

MILITARY HEALTH WISHES IN THE GREEK LETTERS OF CAESAR AND OCTAVIAN*

ABSTRACT

This article examines and contextualizes a health wish formula found at the opening of eight Roman official letters inscribed in Greek, one of Caesar and seven of Octavian. In each letter the sender mentions that he is well ‘with the army’ (μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος), hence the term ‘military’ health wish. The health wish was borrowed from Latin letters into Roman letters written in Greek by means of phraseological imitation. The formulation employs appropriate Koine Greek. It was optional during the Republic for the wish to be used in letters either from or to a Roman holding imperium and commanding an army. Because Caesar and Octavian were in such positions, their use of the wish is conventional. The use of this health wish demonstrates that epistolographers working for Caesar and Octavian not only drafted letters that met the conventions of Hellenistic chanceries but also were proficient enough in the medium to incorporate Roman elements with effectiveness. Attestations of the military health wish declined during the Imperial period. The requirement that the sender or the recipient hold imperium would have restricted usage during the Republic but even more so under the Empire through administrative changes to the command of armies and the increasing centrality of the princeps.

Keywords: health wish; formula; letters; Caesar; Octavian; Greek–Latin bilingualism

1. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this article is a particular kind of health wish formula found in eight Roman official letters written in Greek.¹ One of the letters was sent by Julius Caesar and the

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¹ **Letter 1**, Caesar to Mytilene, 48–47 B.C.E. = R.K. Sherk, *Roman Documents from the Greek East* (Baltimore, 1969), no. 26a.2; **Letter 2**, Octavian to the Plaraseans and Aphrodisians, 39–38 B.C.E. = *Iaph2007* no. 8.25 (= Sherk [this note], no. 28), fr. A.11–14; **Letter 3**, Octavian to Ephesus *primum*, early 38 B.C.E. = *Iaph2007* no. 8.31.2–3; **Letter 4**, Octavian to Rhusus *primum*, 35 B.C.E. = A. Raggi, ‘The epigraphic dossier of Seleucus of Rhusus: a revised edition’, *ZPE* 147 (2004), 123–38, at 128, Doc. I = *SEG* 54.1625.4; **Letter 5**, Octavian to Mylasa, 31 B.C.E. = Sherk (this note), no. 60 A.4–6 (cf. *IMylasa* 602 and F. Canali De Rossi, ‘Tre epistole di magistrati romani a città d’Asia’, *EA* 32 [2000], 163–81, at 172–8); **Letter 6**, Octavian to Rhusus *iterum*, 31 B.C.E. = Raggi [this note], 132–3, Doc. III = *SEG* 54.1625.75–6; **Letter 7**, Octavian to Rhusus *tertium*, 30 B.C.E. = Raggi [this note], 133–4, Doc.

other seven were sent by his adoptive son Octavian. The letters survive inscribed on stone in Greek, having been preserved in this manner by their Hellenophone recipients. The eight health wish examples are of a variety not found in this form in other Greek letters, but this variety has parallels in Latin letters in the correspondence of Cicero and the Roman emperors. Because these health wishes mention the sender's army when referring to the sender's health, I term these formulas 'military' health wishes.

This article has four aims, addressed in five sections. The first aim is to present the evidence for the development of the military health wish (Section 2). The second is to provide a linguistic analysis of the eight military health wishes written in Greek (Section 3). The third aim is to determine whether Caesar's and Octavian's health wishes are employed in a conventional manner (Section 4). I then make some observations on the significance of Caesar's and Octavian's military health wishes for our understanding of Roman official interstate epistolography (Section 5). The final aim is to offer an explanation for why there is a limited number of attestations of this health wish after the Augustan period (Section 6). I close by summarizing my main conclusions (Section 7).

2. MILITARY HEALTH WISHES

The sender of a Greek or Roman letter could express his or her wish for the well-being of the recipient by employing a health wish formula.² Health wishes are found in Greek and Roman letters surviving in papyri, inscriptions and letter collections preserved in the manuscript tradition. In Greek letters, it is normal to find them right after the letter address (*formula ualetudinis initialis*) or right before the closing (*formula ualetudinis finalis*).³ Only the initial health wish is found in the inscribed Roman official letters. In general, Greek health wishes are conditional sentences with two components, to which a third can be added.⁴ The first clause is a protasis with εἰ, referring to the recipient, to the effect of 'if you are well ...'. The second is an apodosis with ἄν to the effect of '... it would be good'. The optional third clause is a direct statement referring to the sender to the effect of 'and I myself am well'. Consider this example:

εἰ ἔρρωσθε, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι ὑγιαίνω δὲ καὶ αὐτός

If you are well it would be good, and I myself am in good health too.

Because health wishes are not a universal component of ancient letters, modern scholars conclude that they were an optional feature that could be included when senders simply desired to wish their recipients well or had some reason to do so.⁵ Such motivation most

IV = SEG 54.1625.86–7; **Letter 8**, Octavian to Ephesus *iterum*, 29 B.C.E. = D. Knibbe, H. Engelmann, B. Iplikçioğlu, 'Neue Inschriften aus Ephesos XII', *JÖAI* 62 (1993), 113–50, at no. 2.8–9.

² F. Ziemann, 'De epistularum Graecarum formulis sollemnibus quaestiones selectae' (Diss., Halle, 1910), 302–17; F.X.J. Exler, 'The form of the ancient Greek letter: a study in Greek epistolography' (Diss., Catholic University of America, 1923), 103–7; H. Koskeniemi, *Studien zur Idee und Phraseologie des griechischen Briefes bis 400 n. Chr.* (Helsinki, 1956), 138; R. Buzón, 'Die Briefe der Ptolemäerzeit: ihre Struktur und ihre Formeln' (Diss., Heidelberg, 1984), 9; J.L. White, *Light from Ancient Letters* (Philadelphia, 1986), 200–2.

³ Ziemann (n. 2), 302–17; Buzón (n. 2), 9–14, 23–5, 51–3, 102–8, 112–14, 163–6, 171–2, 240–3.

⁴ Ziemann (n. 2), especially 267 n. 1, 305–13; Koskeniemi (n. 2), 131, 133; Buzón (n. 2), 9–10, 13.

