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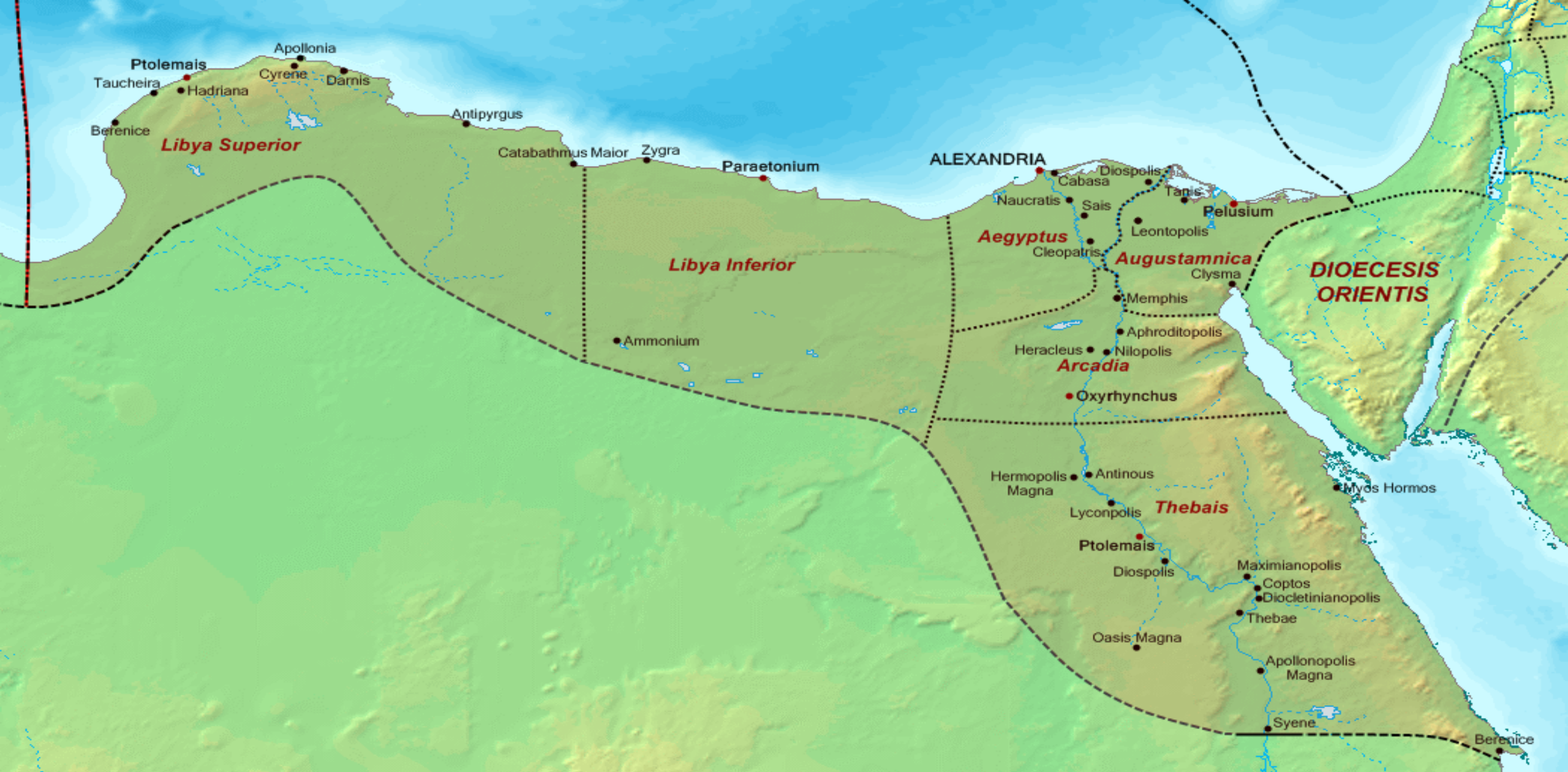


ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

LO SCRIBA IMPREPARATO

Copie di documenti latini nelle cancellerie dell'Egitto tardoantico

*Der Traum der Kopie ~ Il sogno della copia, **Villa Vigoni** – 31/01/2023*



LATIN RELICS IN A GREEK EGYPT (MSCA-IF-GF N° 895634):
 LATIN IN EGYPTIAN DOCUMENTS BETWEEN DIOCLETIAN AND HERACLIUS



LATIN IN LATE ANTIQUE EGYPT

- A set of evidence **quantitatively irrelevant** if compared to coeval Greek, Coptic, and later Pehlevi and Arabic documents

