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## A Latin Letter

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# A Latin Letter

## **Abstract**

This manuscript was written sometime within the Renaissance, and can open up the world of a gentleman to us. Johannes Lampreicht would have been classically trained around the same time as he learned how to read, write, and count. Because of this, he could compose letters in Latin, and possibly Greek too. He mentions a few Greek authors, and seems well versed in their work. Throughout he uses many shorthand symbols to make writing faster, including an em-dash, and an ampersand. These do not help date the document, however, because they were invented by Cicero's right-hand-slave Tiro in the first century BCE and used continuously since then. This letter was later recycled as a piece of a book, but was then taken from the book again and displayed in its original letter form. Below, you can find a transcription and translation of the letter, along with a physical description. [*excerpt*]

## **Keywords**

Johannes Lampreicht, Michal Hobor, Latin

## **Disciplines**

Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque Art and Architecture | Fine Arts | History of Science, Technology, and Medicine | Industrial and Product Design | Intellectual History

## **Comments**

Produced as part of a collaboration between Kay Etheridge's course FYS-188: Exploration of the Marvelous: Art and Science in the Renaissance, and Felicia Else's course ARTH 284: Wonders of Nature and Artifice: The Renaissance Quest for Knowledge.

Original version online at <http://wonder-cabinet.sites.gettysburg.edu/2017/cabinet/test-jfdklsajkdsaljfal/>

