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A 3rd-Century *manumissio inter amicos*

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Arsinoites?
☞ P.B.U.G. inv. 513

9.6 (h) × 11 (w)

262/264/266

- §1 According to collection documentation, the papyrus edited here was purchased in 1928 from an unknown dealer in Medinet el-Faiyum by Berlin Professor Carl Schmidt.¹
- §2 A brown papyrus fragment, it contains ten incomplete lines of text of various degrees of preservation. The text runs along the fibers and the verso is blank. What survives is the Greek part of a manumission among friends (*manumissio inter amicos*), which might have been accompanied by a Latin counterpart placed just before the Greek text. The hand is unbalanced, employing a wide range of letter forms, some of which are characteristic: large theta in line 4, an almost Byzantine cursive kappa in line 5, elongated left stroke of the mu and lambda.
- §3 At least five other manumissions *inter amicos* have survived among Egyptian documents: the unpublished P.Vindob. L 98 from Philadelphia, presumably dated somewhere between the second half of the 1st c. and the beginning of 2nd c. CE;² ☞ M.Chr. 362 = FIRA 3 11, a Greek & Latin wooden diptych dated to 221; ☞ P.Lips. 2 151, a Greek papyrus dated 246/247; ☞ P.Oxy. 9 1205, a Greek papyrus dated to 291; P.Mich. inv. 5688c, published in ☞ Stornaiuolo 2019, a bilingual Latin & Greek papyrus, dated to 212–250. Furthermore, a recently published papyrus attests the payment of the *vicesima* for a manumission *inter amicos* from the year 184 (☞ P.Oxy. 86 5556).
- §4 Although based on a pattern similar to other manumissions of this type, this document stands out because the freedman was freed *cum peculio*, that is with a piece of property bestowed by his ex-master and possibly included in the price paid by the redeemer. Noteworthy is the name Amesysos, a rare and unusual Egyptian name associated with a feast for the birthday of Isis; see comm. to line 8, which is the key for its restoration also in line 3 of the text.
- §5 The proposed dates of the document are based on the reference to the consulate of Gallienus as *consul prior* in combination with the time of his sole reign over the empire. The year 261 is excluded as from the fall of 260 until at least the fall of 261 Egypt recognized the usurpers Macrianus and Quietus,³ who figure in documents between 17 September 260⁴ (the earliest) and 15 October 261 (the latest);⁵ for 262 we possess only indirect evidence of the end of the hostilities and the final defeat of the pro-Macriani supporters (who included another alleged rebel, prefect L. Mussius Aemilianus), in the letter of Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, dated to summer 262.⁶
- §6 A difficulty emerges with the restoration of Gallienus’ titles in line 7, which could affect the date of the text. The papyrus measures around 9.6 cm in preserved width, comprising seventeen characters in line 7. If we restore Gallienus’ titulature with the inclusion of the title Περσικοῦ μεγίστου, first attested in September 266, and the name of the month, which surely was at the end of the line, then the lost

¹ ☞ Gundel 1968: 5.

² ☞ Pedone 2019: 25–26.

³ The events in Egypt seen through the numismatic evidence are discussed and re-examined by ☞ Legutko (2002).

⁴ ☞ P.Oxy. 49 3476.

⁵ ☞ P.Oxy. 67 4595.

⁶ ☞ Legutko (2002):148. See also, ☞ John, Hartmann, Gerhardt 2008: 807.

characters skyrocket to approximately seventy-six.⁷ This would require a sheet about 40–42 cm wide, a rather extraordinary situation. By contrast, the exclusion of Περσικοῦ μεγίστου would produce a sheet of around 31–33 cm wide, a width within the norm for papyrus sheet dimensions. Therefore, it appears that the date could be narrowed down even more by setting September 266 as a terminus ante quem for our document.

