

ALEXANDRIA AD AEGYPTVM: THE (DIS)CONNECTION BETWEEN ALEXANDRIA AND EGYPT*

ABSTRACT

The ancient city of Alexandria was often referred to as Alexandria ad Aegyptum in Roman documentary, epigraphic and literary sources; this phrase was translated in Greek as ἡ Ἀλεξάνδρεια ἢ πρὸς Αἰγύπτω. The grammatical phrasing implies that Alexandria was seen as being ‘near’ or ‘next to’ Egypt, not ‘in’ Egypt. This observation has given rise to the scholarly view that Alexandria was not part of Egypt. In this article the function of the designation ad Aegyptum and of similar designations within literary, papyrological and epigraphic sources ranging from 300 B.C.E. to 640 C.E. will be closely examined. This article argues that the expression can be seen as reflecting both the distinction and the close connection between Alexandria and Egypt on the basis of geographical, political and socio-cultural factors.

Keywords: Alexandria ad Aegyptum; Roman Egypt; Ptolemaic Egypt; toponyms; geographical markers; papyrology; epigraphy

In 30 B.C.E. Egypt was incorporated in the Roman empire and organized as a Roman province.¹ With this transition into the Roman power sphere, the city of Alexandria changed status from royal capital to the capital of an imperial province. The Romans referred to their new province as *Alexandria et Aegyptus*, which was administered by the *praefectus Alexandriae et Aegypti*, a newly created equestrian post.² The capital of the province was often referred to as *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* in Roman documentary, epigraphic and literary sources, which was translated in Greek as ἡ Ἀλεξάνδρεια ἢ πρὸς Αἰγύπτω. As Bell observed, this expression translates as ‘Alexandria near Egypt’, the grammatical phrasing implying that Alexandria was not identified as being *in* Egypt.³

This observation has given rise to the scholarly view that Alexandria was not part of Egypt.⁴ This perspective is continuously present in Fraser, who in his *Ptolemaic*

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¹ For an overview of the changes in the administration of Egypt, see L. Capponi, *Augustan Egypt: The Creation of a Roman Province* (London, 2005).

² In a trilingual inscription (*IPhilae* 128) from 29 B.C.E., the first Roman prefect Cornelius Gallus was referred to in Latin as *pr(a)efect[us Alex]andreae et Aegypti*. The Greek version refers to Gallus as πρῶτος ὑπὸ Καίσαρος ἐπὶ τῆς Αἰγύπτου κατασταθείς. Interestingly, only Egypt is mentioned, without separately mentioning Alexandria.

³ H.I. Bell, ‘*Alexandria ad Aegyptum*’, *JRS* 36 (1946), 130–2 responding to F. Schulz, ‘Roman registers of births and birth certificates: part II’, *JRS* 33 (1943), 55–64, at 58. P.M. Fraser, ‘*Alexandria ad Aegyptum* again’, *JRS* 39 (1949), 56 added some further evidence to Bell’s account.

⁴ A. Stein, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Verwaltung Ägyptens unter römischer Herrschaft* (Stuttgart, 1915), 85–90 is one of the first who discussed the use of the name *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* in the documents. He observed that Alexandria and Egypt are often separately mentioned in the titles of Roman functionaries. V. Arangio-Ruiz, ‘L’*enigma costituzionale dell’antica Alessandria*’, *Labeo* 5 (1959), 79–85 discusses the juridical status of Alexandria as a matter of public law, but views it solely

Alexandria sees Alexandria as a distinctly Greek city with Greek political and cultural institutions.⁵ Haas states: ‘Most papyrologists consider Alexandria as somehow separate from Egypt, belonging more to the classical world of the Mediterranean cities than to the more familiar villages and *metropoleis* of the Egyptian *chōra* (countryside). From the standpoint of papyrology, the city is considered *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* (that is, “next to” or “toward” Egypt) rather than *in Aegypto*, thereby echoing the phraseology of the ancients.’⁶ In this article I will take a fresh look on the matter. I will closely examine the function of the expression *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* within literary, papyrological and epigraphic sources. The aim is to establish whether the expression implies a connection or rather a disconnection between Alexandria and Egypt. I will argue that Alexandria’s designation as *ad Aegyptum* does not necessarily mean that it was perceived by the ancients as apart from Egypt. On the contrary, the expression could also be considered as a confirmation of the connections between Alexandria and Egypt.

In the first section of this article, I will examine the function of the designation *ad Aegyptum* in literary, epigraphic and papyrological sources from the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Only the attestations of *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* or (Greek) equivalents thereof will be taken into consideration. Other phrases that may indicate any disconnection between Alexandria and Egypt, such as *Alexandria et Aegyptum*, will be considered in the second section of this article, where the perception by the ancients that Alexandria was not part of Egypt will be discussed. It will be argued that geographical, socio-cultural and political factors might have played a role in the creation of this perception. This distinction is most visible in the cases where Alexandria and Egypt are explicitly named separately, where one would expect the two to be combined. In the third section, consideration of the epigraphic and the literary evidence will show that Alexandria was just as much perceived as being *in Egypt*, or at least that Alexandria and Egypt were considered to be inseparable.

As the designation *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* is found in epigraphic or papyrological sources from 300 B.C.E. to 640 C.E., when Egypt was part of the Ptolemaic, Roman and Byzantine empires, only texts within that chronological timespan will be taken into consideration. The corpus for this research was compiled in several ways. The initial search started with collection of all the attestations of Alexandria in the *Trismegistos Geo-Ref* database.⁷ In this database forty-two references to Alexandria were marked as ‘Alexandria near Egypt’, including papyrological and epigraphic attestations. The corpus was complemented by adding references found in several online databases. Greek literary texts were found in the *TLG*.⁸ A consultation of the *LLT-A* and *LLT-B* databases gave no results.⁹ Greek inscriptions were found in the *PHI Greek*

as a city *near* Egypt, failing to account for the evidence that it was also seen as a city *in* Egypt and therefore missing out on important nuances. G.M. Cohen, *The Hellenistic Settlements in Syria, the Red Sea Basin, and North Africa* (Berkeley, 2006), 353–82 and 409–23 already studied the designation *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* and the (dis)connection between Alexandria and Egypt, but focussed mainly on an Egyptian perspective during Ptolemaic times.

⁵ P.M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford, 1972), 2 vols., 1.107–8.

⁶ C. Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity: Topography and Social Conflict* (London, 1997), 7. Haas prefers a geographical explanation of the designation *Alexandria ad Aegyptum*.

⁷ Trismegistos Places: www.trismegistos.org/geo/index.php.

⁸ Thesaurus Linguae Graecae: <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/>. I used the lemmata “Ἀλεξάνδρεια”, “πρός” and “Αἴγυπτος” in a vicinity of five words.