⁵ For example Exler (n. 2), 106.

often eludes us, because it is not necessary that the reason why the sender elected to wish the recipient well be mentioned in the letter. The somewhat personal quality of health wishes is a probable reason why they are more common in private rather than in official correspondence.⁶ Nevertheless, they are found in inscribed official letters of Hellenistic kingdoms from the mid second century B.C.E.⁷

Health wishes were also used in Latin epistolography. The simplest version was *si uales, bene est* 'if you are well, it is good', to which senders had the option of adding *ego (quidem) ualeo* 'I (too) am well'.⁸ In Latin letters the apodosis is a statement of fact, whereas in Greek the statement is potential. The earliest attestation of a Latin epistolary health wish is in Plautus.⁹ Health wishes are found in Latin documentary letters, such as those from Vindolanda,¹⁰ as well as in the correspondence of famous Latin epistolographers, such as Cicero, Seneca and Pliny, although they become rare after the Late Republic.¹¹ There is evidence of health wishes in the letters of Roman and Byzantine emperors (see below).

As mentioned above there are eight Roman official letters inscribed in Greek with variant health wishes. One letter was sent from Caesar and seven were from Octavian. Some are better preserved than others, but the health wishes are discernible. The first two clauses are no different to what can be found in Greek health wishes, but their third clauses are not found in this form in other Greek letters. They differ by mentioning the sender's army when stating his well-being. The eight health wishes are as follows. For bibliographic details, see n. 1 above.

Letter 1. Caesar to Mytilene, 48–47 B.C.E.

[εἰ ἔρρωσθε, καλῶς ἂν] ἔχοι· κἀγὼ δὲ μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύμ[ατος | ὑγίαινον]
[If you are well,] it would be [good]; and I too with the army [was well].

Letter 2. Octavian to Aphrodisias, 40–38 B.C.E.

εἰ ἔρρωσθε, εὖ ἂν ἔ|χοι· ὑγίαινω δὲ καὶ | αὐτὸς μετὰ τοῦ στρα|τεύματος
If you are well, it would be good; and I myself with the army am well too.

Letter 3. Octavian to Ephesus *primum*, early 38 B.C.E.

εἰ ἔρρωσθε εὖ ἂν ἔχοι, ὑγίαι|νω δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος
If you are well, it would be good; and I myself with the army am well too.

Letter 4. Octavian to Rhodus *primum*, 35 B.C.E.

<εἰ ἔρρωσθε, καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι>· καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος || [ὑγίαινον]
<If you are well, it would be good;> and I myself with the army was well too.

⁶ Buzón (n. 2), 241 (ref. administrative letters, comparable to official letters); Koskenniemi (n. 2), 131; C.B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period* (Chicago, 1934), 248.

⁷ Welles (n. 6), 248, 291; Sherk (n. 1), 190.

⁸ P. Cugusi, *Evoluzione e forme dell'epistolografia latina* (Rome, 1983), 48; H. Halla-aho, *The Non-Literary Latin Letters: A Study of their Syntax and Pragmatics* (Helsinki, 2009), 45.

⁹ Plaut. *Persa* 502–3 *si ualeis, gaudeo. ego ualeo recte* 'if you are well, I rejoice. I am very well.' The *Persa* is dated after 191 B.C.E. by W.C.D. de Melo, *Plautus: The Merchant, The Braggart Soldier, The Ghost, The Persian* (Cambridge, MA, 2011), 448. When drawing conclusions based on Plautine evidence we must keep in mind that his works are metrical and that we do not possess contemporaneous documentary letters for corroboration. On the evidence for pre-Ciceronian Latin epistolography, P. Cugusi, *Studi sull'epistolografia latina, I. L'età preciceroniana* (Cagliari, 1970), *passim*; Cugusi (n. 8), 151–7 with discussion of Plautine letters at 152.

¹⁰ See Halla-aho (n. 8), 45; *T.Vindol.* 52.2 *si uales b[ene e]st uero ego ualeo; CEL 10.1 s(i) u(ales) b(ene est)*. The latter is from the Augustan period.

¹¹ W.A. Laidlaw, 'S.V.B.E.', *CPh* 34 (1939), 251–2, at 251.

Letter 5. Octavian to Mylasa, 31 B.C.E.

εἰ ἔρρωσθε καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ μετὰ τοῦ | στρατεύματος ὑγίαινον
If you are well, it would be good; and I myself with the army was well too.

Letter 6. Octavian to Rhosus *iterum*, 31 B.C.E.

εἰ ἔρρωσθε, καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύ[μ]ατος ὑγ[ί]αινον
If you are well, it would be good; and I myself with the army was well too.

Letter 7. Octavian to Rhosus *tertium*, 30 B.C.E.

εἰ ἔρρωσθε, καλῶς | [ἂν ἔχοι καὶ] αὐτὸς δὲ μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος ὑγίαινον
If you are well, it would be good; and I myself with the army was well too.

Letter 8. Octavian to Ephesus *iterum*, 29 B.C.E.

εἰ ἔρρωσθε καλῶς ἂν | [ἔχοι, κἀγὼ δὲ με]τὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος ὑγια[ί]νω
If you are well, it would be good; and I too with the army am well.

The military clauses in the eight examples can be divided into three types:

Type 1. κἀγὼ δὲ μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος ὑγίαινον
And I too with the army was well.

Type 2. ὑγίαινω δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος
And I myself with the army am well too.

Type 3. καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος ὑγίαινον
And I myself with the army was well too.

Type 1 is exceptional; the sole example is in Caesar's **Letter 1**. **Type 2** is found three times (**Letters 2, 3 and 8**), and **Type 3** is found four times (**Letters 4–7**).¹² **Types 2 and 3** are found in the letters of Octavian. The military clause consists of a first-person singular present active indicative verb ὑγίαινω 'I am well' or the (epistolary) imperfect ὑγίαινον 'I was well', which is followed by the sender's statement that he is μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος 'with the army'. It is clear that the military clause is a variation of those references to the sender's health found in other Greek versions.

