TRAVEL AND GEOGRAPHY IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Edited by Colin Adams and
Ray Laurence

London and New York

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TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION IN THE ROMAN STATE

The cursus publicus

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The *cursus publicus* was a peculiarly Roman government institution which has been widely misunderstood. By making possible government comunication, travel by government officials and the transport of certain freight goods, the *cursus publicus* played a vital role in securing and exercising Roman rule throughout the empire. The institution today still is termed 'post office' or 'government post' by many, even though its function and organisational structure were quite different from modern postal systems.[1] It is well known that the *cursus publicus* did not carry out appointed rounds, nor was it universally available.[2] This chapter seeks to illustrate more of such differences, in order to show that the *cursus publicus* was not a delivery service like a post office, but rather an infrastructure for use by state officials.

CREATION AND OPERATION OF THE CURSUS PUBLICUS

Although the public transportation system known to us as the *cursus publicus* is not mentioned by name in sources prior to the fourth century, we know from a chapter in the *Life of Augustus* by Suetonius that it was Augustus himself who established it.[3] The fundamental principles upon which its operations were based, under the principate as well as under the late empire, were laid down at that time. It seems justifiable, therefore, to extend our use of the fourth-century term to the earlier organisation as well.

About the creation of the *cursus publicus* Suetonius (*Aug.* 49.3) noted:

So that he [Augustus] quickly and easily could receive reports of events

in every province, he stationed first young men, and later carriages, at points along the military roads. The latter system proved itself more advantageous, because then the same courier could deliver the message to its destination and, if necessary, also personally be questioned.

The text states clearly that Augustus' primary concern was the transportation of important messages. Suetonius describes two methods by which messages were transmitted. At first, young men from local communities were posted at points along the *viae militares*, apparently as a sort of relay system of runners, who passed messages at each station from one to the next. As Suetonius notes, this system had the disadvantage that the courier had no personal knowledge of his messages' content and, therefore, could neither answer questions nor provide supplementary information about conditions or events at the place where the message originated. The system was later changed to include vehicles that could be exchanged at the staging posts. Under the revised system, the same messenger could travel from his point of departure directly to his destination.

As Suetonius recorded, Augustus intended that only vital official dispatches would be carried. The first system of runners was no more than a courier service. The second system, however, which remained in effect throughout the later period, could do more than just deliver official mail. The *vehicula* – that is to say pack animals, boats or, most specifically, wagons – could carry not only the couriers and their messages, but also other persons as well as a limited amount of baggage or other freight. The transition from courier to transportation system was already complete under Augustus and so it remained in late antiquity.

This reform is reflected in a provincial edict from Galatia dating from the beginning of Tiberius' reign. The provincial governor Sextus Sotidius Strabo Libuscidianus refers in his edict to directives received from Augustus and Tiberius. This text, first published in 1976, is recorded in both Greek and Latin,[4] and is our only source detailing exactly how the *cursus publicus* worked:

> Sextus Sotidius Strabo Libuscidianus, Legate of Tiberius Caesar Augustus, decrees: 'It is the most unjust thing of all for me to tighten up by my own edict that which the Augusti, one of the greatest of gods, the other the greatest of Emperors, have exactly regulated, that is that no person shall use wagons free of charge.[5]

We can see that the purpose of the edict is to reinforce the stipulation that transportation services had to be paid for:

> Since the indiscipline of certain persons calls for immediate punish-ment, I have caused to be posted in the various cities and villages a schedule of those services which, according to my decision, must be provided . . . The people of Sagalassos must provide a service of ten wagons and as many mules for the necessary use of the travellers,

and they shall receive from each user ten asses per schoinum for a wagon and four asses per schoinum for a mule.[6]

The text clearly reveals how Augustus' transportation system worked: it was a burden placed on local populations – in other words, it was a *munus*. The provincial governor designated which services were to be supplied by each city or village. Basically, this meant that the population had to provide transportation services to state officials. In return, they were entitled to compensation on a scale determined by the governor. The system therefore was founded on the principle of forced rental of vehicles and animals, which the local population had to provide at a preferred rate.