⁹ Library of Latin Texts – Online: <http://www.brepols.net/Pages/BrowseBySeries.aspx?TreeSeries=LLT-O>. Search-string: ‘(%5 Alexandria* Aeg*)’.

Inscriptions database and Latin inscriptions in the *EDCS*.¹⁰ The papyrological sources were mainly extracted from the gathering of references from the *Trismegistos* database. These attestations were complemented by a search in the *PN*.¹¹ The resulting corpus was expanded by any further allusive attestations found in Bell (n. 3 above), Stein (n. 4 above) and Cohen (n. 4 above) that were not found through searches in the various databases.

I: ALEXANDRIA NEAR EGYPT

The first questions to be addressed are why the Romans qualified the city of Alexandria as *ad Aegyptum* and how the phrase *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* is used in literary, epigraphical and papyrological sources. The geographical marker *ad Aegyptum* fits into a wider pattern of using geographical markers for Hellenistic cities. Alexander and his successors founded many eponymous cities. The Alexandria founded in Egypt was hardly the most prominent city in the earliest years of its existence. Many of the Alexandrias, such as *Alexandria Troas* and *Alexandria ad Issum*, became towns of prominence in the Hellenistic period and continued to be so under Roman rule. Owing to the effort of the Ptolemies, the Egyptian Alexandria developed into a ‘global’ political, economic and cultural centre.

The *diadochi* adopted this practice of adding geographical qualifications to differentiate between homonymous cities. For example, Ptolemy I Soter founded as capital of Upper Egypt the eponymous city that was described as Πτολεμαῖς τῆς Θηβαΐδος.¹² Not-eponymous cities could also bear a geographical qualification, as the reference Ὁξυρύγχων πόλις τῆς Θηβαΐδος indicates.¹³ Also many eponymous cities founded by the Seleucids bore geographical markers, such as Σελευκεὺς τῶν πρὸς τῷ Εὐφρόρῳ.¹⁴ These geographical additions may be explained pragmatically, in order to distinguish the various homonymous places. As all such cities became part of the Roman world, some further description was necessary to distinguish them.

Literary sources

The designation ἡ Ἀλεξάνδρεια ἡ πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ is attested in at least fifteen Greek literary texts ranging from the second century B.C.E. to the Byzantine period. These will be discussed in chronological order. The formulation *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* is not found in any Latin literary sources, while it frequently features in Latin epigraphic

¹⁰ PHI Greek inscriptions: <https://inscriptions.packhum.org/>. The search-string ‘πρὸς Αἶγ’ was used. Epigraphische Datenbank Clausen – Slaby: <http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi.php>. Search-string: ‘*ad Aeg*’.

¹¹ Papyrological Navigator: <http://papyri.info/search>. Search-string for Greek papyri: “Ἀλεξάνδρ* NEAR Αἶγ* NEAR πρὸς” within five words; search-string for Latin papyri: ‘*Alex** NEAR *Aeg**’, also within five words.

¹² See A. Calderini, *Dizionario dei nomi geografici e topografici dell’Egitto greco-romano* (Milan, 1986), 4.210–11. For Πτολεμαῖς τῆς Θηβαΐδος see, for example, *BGU* III 994, 8 (113 B.C.E.); *BGU* III 996, 7 (c.112 B.C.E.); *BGU* VI 1249, 6 (136 B.C.E.); *P.Grenf.* I 27, 4 (109 B.C.E.).

¹³ One hundred and nine attestations of this reference were found in Greek documents (and one in Latin: *ChLA* V 301, 19 [147 C.E.]), ranging from the first century B.C.E. to the second century C.E. All attestations were used to designate the place where the document was drawn up as part of the dating formula.

¹⁴ See *IG* XII,1 653, 3–4 (Augustan).

and papyrological sources. This may result from a difference in function of the geographical description in the literary and epigraphic sources on the one hand and in the papyrological sources on the other hand, as will be argued in the following paragraphs.

The earliest attestation of ἡ Ἀλεξάνδρεια ἢ πρὸς Αἴγυπτον can be found in the *Anaphoricus* by the Alexandrian mathematician and astronomer Hypsicles, dated between 150 and 120 B.C.E. The work is about the adaptation of a certain Babylonian scheme for calculating how much time the signs of the zodiac need to rise to the latitude (κλίμα) of Alexandria. It is referred to as τὸ ἐν Ἀλεξάνδρεια τῇ πρὸς Αἴγυπτον κλίμα (63).¹⁵

A reference to Alexandria might also have been made by Hipparchus, an astronomer from the second half of the second century B.C.E., whose geographical treatise is mainly known from quotations by Strabo. Alexandria is named ninety-two times in Strabo's *Geographica*, but only five times it is accompanied by the marker ἢ πρὸς Αἴγυπτον. Two of those instances occur when Strabo is quoting Hipparchus, in 1.1.12 and 2.5.40.¹⁶ In 2.5.40 Alexandria near Egypt is juxtaposed with *Alexandria Troas*. In 1.1.12 it is discussed whether it can be known if Alexandria near Egypt is north or south of Babylon. Clearly, these uses of the geographical marker can be seen as intended to avoid confusion between the different Alexandrias.

Philo Judaeus, an Alexandrian himself, writing in the early first century C.E., refers six times to the city in the *Legatio ad Gaium*, a report of the embassy to Emperor Caligula in 40 C.E. in which Philo took part. The embassy's goal was to find a solution for an impending clash between Alexandrian Jews and Greeks. In only one of these six instances is Alexandria designated as πρὸς Αἴγυπτον (250). As this reference concerns Caligula's intention to undertake a journey from Rome to Ἀλεξάνδρειαν τὴν πρὸς Αἴγυπτον—that is, from outside Egypt to Egypt—the designation was necessary to avoid confusion with different Alexandrias. In all the other references to Alexandria it is unambiguously clear which Alexandria is meant, because the narrative takes place in that city.

In Philo's *Quod omnis probus liber sit* the geographical marker is also added. Alexandria is named here as the residence of a certain philosopher named Chaereas (125), who is compared to Diogenes of Sinope in respect of their shared outspokenness (παρρησία). The geographical marker was necessary to avoid confusion, as philosophers from geographically dispersed regions are discussed.

Aristides' *Roman Oration* (*Or.* 26), a literary encomium of Rome, also contains multiple references to Alexandria. The city is referred to as πρὸς Αἴγυπτον τὴν ἐπώνυμον πόλιν in a section of the speech listing the feats of Alexander (26) and comparing former world empires to Rome.¹⁷ In this passage no other Alexandrias are mentioned, but of course there were many more ἐπώνυμοι πόλεις of that name. Hence, confusion might arise if Alexandria was not further specified. Furthermore, in the *Roman Oration* (95) Alexandria, designated as ἡ δὲ σεμνὴ καὶ μεγάλῃ κατ'

¹⁵ Note that Αἴγυπτον is in the accusative case and not in the dative case and thus not used in a locational sense but probably in a relational sense as 'the Alexandria that is related to Egypt'.

