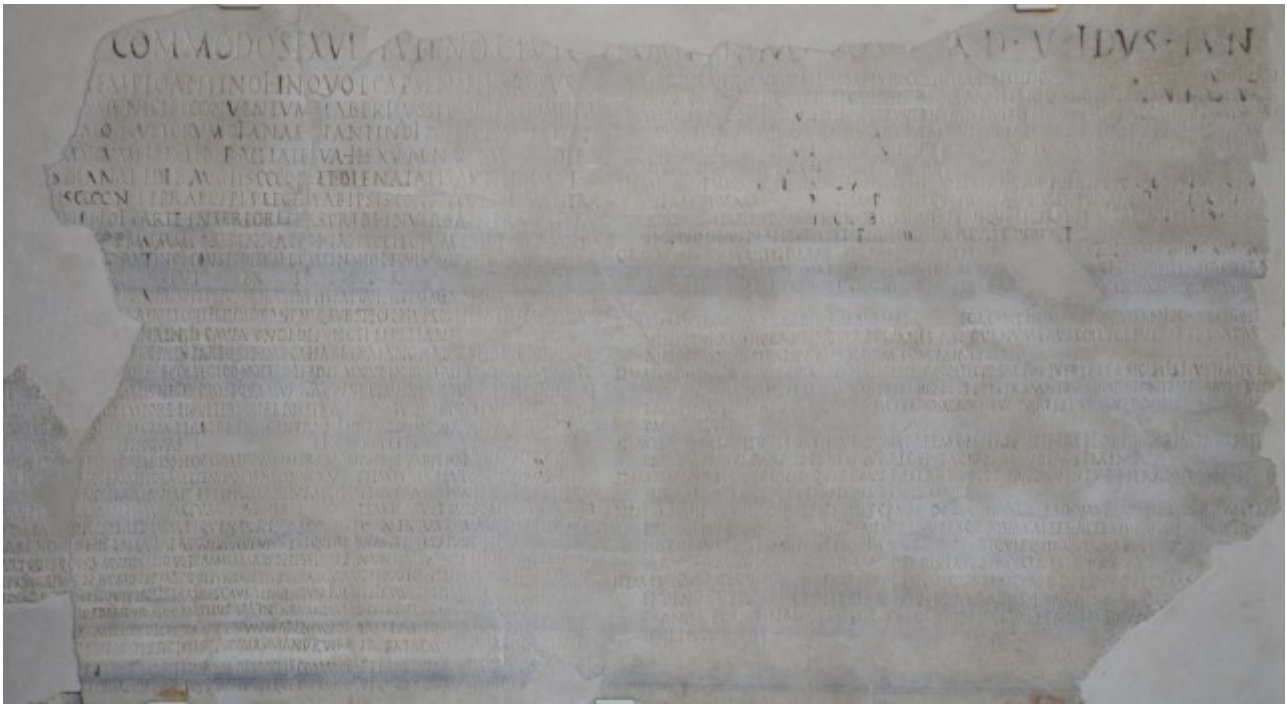


November 27 was the day when the *Natalis Antinoi*, the birthday of Antinous, was celebrated. Although the exact year of his birth is uncertain (c. AD 110-112), an inscription found in scores of fragments in Lanuvio (Italy) attests November 27 (V a.d. Kalendas Decembres) as his date of birth.



*The inscription of the collegium of Diana and Antinous in Lanuvium, 136 AD.*

The marble inscription ([CIL XIV 2112](#)) was discovered in 1816 in the ruins of the ancient city of Lanuvium located in Latium in the Alban Hills, a short distance from the Appian Way. Lanuvium was the birthplace of Antoninus Pius and Commodus and a concentration of Imperial villas grew up within its neighbourhood. Lanuvium is also known for its celebrated temple of Juno Sospita of which part of the sanctuary's portico can still be seen (see images [here](#)). A fine equestrian group in marble was also unearthed in the city in the 1880s. The group of statues, dating to the 1st century BC, includes life-size torsos of Roman cavalymen and horses, probably commissioned to commemorate the victory of [Lucius Licinius Murena](#) in the Second Mithridatic War. This collection of sculptures is now the highlight of the Leeds City Museum (see images [here](#)).

The *Natalis Antinoi* (birthday of Antinous) was celebrated in Lanuvium by a *collegium* (association) dedicated to Antinous and the goddess Diana. The Lanuvian *collegium* was a prominent burial association which, among other activities, provided burial for their deceased members. The lengthy

inscription, the longest and most important of the Lanuvian inscriptions, was originally erected in the temple of Antinous (*tetrastylum*). It contained the rules and regulations (by-laws) of the Lanuvian worshippers (*cultores*) of Diana and Antinous with detailed provisions for burial. Such *collegia* were strictly regulated by local rules but also by the Roman Senate's regulations.