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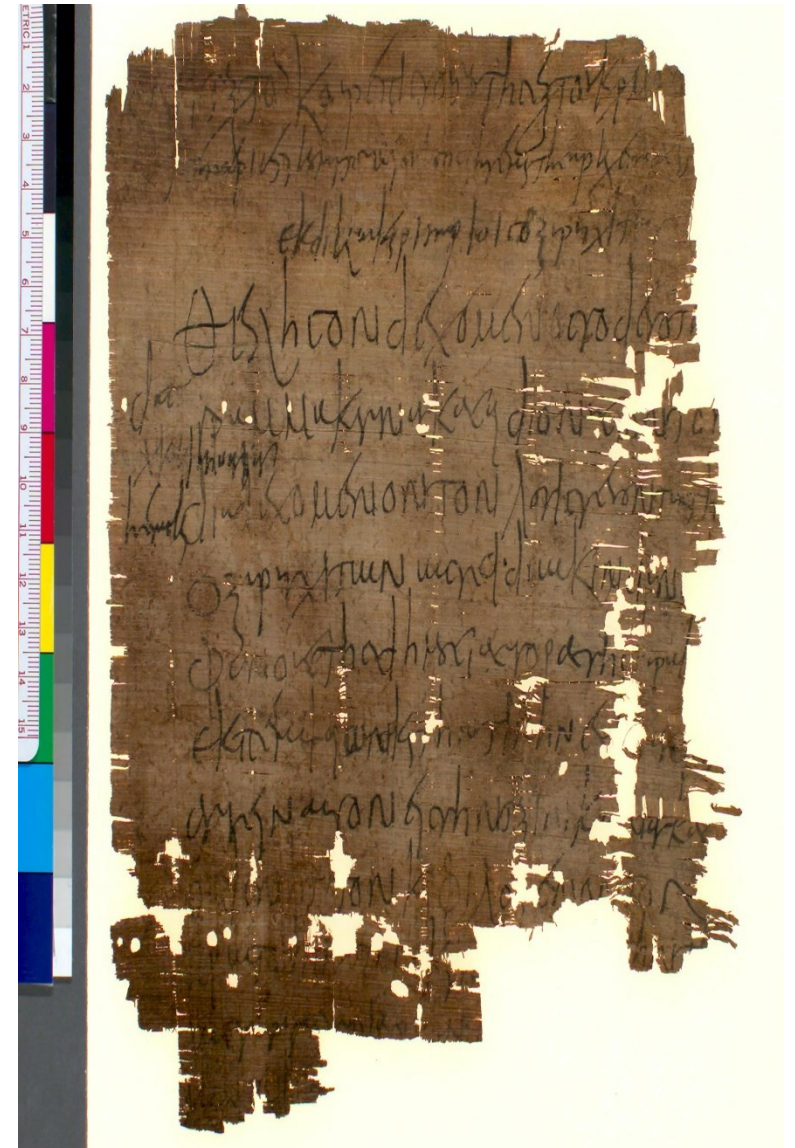
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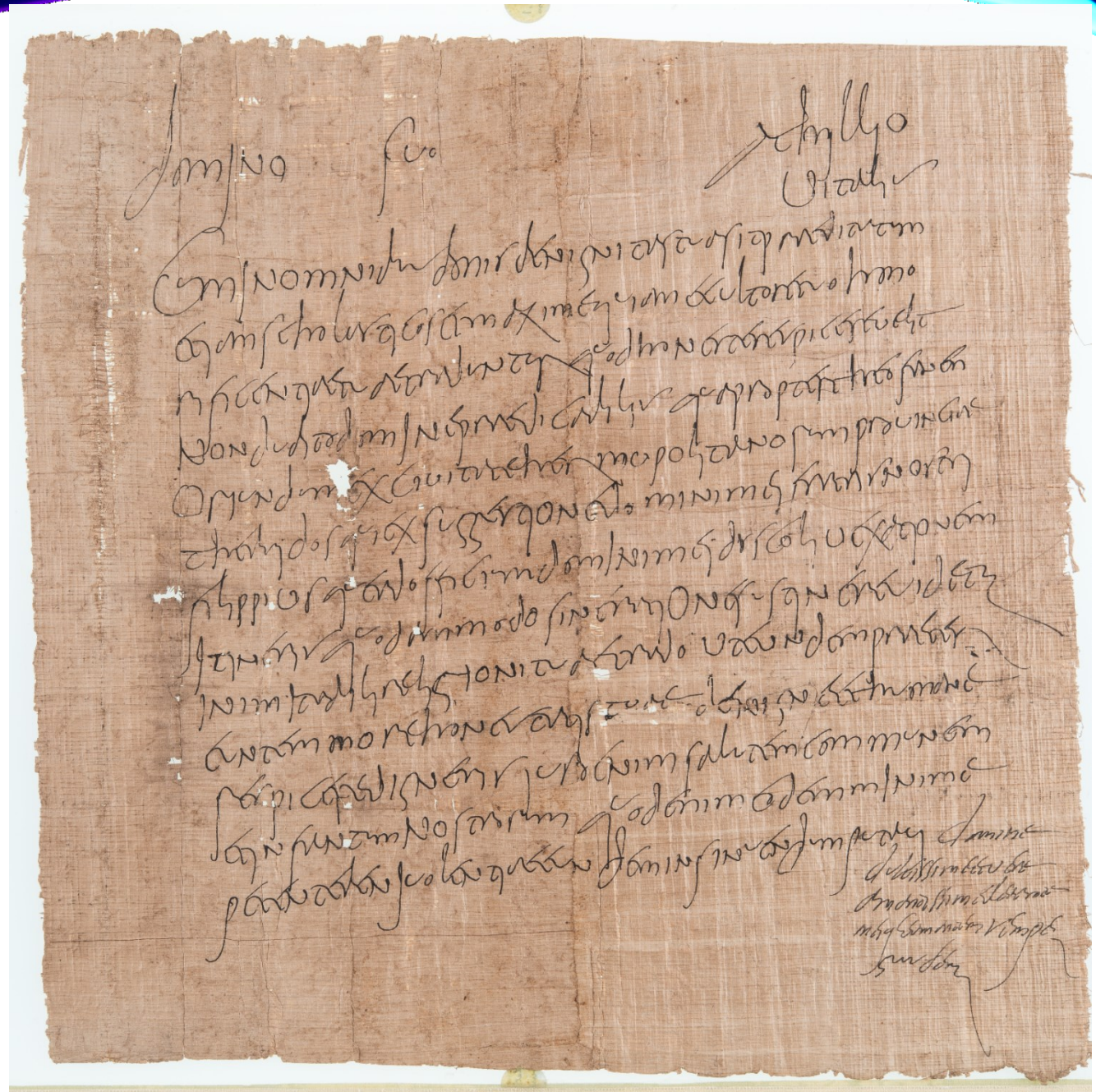
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- b) **Copies of legal texts** (*Codex Theodosianus*, *Corpus Iuris* etc.)
- c) **Latin literature** (Cicero, Sallust, Terence, Juvenal et al.)
- d) **Latin official texts** (from military or civilian bureaus)
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- f) Greek texts with **Latin personal names**
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Greek texts with **Latin tags and seals**
(*legi, recognoui, bene uale...*)