Only certain persons were entitled to use the transport thus provided:

> Not all are entitled to use this service, but the imperial Procurator and his son. They may use up to ten wagons or three mules in place of a single wagon . . . ; further, persons travelling on military service may use public transport, both those who have a diploma as well as soldiers stationed in other provinces who are passing through. A Roman senator may use up to ten wagons or, in place of wagons . . . A Roman knight on imperial service shall have three wagons . . . A Centurion may use one.[7]

The edict names explicitly those persons entitled to use the public transportation system: the provincial procurator, senators, *equites*, centurions and generally all persons undertaking imperial or military business, insofar as they have imperial commissions and warrants for the *cursus publicus*. Quarters, however, had to be provided to travellers at no cost: 'Free hospitality must be offered to all members of our household; to persons on imperial business from any province; to the best emperor's freedmen and slaves and their animals.'[8]

Although the payment of compensation for transportation had disappeared by the fourth century at the latest,[9] the system remained much the same for travellers using it. They enjoyed the use of animals and wagons belonging to provincial inhabitants, exchanging them periodically at intervals along the way. In order to make the process more convenient for travellers and less onerous to the people, rest and relay stations were established along the major highways of the empire, in late antiquity called *mansiones* or *mutationes*. Construction of these stations occurred progressively, and the whole programme probably was not complete until the third or fourth century.[10]

The use of state-owned facilities was reserved for those persons specifically authorised by the emperor to do so. This right was documented by writs called *diplomata* or *evectiones*, which detailed what contingent of wagons and animals could be called upon,[11] which route was to be taken,[12] and the period during which the warrant was valid.[13] Only those services noted in the pass could be demanded. It was strictly forbidden to demand any further services or to requisition animals other than at the official stage posts. Furthermore, only the

animals belonging to the *cursus publicus* could be used, which sometimes led to delays until fresh animals became available. If travellers were delayed at a way station, they were to wait until fresh animals could be brought up; they were not to demand animals from the nearest peasant. Constantine sanctioned this presumably common abuse with the threat of arrest and indictment.[14] Travellers had to present their warrants when exchanging transport at way stations or to other inspecting officials as required.

The *cursus publicus* was a government transportation system based on obligations placed by the Roman state on private persons. They provided equipment, animals and wagons used by government agents during their travels. In the early empire, compensation had to be paid for this service, but that had fallen into abeyance in late antiquity. The burden of this *munus* then fell completely on the inhabitants, who also had to maintain the way stations and care for the animals.

This system enabled the state to satisfy its most important transportation needs: first, securing state communication; second, transporting government agents; and, third, moving certain goods. The following discussion will show how these three tasks were organised. It will be seen that it was not the personnel of the *cursus publicus* but rather individual government agents travelling on state business that carried out these tasks. The *cursus publicus* contained only those personnel necessary for its administration and for the operation of the way stations. These included veterinarians, wagon-wrights, and grooms responsible for the care, issue and maintenance of the animals at the various way stations.[15] Since neither couriers nor wagon drivers belonged to the *cursus publicus* proper, government agents travelling by means of the *cursus publicus* were not using a transportation system *per se*. They were using an infrastructure based on the facilities of the *cursus publicus* which used animals requisitioned from local individuals or communities.

STATE COMMUNICATION

Who carried the government's messages?

The emperor Caligula was not fated to go down in history as one of its great figures. Concerning his varied efforts in this direction, Suetonius reports the following from the expedition to Britain:

> The only thing that Caligula achieved on this campaign was the taking under his protection of Adminius, the son of the British king Cunobelinus, who came over to him with a small band of followers after being expelled by his father. He sent glowing reports to Rome, however, as though he had subjected the entire island. To this end he urged his *speculatores* to drive their carriage all the way to the forum and *curia* and not to present their dispatches to the Consuls until the Senate was fully assembled in the temple of Mars.[16]

Caligula entrusted the carrying of important dispatches to soldiers, in this case high-ranking *speculatores*. These were probably *speculatores praetorii*, who also acted as imperial bodyguards.[17] Their close proximity to the emperor made them well suited for special tasks, message-carrying among others. Other emperors used soldiers as couriers, including centurions, members of their personal guard[18] and, after the second century AD, the *frumentarii*, although these latter probably only for special missions.[19]

Provincial governors preferred to entrust messages to members of their personal staff such as *beneficiarii*[20] or guard cavalrymen (*equites singulares*).[21] Low-ranking soldiers from the provincial armies were also detached for service as couriers. The morning reports and strength returns of individual units, and other forms of military correspondence, show that in every unit a number of soldiers would be away carrying letters.[22]

