

## THE LANGUAGE OF ROMAN LETTERS

Roman letters demonstrate that language has *imperium*: the power to resolve problems, to negotiate relationships and to construct identities. This book combines sociolinguistic and historical approaches to explore how that power is deployed by the bilingual elite of the Roman Republic and Empire, offering the first systematic analysis of Greek code-switches in the letters of Cicero, Pliny, Marcus Aurelius and Fronto and in the *Lives* of Suetonius. Greek was a subtle tool within Latin epistolary communication, and an analysis of letter writers' bilingual practices reveals their manipulation of language to manage relationships between peers and across hierarchical or political divides, uncovering the workings of politics and society. Comparative analysis of Roman and modern code-switching contributes to the debate on how bilingual strategies in letters evolve and how they relate to oral and literary language. The language of letters illuminates the Roman world and its entanglements with Greek language and culture.

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**THE LANGUAGE OF ROMAN LETTERS**

Bilingual Epistolography from Cicero to Fronto

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COVER IMAGE A section of drawings by Mai (1823) of the Milan palimpsest, containing the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon written over parts of the Frontonian correspondence. Reproduced by kind permission of the Warden and Fellows of All Souls College, Oxford.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations of ancient sources follow the practice of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (*OLD*).

- CIL* = T. Mommsen (ed.) (1862–), *Corpus inscriptionum latinarum* (Berlin)  
*EL* = Embedded Language  
*GCS* = Greek cultural sphere  
*LSJ* = H. G. Liddell, R. Scott and H. S. Jones (1996), *A Greek-English Lexicon, with a Revised Supplement* (Oxford)  
*ML* = Matrix Language  
*MLF* = Matrix Language Framework  
*OCT* = Oxford Classical Texts  
*OLD* = P. G. W. Glare (ed.) (2012), *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford) (2nd ed.) 2 vols  
*TLG* = *Thesaurus linguae graecae*  
*TLL* = *Thesaurus linguae latinae*  
*VdH* = M. P. J. van den Hout (1988), *M. Cornelius Fronto: epistulae* (Leipzig)

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