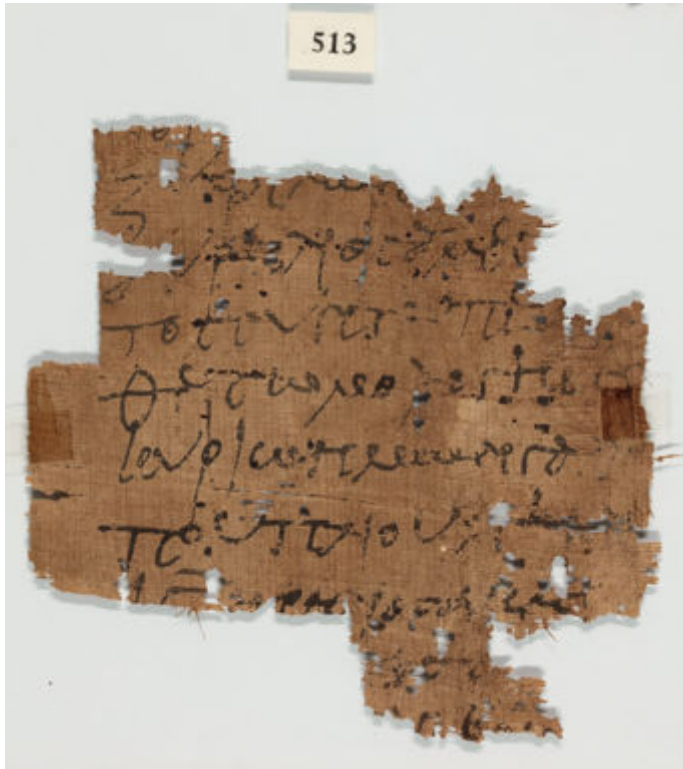


Fig. 1. P.B.U.G. inv. 513 recto.

Γ

αι [-ca.?- μετα]-

ξὺ φίλων [ἤλευθέρωσεν καὶ -ca.?-]

Αὐρήλιος Ἀμέσ[υσος -ca.?-]

τος σὺν τῷ πεκ[ουλίῳ -ca.?- καὶ ἐπερωτη]-

5 θεὶς ὁμολόγησεν [-ca.?- τῇ -ca.?-]

κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Γαλλι[ηνῶ Σεβαστῶ τὸ -1-2- καὶ -ca.?- ὑπάτοις (ἔτους) -1-2-
Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος]

Πουπλίου Λικιν[νίου Γαλλιηνοῦ Γερμανικοῦ μεγίστου Εὐσεβοῦς Εὐτυχοῦς
Σεβαστοῦ -ca.?-]

ιγ (m2) Αὐρήλιος Ἀμέσ[υσος -ca.?-]

[-ca.9-]ησε [-ca.?-]

⁷ We presume that the titles are not abbreviated, which could decrease the number of characters, as is the case in all other examples we have with Gallienus.