Besides soldiers, civilian members of the administration also were occupied with carrying messages. Among these official couriers numbered the traditional message carriers attached to the Roman magistracies, the *geruli* and *viatores*, who were members of the urban decuries of *apparitores* and thus were free citizens.[23]

Probably the largest group of imperial couriers was that of the *tabellarii Augusti* and *cursores*, both professional couriers, as their designations indicate.[24] During the principate, the imperial *tabellarii* and *cursores* were made up of imperial slaves and freedmen. Evidence for them is concentrated at the great centres of administration, in Rome and in provincial capitals throughout the empire, such as Ephesus or Carthage. The *tabellarii Augusti* had been given a military-like organisation by the second century, probably because of their large numbers.[25] Such a structure was common to many large official groups of slaves and freedmen.[26] The *tabellarii* and *cursores* were attached to the various government bureaux – especially within the Roman financial administration, for instance the various financial offices in Rome, the *officium rationum*, the *statio hereditatium*, the *statio patrimonii* or the (*ratio*) *castrensis*.[27] Further, they belonged to the urban Roman administrative departments of the *officium annonae* and the *statio marmorum*.[28] Outside of Rome they could be found on the staff of the imperial procurators.[29] In later times it was particularly the *agentes in rebus*, also known under the titles of *magistrianoi* and *veredarii*, who served as imperial messengers.[30]

Besides soldiers and professional messengers, the Roman state called upon the services of other persons as required. Servants and officials were occasionally commissioned to carry messages. Among these numbered the *servi publici* that, according to Plutarch, the senate dispatched with its decrees after Nero's death.[31] In Egypt, messenger services were performed by *hyperetai*, who were also subaltern officials.[32] Even high-ranking officials from the staff of provincial governors, the so-called *officiales*, were occasionally called upon to perform further unspecified duties as letter-carriers. This was, however, probably an exception to normal practice used only when the governor expected not only delivery of his letters, but also an immediate reply.[33]

The various classes of government couriers just mentioned can be divided roughly into two categories: soldiers and other government personnel belonging to the various administrative offices. They did not belong to the structure of the *cursus publicus*. All of these messengers carried out their tasks for the emperor, for military commanders or for civilian government office-holders. Government couriers thus formed a part of the Roman administration.

From Pliny's correspondence with Trajan we learn that the issue of warrants for the use of the *cursus publicus* was extremely restricted and that such warrants were only issued to messengers or other officials on a case-by-case basis and for important matters alone. For example, the governor of Bithynia writes to the emperor informing him that he had issued such a warrant to a messenger of King Sauromates in order to accelerate his journey to Trajan: '*ex causa festinationem tabellarii . . . diplomate adiuvi*'.[34] It follows that even official state couriers did not always travel via the *cursus publicus*. If their mission was not particularly urgent or not of the highest priority, they had to travel on foot or use vehicles not exchangeable at the way stations.

Two special cases seem at first glance to contradict the statements just defined. A series of late Roman papyri from Egypt seems to refer to letter-carriers belonging to the *cursus velox*, a section of the *cursus publicus* established in the fourth century for express deliveries.[35] The exact title of such an official was *haliadites etoi grammatephoros* or 'boatman or letter-carrier' of the *cursus velox*: we might infer from this functionary's title that he did in fact belong to the staff of the *cursus publicus*.[36] Since no comparable official title is known from the rest of the empire, this might be a peculiar institution within the Egyptian transportation system. But in four papyri from a period of more than sixty years we find exactly the same title, where the function as sailor is always named first.[37] Further, the earliest example of this post from the year 300 gives the description as 'sailors in the service of the *cursus publicus*'.[38] It follows that the main function of these liturgical officials was that of boatman, and they would have plied their trade in shallow-draught Nile boats as part of the *cursus velox*. This system would have been particularly appropriate for Egypt, where the centres of population lay close by the banks of the Nile. The fact that these boats operated along one main route made it sensible for them to transport not only the official travellers who were allowed to use the *cursus publicus*, but internal administrative mail of the province of Egypt as well. The requirement for reliable and frequent delivery of official correspondence was particularly important in Egypt, with its traditionally complicated bureaucracy.[39] A similar water-transport service for official travellers was provided by the state in the Adriatic Sea. Tacitus shows that *biremes* of the Roman imperial navy were used to transport officials between Italy and Dyrrachium.[40]