The inscription, dated to 9 June AD 136, consists of two columns of respectively thirty-three and thirty-two lines and one heading line stretching across the entire marble panel. It operated with the support of a wealthy patron whose name was Lucius Caesennius Rufus at the time of the consulship of Lucius Ceionius Commodus and Sextus Vettulenus Civica Pompeianus.

**Headline:**

[L(ucio) Ceionio] Commodo Sex(to) Vettuleno Civica  
Pompeiano co(n)s(ulibus) a(nte) d(iem) V Idus Iun(ias)

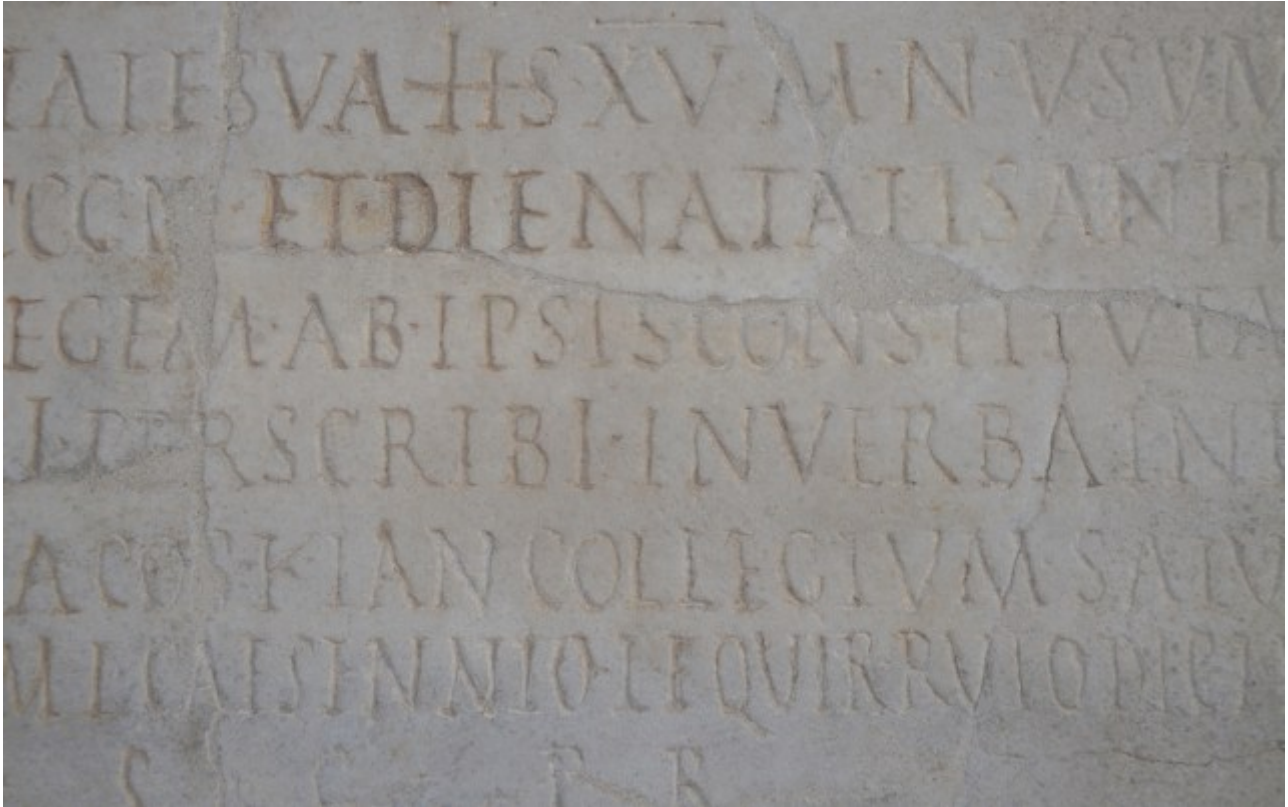


**Colu**

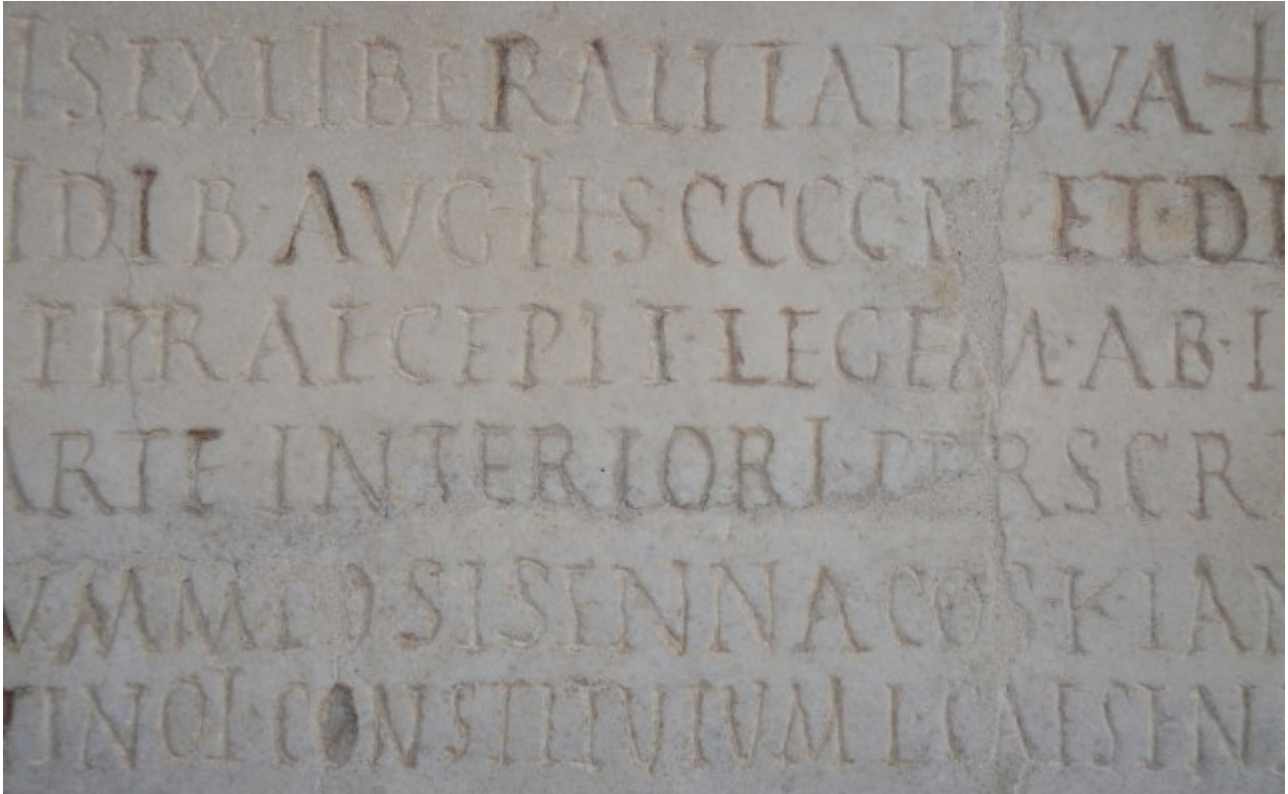
**mn 1:**

The text opens with an account of the college's assembly on 9 June AD 136 (a little more than two years after the drowning of Antinous in October 130 AD), during which L. Ceionius Commodus, who happened to be patron of the *municipium* of Lanuvium, offered the interests on 15,000 sesterces to provide annually 800 sesterces: 400 sesterces on the birthday of Diana on August 13 and 400 sesterces on the birthday of Antinous on November 27. These financial benefactions (*liberalitas*) enabled the *collegium* to honour Diana and Antinous and also to pay for the funerals of its members.

[Lanuvii in] **templo Antinoi** in quo L(ucius) Caesennius Rufus / [patronu]s municipi(i) conventum haberi iusserat per L(ucium) Pompeium // [—]um q(uin)q(uennalem) cultorum Dianae et Antinoi pollicitus est se / [conl]aturum eis ex liberalitate sua HS XV m(ilium) n(umum) usum die / [natal]is Dianae Idib(us) Aug(ustis) HS CCCC n(ummos) et die **natalis Antinoi V K**(alendas) / [**Dec**(embres)] HS CCCC n(ummos) et praecepit legem ab ipsis constitutam sub **tetra**/[stylo A]**ntinoi parte interiori** perscribi in verba infra scripta



