Roman Egypt* (Ann Arbor 1952) Nos. 2283–89; and R. Roca-Puig, "Panorama de los Papiros Latinos," *Helmantica* 30 (1958) 25–29. The Robinson papyrus is unrelated to the two other Catilinarian papyri (*PVindob.* 30.885a and e, *PRyl.* 1.61 = *CPL* 21 and 22, respectively), which are bilingual texts with the Latin original and its Greek translation in parallel columns. They are dated iv/v and v century by their editors.

the Second Action against Verres, one codex of which contained the *De Imperio* and *Pro Caelio* as well. Besides these there is a fragment of the *Divinatio in Q. Caecilium* and one of the *Pro Plancio*. After Cicero in number of papyri come Sallust and Livy. These four seem to have been the staple Latin classics of Roman Egypt during the late Empire.

CICERO, *In Catilinam*. 1.13, 14–15

*PRob.* Inv. 201  
Papyrus codex

Upper Egypt?  
Saec. iii/iv

## VERSO

- §13 [quid est]  
1 [Catilina? non dubitas id me imperante] f[acere]  
[quod iam tua sponte faciebas?] exire e[x urbe]  
[iubet consul hostem. in]terrogas me [num in]  
[exsilium? non iubeo sed si] mei consule[is(?) sua-]  
5 [deo. quid est enim, Catili]na. [[non dub[itas]]]  
[[ ?? id me imper]ante facere [quod]]  
[quod te iam in hac urbe d]electare qo[ssit?]  
[in qua nemo est extra i]s[t]am : con[iuratio-]  
[nem perditorum hominum q]ui te [non metuat]

1. [non]: num *codd*; *lect. conj. e versu deleto 5 infra*.4. mei consule[is]: me consulis *codd*.

5. Quid

est enim, Catilina *codd*.: q. enim Cat. est *ed. princ.*5-6 [[non . . . facere]] *ditogr. e versibus 1 et 2**supra, lineis duabus deleta.*6. me imper]ante: imperante me β; *spatium in lacuna pro textu cognito nimium,**nisi fortasse num dubitas in me imper]ante.*7. delectare *codd*.: delectari αβ.8. istam *cett*.: hanc A.

## RECTO

- §14 [praetermitto]  
1 [ruinas] f[ortunarum tuarum quas omnis]  
[im]pendere [tibi proxumis Idibus senties; ad]  
[illa v]enio quae nō[n ad privatam ignominiam]  
[viti]orum tuorum [non ad domesticam tuam]  
5 [dif]ficultatem' a[c turpitudinem sed ad]  
[summ]am rem publ[icam atque ad omnium]  
[no]strum vita[m salutemque pertinent.]  
§15 [potestn]e [t]ib[i] haec[c lux, Catilina, aut huius]  
[caeli spiritus] e[ss]e iucundus, cum scias esse]

2. impendere tibi proxumis Idibus *ordo verborum ob lacunae spatium videtur, ut cett*.: prox. Id. tibi imp. Aah.

4. tuam αβγ: om. AVs.

5. a[c *codd*.: fortasse e[st] pap.8. tibi haec lux *codd*.: tibi huius vitaehaec lux *ed. princ.*