A further deviation from the communications system already outlined deals with the delivery of messages between military installations, particularly on the military frontiers. A true courier system existed in the military zone, so-called *equites dispositi* being located at designated stations. These mounted messengers

delivered their dispatches in a system of relays, thus maintaining high-speed communications between headquarters, scattered detachments and field forces.[41] This, however, was a purely military institution, having nothing to do with the *cursus publicus*, so the two should not be confused. The military courier service fulfilled strictly military requirements and it did not exist outside the military zones, and indeed was not universal there. For supra-regional communications involving, for instance, correspondence with neighbouring armies, the governor or the emperor detached soldiers who could then use the *cursus publicus* if the urgency of the mission warranted it.

TRAVEL BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Besides state couriers, other government officials were entitled to use transportation provided by the *cursus publicus* when in the possession of a valid warrant. That the travelling officials themselves and not the members of the *cursus publicus* were the users of animals and wagons is shown clearly by a statute of the emperor Constantine. In 316, he forbids the use of cudgels to drive the beasts, whips only being permissible.[42] As usual with imperial laws there is a punitive clause providing for punishments in case of abuse. In the case of this law, the threat of punishment is directed against senior and low-ranking government officials, a *promotus* and a *munifex*. It follows that officials either drove the vehicles themselves or were held personally accountable for their use of *cursus publicus* transportation facilities, meaning that they had personnel in their retinues for this purpose.

Various sources indicate the presence of such drivers on the staff of travelling government officials. The earliest such document is a second-century inscription from Carnuntum containing the following text: 'Sacred to Epona Augusta, those in charge of looking after the baggage animals and mules of Claudius Maximus, the imperial propraetorian legate, gladly, willingly, and deservedly fulfilled the vow'.[43] Claudius Maximus is known as provincial governor of Pannonia superior between 150 and 154.[44] The first editors of this inscription, Jobst and Weber, saw the *superiumentari et muliones* as officials of the *cursus publicus*.[45] Werner Eck disagreed, with good reason, showing that these *superiumentari et muliones* would never have called themselves the *superiumentarii et muliones* of the governor Claudius Maximus if they had worked for the *cursus publicus*. They must therefore be regarded as members of the governor's staff.

A similar document from AD 217 exists from Apulum, the capital of the province of the Tres Daciae. The inscription was dedicated by a *superiumentarius*, once again, to the goddess Epona and to the well-being of the provincial governor.[46] The servant designates himself as *superiumentarius eius* (of the governor) and this shows that he was indeed a member of the governor's staff.

Such personnel were common in late antiquity as well. The Christian writer Eusebius preserves a letter from Constantine to Bishop Chrestus of Syracuse,

inviting him to a synod at Arles. In it, Constantine authorises him to use the *cursus publicus* for his journey and to take two other churchmen and three servants along, such as might be serviceable to him along the way.[47] A law from the Theodosian Code concerning the *cursus publicus* shows that accompanying personnel were necessary, not just for protection, but because of the hardships of travel.[48]

TRANSPORT OF GOODS

Freight played a relatively unimportant role in the *cursus publicus*. For the principate, the Galatian edict indicates that this freight consisted primarily of baggage belonging to government officials. Freight transport on a larger scale, such as supplies for the army, does not seem to have been organised using transport provided by the *cursus publicus*, because the facilities were not sufficient for such provision.[49] The same seems to have been true in late antiquity. The *cursus publicus* was not used to transport taxes in kind.[50]

During the late imperial period, the *cursus publicus* was used to transport tax money and a number of products from state industry, such as weapons or clothing for the army[51] or the imperial court.[52] Imperial laws show that only the officials of the financial agency responsible organised the transportation of these goods: the officials of the *comes sacrarum largitionum* and the *comes rerum privatarum*, the chiefs of the two imperial treasuries.[53] They received warrants for the use of horses and wagons of the *cursus publicus* whenever they required them.[54] Other officials did not enjoy this special dispensation. These generally received an annual restricted allotment of *cursus* warrants. For example, according to a law of AD 316, provincial governors were entitled to only two *evectiones* annually. The emperors declared themselves willing, however, to issue additional warrants to provincial governors in urgent cases or for reports being submitted to the court.[55]