Col.1 4-10



Col. 14-9

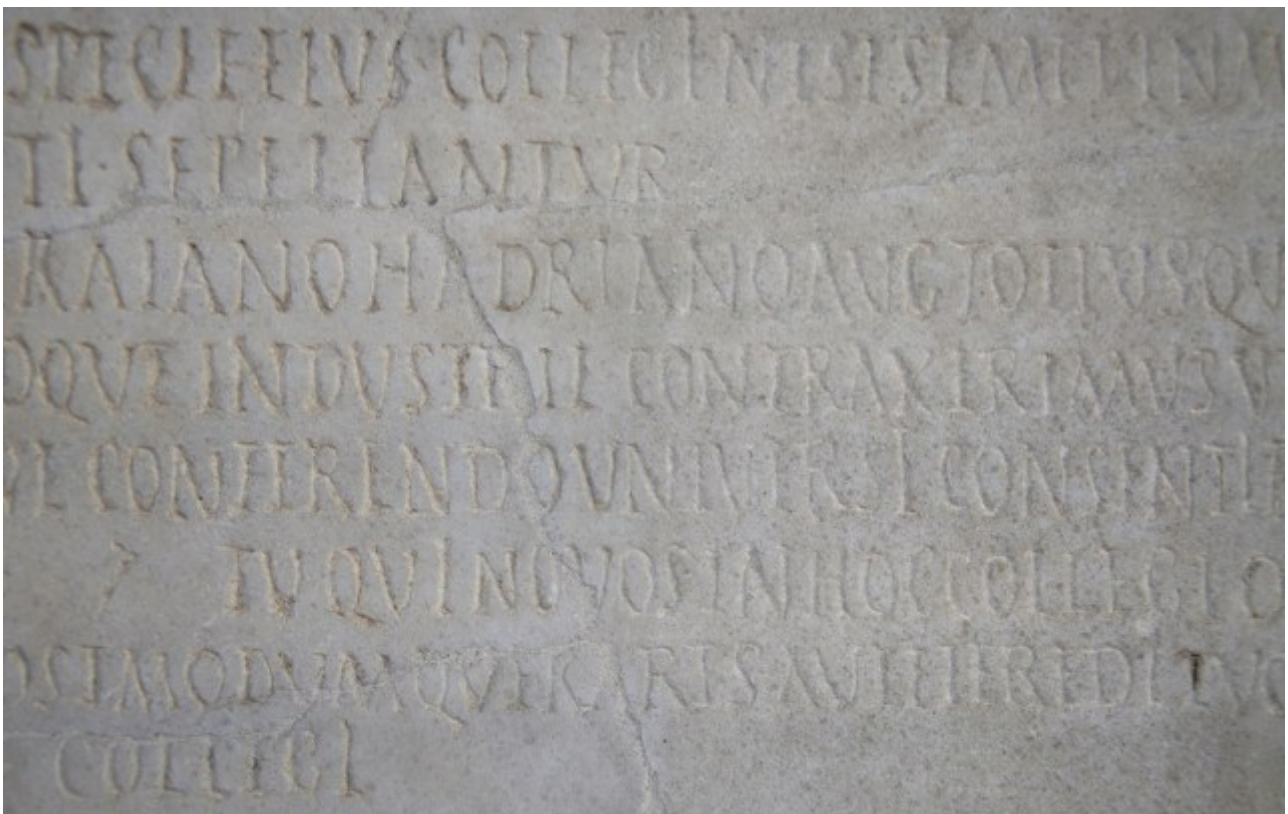
The members of the college's assembly met in the tetrastyle temple of Antinous where the members of the *collegium* were told to inscribe their by-laws so that all the town's residents could read them.



After

citing the college's date of creation, 1st January AD 133, the Senate's approval and prayers for the emperor Hadrian and his family, the inscription states the rules (*lex*) of the association. The rules had to be read in their entirety before new members could enter the *collegium* so that later they "may not make a complain or leave a dispute" to their heirs. The association was composed only of men, freeborn, freedmen and slaves.

[quod fa]ust[um fe]lix salutareq(ue) sit Imp(eratori)  
Caesari Traiano Hadriano Aug(usto) totiusque / [do]mus  
[Aug(usti)] nobis [n]ostris collegioq(ue) nostro et bene  
adque(!) industrie contraxerimus ut /