Fully Latin documents, carefully
worded and bombastic, from
provincial and Imperial chanceries

Greek texts with
the **di emu** formula

Greek texts with **Latin names and sentences**

+ ARTICULATION

— ARTICULATION

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- About **sixty** more papyri where the text is **too fragmentary** to be relevant, or where the text is a **military list**, where no textual consideration can be made

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- SB XVIII 13851 (AD 293), letter for the sick *adiutor memoriae* Alogius
- P.Lips. I 44 (copied around AD 324–7), Imperial rescript
- ChLA XIX 687 (AD 317–24), recommendation letter
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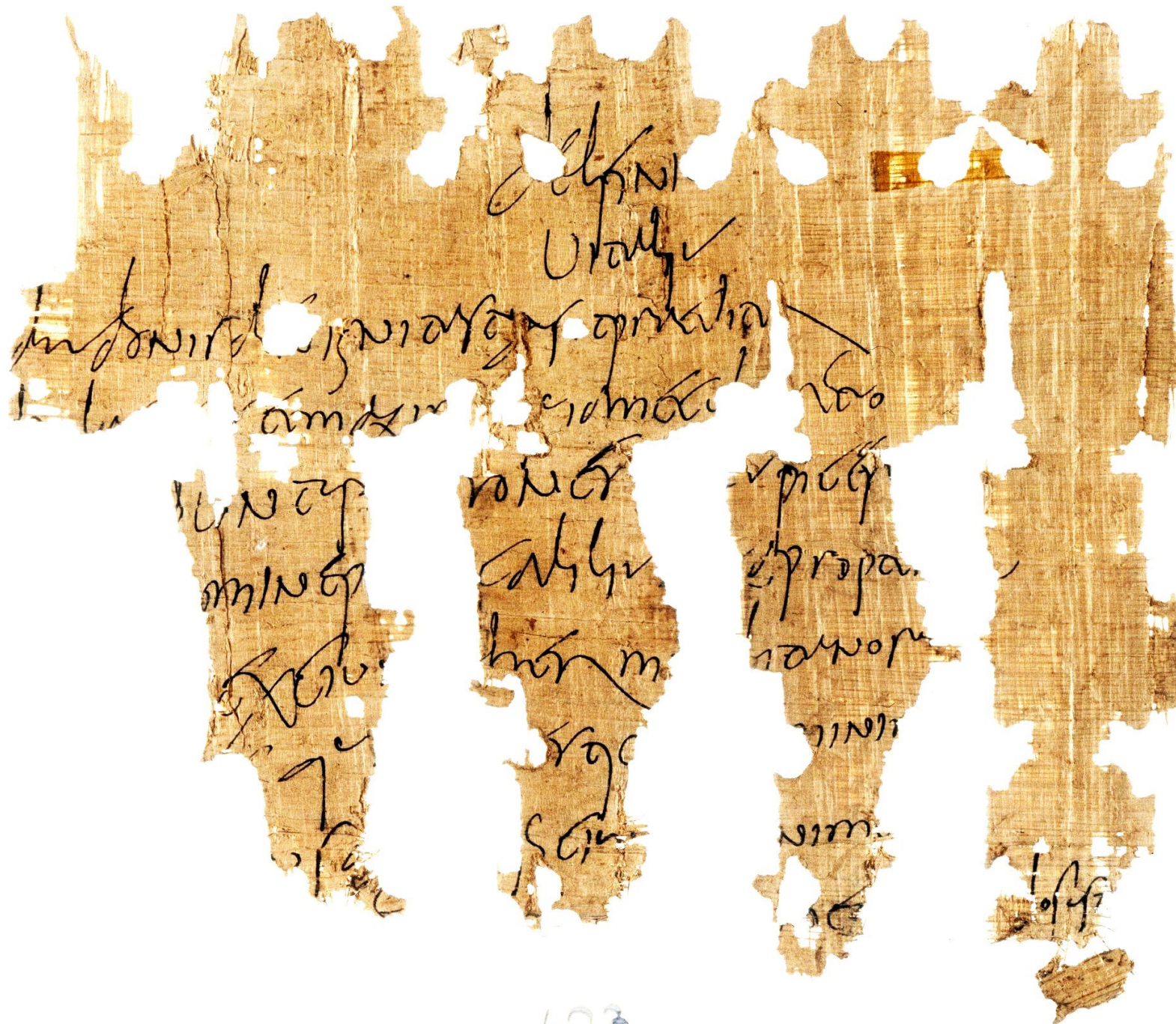
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CHLA XIX 687: **VITALIS** TO **ACHILLIUS** (AD 317-24)

|¹ Domino suo Achillio |² Vitalis.

|³ Cum in omnibus bonis benignitas tua sit praedita, tum |⁴ etiam scholasticos et maxime qui a me cultore tuo hono-|⁵-rificentiae tuae traduntur quod honeste respicere uelit |⁶ non dubito, domine praedicabilis. Quapropter **Theofanen** |⁷ **oriundum ex ciuitate Hermupolitanorum prouinciae** |⁸ **Thebaidos**, qui ex suggestione domini mei fratris nostri |⁹ Filippi **usque ad officium domini mei Dyscoli uexationem** |¹⁰ **itineris** quodammodo sine ratione sustinere uidetur, |¹¹ inimitabili religioni tuae trado, ut eundem praeter-|¹²-euntem more honestatis tuae **benigne et humane** |¹³ **respicere digneris**. Iuro enim salutem communem |¹⁴ et infantum nostrorum, quod enim eodem minime |¹⁵ petente beniuolentiae <tuae> eundem insinuendum putauī.