¹⁶ Although the designation πρὸς Αἴγυπτον is used in the instances mentioned, it is not consequently used in quotations of Hipparchus by Strabo. Alexandria is named eight times in those quotations. In six of the attestations the geographical marker is not used: in Strabo 1.4.1, 2.5.36, 2.5.38 (two times) and 2.5.39 (two times).

¹⁷ J.H. Oliver, 'The ruling power: a study of the Roman empire in the second century after Christ through the Roman oration of Aelius Aristides', *TAPhS* 43 (1953), 871–1003, at 878–9.

Αἴγυπτον Ἀλεξάνδρου πόλις, is described as having become the ‘glory of your [Rome’s] hegemony’. The use of *κατά* instead of *πρός* is notable, as it emphasizes that Alexandria was situated below Egypt or in Lower Egypt. The same phrasing is also attested on the inscriptions *IL Afr.* 184 and *IGR IV* 186, which will be discussed below in the discussion of the epigraphic evidence.

In Aristides’ prose hymn *To Serapis* from the second century C.E. the worship of Zeus Serapis by the citizens of τῆς μεγάλης πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ πόλεως is mentioned (*Or.* 45.21). Although Alexandria is not explicitly named, there is no doubt that this city is implied, as the designation ‘big city’ and the geographic addition πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ make clear. Furthermore, Alexandria was one of the major cult centres for Serapis. Thus in this case Alexandria’s identity is revealed even without mentioning the name of the city through its other relevant characteristics.

The practical usage of the geographical markers is illustrated very well in a list of all the different Alexandrias that Alexander founded in the *Alexander Romance*, of which the oldest version in Greek (*recensio α*) can be dated to the third century C.E.¹⁸ In this list each Alexandria has its own marker: some are geographical, others have some other kind of characterization (Ps.-Callisthenes 3.35). The marker of the Egyptian Alexandria was πρὸς Αἴγυπτον.¹⁹ In 1.34.9 Alexander addresses the Egyptians after he had conquered Egypt and ended Persian rule. In an adhortative speech he requests that the Egyptians pay him the tribute that they would otherwise have given Darius, so that he may invest it in τὴν ὑμῶν πόλιν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν τὴν πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ μητρόπολιν. The use of the geographical marker πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ may surprise in a speech to Egyptians, but it is functional, as it emphasized that it is the Egyptian Alexandria that is meant and not some other Alexandria. In this way Alexander reassured the Egyptians that he would spend their money in their own interest. By calling the city ὑμῶν πόλιν, the Egyptian people were represented as associates of the new city.

Another literary reference to Alexandria is found in the historical work *Chronica* of the third-century C.E. scholar Porphyry. Fr. 7.11 contains a list of Ptolemaic kings after the reign of Alexander.²⁰ It is stated that Alexander founded Ἀλεξάνδρειαν τὴν πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ. Although this is the only Alexandria mentioned, the principle that Alexandria needed to be distinguished from other Alexandrias founded by Alexander holds. Such clarification was especially helpful, because neither Porphyry nor his audience came from Alexandria or Egypt.

In the *Vita Procli* by Marinus of Samaria Alexandria is named five times. This work from the fifth century C.E. was a biography of the Neoplatonist philosopher Proclus (412–485 C.E.), who was the mentor of Marinus of Samaria and his predecessor as Head of the Academy of Athens. In the first of the five instances Alexandria is named with the geographical marker πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ (178). This is not surprising, because Proclus’ journey from a school in Lycia to Alexandria near Egypt is being described. Thus, the geographical location of the city informs the reader to which Alexandria Proclus went. In the other four instances the city is mentioned without further specification, as the narrated events take place in the same Alexandria.

In his *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* from the fifth century C.E. the Bishop Theodoret of Cyrrhus discussed the Meletians, a schismatic sect of Christianity in

¹⁸ K. Nawotka, *The Alexander Romance by Ps.-Callisthenes: A Historical Commentary* (Leiden, 2017), 3–4.

¹⁹ Αἴγυπτον in the accusative, not in the dative. We have already seen this in Hypsiel. *Anaph.* 63.

²⁰ *FHG* 3.719.

Egypt. Chapter 6 starts with the words ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ τῇ πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ. These initial words of the chapter are parallel to the first words of chapter 5, where another schismatic sect, that of the Donatists in Libya, is introduced by reference to their location ἐν δὲ τῇ πάλλαι μὲν Λιβύῃ. Thus both chapters begin with setting the scene by identifying the geographical area of the sect to be discussed.

The addition πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ continued to be used in the same way for Alexandria in Byzantine sources,²¹ even after Alexandria had become part of the Islamic empire in the seventh century. The geographical marker remained necessary for identifying the city, as there still existed multiple Alexandrias. In Islamic sources, Alexandria is never referred to as ‘near Egypt’. The Islamic conquest of Egypt changed Alexandria’s position and to the Arabs Alexandria was a city in Egypt.²²

As this discussion of literary texts demonstrated, the function of the geographical marker in references to Alexandria was used to identify Alexandria unambiguously as the city in Egypt.

Epigraphic sources

There are eight Greek and Latin inscriptions that refer to Alexandria as *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* or similarly. Most of the inscriptions can be dated to the second century C.E. The inscriptions are dispersed over a large geographical area in various places in the Roman East and on the Italian peninsula. As none of the inscriptions was found in Egypt, the geographical marker most likely functioned in a similar fashion as in the literary texts as a means of excluding ambiguity about the different Alexandrias.

The earliest attestation of *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* in an inscription is *IDid.* II 218.2, which may be dated to the period 38–24 B.C.E. and was found between Didyma and Karakuyu in Ionia. It concerns a *prophētēs* inscription for the son of Sopolis, whose name probably was Lysimachos. He went to Alexandria near Egypt as an envoy (6–7 [πρεσβεύσας] δὲ καὶ εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρην τὴν πρὸς [Αἰγύπτῳ]) to King Ptolemy XIII. As the inscription was erected in Ionia, where the Alexandria near Egypt was not the nearest Alexandria, the geographical description of Alexandria was indispensable.

