

125.

PAPYROLOGISCH-EPIGRAPHISCHE WERKSTATT

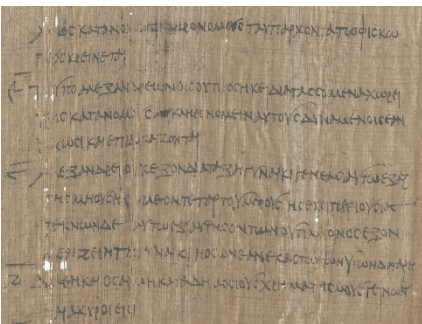


Montag, 10. November 2025, 18 Uhr c.t.

Fachbereichszimmer im Institut für Alte Geschichte und
Altertumskunde, Papyrologie und Epigraphik

Sofia Torallas Tovar (Princeton; Chicago)

*The Earliest Witness to Athanasius' work: a
papyrus roll with an interesting history*



A virtually complete papyrus roll at the Abbey of Montserrat turned out to be an interesting discovery. The text contained in this papyrus is a Coptic translation of the letter of Athanasius to Dracontius: a very early witness, end of the 4th century to a letter so far only attested in Greek earliest in the 11th century. This letter was sent to Dracontius, recently appointed bishop of Hermoupolis Parva, who fled. It was written in 354 or 355 to urge him to come back and not refuse the Episcopate. Apart from the fact that this is an unknown Coptic text, and one of the earliest Athanasius papyrus we have, this papyrus is also extremely interesting as a historical artifact, and the circumstances of its finding and its bibliographical characteristics help in understanding the scribal environment in the monastic context of the Thebaid.