There is no evidence that this version was ever a Greek formula. All the relevant *comparanda*, including the two examples and one *testimonium* in Greek literature, come from Roman contexts. Although not epistolary, Reynolds found that the earliest extant reference to the health of a Roman *imperator* with his army is found in an honorific decree of the Letaeans for Marcus Annius (118 B.C.E.).¹³ The earliest extant epistolary example is in Cicero's letter to *imperator* Metellus Celer (January 62 B.C.E.): *Fam.* 5.2.1 *si tu exercitusque ualetis, bene est* 'if you and the army are well, it is good.'¹⁴ The abbreviated form appears in Cicero's letter to *imperator* Pompeius

¹² There is a probable example of **Type 3** in a fragmentary letter of Augustus to Samos, sent between 2–1 B.C.E. and 8–9 C.E. = H.J. Kienast and K. Hallof, 'Ein Ehrenmonument für Samische Scribonii aus dem Heraion', *Chiron* 29 (1999), 205–23, at 216.5–6: εἰ ἔρρωσθε] καλῶς] ἂν [ἔχοι, καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ μετὰ τοῦ] | στρατ[ε]ύμα[τος ὑγ]ίαινον[ον] 'if you are well, [it] would [be] good, [and I myself with the] army was well [too].'

¹³ *SIG*³ 700.42–3 καὶ συναρπέντες | ἐπὶ τοῖς ὑγιαίνειν αὐτὸν τε καὶ τὸ στρατόπεδον 'and rejoiced together because of him and the army being healthy'. See J. Reynolds, *Aphrodisias and Rome* (London, 1982), 45.

¹⁴ Military health wishes in Latin have been noted by a number of scholars, for example J. Babl, 'De epistularum Latinarum formulis' (Diss., Bamberg, 1893), 24; Laidlaw (n. 11), 252; D.R. Shackleton Bailey, *Epistulae ad familiares* (Cambridge, 1977), 2 vols., 1.438, 2.547; Reynolds (n. 13), 45; Cugusi (n. 8), 48; J.-L. Mourgues, 'Imperial correspondence preserved in inscriptions

Magnus (April 62 B.C.E.): *Fam.* 5.7.1 *S.T.E.Q.V.B.E.*, which should be for *si tu exercitusque ualeatis, bene est*.¹⁵ Laidlaw attributed the formula ‘to the demands of Roman etiquette’, which is as good an explanation of its origin as any.¹⁶ In Cicero’s correspondence we also have five abbreviated military health wishes from *imperatores*.¹⁷ Although abbreviated, the examples *from* commanders are most relevant for assessing our inscriptions.

The first two examples in Greek literature are in Josephus’ *Antiquitates Iudaeorum*, but the contexts are Roman. The first example is of Caesar (Joseph. *AJ* 14.190) and the second is of Marcus Antonius (Joseph. *AJ* 14.306–7).¹⁸ It is most probable that these two letters were sent in Greek, as they are official correspondences of the same nature as our epigraphic letters. The third example in Greek literature is a *testimonium* preserved in Dio. It appears that the military wish was still a feature of sufficient significance for Dio to notice that Hadrian did not include it in a letter to the Senate (before 134[?] C.E.).¹⁹ At the time, Hadrian was with the legions in Judaea that had suffered severe casualties, which seems to have made the use of a military health wish inappropriate. It seems beyond doubt that the original of this letter was written in Latin and was paraphrased by Dio in Greek. Dio’s discussion makes it clear that the Latin expression is meant, regardless of whether he examined the document or paraphrased it from oral testimony.²⁰ We would expect Hadrian to write to the Roman Senate in Latin, and the military clause in Dio mirrors Latin versions. The military wish

and papyri’ (Diss., Oxford, 1990), 2 vols., 2.93–4 n. 58. On the political context and the delicate construction of Cicero’s defence of himself in the letter to Metellus Celer (*Fam.* 5.2.1), see J. Hall, *Politeness and Politics in Cicero’s Letters* (Oxford, 2009), 156–60. I thank Tom Hillard for discussing this example with me.

¹⁵ See Shackleton Bailey (n. 14), 1.280.

¹⁶ Laidlaw (n. 11), 252.

¹⁷ The examples are as follows: (1) *Fam.* 15.1.1 (Cicero to the Senate, 51 B.C.E.): *s.u.u.b.e.e.q.u.* = *si uos ualeatis, benest; ego exercitusque ualemus* ‘if you are well, it is good; I and my army are well’; see Shackleton Bailey (n. 14), 1.438. (2) *Fam.* 15.2.1 (Cicero to the Senate *iterum*, 51 B.C.E.): *s.u.u.b.e.e.q. u.* = *si uos ualeatis, benest; ego exercitusque ualemus* ‘if you are well, it is good; I and my army are well’; cf. Shackleton Bailey (n. 14), 1.438. (3) *Fam.* 5.9.1 (Vatinius to Cicero, 45 B.C.E.): *s.u.b.e.e. u.* = *si uales, benest; ego exercitusque ualemus* ‘if you are well, it is good; I and my army are well’; see Shackleton Bailey (n. 14), 2.424 (cf. Mourgues [n. 14], 2.93–4 with his n. 58). (4) *Fam.* 5.10a.1 (Vatinius to Cicero *iterum*, 44 B.C.E.): *s.u.b.e.e.q.u.* = *si ualeatis, bene est; ego exercitusque ualemus* ‘if you are well, it is good; I and my army are well.’ (5) *Fam.* 10.35.1 (Lepidus to the Senate, 43 B.C.E.): *si u. liberique uestri u.b.e.e.q.u.* = *si uos liberique uestri ualeatis, bene est; ego exercitusque ualemus* ‘if you and your children are well, it is good; I and my army are well’; cf. Shackleton Bailey (n. 14), 2.547. I thank Gregory Hutchinson for bringing this example to my attention and for discussing it with me.

¹⁸ For example, see Joseph. *AJ* 14.306–7 Μάρκος Αντώνιος αυτοκράτωρ Ἰρκανῶ ἀρχιερεῖ καὶ ἐθνάρχη καὶ τῷ Ἰουδαίων ἔθνει χαίρειν. εἰ ἔρρωσθε, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι, **ἔρρομαι δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος** ‘Marcus Antonius, *imperator*, to Hyrkanos chief priest and *ethnarkh*, and to the race of the Jews, greetings! If you are well, it would be good, **and I myself am well with the army too.**’

¹⁹ Dio Cass. 69.14.3 πολλοὶ μὲντοι ἐν τῇ πολέμῳ τούτῳ καὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀπόλωντο· διὸ καὶ ὁ Ἀδριανὸς γράφων πρὸς τὴν βουλὴν οὐκ ἐχρήσατο τῷ προοιμίῳ καὶ συνήθει τοῖς αυτοκράτορσιν, ὅτι ‘εἰ αὐτοὶ τε καὶ οἱ παῖδες ὑμῶν ὑγιαίνετε, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι· **ἐγὼ καὶ τὰ στρατεύματα ὑγιαίνομεν**’ ‘Many of the Romans, however, perished in this war; so much so that even Hadrian when writing to the Senate did not use the letter opening customary for the *imperatores*, that “if both you and your children are well, it would be good; **the army and I are well too**.”’ This was noted also by F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford, 1999²), 69 (and see Millar’s n. 6 on the date); A.R. Birley, *Hadrian: The Restless Emperor* (London, 2009²), 272.