In most cases the geographical description was added to designate the place where the individual referred to in the inscription had held office. For example, *CIL* X 1685 from 97–110 C.E., erected in Puteoli, is an epitaph for his wife by Lucius Bovius Celer, who was among many other offices *procur(ator) ludi familiae gladiatoriae Caesaris Alexandriae ad Aegyptum* (4–5);²³ *IK* XVII 4112, a dedicatory inscription for the Lares of the emperor from 114–117 C.E., put up in Ephesus by Flavius Juncus, who held various offices including *iuridicus Alexandriae ad Aegyptum* (11–12);²⁴ *CIL* VI 8582 (late second century C.E., Neapolis) commemorates Marcus Aurelius Philetus as

²¹ See Zonar. *Hypom. in Sophr. Hier.* 8; Eust. *Comm. in Dionys. Per.* 918 (juxtaposed with Σελευκεία τῆς ἐπὶ τῷ Τίγγρει); Xanth. *Hist. Eccl.* 8.5.

²² A.L. Udovitch, ‘Medieval Alexandria: some evidence from the Cairo Genizah documents’, in K. Hamma (ed.), *Alexandria and Alexandrianism* (Malibu, 1996), 273–83, at 282–3.

²³ For more on L. Bovius Celer and the office of *procurator ludi familiae gladiatoriae Caesaris*, see F. Kayser, ‘La gladiature en Egypte’, *REA* 102 (2000), 459–78, at 468–9 and H.G. Pflaum, *Les carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le Haut-Empire Romain* (Paris, 1960), no. 55.

²⁴ The division between Alexandria and Egypt is more often seen in combination with the title of *iuridicus*. See Stein (n. 4), 87.

the *proc(urator) Fari Alexandriae ad Hegyptum [sic]* (3–5);²⁵ *CIL* III 399 (c.29 B.C.E., Pergamum) was erected by a certain Tullia for several relatives, including her son Titus Aufidius Balbus, who held the office of military tribune of the twenty-second legion at *Alexandr(ea) ad Aegypt(um)* (7); *SEG* XLI 1407 (160–180 C.E., Seleucia ad Calycadnum) honours the wrestler Titus Aelius Aurelius Maron, who held honorary citizenships of Ἀλεξανδρέα τῶν πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ (3) and many other cities.

Two interesting inscriptions are the epitaphs *IL Afr.* 184 (second century C.E., Henchir el-Kohl) and *IGR* IV 186 (unknown date, Zeleia). *IL Afr.* 184 is the epitaph of the freedwoman Iulia Artemis, which was erected by her father Iulius. She came from *Alexandria cat(a) Aegipto* (3–5).²⁶ This is a rare example of the Greek *κατά* transliterated in Latin. *IGR* IV 186 is a fragmentary epitaph that an unknown person arranged to have erected for himself. The inscription consists mostly of a list with various places, probably locations where an office was held. The list ends with the statement that the person had been working in-between those offices with the φορικὰ χρήματα (*uectigalia*) for 35 years. He was thus working in the financial administration of the Roman empire. One of the places mentioned is Alexandria, which is referred to as Ἀλεξανδρείαν τὴν κα[τ'] Αἰγυπτῶν (5–6). The use of the preposition *κατά* instead of *πρὸς* stresses not only the fact that Alexandria was not situated in Egypt but also that it was geographically located ‘below’ Egypt, being in Lower Egypt.²⁷

To sum up, relatively few inscriptions use the designation *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* or variants thereof. Those inscriptions are dispersed over a wide geographical range. The expression is mostly used in epitaphs or other inscriptions where the *cursus honorum* was given and titles mattered. Most of the persons concerned did not originally come from Egypt, but were rather connected to Egypt through their (imperial) career. The designation is thus mostly used as a location where an office was held. The identification of location mattered and in the case of career officials may have impressed.

Papyrological sources

In total thirty Greek and Latin papyri refer to Alexandria as *ad Aegyptum* or πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ and they range from 27 C.E. to 641 C.E. More than half of the documents can be dated to the second century C.E. This is the same chronological concentration as the epigraphic material. The question arises whether the impression about the practical function of the geographical description that has emerged for the literary and the epigraphic sources also applies to the papyrological sources. While most of the epigraphic sources were found outside Egypt, almost all the papyrological sources were found in Egypt. Sixteen of the documents were written in Alexandria itself. In twenty-seven of the documents the reference is used to identify the location where the document had been drawn up, in combination with a dating formula.

²⁵ This was an official who had certain responsibilities surrounding the Alexandrian harbour that included the issuance of permissions granting departure of ships. See A. Puk, ‘The procuratorship of the Alexandrian Pharos’, *ZPE* 175 (2010), 227–30.

²⁶ R. González Fernández, ‘Domo Alexandria cat(a) Aegipto(n). Otra peculiaridad de la ciudad que estaba en Egipto’, *Myrtia* 28 (2013), 343–54.

²⁷ The same expression is used in Aristid. *Or.* 26.95 ἡ δὲ σεμνὴ καὶ μεγάλη κατ’ Αἰγυπτῶν Ἀλεξάνδρου πόλις, as discussed earlier.

One Latin document from outside Egypt mentions *Alexandria ad Aegyptum*. This is wax-tablet *PSI IX 1026* (150 C.E.), a petition in Latin by a group of veterans of the *Legio X Frentensis* from Caesarea to the governor of Judaea. The veterans, who want to return to *patriam Alexandriam ad Aegyptum* (1.7 and 3.5), ask the governor for affirmation of their discharge. The veterans probably were anxious to receive proof of their Roman citizenship, having started their service as non-citizens. The governor replies that he cannot give them an official written document (*instrumentum*), but he will offer an informal statement and a notice to the *praefectus Aegypti*.²⁸

In *PSI IX 1026* the use of the geographical description might be explained in a similar sense as the literary and the epigraphical material to distinguish between different Alexandrias. However, this function of the description would seem less pressing when looking at the papyrological evidence from Egypt or Alexandria itself, as the following discussion aims to show. When looking at this material it is notable that all the papyri preserve official documents. Nine documents with the expression are Roman notifications of birth:²⁹ *CPL 148*, *P.Mich.* III 166, 168, 169, *BGU VII 1692*, 1693, 1694, *P.Oxy.* VI 894 and XXXI 2565. Most of the other documents are originating from or addressed to Roman authorities, such as edicts or proclamations (*W.Chr.* 463 and *P.Oxy.* I 35) and petitions (*P.Horak* 13 and *P.Oxy.* VI 899), nine in total. Seven documents are legal documents governed by private law, often in a Roman military context. This kind of document shows a high degree of formality and often uses language that is characteristic for 'legal etiquette'.³⁰ They are therefore comparable to official documents that are produced by the central administration. In contrast to these official texts, the phrase *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* or a Greek equivalent of it was never used in private documents. This contrast in use in different contexts may confirm the 'official' character of the phrase.