10 (m3?) [-ca.9-] . π [-ca.?-]
 - - - - -

- §7 1–2 μεταξὺ φίλων is a direct translation of *inter amicos*. This was one of several methods Romans used to free their slaves, but not all of them produced the same legal effects for the emancipated person. Three formal manumissions provided a freedman with both freedom and Roman citizenship (if performed according to the provisions of the *leges Aelia Sentia* and *Fufia Caninia*): *manumissio testamentaria*, by which a testator could grant freedom to their slaves upon their death (e.g. ☞ BGU 1 326 = M.Chr. 316); *manumissio vindicta*, a fictitious *legis actiones* trial;⁸ and *manumissio censu*, performed by the inscription on the list of citizens (unattested in Egypt).
- §8 An indirect method of freeing slaves was *manumissio fideicommissaria* (☞ P.Hamb. 1 72 and ☞ FIRA 3² 47 = CPL 221⁹), included in a will as an obligation imposed on the heirs, who were required to free the enslaved through one of the above *inter vivos manumissiones*. For the latest work on testamentary manumissions in papyri, see ☞ Colella 2022. In his *Institutes*, Gaius refers to *manumissio inter amicos* as the third type of *inter vivos* manumissions (G. 1.44). A person freed *inter amicos* did not obtain citizenship but from 17 BCE (*Lex Iunia*) could obtain the same rights as colonial Latins had enjoyed, now referred to as a Junian Latin. The same status could also be granted to slaves who were enfranchised in a formal ceremony before they completed thirty years of age, provided that there was proof of reasonable motive (*iusta causa*), and the manumission was performed before a special council (G. 1.18).
- §9 Roman law manumissions were not the only ones attested in papyri. Before 212 CE, peregrine manumissions are attested as testamentary dispositions in local wills or as *mortis causa* agreements (e.g. P.Oxy. 3 634 descr. = ☞ Benaissa (2020): 230–235: 126; ☞ P. Oxy. 3 494 = M.Chr. 305 = Sel.Pap. 1 84 = Jur.Pap. 24: 165; ☞ SB 22 15345: 116), and as deeds performed *inter vivos* in the office of the agoranomos (see reference to μνήμονι at the end of ☞ P.Lond. 2 299 = M.Chr. 204: 128) or by a herald (☞ P.Strasb. 3 135 = SB V 8017: 198–211). More examples can be found in: ☞ Straus (2020). These manumissions were recognized by Roman law as valid for peregrines (Fr. Dosith. 12). It is beyond any doubt that they granted freedom and the civic status of their manumittors (D. 50.1.6.3). See ☞ Volterra 1956.
- §10 As informal manumission was based on the will of the manumittor, however, one of these local methods, if used by a Roman, should grant a manumitted slave his freedom and the status of Junian Latin. Yet, the only informal Roman manumission found in the sources is *manumissio inter amicos* (and later on *per epistulam*). See ☞ Sirks 1983: 222–223 and 224.
- §11 Junian Latins could not make a will, inherit, or become a guardian (G. 1.23). Their property was inherited by their patron *iure peculii*, for which see ☞ Sirks 1983: 223. Their status could, however, be improved through the fulfillment of certain criteria, such as marrying another Latin or a Roman and having a child who would survive up to the age of one year, or having enough property, thereby opening the doors to Roman citizenship (G. 1.28–34). One of the tablets from Herculaneum consists of *anniculi probatio* for Junian Latins, T.Herc. 89 = FIRA 3² 5 bis b = TH² 89: 69, ☞ Pedone 2019: 26.
- §12 Since the status of Junian Latins was lower than that of regular freedmen, the growth of popularity of *manumissio inter amicos* after the universal grant in 212 CE is striking: most published enfranchise-
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- 8 ☞ P.Mich. 7 462 = CPL 171 = FIRA III 10 bis, l. 3 = ☞ van Minnen, Worp 2009: 19: 2nd-century receipt for payment of *vicesima* resulting from *manumissio vindicta*; ☞ van Minnen, Worp 2009: similar receipt dated to late 2nd or 3rd c., but with no explicit mention of the *manumissio vindicta*; ☞ P. Diog. 7 (and a copy ☞ P. Diog. 6): the mention of *tabulae* resulting from *manumissio vindicta* in the epikrisis documents. See ☞ Dolganov 2022.
- 9 In the literature, it has been, however, suggested that Kronion's manumission might have been a direct one. See the summary of the discussion in ☞ Strobel 2014: 102–103.

ments of this type, including the present one, were made after 212 (see the list above). It is tempting to interpret this growth as a result of the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, often presented as a “universal” grant of citizenship. Yet, even though Caracalla granted citizenship to various groups of peregrines, the Junian Latins remained a separate status until 531 when Justinian abolished it (C. 7.6.1).