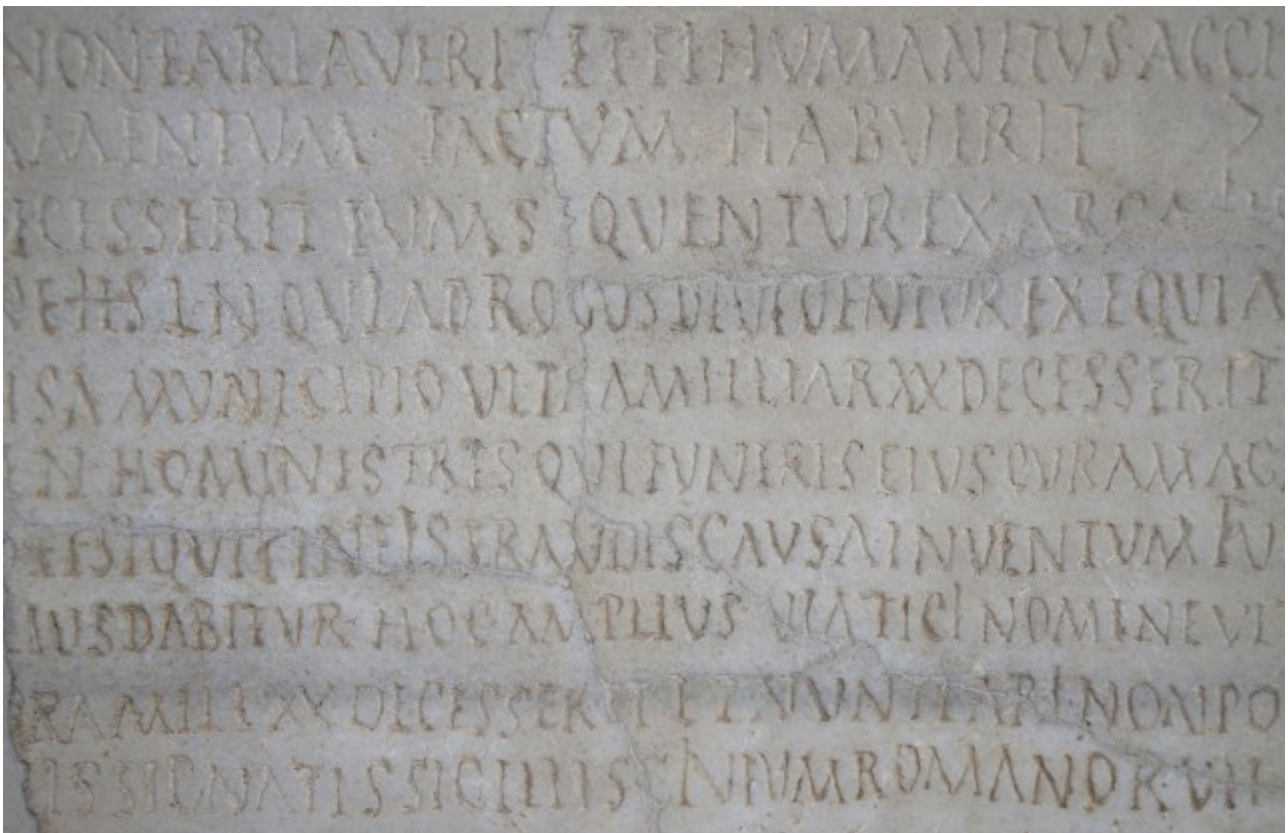
Col. 1 12.17

The by-laws determined membership' subscriptions, monthly fees, fines for neglect of duties or misconduct, and the organisation procedure for members' funerals (*funus*).

lexs collegi / [plac]uit universis ut quisquis in hoc

collegium intrare voluerit dabit kapitulari nomine / HS C  
n(ummum) et vi[ni] boni amphoram item in menses  
sing(ulos) a(sses) V item placuit ut quisquis mensib(us) /

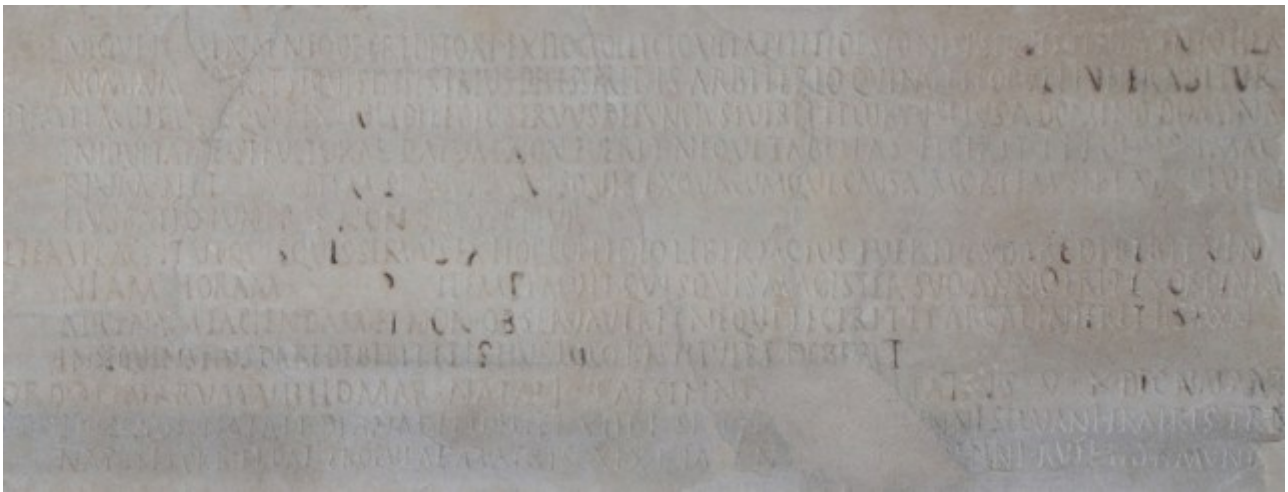
Each new member had to pay an entrance fee of 100 sesterces and an amphora of good wine as well as a monthly contribution of 5 asses. If the member was up-to-date with his monthly dues when he died the association would pay his funeral expenses to the sum of 300 sesterces. However, if he failed to pay his dues for six consecutive months he would “lose the money standing in his account for the *funus*”. Also, If a member died more than twenty Roman miles away from Lanuvium and his death was reported, the *collegium* would send members to take care of his funeral. If someone else took care of the funeral, the *collegium* was to pay this person the cost of the funeral.