²⁰ See Millar (n. 19), 36–7 (on Dio’s general use of sources), 62 (on the likelihood that Dio consulted Hadrian’s reports to the Senate) and 69 (on Hadrian’s letter).

is found in an inscribed Latin letter of Constantine and his sons, which seems to have been from the time of the campaign preparations in 337 C.E.²¹ At some point after Constantine, or perhaps even in his time, it seems that convention no longer required the emperor as sender to be with his army: if the army was in the field under one of his commanders, this sufficed. A letter of Valentinian III from 450 C.E. collected in the *Liber legum nouellarum* employed the military wish,²² but it was Aetius, not Valentinian, who was in the field with the armies. Because of this, Pharr interpreted the use of the military wish as '[a]n inappropriate imitation of Cicero'.²³ Another interpretation is that Valentinian considered the armies under Aetius' command to be in fact under his superior command, or, considering that he was in a constantly precarious position in military matters during the 440s and early 450s C.E.,²⁴ he wished to maintain at least a façade of control when writing to his Senate. As late as 516 C.E. the military wish is still found in the correspondence of the Byzantine emperor Anastasius I.²⁵ The letter to the Senate concerning Theodoric and the Doctrinal Schism was sent around the time of, if not during, Vitalian's final revolt against Anastasius, which ended in Vitalian's defeat by Anastasius' praetorian prefect Marinus.²⁶ This means that, even if the letter was sent at the time, Anastasius would not have been with the army. It appears that Anastasius, who, like Valentinian, had been in a precarious position because of an effective military subordinate, wished to present himself as being in more control than he was in reality. Although at some point during the Imperial period the requisite that the sender be with his army was abandoned, a connection with the army was retained. The Republican-era evidence, however, makes it clear that in this period it was a conventional option only when the senders or the recipients were *imperatores* commanding armies.

Tracing the evolution of the military health wish has allowed us to establish two important points. The first is that the variant formula originated in Latin letters and from there came to be used in Roman official letters in Greek. This means that we

²¹ CIL 6.40776.1–12 *imp(erator) Caes(ar) Fl(avius) Constantinus* [8 lines] *senatui suo salutem dicunt si uos liberique | uestri ualetis bene est nos exercitusque | nostri ualemus* 'imperator Caesar Flauius Constantinus [et al.] ... say "greetings!" to their Senate. If you and your children are well, it is good; **we and our armies are well.**' See S. Corcoran, 'State correspondence in the Roman empire: imperial communication from Augustus to Justinian', in K. Radner (ed.), *State Correspondence in the Ancient World* (Oxford, 2014), 172–209, at 193.

²² *Nou. Val.* 1.3 *idem* [*sc. imperatores Theodosius et Valentinianus*] *aa.* (= *Augusti*) *consulibus, praetoribus, tribunis plebis, senatui suo salutem dicunt. si uos liberique uestri ualetis, bene est: nos exercitusque nostri ualemus* '(the *imperatores* Theodosius and Valentinian) Augusti, say "greetings!" to the consuls, praetors, tribunes of the plebs and their Senate. If you and your children are well, it is good; **we and our armies are well.**' We should keep in mind that there is disagreement in the manuscripts, with the military clause omitted in MS S; see T. Mommsen and P. Meyer (edd.), *Theodosiani libri XVI cum Constitutionibus Sirmondianis et Leges Nouellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes*, vol. 2 (Berlin, 1905), 74.

²³ C. Pharr, in collaboration with T. Sherrer Davidson and M. Brown Pharr, *The Theodosian Code, and Novels, and the Sirmondian Constitutions* (Union, NJ, 1952), 515 with his n. 14.

²⁴ M. Whitby, 'The army, c. 420–602', in A. Cameron, B. Ward-Perkins and M. Whitby (edd.), *The Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. 14. Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors, AD 425–600* (Cambridge, 2001), 288–314, at 296–7.

²⁵ *Collectio Auellana* 113.1 *si uos liberique uestri ualetis, bene est; ego exercitusque meus ualemus* 'If you and your children are well, it is good; I [*sc.* Anastasius I] **and my army are well.**' See Corcoran (n. 21), 193. For the *Collectio Auellana*, see O. Guenther (ed.), *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, vol. 35 (Leipzig, 1898).

²⁶ On this letter and the Doctrinal Schism, see F.K. Nicks, 'The reign of Anastasius I, 491–518' (Diss., Oxford, 1998), 132–4; J. Richards, *The Popes and the Papacy in the Early Middle Ages, 476–752* (London, 1979), 102–5. For the revolt of Vitalian, see Nicks (this note), 63–5.

need to investigate the linguistic (especially contact linguistic) aspects of the wishes in Greek (I examine this in Section 3). The second point is that the military health wish was conventional in Roman Republican letters when the sender held *imperium* and commanded an army, unlike in the Later Roman Empire. We, therefore, need to investigate whether Caesar and Octavian used the health wishes in accordance with such conventions, a task undertaken in Section 4.

3. MILITARY HEALTH WISHES IN GREEK: LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

We have established that the military health wish originated in Latin letters. We now need to determine from a linguistic perspective whether the epigraphic attestations of the military clause in Greek are examples of borrowing or of interference. Borrowing, of which there are several kinds, denotes the *intentional* use of an established feature of one language (L_a) in another language (L_b); interference denotes the *unintentional* use of features of L_a in L_b .²⁷ Because the military clause is a phraseological element, we are searching for evidence of phraseological borrowing²⁸ (*intentional* employment of L_a phraseology in L_b) or phraseological interference (*unintentional* employment of L_a phraseology in L_b).