Domine |¹⁶ dulcissime et uere |¹⁷ amantissime, beatum te |¹⁸ meique amantem semper |¹⁹ gaudear.



P.Ryl. IV 623, **same**
sender for the
same Theophanes

P.RYL. IV 623: VITALIS TO DELPHINIUS (AD 317-24)

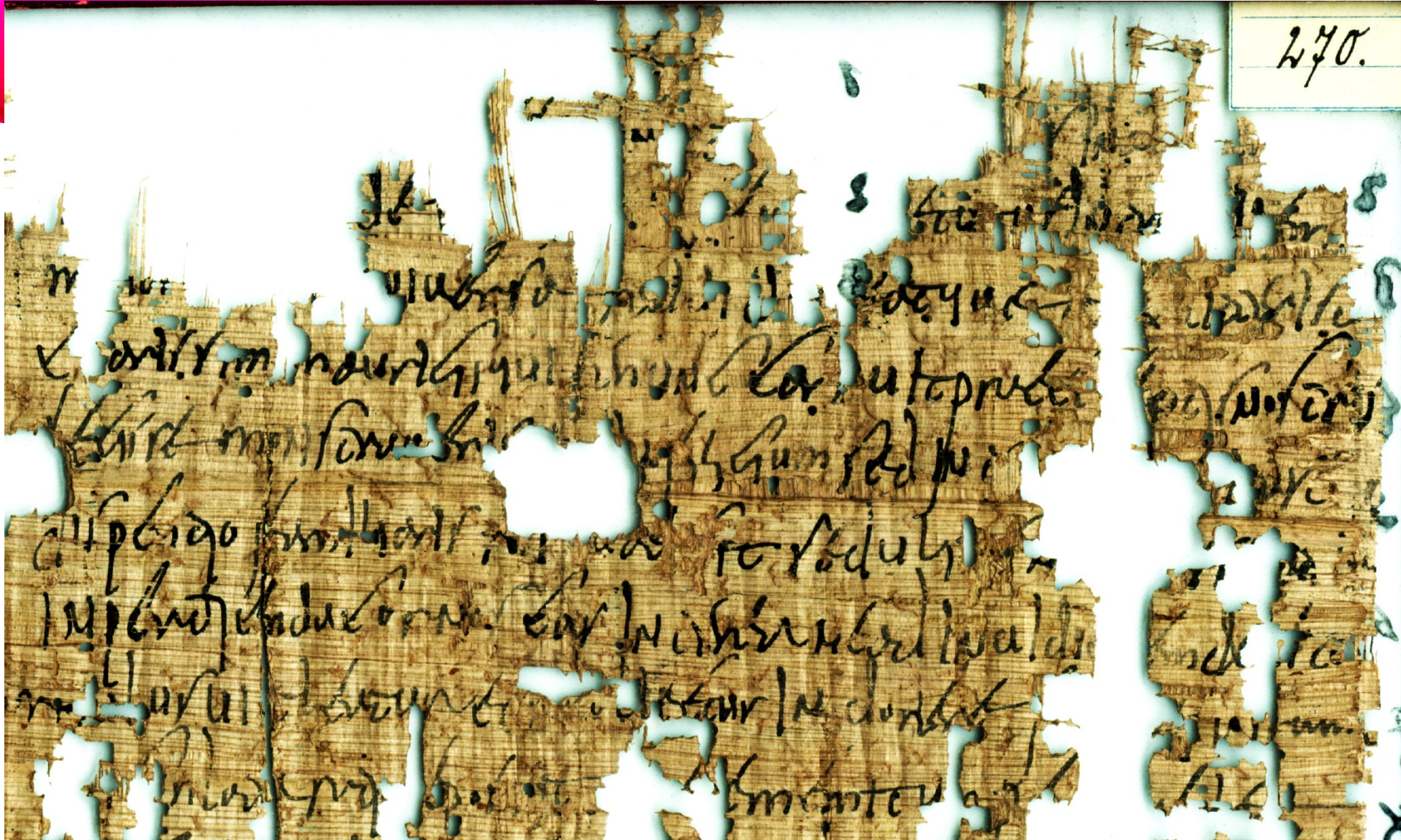
|¹ [Domino suo] **Delfini[o]** |² Vitalis.

|³ [Cum in omni]bus bonis benignitas tua sit praedita |⁴ [tum etiam s]ch[o]las[tico]s
et maxim[e q]ui a me cul[to]re tuo |⁵ [honorificentiae tuae tr]aduntur [quod] hones[te]
r]espiciere |⁶ [uelit non dubito, d]omine p[raedi]cabilis. [Q]uapropter |⁷ [**Theofanen**
oriundum] **ex ciui[tate] Hermu[po]litanoru[m]** |⁸ **prouinciae Thebaido]**s, qu[i ex
sugg]estio[ne do]mini m[ei |⁹ fratris nostri Philippi] **usq[ue ad of]ficium [domi]ni**
me[i |¹⁰ Dyscoli uexationem itineris sine ratio]ne q[uo]dammodo sust[inere |¹¹
uidetur - - -]



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- These forms were probably originally conceived and written within the Imperial chanceries, where Latin was extensively known and read
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- In the archives of the province of Thebaid's chief office there must have been **a prototype for recommendation letters**, ready to be copied whenever required



ChLA XII 523 (= P.Lips. inv. 270 B, AD 367–75: a **reprimand** to an unknown officer for **pocketing public money**)



P.Lips. inv. 2632A:
the **same text**,
discovered by A.
Bernini (Heidelberg)

.u .erī . . ad decessorem grauitatis tuae culpam reduceres, si sedula osi temporis c si .
 . . e . iocissēs, ut eum tertia decima indictione inuenia . . . e essa praeter re ad al
 contendis i e . guarid . sit hu . a lico . . ti . ti deceat a pacti cassesum
 inpoteri . . s quae a . e . s in al d reprehend de conexum breuem sectatus intra diem I . .
 Kalendas Maias . . . , nisi uniuersa reddideris atque ex litteris publicis uiri clarissimi Mauricii,
 qui te nunc caruit, praeceptis nostris satisfecisse monstraueris. non in officium sed in te seue-
 ritas castiget, ut dispendio familiaris rei quae sit sedulitas necessitatibus publicis impertienda
 cognoscas. interea, ne ad inuidiam debitoris cumulus uideatur esse collectus, in doriere f . . e .
 iō . . am oī . e . i collata satis a te possit t . . . e . em emi tuo pe . . eale.