Col. I 22-31

**Column 2:**

Different rules applied to slave members who were denied burial by their masters. They had the right to a fictitious funeral (*funus imaginarium*) which involved the cremation of a wax figure (*imago*) on a pyre. Meanwhile, members who committed suicides lost the right to receive funeral honours.



Col. II 1-13

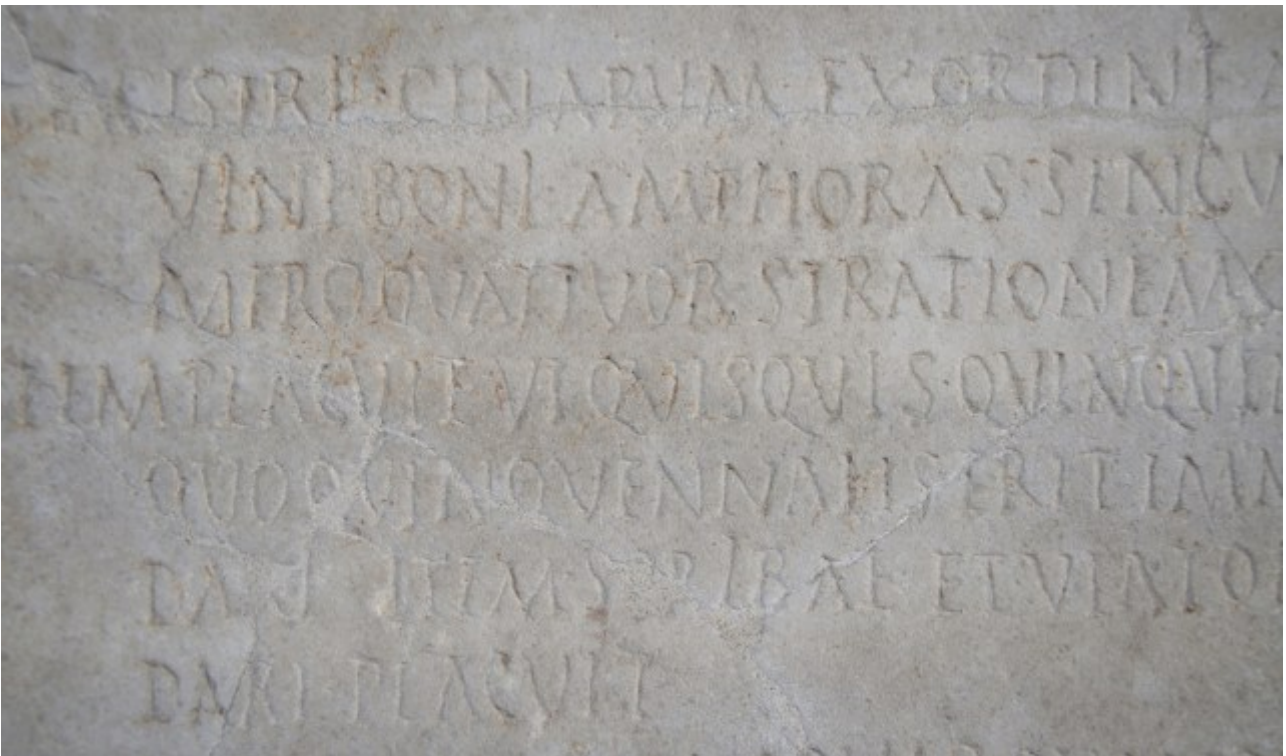
The inscription continues by listing the dates of the six annual banquets organised by the *collegium*: the birthday of L. Caesennius Rufus' father, on March 8, appears first among the birthday feasts listed, followed by the birthday of Antinous on November 27, of the goddess Diana on August 13, the birthday of Caesennius's brother on August 20, his mother's on September 12 and his own on December 14.

ordo cenarum VIII Id(us) Mar(tias) natali Caesenni [—]  
patris V Kal(endas) Dec(embres) nat(ali) Ant[inoi] / Idib(us)  
Aug(ustis) natali Dianae et collegi XIII K(alendas)  
Sept(embres) na[t(ali) Caes]enni Silvani fratr{a}is pr(idie)  
N[onas —] / natali Corneliae Proculae matris XIX