It is noteworthy that a relatively large proportion of the documents were written on wooden wax-tablets (*PSI IX 1026*, *CPL 148*, *W.Chr.* 463, *P.Mich.* VII 432, *P.Mich.* III 166, 168, 169, *BGU VII 1691*, 1692, 1693, 1694, 1695, *CPL 156*, *SB III 6223*, *CPL 221*). The practice of writing on wax-tablets in the provinces has been widely considered to be a Roman practice.³¹ This might indicate that the use of the phrase *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* in the documents can be connected with Roman practice as well, as the phrase is not found outside Roman contexts in the papyri.

The official use of the geographical description is well illustrated by the birth certificates. All such documents start with a dating formula followed by the location.³² The date was usually given in both the Roman-style date with the consular year, the day and the Roman month, and the Egyptian-style date with the regnal year of the emperor(s),

²⁸ B. Campbell, *The Roman Army, 31 BC–AD 337: A Sourcebook* (London, 1994), no. 329 (bilingual). Note that in line 24 the prefect is not referred to by means of his full title *praefectus Alexandriae et Aegypti*. The brevity of this reference may be ascribed to the veterans already having indicated their *patria* as *Alexandria ad Aegyptum*.

²⁹ For declarations of birth and birth certificates, see B. Palme, 'The range of documentary texts: types and categories', in R.S. Bagnall (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology* (Oxford, 2009), 358–94, at 379–80; C. Sánchez-Moreno Ellart, 'Notes on some new issues concerning the birth certificates of Roman citizens', *JJP* 34 (2004), 107–19; F. Schulz, 'Roman registers of births and birth certificates', *JRS* 32 (1942), 78–91; Schulz (n. 3).

³⁰ E.A. Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World: Tabulae in Roman Belief and Practice* (Cambridge, 2004), 44.

³¹ Meyer (n. 30), 170–83.

³² Schulz (n. 3), 58–9 gives an extensive discussion of the form and recurring clauses of birth certificates, including dating and location formulas.

the Egyptian month and the day. The location included the geographical marker and was often abbreviated as *Alex ad Aeg.*³³

For example, in *P.Mich.* III 169 (145 C.E.) a *testatio* for the birth of illegitimate twins is recorded. Both the Roman consular year and month, and the Egyptian regnal year and month were given after the location in line 3.4, *actum Alex(andriae) ad Aeg(yptum)*, which was given at the end of the document.

A feature of the Latin documents is that the location was often given with the participle *actum* (see *P.Mich.* III 169, 3.4), under the context of the document.³⁴ In the Greek documents from Judaea and Arabia from the Roman period a location formula can be found as well, which points towards a local habit.³⁵ By contrast, Greek documents from Egypt only rarely contain a formula to indicate the location where the document was written. Notable exceptions are Latin and Greek documents that were written by Roman soldiers, especially in the first century C.E. Often the Alexandrian location in these military contexts was given as *Alexandriae ad Aegyptum*. The use of the geographical description in these documents might be especially relevant, as legions were stationed and moved all over the empire. For their context it was important to keep the geography clear.

For example, in *CEL* I 13 a Roman cavalryman states he has a debt. This is the earliest document in which the phrase *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* can be found and is dateable to 27 C.E. In line 12 we find the location formula *actum* [-] *Alexandr(eae) - ad Aegypt(um)*.

In testaments of Roman soldiers we see similar formulas where the location and the dating formula are given at the end of the document. For instance, *CPL* 221 (142 C.E.) contains the testament of Antonius Silvanus, a cavalryman and *stator praefecti*.³⁶ Both the city and the military camp are given as the location (44–6). The location is preceded by the words *testamentum factum* and followed by a Roman-style date. In *BGU* VII 1695 we find the testament of a soldier of the fleet from 157 C.E. The location is given as *f(actum) Alex(andreae) ad Aeg(yptum)* (fragment B2.4).

A case in which we find the geographical marker in a private document outside a military context is *BGU* XIII 2244 (186 C.E.), a fragment of a will written in Greek. The document probably was a Greek translation of a Latin original and was governed by Roman law. It is stated that the witnesses have sealed the document and confirmed the authenticity of the seals in the *statio uicesimae hereditatum* in Alexandria near Egypt (11–12 ἐν τῇ Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ πρὸς Αἰγύπτω).³⁷ This is the only time that the reference *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* is used not in the formulaic part after the dating formula but

³³ *CPL* 148, 22; *P.Mich.* III 166, 2.4; *BGU* VII 1692, 4; *BGU* VII 1693, 4; *P.Mich.* III 168, 6; *P.Mich.* III 169, 3.4. Other possible abbreviations were *CPL* 156 line 12: *Alexandre(ae) ad Aegyptum*; *P.Oxy.* VI 894 line 3: *A]lexandr(iae) ad A]egyptum*; *P.Oxy.* XXXI 2565 line 5: *[Alex]a[ndr](iae) ad Aeg(yptum)*.

³⁴ See J.G. Wolf, 'Die Ναυλοτικὴ des Menelaos – Seederlehen oder Seefrachtvertrag?', in id., *Aus dem neuen pompejanischen Urkundenfund: gesammelte Aufsätze* (Berlin, 2010), 156–85, at 159–61 for dating and location formulas in different Roman contract forms. The *actum*-formula is also found in other parts of the Roman empire; cf. the documents of the archive of the Sulpicii (*TPSulp.*), the Bloomberg Tablets (*WT* 32, 67) from Britain and *P.Mich.* III 161 from Caesarea in Mauretania (or Palaestina?).

³⁵ Wolf (n. 34), 160.

³⁶ The military office of *praefectus alae* is probably meant here, not the *praefectus Alexandriae et Aegypti*.

³⁷ The *uicesima hereditatum* was a 5% tax on inheritances higher than 100,000 sestertii by non-relatives that was instituted by Augustus. See *OCD*⁴, s.v. *vectigal*. What the exact function of the *statio uicesimae hereditatum* was in relation to this tax remains unknown.

rather to indicate the location of an institution. This indicates that the use of this designation was not limited to location formulas.

In *SB XVI 12673* (324–325 C.E.) we find a fragmented contract that is related to a deposit of money between Roman citizens. Reference to the *ius trium liberorum* (4) points to its Roman legal context. The dating formula is followed by the location ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ τῇ πρὸς [Αἰγύπτῳ] (2).

An analogous dating and location formula is found in *P.Oxy. I 35 Ro* (223 C.E.). This fragmentary document contains a proclamation by an unknown official from the reign of Severus Alexander. The document is in Greek, but was probably a translation of a Latin original. The place where the document was drawn up is given as Ἀλεξ[ανδρείᾳ τῇ πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ] (9). This location is again given immediately after the date. The date is, as in the other documents, given in both consular and imperial regnal years.