By comparing examples of the three types of Greek military clause with other Roman counterparts, we find that there are key formal differences. Because the Ciceronian examples, such as *Fam.* 15.1.1, are all abbreviated, we have no Republican-period examples of an unabbreviated military wish in Latin. But we can compare the abbreviated forms with Dio's testimony and later Latin examples, such as *Collectio Auellana* 113.1. As noted above, it is most probable that Hadrian's letter, paraphrased by Dio, was sent to the Roman Senate in Latin, so it is an appropriate *comparandum*.

Type 1. Letter 1, Caesar to Mytilene, 48–47 B.C.E.

κἀγὼ δὲ μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύμ[ατος | ὑγίαινον]
And I too with the army [was well].

Type 2. Letter 2, Octavian to Aphrodisias, 40–38 B.C.E.

ὑγίαινω δὲ καὶ | αὐτὸς μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος
And I myself with the army am well too.

Type 3. Letter 7, Octavian to Rhosus *tertium*, 30 B.C.E.

[καὶ] αὐτὸς δὲ μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος ὑγίαινον
And I myself with the army was well too.

Roman *comparandum* 1. Cicero to the Senate, 51 B.C.E.

Cic. *Fam.* 15.1.1: *e.e.q.u.* = *ego exercitusque ualemus*
My army and I are well.

Roman *comparandum* 2. Hadrian to the Senate, before 134(?) C.E.

Dio Cass. 69.14.3: ἐγὼ καὶ τὰ στρατεύματα ὑγαινομεν
My army and I are well.

²⁷ See H.H. Hock and B.D. Joseph, *Language History, Language Change, and Language Relationship* (Berlin and New York, 2009²), 241–6 (borrowing) and 354–8 (interference).

²⁸ On the borrowing of collocations, see Hock and Joseph (n. 27), 244. See also J.N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language* (Cambridge, 2003), 25–8.

Roman comparandum 3. Anastasius I to the Senate, 516 C.E.*Collectio Auellana* 113.1: *ego exercitusque meus ualemus*

My army and I are well.

The first formal difference is that the first-person singular personal pronoun *ego* ‘I’ is used in the Latin version, whereas in the Greek counterparts (aside from *καγώ* in **Letter 1**) the intensive pronoun *αὐτός* is used, which combines with a first-person singular verb to express ‘I myself’. The use of *αὐτός* is normal in references to the sender’s health in the Ptolemaic papyrus letters examined by Buzón.²⁹ At least in the case of Octavian’s **Letters 2–8**, the Greek idiom is adopted. The second difference is that the verb in the Latin version is first-person *plural* present active indicative, *ualemus* ‘we are well’; the Greek wish has first-person *singular* and either present *ὑγιαίνω* or (epistolary) imperfect *ὑγιαίνων*. The final difference is that two subjects are coordinated in the Latin military clause, *ego exercitusque* ‘I and (my) army’; there is only one subject in the Greek military clause, with the army accompanying the subject, *μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος* ‘with my army’. Although *μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος* is a rare phrase in extant evidence, it is appropriate Koine Greek. We find it in the NT (*Apoc.* 19.19) and in the tacticians Onasander (*Strat.* 11.3, first century C.E.) and Polyaeus (*Strat.* 3.9.61, second century C.E.). There is no reason to consider *μετὰ* to be for *cum*. Mourgues expanded *Fam.* 5.9.1 (Vatinius to Cicero, 45 B.C.E.): *s.u.b.e.e.u.* as *si uales, bene est; ego cum exercitu ualeo* (my emphasis), but he conjectured *cum exercitu* from *μετὰ τοῦ στρατεύματος*.³⁰ The weight of the secure Roman evidence makes Shackleton Bailey’s *ego exercitusque ualemus* preferable,³¹ which would mean that there are no examples of *ego cum exercitu ualeo*. The military clauses in the Roman letters in Greek are not mechanical translations from Latin; they are written in appropriate Early Koine Period (henceforth, EKP) Greek.³²

The military clauses captured the sense of the Latin expression but are not exact duplications of it. They are examples of ‘imitation’ of the Latin wish.³³ Imitation is a form of phraseological borrowing, which involves the replication of an expression from L_a in L_b (or vice versa). When an expression is normal in L_a but not so in L_b , and the author would like to evoke a similar effect to that achieved by the expression in L_a , the author can imitate the arrangement of the L_a expression in L_b . There are a number of phraseological *comparanda* that scholars have argued are transferences from Latin into Greek epistolography. Parsons argued that Greek epistolographers introduced *ἔρωσθαί σε εὐχομαι* in a kind of health wish after Latin *bene ualere te opto*.³⁴ Cuvigny ascribed *ἴδιος* in Greek letter addresses as an example of transference from *suus* in Latin addresses.³⁵ And Dickey concluded that the word order and function of *ἔρωτῶ καὶ παρακαλῶ* in Greek letters had been influenced by *rogo et oro* in Latin

²⁹ Buzón (n. 2), 9–14, 51–3, 102–8, 163–6, 240–3.

³⁰ Mourgues (n. 14), 2.93–4 with his n. 58.

³¹ Shackleton Bailey (n. 14), 2.424.

³² The EKP of Greek covers the years from the third to the first centuries B.C.E. in the periodization of J.A.L. Lee, “Ἐξαποστέλλω”, in J. Joosten and P.J. Tomson (edd.), *Voces biblicae: Septuagint Greek and its Significance for the New Testament* (Leuven, 2007), 99–113, at 113 n. 31.

³³ On imitation, see Adams (n. 28), 422–4. See also R. Coleman, ‘Greek influence on Latin syntax’, *TPhS* (1975), 101–56, at 126.

³⁴ P.J. Parsons, ‘Latin letter’, in *Festschrift zum 100-jährigen Bestehen der Papyrussammlung der österreichischen Nationalbibliothek: Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer (P. Rainer Cent.)* (Vienna, 1983), 483–9, at 488–9 (= *P.Rain.Cent.* 164, TM 78737); see also Adams (n. 28), 79–80.

³⁵ H. Cuvigny, ‘Remarques sur l’emploi de ἴδιος dans le *praescriptum* épistolaire’, *BIFAO* 102

counterparts.³⁶ The military clause in Greek is a similar kind of imitation of the Latin precedent.