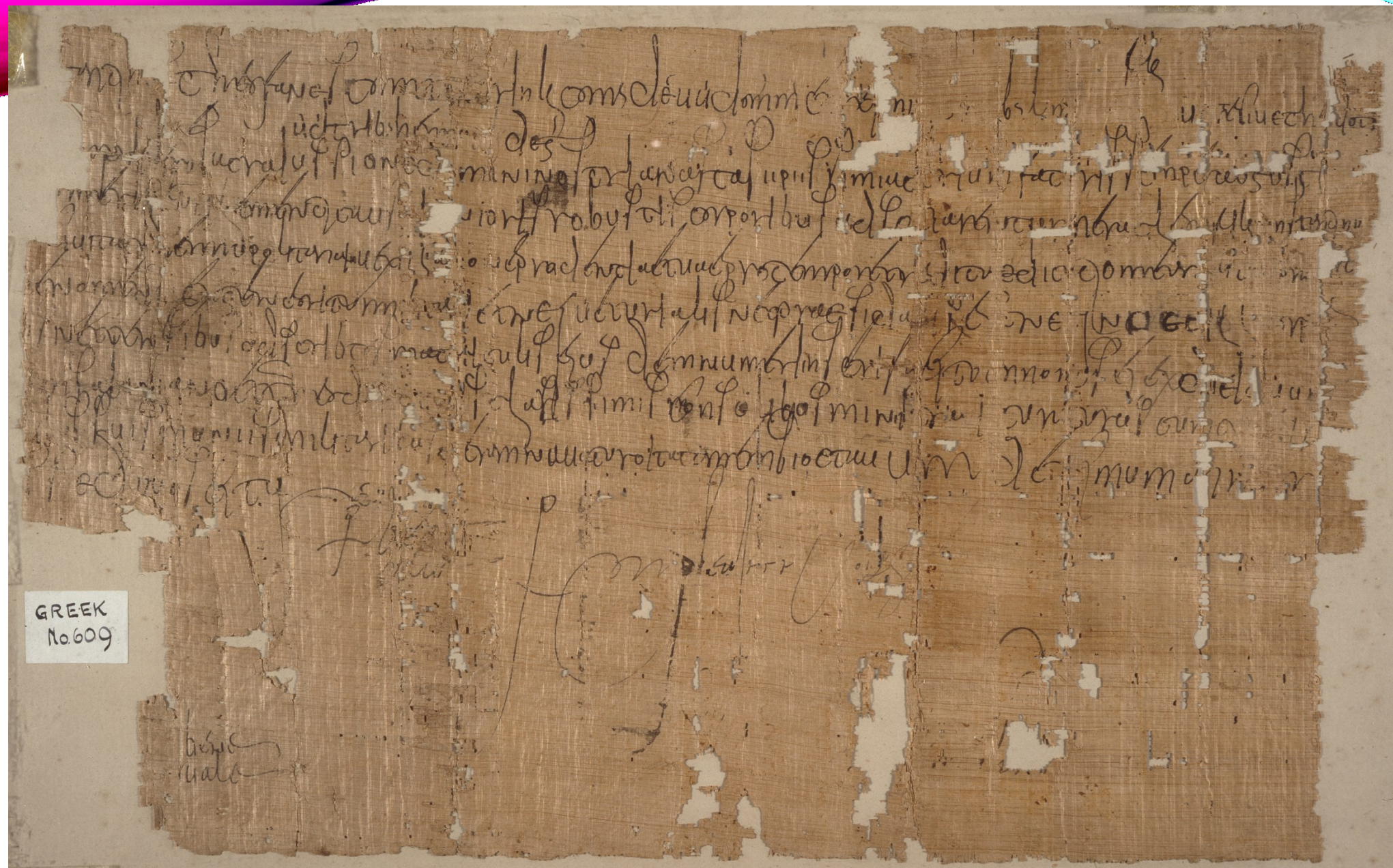
uel praeter i- uel praeterit- uel praeterea || *uel al . . ç uel al . . s uel al . . x* || *uel hī . . a* || *fortasse -e publico* || *çasseş*
. `u`m Inv. 2632 A 5 cas,se[.] Inv. 270 B 5 || *post diem, uel III uel IV uel IX* || *post Maias, fortasse es uel est* ||
reddideris Inv. 270 B 7 redditeris Inv. 2632 A 7 || *publicis Inv. 2632 A 8 nihil Inv. 270 B 7* || *nunc Inv. 270 B 8 nonc*
Inv. 2632 A 8 || *carruit Inv. 270 B 8 Inv. 2632 A 8* || *monstraueris Inv. 270 B 9 manstrauerris Inv. 2632 A 9* || *dis-*
pentio Inv. 270 B 10 Inv. 2632 A 10 || *inpertienda Inv. 270 B 11 Inv. 2632 A 11* || *inuidiam Inv. 2632 A 12 inuidiem*
Inv. 270 B 11 || *cumulus Inv. 270 B 11–12 comolos Inv. 2632 A 12* || *uideatur Inv. 2632 A 12 uitheatur Inv. 270 B*
12 || *doriere fortasse δωρεά interpretandum* || *conlata Inv. 270 B 13* || *fortasse tuo opere*