## K(alendas) Ian(uarias) na[tal(i) Cae]senni Rufi patr(oni) munic[ipii]

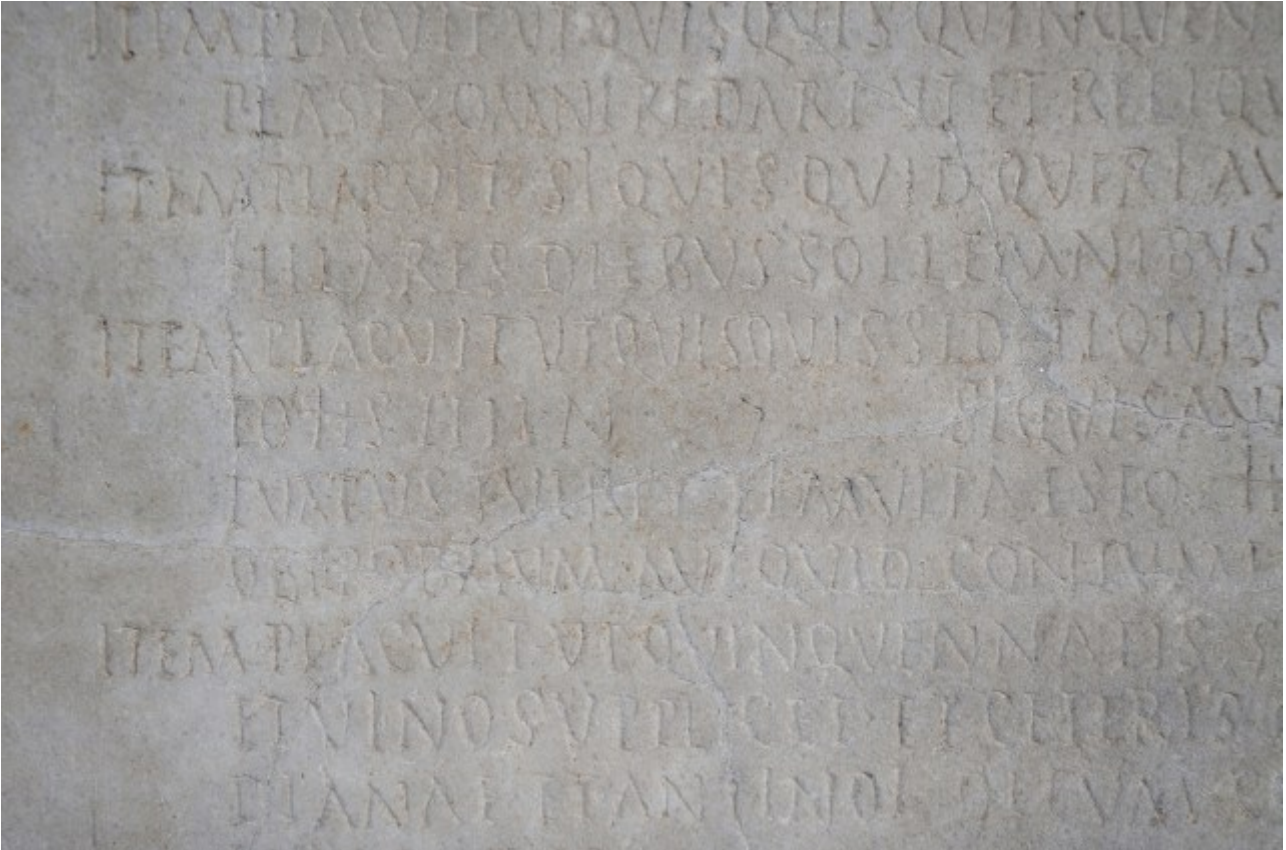
Each year a *magistri* (chairman) was chosen to preside the banquets and had to supply the food, namely four sardines, loaves of bread together with hot water and good wine. The *quinquennalis* (chief official) had to make sacrifices with wine and incense throughout his five years of service and provide the members with oil in the public baths twice a year on the birthdays of Diana and Antinous as well as an amphora of good wine for the banquets.