One unusual consignment carried for the emperor Constantine illustrates once again that it was not the personnel of the *cursus publicus* who carried out freight transport, but rather the responsible official himself. In a letter to Eusebius, Constantine asks that he send fifty of the most useful theological books to him at Constantinople, and allows him two government wagons for the purpose. A deacon of Eusebius' church was to demand these, presenting Constantine's letter to Eusebius as authorisation.[56]

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the *cursus publicus* was to make possible official government travel. This was accomplished by organising transportation at particular places along certain routes, which then were used in relays. The conduct of business

was left to the system's users. These were, on the one hand, state couriers belonging to government bureaux or the military, and, on the other, government officials travelling on business throughout the empire. Finally, certain goods were transported through the endeavours of state officials. The *cursus publicus*, therefore, was not a delivery service like a post office, but the infrastructure which allowed for the provision of official transportation.

NOTES

1 Hudemann (1878); Holmberg (1933); Hirschfeld (1963); Pflaum (1940); Stoffel (1994); Kolb (2000) 49–226.

2 See Eck (1979) 88; Stoffel (1994) 3.

3 Suet., *Aug.* 49.3; cf. Hirschfeld (1963) 190–204; Holmberg (1933) 37–42; Pflaum (1940) 210–45; Eck (1979) 88–9.

4 Mitchell (1976) 106–31 = *SEG* XXVI 1392 = *AE* 1976, 653; for the dating not after AD 19, see Mitchell (1986) 26–33. The following quotes rely on the Latin text of the inscription.

5 *SEG* XXVI 1392, 1–4: '*Sex(tus) Sotidius Strabo Libuscidianus, leg(atus) Ti(beri) Caesaris Augusti pro pr(aetore) dic(it). Est quidem omnium inquissimum me edicto meo adstringere id quod Augusti alter deorum alter principum maximus diligentissime caverunt, ne quis gratuitis vehiculis utatur*'.

6 *SEG* XXVI 1392, 4ff. (with ZPE45 1982, 100): '*Sed quoniam licentia quorundam praesentem vindictam desiderat, formulam eorum quae [pra]estari iudicio oportere in singulis civitatibus et vicis proposui servaturus eam aut si neglecta erit vindicaturus non mea tantum potestate sed principis optimi a quo id – in ip[sum] mandatis accepi maiestate . . . Sagalassenoss[o] ministerium carrorum decem et mulorum totidem praestare debent ad usus necessarios transeuntium, et accipere in singula carra et in singulos schoenos ab iis, qui utentur, aeris denos, in mulos autem singulos et schoenos singulos aeris quaternos.*'

7 *SEG* XXVI 1392, 13ff.: '*Neque tamen omnibus huius rei ius erit, sed procuratori principis optimi filioque eius, usu da[to us]que ad carra decem aut pro singulis carris mulorum trium . . . praeterea militantibus et iis, qui diplomum habebunt, et iis, qui ex alis provincis militantes commeabunt ita ut senatori populi Romani non plus quam decem carra . . . equiti Romano cuius officio princeps optimus utitur ter carra . . . centurioni carrum.*'

8 *SEG* XXVI 1392, 23: '*Mansionem omnibus qui erunt ex comitatu nostro et militantibus ex omnibus provincis et principis optimi libertis et servis et iumentis eorum gratuitam praestari oportet.*'

9 Other documents show this procedure only until the third century AD: *P. Lond.* III 1171 v (AD 42); *OGIS* 665 (AD 48); *IGL*Syr. V 1998 (AD 81–96); *SEG* XXXVII 1186 (AD 211–14).

10 For example, *CIL* III 6123 = *ILS* 231add.; *CIL* X 7200 = *ILS* 5905.

11 *CTh* 6.29.2.2 (AD 357): '*ne quis citra evectionis auctoritatem moveat cursum vel amplius postulet, quam concessit evectio*'; 8.5.14 (AD 362); 22 (AD 365); 24 (AD 365); 27 (AD 365); 29 (AD 368[367]); 35 (AD 378); *Nov. Iust.* 30.7.3.

12 *CTh* 8.5.25 (AD 365).