SB III 6223 (198 C.E.) is a request in Latin for the approval of a guardian by the woman Mevia Dionysarion. Prefixed to her request is the actual approval of the request by the prefect of Egypt. The reply by the prefect is concluded with a dating formula. Before the date the location where the document was drawn up was inserted: *actum Alex(andriae) ad Aeg(yptum)* (7). The date is given both in the Roman and in the Egyptian fashion.

In addition to the abovementioned documents there are documents in which parts of the location formula *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* or Ἀλεξάνδρεια ἢ πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ might be read, but they are too fragmented for us to be certain of their reading.³⁸ Also the three documents *P.Oxy. LXIII 4394* (494 C.E.), *P.Paramone 15* (592/3 C.E.) and *CPR XXIII 35* (641 C.E.) are excluded, as their elaborate location formula will be discussed elsewhere more in depth.³⁹

This overview of papyri with attestations of *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* and Ἀλεξάνδρεια ἢ πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ clearly demonstrates that this designation of the city of Alexander is used only in official documents, in Roman-law contexts and in most cases to designate the location where a document was drawn up. Its use in standard formulas in official and Roman contexts may be taken to indicate the ‘official’ character of this designation as used by the Roman administration. In private contexts in Greek and Latin papyri preference was given to write simply ‘Alexandria’, at least when no confusion with other homonymous cities could occur.

II: ALEXANDRIA AND EGYPT

As the discussion of literary and documentary sources has shown, the designation *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* was used not only as a geographical description but may well have had an official sound to it, at least to Roman administrators. The next question is why Alexandria was qualified *ad Aegyptum* and not *in Aegypto*? First and foremost, I think that this should be explained in a geographical sense.⁴⁰ The idea that the area

³⁸ *ChLA X 416* (late first century B.C.E.), *P.Mich. VII 432* (late first century C.E.), *P.Mich. VII 433* (110 C.E.), *ChLA XLII 1207* (153 C.E.), *P.Horak 13* (177/8 C.E.), *P.Oxy. VI 899* (200 C.E.), *W.Chr. 115* (222–234 C.E.) and *CPR XXIV 2* (late fourth or early fifth century C.E.).

³⁹ The full formula is ἐν τῇ λαμπρο(τάτῃ) καὶ φιλοχρίστῳ πόλει τῶν Ἀλεξανδρέ(ων) τῇ πρὸς Αἰγ(ύπτῳ) or ἐν τῇ λαμπρο(τάτῃ) καὶ φιλοχρ(ίστῳ) Ἀλεξ(ανδρείᾳ) τῇ πρὸς Αἰγ(ύπτῳ).

⁴⁰ This explanation is also upheld by Haas (n. 6), 33 and Cohen (n. 4), 422–3. A. Bernand, ‘Une capitale “en marge”’, in id., *Alexandrie des Ptolémées* (Paris, 1995), 31–45, at 31–2 states that Alexandria was a ‘capitale “en marge”’, signifying its geographical location as a border city.

around Lake Mareotis—where Alexandria was founded—was not part of Egypt was possibly older than Alexandria itself. Herodotus reports a conflict involving the villages of Marea and Apis, both located to the west of this region.⁴¹ The people from these villages allegedly claimed that they were Libyans instead of Egyptians, as they lived outside the Delta and did not want to follow all aspects of the Egyptian religion, specifically the prohibition on the consumption of the flesh of cows. When the oracle of Ammon was consulted to settle the dispute, it ruled that all the lands watered by the Nile should be considered to be Egypt. The oracle thus ruled that the villages did belong to the kingdom of Egypt, which of course was in the political interest of the pharaoh. Still, it goes without saying that the villagers did not think of themselves as having an Egyptian identity, which they substantiated with the geographical argument that they lived outside the Delta.

Another pre-Roman source which may be taken to reflect the perception of Alexandria as being situated outside Egypt is the Satrap Stele. After the foundation of Alexandria in 331 B.C.E. and the installation of Ptolemy I as satrap of the child king Alexander IV, Egyptian priests erected in 311 B.C.E. the so-called Satrap Stele in a temple in Buto in honour of Ptolemy. In the inscription Alexandria is described as the ‘fortress of King Alexander’, which was situated ‘on the shore of the Great Sea of the Ionians’.⁴² The emphasis on the location of Alexandria by the ‘Great Sea of the Ionians’ places it on the shore of a foreign sea. This might indicate that the city was perceived as lying outside Egypt, according to Werner Huß.⁴³

While the Mediterranean Sea was considered to be foreign, Egypt was above all associated with the river Nile. This close association is best illustrated by the fact that Homer (*Od.* 4.477) calls the river by the name Αἴγυπτος. Herodotus famously gave Egypt the designation ‘Gift of the Nile’, as the land attributed its fertility to the annual inundation of that river.⁴⁴

Taking the reach of the river Nile as criterion for defining ‘Egypt’, some ancient geographers after Herodotus placed Alexandria outside Egypt. Strabo, for example, states that οἱ ἀρχαῖοι (‘the ancients’) only considered Egypt that part of the country that was inhabited and watered by the Nile, being only the Nile Delta and Valley.⁴⁵ He furthermore states that later writers up to his own time included the parts between the Arabian Gulf and the Nile and the parts westwards up to the territory of the Cyrenaicans, on account of the expansions by the Ptolemies.⁴⁶ The later geographers thus defined Egypt on the basis of political rather than geographical criteria. On a geographical level, it could be argued that, because Alexandria was not watered by the Nile, nor was situated inside the Delta, it did not meet the geographical criteria to be counted among the unity perceived of as Egypt by ‘the ancients’. Alexandria was

⁴¹ Hdt. 2.18.2. See Cohen (n. 4), 422 and A.B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II: Commentary 1–98* (Leiden, 1976), 87–9. Lloyd especially stresses the ‘strong infusion of Libyan elements’ in the western Delta.

⁴² Translation from E.R. Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy: A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty* (Chicago, 1968), 28–32.

⁴³ W. Huß, *Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung Heft 104: Die Verwaltung des ptolemäischen Reichs* (Munich, 2013), 24.

⁴⁴ See J.G. Griffiths, ‘Hecataeus and Herodotus on “a Gift of the River”’, *JNES* 25 (1966), 57–61. Strabo 1.2.29 and 15.1.16 expand upon this tradition.

⁴⁵ Strabo 17.1.4–5. See also 17.1.21 ἡ δὲ μεταξύ τοῦ Νείλου καὶ τοῦ Ἀραβίου κόλπου Ἀραβία μὲν ἔστι (‘The land between the Nile and the Arabian Gulf is Arabia’).