In both cases we
 do not know the
 name of the
 reprimanded
 officer, but the
 two texts

**contribute to each
 other's
 reconstruction**

A. **Bernini**, *Due bozze di una reprimenda in lingua latina a un funzionario: P.Lips. inv. 270 b e inv. 2632 a*, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 218 (2021) 265–281

P.Ryl. IV 609
(AD 505).
Epistula
probatoria

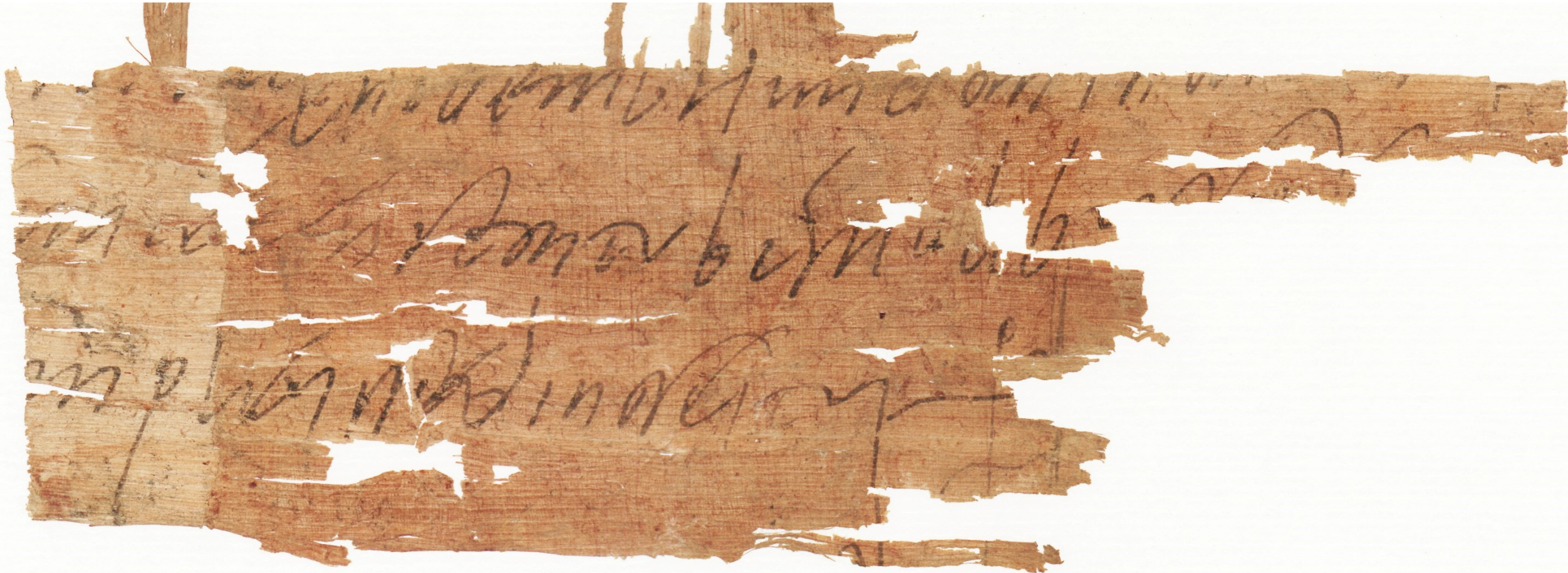


P.RYL. IV 609 (AD 505)

|¹ [Fl(auius) Cons]tātinus Theofanes com(es) et uir inl(ustris) com(es) deuu(otissimorum) domm(esticorum) et rei mil(itaris) Th[e]b(aici) lim(itis) 'Fl(auius)' Ver't'e siue Theodoti[o] |² u(iro) d(euotissimo) trib(unō) Hermupoli deg(enti).

|³ [Cum] opdulero sacra iussione domini nostri Anastasii piissimi ac triumfatoris semper Augusti |⁴ [e qua n]umeris supplementi causa i[u]niores robustis corporibus adsociarentur, **Heracleon fili(um) Constantinii** |⁵ [ortum e] ciuitati Hermupolitana 'in' **uexillatione** prudentiae tuae pro tempore credita **edictio mea militare prae[cip]it**, |⁶ [**eiusq]ue nomen** si ex gen<t>e oritur militari et neque curialis nec praesid<i>alis est nec inuecill[o c]orpore n[ec] |⁷ [inualid]us nec censibus adscribtos **matriculis eiusdem numeri inseri facito**, **annonas ei** ex die Iduum |⁸ [. . .]um Sabiniano et Theodoro uiris clarissimis consulibus **ministrari curaturus** cum ceteris [con-|⁹-tuberna]libus suis muniis militaribus **o[p]eram nauaturo** ita tamem si octauum decimum annum |¹⁰ [compleui]sse dinoscitur.

P.Vindob. inv. L **169** (V–VI AD) contains a small portion of a text **identical** to that in the Rylands papyrus



The P.Ryl.:

annonas ei ex **die Iduum**
|⁸ [.] **um Sabiniano et Theodoro** uiris clarissimis consulibus ministrari curaturus **cum ceteris** [con-]
|⁹ [**-tuberna**] **libus suis** muniis militaribus o[p]eram nauaturo ita tamem si octauum decimum annum
|¹⁰ [**compleui**] **sse dinoscitur.**

The P.Vindob.:

→ 1 — — — — —
2] III Kal(endarum) Nouembrium domino nostr[o] Fl(auius) [
3] cum ceteris contubernalibus suis [
] compleuisse dinoscitur †
— — — — —

— — — — —
→ 1]III Kal(endarum) Nouembrium domino nōstr[o] Fl(auiο) [
2] cū ceteris contubernalibus suis [
3] compleuisse dinoscitur †
— — — — —