We can draw two conclusions from this analysis. The first is that those who wrote the Greek health wishes in **Letters 1–8** added the military clauses by means of phraseological borrowings that imitated the Latin expression. The fact that in eight examples there are three types of military clause in Greek, of which there are two types for Octavian's letters, indicates that the formula had not yet crystallized into a 'standard' form but may have been approaching one. The second conclusion is that these imitations of the Latin military clause were produced in appropriate EKP Greek. We should also keep in mind that the first two clauses in these wishes (that is, those preceding the military clause) are perfect accomplishments of the formal conventions of Greek epistolography.

4. THE CONVENTIONALITY OF CAESAR'S AND OCTAVIAN'S MILITARY WISHES

As far as our extant evidence allows us to conclude, health wishes in Greek (or Latin) letters were not obligatory. Health wishes could imply a certain familiarity between sender and recipient or simply that the sender wished a certain recipient well on a certain occasion. Although it is most often beyond us to determine why a wish is used, it is worthwhile to investigate whether some form of positive relationship between sender and recipient can be identified as a motivator for the health wishes in **Letters 1–8**. As demonstrated above in Section 2, during the Roman Republic conventional usage of the military clause required one of the Roman correspondents to possess the power to command an army.

Although less critical than whether the sender held *imperium*, we begin with the evidence for reasons to wish the recipients well. In **Letter 1** we see evidence of a positive relationship demonstrated in Caesar's promise to benefit Mytilene in his Benefaction Formula, a formula reserved for senders expressing their intentions to be of benefit to the recipient.³⁷ In **Letter 2**, Octavian expressed superlative praise of his acquaintance with the ambassador Solon of Plarasa–Aphrodisias,³⁸ and reconfirmed his *polis'* privileges as being ἀτελ[εῖς κ]α<ι> ἐλευθέρους 'exempt from public services

(2002), 143–53; see also E. Dickey, 'The Greek address system in the Roman period and its relationship to Latin', *CQ* 54 (2004), 494–527, at 508.

³⁶ E. Dickey, 'Latin influence and Greek request formulae', in T.V. Evans and D.D. Obbink (edd.), *The Language of the Papyri* (Oxford, 2010), 208–20.

³⁷ **Letter 1.9–12** ἐγὼ δὲ τούτῃ τε ἀνδραῖς ἐπήνε|[σα διὰ τὴν προθυμίαν αὐτῶν καὶ φιλοφρόν]ως ἀπεδεξάμην, ἠδέως τε τὴν πόλιν | [ὑμῶν εὐεργετεῖν περιάσομαι καὶ κατὰ τ]οὺς παρόντας καιροὺς καὶ ἐν τοῖς μετὰ ταῦ|[τα χρόνοις] 'And I commended the men [on account of their zealotness and] I approved of [them in a friendly manner], and with pleasure [I shall endeavour to benefit] the *polis* [both in] the present time and in the future.' On the Hellenistic Benefaction formula, see J. Ma, *Antiochos III and the Cities of Western Asia Minor* (Oxford, 2002²), 101–2 (with his n. 178), 187, 202–3; V. Hofmann, 'Mimesis vel aemulatio? Die hellenistischen Anfänge der offiziellen römischen Epistolographie und ihre machtpolitischen Implikationen', *ZSav* 131 (2014), 177–215, at 195–6, 211, 213.

³⁸ **Letter 2.33–45** ἐφ' οἷς ἐπαίνε[σας τὸν Σόλωνα μᾶ[λ]]λον ἀπεδεξάμην ἔσχον τε ἐν τοῖς ὑπ' ἐμοῦ | γεινωσκομένοις | ᾧ καὶ τὰ καθήκοντα | ἀπεμέρισα φιλάν[θρωπα, ἄξιον ἡγή]σάμενος τὸν ἀν[δρα τῆς ἐξ ἡμ<ᾶ>ν [τε]]τεμῆς, ὑμείν τε συ[v]ήδομα ἐπὶ τ<ᾶ> ἔχειν || τοιοῦτον πολεῖτην 'After I commended Solon on account of these matters I approved of him exceedingly and I held him among my acquaintances, to whom I also awarded the appropriate privileges, because I considered the man worthy of honour from us; and I rejoice with you on account of possessing such a citizen.'

and free'. In **Letter 3**, the health wish may have been included because Octavian made a request for the return of a looted statue from Ephesus to Plarasa–Aphrodisias. **Letters 4, 6 and 7** were all sent to Rhosus. Octavian describes the *arkhontes* as 'Ῥωσέων τῆς ἱερῶς καὶ ἀσύλου καὶ | [αὐτονόμου] 'of the holy, inviolate and free [*sc. polis*] of the Rhosians'. Octavian does so in all three of his letters to Rhosus but to no other recipient. **Letters 4, 6 and 7** also refer to Seleukos of Rhosus, who is granted high privileges after serving as an admiral in Octavian's fleet.³⁹ In **Letter 5** Mylasa is in a desperate state. Labienus, an opponent of Octavian, had invaded with the Parthians after Philippi in 40 B.C.E. (Vell. Pat. 2.78.1, Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 30.1, Dio Cass. 48.24–6) and razed Mylasa to the ground (Dio Cass. 48.26.3–4; see also Strabo 14.2.24). The *polis* had not yet recovered, and economic mismanagement is attested.⁴⁰ In resisting Labienus, Mylasa earned the favour of Octavian.⁴¹ In **Letter 8**, although the text is damaged, Octavian appears to confirm their φιλόνηθρα 'privileges' after accepting a [ψ]ήφισμα 'decree' of the Ephesian *gerousia*. So, although it was not obligatory, we find that there was some motivation in all eight letters to include the health wish: in **Letters 1, 2 and 4–8** sender and recipient had a positive relationship, in **Letter 5** there was cause for concern for the recipients' well-being, and in **Letter 3** a request was made.

Let us consider the evidence for Caesar and Octavian holding *imperium* at the time of dispatching their letters. Sherk's restoration of **Letter 1.1** [Γάιος Ἰούλιος Καῖσαρ αὐτοκράτωρ ὑπατος τῷ δε[ύτε]ρον allows the letter to be dated to 48–47 B.C.E.⁴² Caesar then would still have been in command of his army after Pharsalus. Caesar pursued Pompeius via Asia after the battle (Caes. *BCiu.* 3.105–6.1, Plut. *Vit. Caes.* 48.1, Dio Cass. 42.6). Pompeius went to Mytilene (Caes. *BCiu.* 3.102.4–5), but he could not enter (Dio Cass. 42.2.4). Because we rely on Sherk's restoration we cannot be certain, but because it is a compelling restoration we can be confident that Caesar held *imperium*.