- §13 One could argue that the popularity of this type of manumission was due to the attempt to avoid paying the tax on enfranchisement. Still, it appears that such manumissions were also subject to the 5% tax, the *vicesima* (cf. ⚡ P.Oxy. 86 5556, from 184), the same as for formal manumissions. And even if the evidence is too meager to be certain that the tax was paid by persons freed among friends, the *vicesima* was abandoned sometime in the mid-third century (the last attested *vicesima* paid for inheritance is dated to 250, ⚡ P. Oxy. 51 3609, ⚡ van Minnen, Worp 2009: 22 n. 21).
- §14 It seems that the likeliest explanation is that manumission among friends was more convenient than the formal methods, since it could be performed at any moment and did not require the presence of an official. Changing the status to Roman was not impossible. And, finally some patrons might have wanted their freedmen to remain Latins so they could inherit from their ex-slaves.
- §15 [ἡλεύθερωσεν καὶ etc.: the only secure restoration as this is the standard verb used in manumissions. It could be followed by ἐλεύθερον/ἐλευθέραν εἶναι ἐκέλευσεν¹⁰ or ἀπέλυσεν.¹¹ The verb ὁμολόγησεν in line 5 justifies the restoration of the third person singular form here. Another manumission *inter amicos* styled in the third person is ⚡ P. Lips. 2 151. 8–9, while the Greek part in ⚡ M. Chr. 362 is written in the first person by the manumittor (in ⚡ P.Oxy. 9 1205 verbs are not preserved, but the text is reconstructed as phrased in the first-person plural, even though οἰκογενῆ δούλην ἐξ[υ]τῶν in l. 3 rather suggests the objective style).
- §16 Ἄμέσ[υ]σος: cf. l. 8. The name (TM Nam 1949) is connected with the feast for the birthday of Isis. See ⚡ Bonneau 1974; ⚡ Bonneau 1985; ⚡ Meeks (1974); ⚡ Perpillon-Thomas (1993): 66–70; ⚡ Frankfurter (1998): 61.
- §17 The date of the papyrus in the consulship of Gallienus allows for a possible identification of the individual involved in the manumission. The earliest attestation of the name is found a century earlier in ⚡ SB 5 7515 col. 31.16 and 18 (155): Ἀμέσυσος Ἀμεσύσου; Παῆσις καὶ Ἀμέσυσος. The next attestations are in the 3rd c. A certain Amesysos is known from two texts from the archive of Heroninos: ⚡ P.Lond. 3 1122b = P.Flor. 2 187a.5 (249–268) Ἀμεσύσῳ τῷ αδιτηλάτῃ (l. βαδιστηλάτῃ), and ⚡ P.Eirene 4 14.8–9 (23 Aug. 257) τὰς ἀλωνίας | Ἀμεσύσου. ⚡ P.IFAO. 2 36.2, another 3rd-century papyrus, furnishes an additional example together with the nomen: παρὰ Αὐρηλ[ί]ου Ἀμεσύσου, as in our text. Given that the name is rare and attested in the Arsinoite nome predominantly,¹² it would be tempting to assume a connection with the nome, although the evidence is insufficient.¹³
- §18 The fragmentary nature of the papyrus complicates the interpretation of the exact role of Aurelius Amesysos in the manumission. The standard pattern recurring in other preserved manumissions is the following: They begin with the identification of the manumittor in the nominative together with his/her description, after which the slave to be freed is given in the accusative, followed by formulaic verbs either in the first or third person expressing the act of manumission, ἡλευθήρωσα or ἡλευθήρωσεν

10 Cf. ⚡ P.Lips. 2 151.5–6: μεταξὺ [φ]ίλων ἡλευθήρωσεν ἐλευθέραν τε εἶναι ἐκέλευσεν (= *inter ami[c]os manumisit liberamque esse ius[si]t*) of ⚡ M.Chr. 362.5–7).

11 Cf. ⚡ P.Oxy. 9 1205.5–6: ἡλευθε[ρ]ώσαμεν καὶ ἀπελύσαμεν (however, based on a reconstruction).

12 With the possible exception of the name Ἀμέσυστος (perhaps another variant of the name) appearing in ⚡ P.Oxy. 1 92.3 from 336 (a rather late text for our purposes), and the fragmentary Ἀμεσυσ... in ⚡ P.Athen. 55.25 (of unknown provenance), which could be read as Ἀμεσύσῳ (upon close inspection of the printed image).

13 A complete list of attestations (unchanged since its publication) can be found in ⚡ Armoni, Ch. and Kruse, T. (2002) : comm. to l. 1, p. 166.

ἐλευθέραν τε εἶναι ἐκέλευσεν/ἀπέλευσεν. The previously edited manumissions also contain the information that the manumittor was paid a price for their slave's freedom, καὶ ἔσχεν ὑπὲρ λύτρων, followed by the redeptor's name in the genitive with the preposition παρά. In [P.Lips. 2 151.8–9](#) and [M.Chr. 362.10–11](#) and 22–24, the redeptor occurs once again as the subject of a new sentence stating that he donated the price paid for the enfranchisement to the freed person, which meant that he had no claim regarding it. In [P.Lips. 2 151](#), the sentence is concluded with the stipulatory clause: ἐπερωτήσεώ[ς] τε γενομένη[ς ὁμολ]όγησε[ν]. This pattern appears to fit also our text.