Di séguito un tentativo di ricostruzione testuale basato sul testo dell'identico P.Ryl. IV 609. La distribuzione delle lettere nei rigi è naturalmente congetturale ed exempli gratia:

— — — — —
[matriculis eiusdem numeri]
→ ¹ [facito annonas ex die - - -]III Kal(endarum) Nouembrium domino nōstr[o] Fl(auiο) [±28 co(n)s(ulibu)s]
² [ministrari curaturus] cū ceteris contubernalibus suis [muniis militaribus operam nauaturo ita tamen si]
³ [octauum decimū annū] compleuisse dinoscitur †
— — — — —

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- What is interesting in these acts of copying is that the scribes are copying in a language **they don't speak, and imperfectly master: Latin**

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- What is interesting in these acts of copying is that the scribes are copying in a language they don't speak, and imperfectly master: Latin
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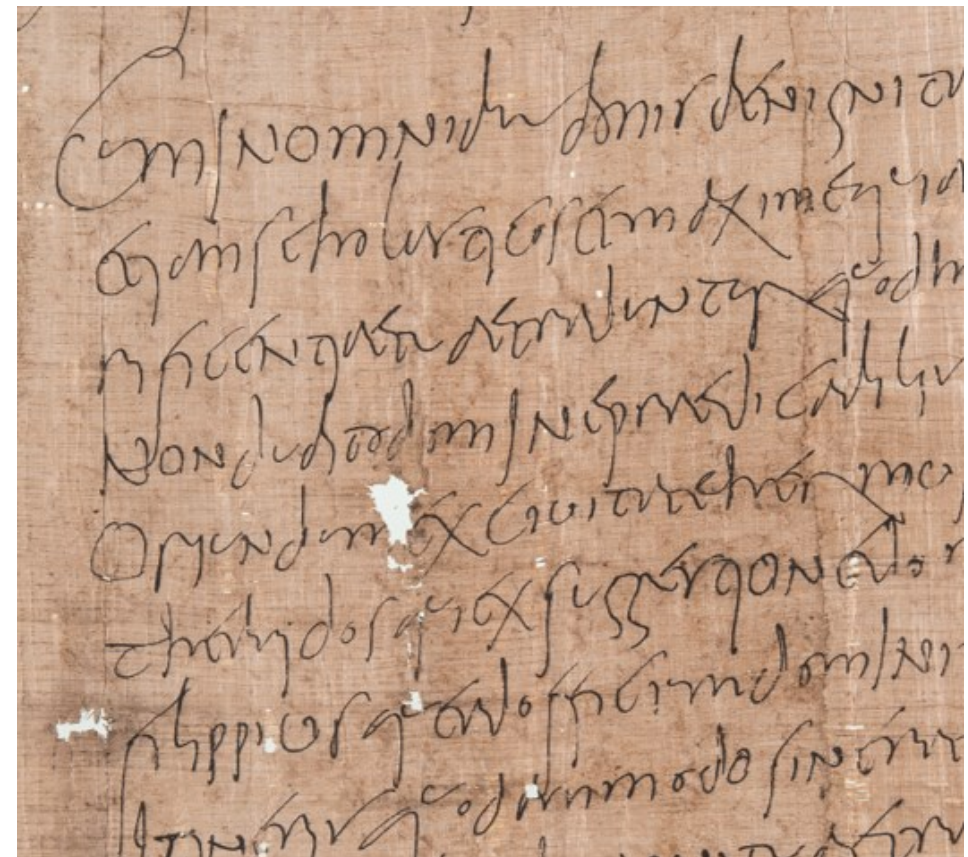
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- **Palme**, B. (1999) 'Die **officia der Statthalter in der Spätantike**: Forschungsstand und Perspektiven', *Antiquité Tardive* 7: 85–133: *cornicularii, adiutores (principis) or primiscrinarii, commentarienses, ab actis, a libellis, cura epistularum* are all **ranks who must be literate** (also) in **Latin**



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CHLA XVII 657 (AD 436-50)

[- - -] |¹ ab iniquis eorum detentatoribus s[i]b[i] restitui. |² Insup[e]r etiam precatur |³ empti[on]ale instrumentum, quod per ui[m a]c necessitatem legibus inimicam |⁴ uili p[r]etio dato super possessionib[u]s ad se pertinentibus conf[ectum sit], |⁵ null[um] sibi praeiudicium gen[er]are |⁶ sed e[xiguo p]retio quod re uera da[tum] est cum legitimis usuris refuso |⁷ [eas se cum d]ebitis fruc[tibus re]cuperare. |⁸ [Denique] // |⁹ [idem petitor de]siderat solacia ex militia sua debita |¹⁰ [ab Isidoro praefato u]surpatore sib[i] restitui. |¹¹ [. carissi]me ac iucundissime, |¹² [laudabilis itaque e]xper[i]entia tua, |¹³ [si preci illi uerita]s inest |¹⁴ [et si res ad iurisd]ictionem suam pertineret, |¹⁵ [praefatum Isidorum a]d solutionem debiti uix tandem sine ulla uana dilatione |¹⁶ [cum petitore celebrandam iu]xta legum tenorem **constringi**, // |¹⁷ **iniquos** uero **detentatores** mancipiorum ad eum pertinentium |¹⁸ portionem ipsi debitam **resarcire**, |¹⁹ nec **ullum precatorem** ex instrumento emptionali |²⁰ pro memorata narratione per uim confecto praeiudicium **pati**, |²¹ sed hoc uiribus uacuato |²² possessiones ad ipsum pertinentes cum debitis fructibus |²³ minimo pretio quod re uera accepisse probatur |²⁴ cum legitimis usuris reddito ab iniquis detentatoribus // |²⁵ eum **recipere praecipiat**, |²⁶ **praefato scilicet Isidor[o]** |²⁷ solacia siue emolumenta ex militia supr[a dicta petitori debita] |²⁸ quae perperam in suum lucrum dicitur [uertisse] |²⁹ **restituere compellendo**. |³⁰ Ita tamen ut personae ad ius spectabilitat[i]s tuae pertinentes] |³¹ cessante militari apparitionis suae a[u]xili[o] |³² in prouinciali iud[icio - - -]