⁴⁶ Strabo 17.1.5.

not the only city that was surrounded by confusion. The geographical position of Pelusium was also questionable, as Strabo situated this Egyptian fortress town in Arabia.⁴⁷

The geographical distinction between Alexandria and Egypt was amplified by socio-cultural and political factors. Alexandria was a new Greek city with a Greek constitution. The city was laid out in a typically Greek checkerboard plan and had all the facilities of a Greek city. Its citizens were enlisted in *phylai* and *dēmoi* and administered the city through Greek political institutions. Although Egyptians did live in Alexandria, they only sporadically gained Alexandrian citizenship.⁴⁸ The dichotomy between the Greek population of Egypt and the native Egyptians is clearly seen in the famous letter to Zenon, *P.Col.* IV 66 (256–255 B.C.E.), in which a native Egyptian complains about his contemptuous treatment by Greek assistants of Zenon. Another document in the Zenon archive, *P.Zen.Pestm.* 41 (263–229 B.C.E.), might contain another indication about a Ptolemaic sense of separation between Alexandria and Egypt. In this document Paüs—an Egyptian—tries to get a recommendation from Zenon to become a storekeeper on a ship of the Ptolemaic fleet. In lines 2–3 a distinction between Egypt and the place where Paüs was writing (ὄδῃ) is suggested. There are reasons, however, which indicate that Paüs wrote the letter in Alexandria.⁴⁹

A distinction between Alexandria and Egypt may be found in the famous letter by the Emperor Claudius to the Alexandrians that has been preserved in *P.Lond.* VI 1912. In his letter Claudius gives permission for the erection of four-horse chariots in his honour at τὴν Ταπόσιριν καλουμένην τῆς Λιβύης (46), Φάρον τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας (47) and Πηλούσιον τῆς Αἰγύπτου (47–8). For this tricolon to be complete, the three places should be connected with three geographical regions, from west to east. Taposiris is named as part of Libya, Pelusium is named as part of Egypt. Hence, Pharos is part of the geographical region that lay between Libya and Egypt: Alexandria.⁵⁰ In the same letter the emperor refers to the Jews living in Alexandria as foreigners (line 95 ἐν ἀλλοτρίᾳ πόλει) and they should not introduce Judaeans ‘sailing down from Egypt’ (lines 96–7 Αἰγύπτου καταπλέοντας).

Five centuries later in Alexandria the tension between the Greek city of Alexandria and the Egyptian countryside still existed. The dichotomy even brought Caracalla around 215 C.E. to issue an edict that all Egyptians should be expelled from Alexandria, except for certain special occasions. The edict has been preserved on *P.Giss.* 40 col. 2.

As the capital of the Ptolemaic kingdom and the Roman province of *Alexandrea et Aegyptus* and as seat of the Ptolemaic court and the Roman prefect, the city of course also had in this respect a different status from the towns of inland Egypt. This could have influenced the constitutional status of Alexandria as well, with the city enjoying more autonomy than other Egyptian cities, as Arangio-Ruiz has argued.⁵¹

Next to a possible political distinction, Alexandria was perhaps also regarded as an un-Egyptian city in a cultural respect. This sentiment is perhaps found in the Oracle of

⁴⁷ Strabo 17.1.24 Πηλούσιον ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ.

⁴⁸ M.S. Venit, ‘Alexandria’, in C. Riggs, *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt* (Oxford, 2012), 103–21, at 104.

⁴⁹ P.W. Pestman (ed.), *Greek and Demotic Texts from the Zenon Archive (P.L. Bat. 20)* (Leiden, 1980), 169–71.

⁵⁰ This is especially interesting because the geographical position of Pelusium was also disputed. This city was sometimes situated in Arabia, as we have seen in Strabo 17.1.24.

⁵¹ Arangio-Ruiz (n. 4). É. Will et al., *Le monde grec et l’Orient* (Paris, 1975), 2.467–8 n. 2 and Cohen (n. 4), 413–14 try to explain this special status by comparing it to the extra-territorial statuses of respectively the modern capitals of Paris and Washington, D.C.

the Potter. This text has been preserved on three papyri from the second or third century C.E., but it stems from at least Ptolemaic times.⁵² Alexandria is represented in the text as the *παρθαλάσσιος πόλις* (P₃, 59) where the Greeks dwell. We have seen on the Satrap Stele that the Mediterranean Sea was associated with the Greeks and was not considered to be 'Egyptian'. In the Oracle the Greeks are referred to as *ζωνοφόροι* and *ξένοι* (P₃, 30 and 53), and these terms imply that the author was constructing the Greeks' 'otherness'.⁵³ The geographical separation between Egypt and Alexandria is also made clear in a reference in the Oracle that the *ἀγάλματα* of the indigenous gods will be brought back from Alexandria to Egypt (P₃, 59 *εἰς Αἴγυπτον*), just like the *Ἀγαθὸς Δαίμων* will return to Memphis in his Egyptian form as *Κνήφης*.⁵⁴

Although a distinction between Alexandria and Egypt was sometimes made, there also was a great connection between the two. Before Egypt became a Roman province the Romans already referred to the Ptolemaic king(s) as 'the king that rules on the island Cyprus, the king that rules in Alexandria and Egypt, and the king that rules in Cyrene, and the kings that rule in Syria'.⁵⁵ This reference can be found on *SEG III 378* (c.100 B.C.E.), which was found in Delphi. In this reference the connection between Alexandria and Egypt is noticeable in the fact that they are mentioned in the same breath, unlike the other regions where the Ptolemies ruled. But still they are named as separate entities, so Alexandria stands out.

In accounts of Roman military activities in Egypt Alexandria and Egypt are often named separately as well. For example, in the *Bellum Alexandrinum* it is stated that Caesar had made himself master of *Aegypto atque Alexandria* and restored the rightful kings of the Ptolemaic kingdom (33). In the *De Bello Ciuili* Caesar states that the regents of the young Ptolemy XIII feared that Pompey might seize Alexandria and Egypt and thus decided to murder him.⁵⁶ In both cases Alexandria might have been separated from Egypt to put more emphasis on its status as the capital of the Ptolemaic kingdom and the seat of the Ptolemaic kings. Cicero separates Alexandria and Egypt in similar terms in his letter to Publius Lentulus Spinther, quoting a message of Pompey about the possibility of an occupation of *Alexandream atque Aegyptum* (*Fam.* 1.7.4). Spinther was governor of Cilicia at the time of the letter (56 B.C.E.). Later he would become a supporter of Pompey during the Civil War.

Cassius Dio puts the following exhortative speech into the mouth of Octavian on the eve of Actium: 'Should we not put ourselves to great shame, if, after surpassing everyone everywhere in valour, we should meekly suffer the insults of those ... those ... by Hercules! those Alexandrians and Egyptians [...]'.⁵⁷ Although the Alexandrians and the Egyptians are mentioned separately, they share the same

⁵² L. Koenen, 'Die Apologie des Töpfers an König Amenophis oder das Töpferorakel', in A. Blasius and B.U. Schipper (edd.), *Apokalyptik und Ägypten: Eine kritische Analyse der relevanten Texte aus dem griechisch-römischen Ägypten* (Leuven, 2002), 139–87 and W. Huß, *Der makedonische König und die ägyptischen Priester: Studien zur Geschichte des ptolemäischen Ägypten* (Stuttgart, 1994), 166.