13 *CTh* 7.12.2 (AD 379); *CTh* 8.5.9 (AD 357); 12 (AD 362); 27 (AD 365).

14 *CTh* 8.5.1 (AD 315).

15 *CTh* 8.5.31 (AD 370).

16 Suet., *Caligula* 44.2: '*Nihil autem amplius quam Adminio Cynobellini Britannorum regis filio, qui pulsus a patre cum exigua manu transfugerat, in deditionem recepto, quasi universa tradita insula, magnificas Romam litteras misit, monitis speculatoribus, ut vehiculo ad forum usque et curiam pertenderent nec nisi in aede Martis ac frequente senatu consulibus traderent.*'

17 Clauss (1973) 46–53.

18 Tacitus, *Hist*. I 67; II 98; IV 37; Herod. VII 6. 5; *Tab. Vindol.* II 263; Tacitus, *Hist*. II 73 shows *speculatores* as couriers of the emperor Vitellius.

19 See Kolb (2000) 290–4. For the contrary view see Rankov (1990) 180: 'The most fundamental role of the *frumentarii* seems not to have been espionage, but the carrying of messages between the emperor and the provinces'; similarly Eck (1995) 69.

20 SHA, Hadrian 2. 6.

21 *P. Oxy*. VII 1022 = Fink, *RMR* nr. 87, 26 (AD 103).

22 For example, *P. Dur*. 82 = Fink, *RMR* nr. 47 col. II 1–7: '*iiii kal(endas) april(es) n(umerus) p(urus) mil(itum) cal(igatorum) dccc{c——} / coh(ortis) XX Palm(yrenorum) Severia{na}e A{l}e{xandrianae} / Iulius Rufinianus tribunus ..vessus ..{——} / missi ad hordeum comparandum m{il(ites) . . . } in h(is) eq . . . {——} / missi in prosec(utione) hordiator(um) mil(ites) {.} i (centuria)Mariani .{——} / reversi q(ondam) d(e)p(utati) Adatha mil(ites) ii (centuria) Nigrini Iul(ius) Zabdibolus{——} / reversi q(ondam) d(e)p(utati) ad praet(orium) praesidis cum epistul{i}s . . . {}*'.

23 For *geruli*, see Mommsen (1878) 366; for *viatores*, ibid. 360–2; Habicht, *RE* VIII A2, 1958, 1928–40; Kunkel and Wittmann (1995) 123–5; cf. Waltzing (1895) 416; Purcell (1983) 125–73.

24 *CIL* V 6964 = ILS 1701 (Turin): '*Ex tabellar(iorum) Aug(usti) stat(ionis) Taur(icae) l. m. d.*'; *CIL* VIII 1878 = *ILS* 1709; *CIL* X 1741; *IGRR* IV 1221; *IG* V 2, 525. For *cursores*, see for example, *CIL* VI 241. 8800. 9317; *AE* 1899, 103; Hirschfeld (1963) 200.

25 The inscriptions give the following ranks of *tabellarii*: *praepositi*, *decuriones*, *optiones* and *tesserarii* in *CIL* VI 410. 746. 8424. 8445. 8505. 9915. 37,766; *IvEph* 696A. 2200. 2222B. 4112; *SEG* VI 594.

26 For example, *praepositus unctorum CIL* VI 8582; *praepositus lecticariorum CIL* VI 8874; *decurio lecticariorum CIL* VI 8875; *decurio unctorum CIL* VI 9093; see further *optiones* with the *officinatores monetae*, cf. Weaver (1972) 228.

27 *CIL* VI 8424a. 8445. 8505. 8526; cf. Hirschfeld (1963) 201–2; Pflaum (1940) 318–26.

28 *CIL* VI 410. 8473.

29 *IvEph* 855: '[*adiutores*] *et tabel(larii) q(ui) s(unt) sub cura* [. . .] *li Firmi proc(uratoris) Aug(usti)*'; also 2200A. 4112; *CIL* VIII 12623–35. 12906. 12908–11.

30 Jones (1964) 578–80; Hirschfeld (1913) 576–612; Giardina (1977); Clauss (1980) 23–51, especially 45–51; Palme (1994) 43–68.

31 Plut., *Galba* 8.4.

32 For their task as letter-carriers see *BGU* I 226 (AD 99); II 578 (AD 189); cf. Strassi (1997) *passim*, especially 47–8.