Col. II 14-20

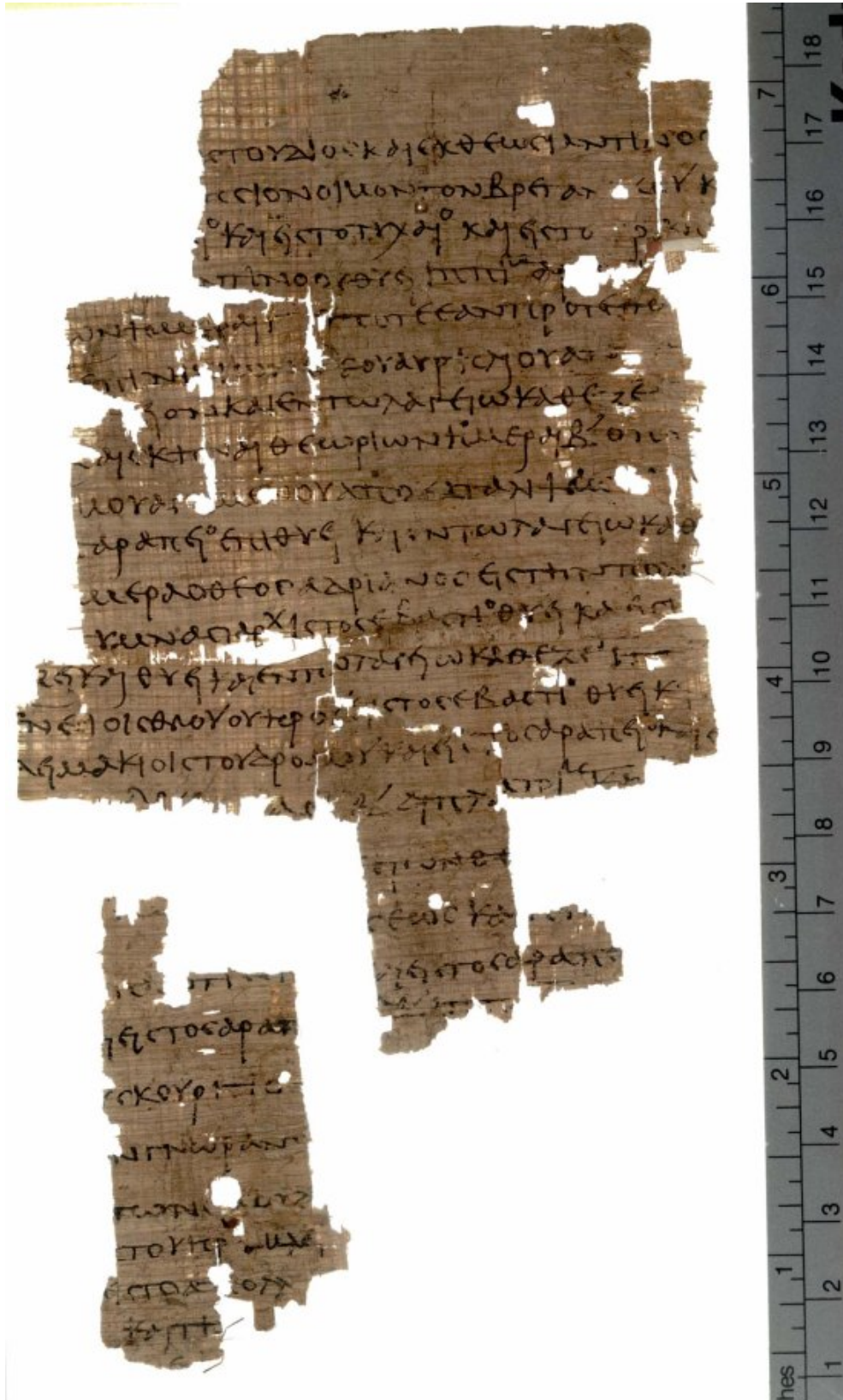
The inscription continues with the rules of conduct at banquets. Each act of misbehaviour was punished with a fine suitable for the offence. For a member causing a disturbance by moving seats, the fine was four sesterces. For “speaking abusively of another”, the fine was twelve sesterces. The largest fine amounted to twenty sesterces for the use of “abusive or insolent language to a

*quinquennalis* (president)".



Col. II 2

Cult sites for Antinous, erections of statues and celebrations of festivals in his honour soon followed his death in late October of AD 130. We also have a record of the birthday of Antinous being celebrated in Egypt from a fragmentary papyrus from Oxyrhynchus (P.Oxy. 31 2553). The fragment, a part of a Calendar of Cult Offerings written in ancient Greek and dating to around AD 175 - 225, mentions the birthday of Antinous with a description of three festivals held between the birthday of Antinous and the birthday of the deified Lucius Verus on December 15.



*P.Oxy.XXXI 2553*

*Fragment of a Calendar of Cult Offerings mentioning Antinous' birthday*

The Lanuvian inscription can now be seen and read in the Baths of Diocletian in Rome.



*The inscription of the collegium of Diana and Antinous in Lanuvium, AD 136 AD, National Museum of Rome, Baths of Diocletian, Rome*

Sources:

- Andreas Bendlin - *Associations, funerals, sociality, and Roman law: the collegium of Diana and Antinous in Lanuvium* (CIL 14.2112) reconsidered in: M. Öhler (ed.), *Aposteldekret und antikes Vereinswesen: Gemeinschaft und ihre Ordnung* (WUNT I 280, Tübingen 2011), 207-296
- [Text in Latin](#) - CIL XIV, n. 2112 (Epigraphik Datenbank Clauss/Slaby). LEX COLLEGII FUNERATICII LANUVINI - Regulations of a collegium funeraticium

- [Lanuvium – Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography \(1854\)](#)
- [Papyri.info](#) Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens
- [Oxyrhynchus Online – P.Oxy.XXXI 2553](#)
- P.J. SIJPESTEIJN, “*A New Document Concerning Hadrian’s Visit to Egypt,*”  
*Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* Bd. 18, H. 1 (Jan., 1969), pp. 109-118

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