⁵³ Huß (n. 52), 171 n. 661.

⁵⁴ Huß (n. 52), 172–3 and Koenen (n. 52), 159.

⁵⁵ *SEG III 378*, B.8–10 *καὶ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα τὸν ἐν τῇ νήσῳ Κύπρῳ βασιλεύοντα καὶ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα τὸν ἐν Ἀλεξάνδρειᾳ καὶ Αἴγυπτῷ βασιλεύοντα καὶ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα τὸν ἐν Κυρήνῃ βασιλεύοντα καὶ πρὸς τοὺς βασιλεῖς τοὺς ἐν Συρίᾳ βασιλεύοντας ...*

⁵⁶ Caes. *BCiu.* 3.104 *Alexandriam Aegyptumque*.

⁵⁷ Cass. Dio 50.24.5 *πῶς δ' οὐκ ἂν ἡμεῖς μεγάλως ἀσημονήσαιμεν, εἰ πάντων ἀρετῇ πανταχοῦ περιόντες ἔπειτα τὰς τούτων ὕβρεις πρῶως φέρομεν, οἵτινες, ὦ Ἡράκλεις, Ἀλεξανδρεῖς τε καὶ Αἰγύπτιοι ὄντες ...*

characteristics as worshippers of animals, embalmers of the dead, etc., as Dio states in the subsequent passage. In other words, although Alexandrians and Egyptians are different groups, they nevertheless are the same inferior people, according to Dio. The lumping together of Alexandrians and Egyptians gives the speech more force by creating a rhetorical antithesis of Roman civilization against a cohesive group of 'others', which would be appreciated by Dio's Roman audience. The distinction between Alexandrians and Egyptians is maintained by naming them separately, but their connection is stressed at the same time.

Thus not only the geographical location of Alexandria but also its identity as a political entity by itself—closely connected to, yet separate from, Egypt—was a basis for distinction. Egypt and Alexandria were connected, yet contrasted. The focus in the texts is on the city of Alexandria as a bulwark of action. When writers speak of Egypt, Alexandria stands out.

III: ALEXANDRIA IN EGYPT

Until now we have only considered the evidence that Alexandria was seen as being apart from Egypt. However, the division between Alexandria and Egypt was at no point absolute. There is evidence that Alexandria was just as much perceived as being part of Egypt. In Ptolemaic times the Delians erected an inscription where the city is described as Ἀλεξανδρεία τῆς Αἰγύπτου (*IG* XI,4 588, 4 [c.300–250 B.C.E.]) 'Alexandria of Egypt'. This formulation leaves it in no doubt that the Delians saw Alexandria as part of Egypt, or at least saw a great connection between Alexandria and Egypt. This was at a time when Delos was under strong Ptolemaic influence.⁵⁸ Dated to the Roman period is *CIL* III 6809 (31–70 C.E.), an honorary inscription from Pisidia for P. Anicius Maximus that was issued by the *ciuitas Alexand(ria) quae est in Aegypto* (13–15).

Augustus described the incorporation of Egypt in the Roman empire in his *Res Gestae* with the simple sentence: *Aegyptum imperio populi Romani adieci* (27.1). There is no separate mention of Alexandria, although of course he also incorporated this city. Therefore, it is very probable that he included the city when he wrote *Aegyptum*. He thus probably saw Alexandria as part of Egypt. Livy thinks of Alexandria as part of Egypt as well. He explicitly calls the city *Alexandream in Aegypto* (8.24.1 and 38.17.11). Pliny the Elder refers to Alexandria in similar terms: *in litore Aegyptii maris Alexandria* (5.63), *Alexandria Aegypti* (5.132) and *Alexandro condente in Aegypto Alexandriam* (13.69 and 32.145). Likewise, in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* Alexandria is seen as being part of Egypt when the deliberation of Hannibal is discussed whether to remain in Italy, to return home, or to invade Egypt and seize Alexandria (3.2.2 *in Aegyptum profectus occupet Alexandriam*). Similarly, Cicero seems to imply that Alexandria was part of Egypt when he says *Alexandriam reliquamque Aegyptum* (*Att.* 2.5.1). We should also add Pausanias (8.33.3) who speaks about ἡ δὲ Ἀλεξάνδρου πόλις ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ, juxtaposed with ἡ Σελεύκου παρὰ τῷ Ὀρόντῃ, another Hellenistic town with a geographical specification. While he describes Seleucus in terms of its vicinity to the river Orontes, he describes Alexandria in terms of

⁵⁸ See Fraser (n. 3).

which region it belonged to according to him. He did not employ the phrase ἡ Ἀλεξάνδρεια ἢ πρὸς Αἰγύπτῳ, which was frequently used at the time.

In 395 C.E. the Roman provinces were reorganized by Diocletian into almost a hundred provinces. These provinces were grouped into dioceses. The former province of *Aegyptus et Alexandria* was divided into four different provinces (*Aegyptus*, *Augustamnica*, *Arcadia* and *Thebais*). These provinces were part of the diocese *Aegyptus*, which also contained the provinces *Libya superior* and *Libya inferior*. Alexandria did not remain a separate entity, but was made part of the province *Aegyptus*.

The separation between Alexandria and Egypt thus should be seen first and foremost (as having its origins) on a geographical level. However, as the geographical boundaries of what was considered to be Egypt varied, perceptions also varied as to whether Alexandria was seen as part of Egypt. This flexibility was often based on socio-cultural or political factors. When a traditional Egyptian point of view was chosen, such as in the Satrap Stele or the Oracle of the Potter, Alexandria could be perceived as laying outside those boundaries. When Alexandria was looked at from a Ptolemaic and Roman point of view, as Strabo (17.1.5) states ‘the later writers’ did, such as Livy, Cicero and Caesar, it certainly was part of the Ptolemaic Egyptian kingdom and the Roman province of Egypt. The Romans, however, still decided to name the city *Alexandria ad Aegyptum*. This designation was based on a Hellenistic convention of giving geographical epithets to homonymous eponymous cities. The main function of these epithets was purely pragmatic, to avoid confusion between the various homonymous cities. While the Romans saw Alexandria as an inseparable part of Egypt, they adopted the Hellenistic way of referring to the city, thus naming it *ad Aegyptum*. Seen in that light, the designation *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* reflects both the distinction and the close connection between Alexandria and Egypt.

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