33 *P. Lips*. inv. 366 = *SB* XVIII 13251; cf. Kramer (1986) 33–9.

34 Pliny the Younger, *Epistulae* 10.64.

35 Cf. Thomas (2000) 194–5.

36 *P. Flor.* 39 (AD 396). The term derives from the word *haliades* which describes a small boat used by officials (military and civilians) and private persons; for sources and references cf. *CPR* X 2.

37 *P. Oxy.* LI 3623 (AD 359); *PSI* X 1108 (AD 381); *P. Flor.* 39 (AD 396); *P. Oxy.* LV 3796 (AD 412).

38 *P. Panop. Beatty* II, 275 (AD 300).

39 With every village submitting monthly reports to the financial administration, a periodic system of official mail was vital.

40 Tacitus, *Ann.* IV 27.1; Starr (1993) 23 and 178; Eck (1997–8) 339–46.

41 In this way Davies (1989) 59 explains the fifteen *dispositi* in the province of Syria Coele: *P. Dura* 100 (AD 219) and 101 (AD 222)= Fink, *RMR* 1. 2; cf. Fink (1971) passim, s.v. 'dispositus'. Caesar and Pompeius, though, had used such mounted soldiers during the civil war: Caesar, *Bell. Civ.* 3.101: '*nuntii de Caesaris victoria per dispositos equites allati*'; Caesar, *Bell. Hisp.* 2: '*tabellarios, qui a Cn. Pompeio dispositi onmibus locis essent, quo certiorem Cn. Pompeium de Caesaris adventu facerent*'.

42 *CTh* 8.5.2 (AD 316): '*Quoniam plerique nodosis et validissimis fustibus inter ipsa currendi primordia animalia publica cogunt quidquid virium habent absumere, placet, ut omnino nullus in agitando fuste utatur, sed aut virga aut certe flagro, cuius in cuspide infixus brevis aculeus pigrescentes artus innocuo titillo poterit admonere, non ut exigat tantum, quantum vires valere non possunt. Qui contra hanc fecerit sanctionem promotus, regradationis humilitate plectetur: munifex poenam deportationis excipiat*'.

43 Eck (1992) 207–10: '*Eponae Aug(ustae) sac(rum) Cl(audii) Maximi leg(ati) Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) superiumentari et muliones v(otum) s(olverunt) l(aeti) l(ibentes) m(erito)*'.

44 *CIL* XVI 99.104; *PIR*² C 933; Thomasson (1984) 157 nr. 56.

45 Jobst and Weber (1989) 349–58 = *AE* 1991, 1308.

46 Stein (1944) 65 = *IDR* III 5.71: '*Epone sancte pro salute C(ai) Iuli Septimi Castini, leg(ati) Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore) III Daciar(um), Libella superi{u}mentarius eius [votum s]olvit.*'

47 Eusebius, *HE* 10.5.23.

48 *CTh* 8.5.4 (AD 326): '*ad tutelam vitae vel laborem adeundum itineris*'.

49 Cf. Herz (1988) 60.

50 See Kolb (2000) 227–47.

51 *CI* 12.50.22 (AD 467/8): *arma*; *CTh* 8.5.33 (AD 374): *vestes militares*.

52 *CTh* 8.5.48 (AD 386): *lineae vel amictoriae*.

53 *CTh* 8.5.13 (AD 362); 18 (AD 364); 40 (AD 382); cf. *CTh* 8.5.20 (AD 364).

54 *Not. Dig.*, Or. 13.35; *Not. Dig.*, Or. 14.15: '*comes rerum privatarum quotiens usus exegerit*'. But see Delmaire (1989) 249, who misunderstood these sources and thought that these officials had the right to give out *evectiones* by themselves.

55 *CTh* 8.5.12 (AD 362): '*Sed ut necessitates publicae impleantur, vicariis denas vel duodenas evectiones manu mea perscribtas ipse permittam, praesidibus vero binas annuas faciat vestra sublimitas, quibus ad seperatas provinciarum secretasque partes necessariis ex causis officiales suos dirigere possint. Sed his quoque nostra etiam mansuetudo evectiones singulas dabit, ut ad nos referre possint, cum fieri necessitas quaedam exegerit*'.

56 Eusebius, *VC* 4.36.4.