Octavian's seven letters all fall during Octavian's long-held *imperium* and military command. Octavian possessed *imperium* as *triumvir* and was occupied with recurrent military matters between 40 and 38 B.C.E., which covers **Letter 2** (39–38 B.C.E.) and **Letter 3** (38 B.C.E.). The Perusine War was concluded in early 40 B.C.E. (Vell. Pat. 2.74.2, Suet. *Aug.* 14.1, Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 30.1, Dio Cass. 48.15); throughout 39 B.C.E. the possibility of conflict with Sextus Pompeius lingered, before the conclusion of the treaty of Misenum (Vell. Pat. 2.77.1, Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 32, Dio Cass. 48.16.2–3, 48.24.7, 48.28.4, 48.36.1). For a letter written at any time during this period it would have been appropriate to include a military wish. The triumvirate was renewed for five years in 37 B.C.E. (Dio Cass. 48.54.6). In 36 B.C.E. Octavian acquired the troops of Sextus Pompeius and Lepidus (Vell. Pat. 2.71.4–2.80.4, Suet. *Aug.* 16.4, Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 55, Dio Cass. 49.10–15) and he was occupied with the restless soldiers for some time afterward (Vell. Pat. 2.81.1–2, Dio Cass. 49.13–14). These events account for Octavian's *imperium* at the time of **Letter 4** (35 B.C.E.).

³⁹ For example, in **Letter 4** Roman citizenship and tax exemption are granted for Seleukos, his family and his descendants (lines 19–22); then the right to vote (lines 24–6); and it is probable that freedom from military service was also bestowed (lines 22–3).

⁴⁰ Sherk (n. 1), no. 59 with his comments at 309 and 312.

⁴¹ **Letter 5.B.10–12** ἐφ' οἷς πᾶσιν συνε[ῖ]δον παθόντας ταῦτα πάσης τεμιῆς καὶ χάρι[τος] ἀξίους ἀνδρας γενομέν]ους ὑμᾶς 'on account of which [I was] able [to see that] you, [who suffered] these hardships, [are men worthy] of all honour and favour'.

⁴² See R.K. Sherk, 'Senatus consultum de agris Mytilenaeorum', *GRBS* 4 (1963), 217–30; Sherk (n. 1), 152.

Letters 5 and **6** are dated to 31 B.C.E. That Octavian possessed *imperium* in 31 B.C.E. is demonstrated by his titles (**Letter 6.73–4**) and by Suet. *Aug.* 17.1, Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 68.4 and Dio Cass. 51.4.1. After Actium (31 B.C.E.) Octavian went to Athens (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 68.4, Dio Cass. 51.4.1) and on to Asia (Dio Cass. 51.4.1–2), wintering with the army in Samos (Suet. *Aug.* 17.1). Octavian, therefore, not only possessed *imperium* but was also with his army. In 30 B.C.E. he retained *imperium* as consul, as shown by the titles in **Letter 7.85** (30 B.C.E.): ἀὐτοκράτωρ τὸ ἕκτον, ὑπάτος τὸ τέταρ[τον]. He had armies at the ready for the final offensive against Antonius in Alexandria, which he carried out in the following year (Suet. *Aug.* 17.3–4, Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 74–6, Dio Cass. 51.9–10). At **Letter 8.7** (29 B.C.E.), sent to Ephesus, Octavian is named as consul for the fifth time (ὑπάτος τὸ ε'). Suetonius tells us that Octavian commenced his fifth consulship at Samos (Suet. *Aug.* 26.3), this being the second time he stayed at Samos with his army (see the discussion of **Letter 5**). We can conclude that the letter from the Ephesians was delivered to Octavian with his army at Samos. There is explicit mention in Dio of Octavian's visit to Ephesus on the way back to Rome after defeating Antonius in Alexandria (Dio Cass. 51.20.6), which could have taken place in response to the embassy to Samos. Ephesus after all is about half a day from Samos.⁴³ We can conclude, therefore, that the military wish in Octavian's seven letters was used in accordance with Late Republican conventions and it is most likely that Caesar's letter is the same.

5. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CAESAR'S AND OCTAVIAN'S MILITARY WISHES

In Section 3 we established that the military health wish is borrowed into Greek by means of imitation, but this borrowing was conducted using appropriate EKP Greek. In Section 4 we observed that the use of the health wish adhered to epistolary conventions. These findings are significant for how we understand the practice of Roman epistolography in Greek and for how we understand the role of documents in Roman relations with Greek-speaking communities.

The use of health wishes in the official letters is evidence that the epistolographers within the Roman administration in the Late Republic were aware of and could produce letters that conformed to certain Greek epistolary conventions. The military wishes also reveal that some of these epistolographers were confident enough in this milieu to introduce a distinctive Roman phraseological feature into Greek formulas, and they did so in an effective manner. The inclusion of the wishes in the letters of Caesar and Octavian is evidence for how these two statesmen were presented to their recipients. The health wishes should be recognized as part of their programmes for maintaining positive relations with their allies. The fact that they are a small detail is significant, because it shows that the two Caesars, or at least their chanceries, were mindful of the role played by minute pleasantries in correspondence with interstate allies.

It is worth considering what message the military health wishes in these letters might have conveyed. Was it an expression of friendship and wish for good health, or was it a form of manipulation or even a threat? Based on the available evidence, it is most probable that it was intended in a positive light. It is impossible to determine with certainty whether there was in fact genuine, friendly affection between parties, but, as

⁴³ A search on ORBIS returned a distance of 62 km and a travel time of around half a day on 5 June 2020: <<http://orbis.stanford.edu/>>.

was shown above, we have plenty of evidence for positive or at least well-established relations. It is unlikely that any of our military health wishes was intended as a threat. The formula's most probable origin is as an added touch of courtesy made by senders who knew that their recipients were commanders; this gesture was then adopted later by senders who were commanders. Furthermore, deploying a health wish as a threat would be misguided. It is an ostensible wish for the health of the recipient, and the mention of the army is in reference to the sender's health. In such a position of power as the Romans enjoyed, a Roman commander did not need to resort to health wishes to be threatening. But, as evidence from Cicero's correspondence demonstrates, the significance of the phrase 'with the army' was not lost on all.⁴⁴ Although threats are less probable, reassurance is possible. It is difficult to imagine that Roman and Hellenophone politicians did not notice the phrase 'with the army', and for some it must have been a tacit reminder of Rome's potential. The military health wish could have served to reassure some allies, implying Rome's capacity to defend them. **Letter 5**, sent to the struggling Mylasa, could then be an example of this.

6. WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MILITARY HEALTH WISH AFTER OCTAVIAN?

As the number of military health wish tokens discussed in this article shows, the formula was a rare variant of the more common epistolary health wishes. Our extant evidence suggests that the Late Republic saw the zenith of the military health wish, but what happened to it afterward is unclear. Based on testimony from Seneca the Younger and Pliny and on a dearth of examples in these authors and Cicero, Laidlaw concluded that health wishes in general ceased to exist in Roman letters after a steady decline from the Ciceronian period onward.⁴⁵ But this conclusion was drawn before the evidence of the Vindolanda letters,⁴⁶ and the evidence presented above from inscriptions and literature shows that the military version was still being used by some Byzantine epistolographers. It appears that the military health wish survived only in restricted circumstances under the Empire, becoming submerged in our record.

There are a number of factors which could have influenced the low total of extant military wishes in inscribed Roman official letters. One obvious reason is that health wishes tend to be rare in Greek and Latin official letters, so it is noteworthy that we have health wishes at all. The military health wish has even fewer chances to be used, because—at least during the Republic—one of the parties must be a Roman in command of an army. The next factor for documentary letters is preservation. Although a party on good terms with Rome that has received a favourable letter is likely to preserve it either on papyrus or on stone, there is no guarantee it would survive. It is probable that only a minute fraction of Roman Republican official letters has survived, so some health wish letters may have been lost.

An important factor affecting the use of a military wish in interstate and intrastate epistolography is the development of Roman *imperium*, especially in relation to the control of the legions. Throughout the Early Imperial period there was a gradual increase in the centrality of the *Domus Augusta* in military matters—consider, for example, the

⁴⁴ See Cic. *Fam.* 5.2.1 with Hall (n. 14), 156–60.

⁴⁵ Laidlaw (n. 11), 251 with Sen. *Ep.* 15 and Plin. *Ep.* 1.11.

⁴⁶ See Halla-aho (n. 8), 45 with *TVindol.* 52.2 and *CEL* 10.1.

restrictions on the use of the appellation *imperator*,⁴⁷ the increasing rarity of triumphs falling to those outside of the Imperial family,⁴⁸ and Octavian's opposition to Crassus' claim of the *spolia opima* in 29 B.C.E.⁴⁹ It is probable that the military health wish became the *de facto* prerogative of the *princeps* (and perhaps his family), a possibility that further restricts opportunities for the usage of the military wish. Dio may be describing such a status quo at 69.14.3, commenting that the expression was τῷ προομίῳ τῷ συνήθει τοῖς αὐτοκράτορσιν 'the (letter) opening customary for the *imperatores*', with *imperator* by this time being used by members of the *Domus Augusta* alone. Up to this point the *princeps* still needed to be with his army in order to employ the wish, and this was yet another restriction. In spite of such limitations, the military wish avoided extinction in the Roman Imperial era. It was of sufficient commonality in the letters of the *principes* for Dio to refer to it as συνήθης 'habitual, customary', and for him (or his source) to notice that Hadrian neglected to employ it on even one occasion. Inscribed Latin letters sent to Rome are very rare, but in the inscribed letter of Constantine and his sons the military wish is used. Centuries after Hadrian it was still prominent enough to be found in the correspondence of Valentinian III and of Anastasius I. Even after the requirement that the sender be present with the army became obsolete during the Imperial period and certainly by the time of Valentinian, it is probable that the use of the military wish remained the prerogative of the *princeps*. The emperor as the sender of the letter still had a connection with the army as the (at least nominal) ruler of the general. It seems that the phrase was still significant to the epistolographers because of this connection to the army, and it was used to allow the sender to appear in more control than was perhaps the case. Although rare in attestation and although its significance changed over time, the extant evidence demonstrates that the military health wish was a feature of enduring yet changing significance in Roman letters written in Latin as well as in Greek.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The main conclusions of this article are as follows. The military health wish originated in Latin letters. During the Republic it was conventional only when one of the parties held *imperium* and commanded an army. The latter requirement was obsolete by the time of Valentinian III if not sooner. The military health wish was borrowed by means of imitation from Latin into Roman Republican official letters in Greek. This phraseological borrowing of the third clause employed intuitive EKP Greek, and the first two clauses adhere to Greek epistolographical conventions. The military health wish is significant for multiple reasons. It demonstrates that epistolographers working

⁴⁷ See A. Momigliano and T.J. Cornell in *OCD*⁴ 728–9 s.v. *imperator*. After Augustus, only the *princeps* is attested with the title of αὐτοκράτωρ *imperator* in Roman official letters written in Greek. It is found both before the name of the *princeps* (in the manner of Caesar and Augustus) and also after it in the long lists of titles. The earliest extant epistolary post-Augustan example appears to be in a letter of *imperator* Gaius to the *Koinon* of the Achaeans, Boeotians, Locrians, Phocaeans and Euboeans from 37 C.E.; see J.H. Oliver, *Greek Constitutions of Early Roman Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri* (Philadelphia, PA, 1989), no. 18.21: [Αὐτο]κράτωρ Σεβαστὸς Καῖσαρ. Magistrates tended to be named with the title of their magistracies, such as ἀνθύπατος *proconsul* or πρεσβευτής *legatus*.

⁴⁸ See M. Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, MA and London, 2007), 68–71.

⁴⁹ See Dio Cass. 51.24.4, Livy 4.20.5–11.

for Caesar and Octavian took care to draft letters that met the conventions of Hellenistic chanceries. Their chanceries paid attention even to such fine points when writing to allies in order to maintain positive relations with them. These writers were also confident enough in the text type and language to introduce features from Latin epistolography in an effective manner. Attestations of the military health wish declined during the Imperial period through governmental and administrative changes to the command of armies and the centrality of the *princeps*. It is probable that the military health wish survived in rare occurrences for more than four centuries because the formula's connection to the army allowed it to remain significant for emperors when writing to their Senates.

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