The first of the two **imperial rescripts** from the famous Leiden papyrus

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*iuidem, praeces, scribto, necuit,
parentium, insinuendum, gaudear,
Blemniorum, uestia, obtulitis, aduxi,
Dionysada, praedocisses, redditeris,
nonc, carruit, manstrauerris,
dispentio, inpertienda, comolos,
uitheatur, iuidiem, senox, Aprelis,
prepositis, prebere, debotis, infra,
inuecillo, tamem*

- Documents copied in **provincial** chanceries are **riddled with mistakes**
- Mostly **orthographical**

HOW **GOOD** ARE THESE COPIES?

- *praeditus **in** omn**ibus** bon**is*** (*in omnes bonos or omnibus bonis!*)
- *iuro quod putavi*
- *solit**i** contemplatione* (*solita!*)
- *castig**et in te*** (*te castigabit!*)
- *iuxta annu**o** consuetudine**e*** (*annuam consuetudinem!*)
- *cum opduler**o** sacr**a** iussione**e*** (*cum obtulerim sacram iussionem!*)
- Documents copied in provincial chanceries are riddled with mistakes
- Mostly orthographical
- Some **syntactical** and **morphological oddities**



WHAT IS THE **MEANING** OF THESE MISTAKES?



SOME POINTS (?)

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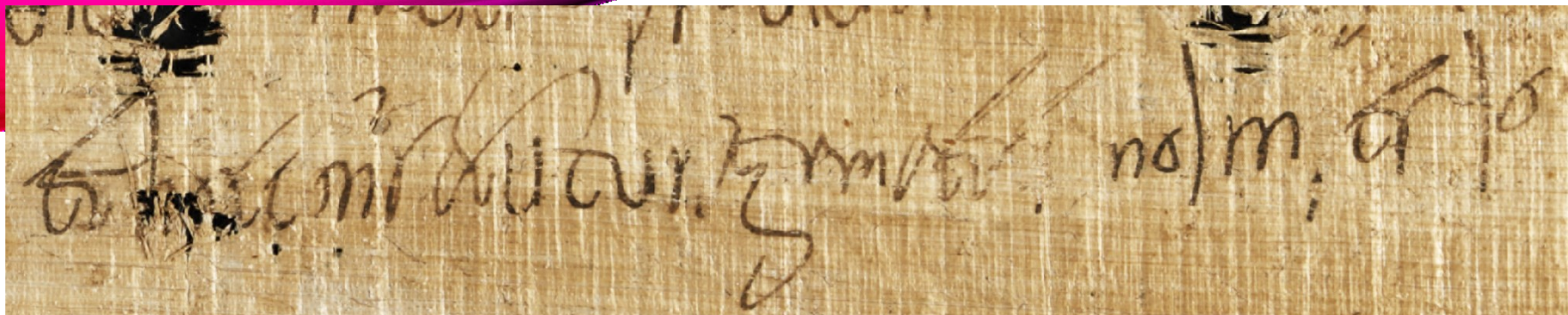
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- Forms like *iuxta annuo consuetudine* or *cum opdulero sacra iussione* seem rather the result of someone **mistakenly applying the few rules he knows**, to compose **a text of his own head**



AN OPEN PAPER

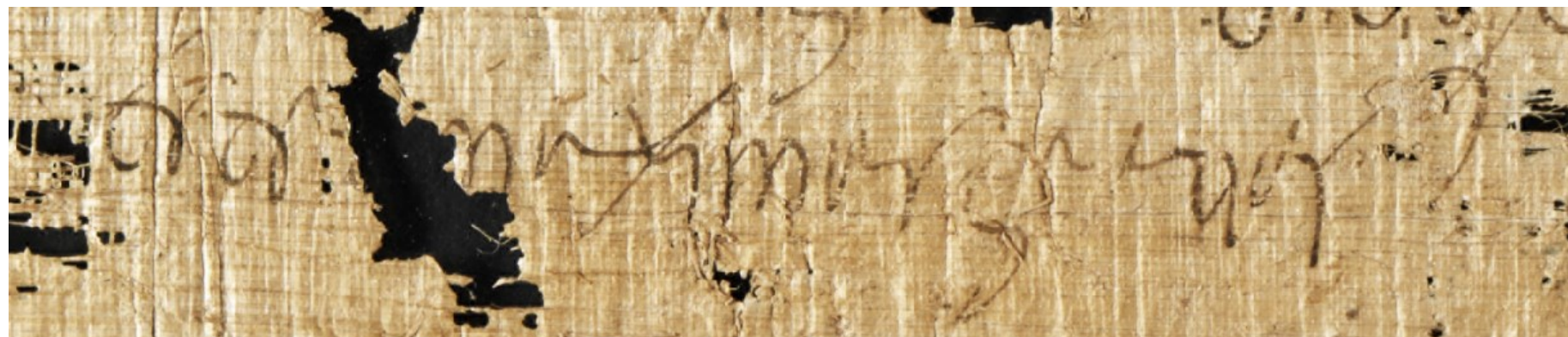
- Were the scribes ineffective in checking their own forms, maybe relying too much on their memory, therefore producing imperfect copies through their own imperfect knowledge of Latin grammar?
- Were they working under dictation, therefore adding their own phonetic slips to the mistakes of the dictating colleagues?
- Any further suggestion is welcome!



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... ET HOC CONSEUTUS **AGAM** AETERNO IMPERIO
VESTRO **MAXIMAS GRATIAS**



Thanks for attending this paper!