- §19 As the first signator, in ll. 8–9 just after the end of the dating formula, Aurelius Amesysos should presumably be the manumittor and not the redeptor, as in [Stornaiuolo 2019](#) or [P. Lips. 2 151.9–11](#). In [M.Chr. 362.24–25](#), the subscription was written by a third party on behalf of the illiterate whose identity is unclear, as it says ὑπ(ἐρ) αὐτ(οῦ) μὴ εἰδό(τος) γρά(μματα). It could constitute a reference to either the manumitting party or the redeptor described immediately before this. The latter is more likely as the *scriptura exterior* on page 1 (not included in DDbDP) contains the subscriptions of the manumittor, redeptor and the witnesses to the manumission (see: [De Ricci 1904](#)). The first legible subscription, as given by the editor, is Αὐρ[- ca.?] | [ca.?] ἐσφ[ca.?]; the second: οσαμμονιω[] | ἐσφραγισα; then follow the subscriptions of three witnesses: Aurelius Silvanus, son of [A?]mphion; a certain Aurelius Eudaimon(?), son of(?) ...ammon, and M. Aurelius NN. We therefore assume that the second legible subscription belonged to the manumittor – [Μᾶρκος Αὐρήλιος Ἀμμωνίω[ν] | ἐσφράγισα, so the one preceding it must have been of the redeptor, Αὐρ[ήλιος Ἀλλῆς Ἰναρω]οῦτος | ἐσφ[ράγισα]. The redeptor's subscription and seal were introduced first.



Fig. 2. The Amherst Diptychon (= M.Chr. 362), page 1. Latin text & subscriptions in Greek (PSBA 26, Plate II pp. 148–149).

- §20 The sentence starting with the name of Aurelius Amesysos is followed by the expression σὺν τῷ περ[ουλίῳ, which we rather expect to be given to the freed person by their master (see [commentary to I. 4](#)). We could, however, imagine that the redeptor both paid the price for the slave's freedom and for his peculium, which he could have subsequently donated to the slave.
- §21 Another possible interpretation is that Aurelius Amesysos was the manumittor. The sentence starting in line 3 would have expressed the donation of peculium, although the repetition of the name would be extraordinary. Based on the above, we assume that the first case holds true, whereby Aurelius Amesysos was the redeptor, and the sentence starting in line 3 most likely referred to the donation of the sum for manumission along with the granting of the entire peculium to the freedman.

- §22 In any event, it is clear that Aurelius Amesysos is not the freedman both due to his nomen Aurelius and on the grounds of syntax: in other manumissions a slave is the direct object within the sentence, which also corresponds with the logic of enfranchisement. Therefore, the name of the individual being freed is unfortunately lost together with any hints as to his/her identity. All other manumissions among friends concern slave women; in [P. Oxy. 9 1205](#), a woman was freed with her young children, born at their patron's house, for which see [Pedone 2019](#): 29–31. This, however, cannot be taken as a suggestion that this type of manumission was used exclusively for women, as the data set is too small.
- §23 4 σὺν τῷ πεκουλίῳ: perhaps followed by παντί, as in [PSI 9 1040](#).18–19 (3rd c., Oxyrhynchos) σὺν πεκουλίῳ | παντί, although the inclusion of the article with πεκουλίῳ reduces the likelihood that παντί was written; cf. also [BGU 1 96](#).14 (second half of the 3rd c., Arsinoites) παντὸς τοῦ πεκου[λί]ου αὐτοῦ. The expression with πᾶν is not always necessary: [P.Cair.Masp. 3 67312](#).101 (567, Antinoopolis) μετὰ το(ῦ) πεκουλί(ο) αὐτῶν; [P.Kell. 1 48](#).5–6 (355, Kellis) μετὰ κα[ὶ] τοῦ | πεκουλίου σου. If our reconstruction is correct, it conforms to the idea that peculium was donated to a slave upon their manumission. Peculium was the separate property that a slave was granted by his master for the slave's free use and disposal. The master, however, had full liberty to make changes or take it back at any moment (D. 15.1.4 pr.: Pomp.) It could consist of all types of objects, such as land, money, other slaves or claims (D. 15.1.7.4: Ulp.). See [Roth \(2010\)](#). As mentioned earlier, the manumission *inter amicos* granted a freed person the status of Junian Latin, whose property was inherited by the patron at any rate, so the gift of peculium would have returned to the manumittor unless the Latin obtained Roman citizenship.
- §24 The mention of the peculium is what makes this text special compared to other enfranchisements among friends, as none of them mention any gift for the freed person. See [Pedone 2019](#): 31–41. Yet, it is not the only text in which a slave was provided with some financial reward. In the Latin will of Antonius Silvanus, the heirs are requested to pay the *vicesima* for the freed slave ([FIRA 3² 47](#).31 [132]), while in a Greek extract from a 3rd-century will, the testator requested his heir not only to manumit his slave with all her peculium, but also to give up his patronage rights ([PSI 9 1040](#).18–19 [3rd c.]). Another text, [P.Kell. 1 48](#) (355), contains a *manumissio per epistulam* in which the female slave is granted her peculium. In [P.Cair.Masp. 3 67312](#).99–104, the will of Flavius Theodoros, the testator ordered all his slaves to be freed together with the peculium and given six solidi.
- §25 5–7 [M.Chr. 362](#) (221), the aforesaid diptych from Hermopolis Magna containing a manumission *inter amicos*, has a Latin and a Greek part. The Greek one lacks any dating formulas, whereas the Latin text is more detailed in this regard, providing a good parallel for reconstructing our text. In comparison, the dating clauses run as follows:

