This small roll of nine layers, written on both sides and broken in the middle, was among the fragments of
51–54 but bears no apparent connection with them. The document’s original size cannot be estimated. The roll
in its last use may have consisted of only one sheet, but, as it had been reused for the account on the verso (80),
it may originally have well been longer. Only one legible line is preserved on the recto, which we publish due
to its special nature.

The document was written in a horizontal format along the fibers, normal for the official documents of
the Petra archive. The hand is a professional and grandiose upright cursive with some extra curves. One line
and the beginning of a second contain very large letters, the largest ones over 3 cm high. They give the name
Zenobios (probably preceded by a title or honorific), not known from the other Petra documents. It is followed
by the words κατὰ τὰ θεσπισθέντα παρὰ τοῦ [ (“according to what had been decreed by the . . .”). The words
θεσπίζω, θέσπισμα have only appeared in those papyri referring to imperial constitutions, e.g., παρὰ τὰ παρ’
ἡμῶν θεσπισθέντα in the imperial rescript P. Cair. Masp. I 67024.53 (551); κατὰ τὸ θεῖον θέσπισμα, P. Michael.
43.1 (526); P. Oxy. LXIII 4399.4 (566?). We may assume that the expression here refers to the emperor or some
high magistrate.

This best-preserved line was preceded by at least three and a half lines in smaller writing, possibly by the
same hand. Their extant traces do not give any clue to the contents, but we have reproduced the legible letters
in case some parallel text might be found. After the lines with large letters, there may have been a short line
in the text of the smaller writing (only one omikron is extant). A somewhat similar layout can be found in the
other official letters of the Petra archive, 60 and 78.

1  traces
] ἐκληθε vacat
4  traces
] Ζηνόβιος κατὰ τὰ θεσπισθέντα παρὰ τοῦ [   vacat
] ε[., . . . ] vacat
] [ vacat
COMMENTARY

4 ἔκληθε: this uncertain reading may derive from παρεκλήθη (“was bidden”), cf. P. Princ. III 137. 1–2 (5th–6th c.): παρεκλήθη ὁ δεσπότης<μου> ὁ λαμπρό[τατος] ἄρχων παρὰ τοῦ περιβλέπτου Ἀνατολίου.

J. Kaimio