vii Kal(endas) Augustas Grato et Seleuco co(n)s(ulibus) anno iiii Imp(eratoris) Caesaris Marcii Aureli Antonini Pii Felicis Aug(usti) mense Mesore die i.	τῇ day] κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Γαλλι[ηνῶ Σεβαστῶ τὸ # καὶ N ὑπάτοις ±? (ἔτους) #] Πουπλίου Λικιν[νίου Γερμανικοῦ μεγίστου Εὐσεβοῦς Εὐτυχοῦς Σεβαστοῦ month]] ιγ
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- §26 6 κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Γαλλι[ηνῶ Σεβαστῶ τὸ number καὶ name ὑπάτοις: For the Greek expression, cf. the more-or-less contemporary [P.Mich. XIV 675 = SB 16 12994](#).25 (241) τῇ πρὸ.....][κ]αλανδῶν Ἰουνίων τῷ κυρί(ῳ) ἡμῶν Γορδιανῶ Σεβαστῶ καὶ Ἀβιόλα ὑπά[τοι]ς. Gallienus' missing consulate, where he is listed as *consul prior*, could be ε', ε' or ζ' (5th, 6th or 7th) based on what we have argued

in the introduction, and accordingly, the *consul posterior* would be one of Gallienus' loyalists:¹⁴ (L.?) Mummius Faustianus (262)¹⁵, Saturninus (264)¹⁶ or Sabinillus (266).¹⁷

- §27 (ἔτους): the choice of (ἔτους) against (ἔτει) is purely conventional. The use of the dative of ἔτος in connection with a nearby consular formula is found written in full only in two papyri: ☞ **P.Oxy. 9 1205.14** (291) and ☞ **P.Ross.Georg. 2 26.6** (160, Arsinoites). For the bulk of other instances, the year is given with a symbol, which the editors generally transcribe with a genitive (ἔτους). There are cases where a dative is used in the consular formula and a genitive (written in full) for the year: ☞ **P.Oxy. 22 2348.45–46, 54–55** (224); ☞ **ChLA 11 486 B.21** (249, Antinoopolis); ☞ **P.Euphrates 13.1–2** (243, Beth Phuraia). Therefore, statistically, ἔτους appears to be more widespread.
- §28 **7** The imperial titulature of Gallienus in the years between 262 and 268 includes the title Germanicus maximus (Γερμανικὸς μέγιστος) for the entire period, and from September 266 on,¹⁸ the title Persicus maximus (Περσικὸς μέγιστος) is added to Germanicus.¹⁹
- §29 **8** Ἀμέσυ[σος]: The partial preservation of the name in this line forms the basis of its restoration in line 3. Only the left stroke of the upsilon is preserved, but it is clear from the preceding Ἀὐρήλιος that the upsilon is sling-shaped here and not curved.
- §30 **10**], π...[: Perhaps,], π...[

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¹⁵ ☞ **Hächler 2019**: 193.

¹⁶ ☞ **Hächler 2019**: 253.

¹⁷ ☞ **Hächler 2019**: 249.

¹⁸ ☞ **P.Coll. Youtie 2 68.36–38**.

¹⁹ For an overview of Gallienus' titles, see ☞ **Peachin 1990**: 74–84.

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