# A Latin Letter

By Francesca Marie Costa

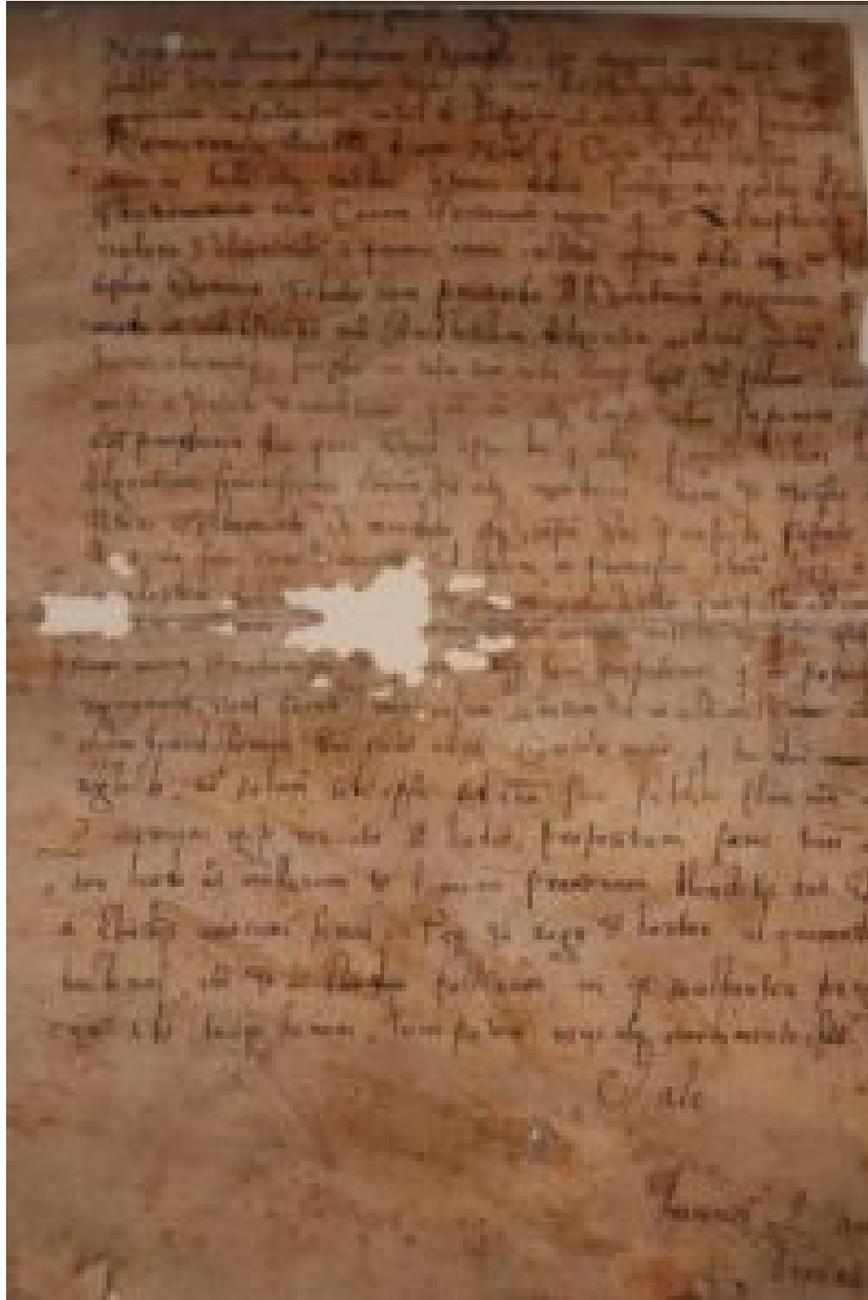


The Letter as it is on display in the exhibition. On loan from Michael J. Hobor, Class of 1969

## Latin Manuscript

This manuscript was written sometime within the Renaissance, and can open up the world of a gentleman to us. Johannes Lampreicht would have been classically trained around the same time as he learned how to read, write, and count. Because of this, he could compose letters in Latin, and possibly Greek too. He mentions a few Greek authors, and seems well versed in their work. Throughout he uses many shorthand symbols to make writing faster, including an em-dash, and an ampersand. These do not help date the document, however, because they were

invented by Cicero's right-hand-slave Tiro in the first century BCE and used continuously since then.<sup>1</sup> This letter was later recycled as a piece of a book, but was then taken from the book again and displayed in its original letter form. Below, you can find a transcription and translation of the letter, along with a physical description.



Close-up view of the letter

### Physical Description

This is the entire letter is damaged by insects and the wear and tear common in a very old document. It would have been recycled in a book, because it is not a constitution or other

important document, but instead an example of the everyday. This letter was in a book, due to the folding, the glue residue still visible in brown, the blue stain of the book paint, and even visible echoes of where the book tabs were located. Two holes on the bottom point to the fact that this book would have had small points for the silk string to tie the book together with.

## English Translation

Other Part of the Argument:

I will not bring forward examples of those people: who with great praise and had shined [through literary things]. I will say nothing concerning Themistocles and Pericles leaders of the Greeks[,] nothing on Scipio, Lucillus and other preferred leaders of the Romans. Nothing on Gaius Julius Caesar who learned literary things [during] his days in war and camp and his “Res Gestas” now defer to the overlooked Cyrus the Great, King of Persia, who if we are to believe Xenophon, learned from his first years the work of justice and he exercised in philosophy if... now I go to Alexander The Great whose manner in his youth diligently listened to Aristotle, ... , and read the writings of others his entire life, and inclined toward virtue and knowledge, so that he can conquer other rich men. And this therefore I say because God himself unites and orders to those who diligently serving want to surpass others. For Moses in the Old Testament out of the mandate and order of God was placed in command of the people truly to his people by means of the law he succeeded but at once in the beginning given legal books from the priests... and collected and out of those who were raised by God...

## Latin Transcription

*Altera Pars Argumenti:*

*Non iam illorum proferam exempla: qui magna cum laude & feustru literis nicuibuert. Nihil ego iam de Themistocle atque Pericles graecorum imp[er]atoribus [,] nihil de Scipione, Lucullo aliisque praelatis Romanorum ducibus dicam. Nihil de Gaio Julio Caesare [qui] diam in bello atque castris literas didicit suasque res gestas defer[er] praeterrmittam iam Cyrum Persarum regem [qui] si Xenophont[i] credere voluerimus, a primis annos iustitiae op[er]am dedit seque in ph[ilo]sophia exercuit si [lculio?] iam praeteribo Alexandrum Magnum [qui] modo in adolescentia sua Aristotelem diligenter audivit, venu eli[us] huius, aliorumque scripta tota sua vita semp[er] legit, & palam confe[ssit] malle se virtute et eruditione, qua[m] vix atque divitis alios superare. Ho[c] aut propterea dico quia Deus ipse his [qui] aliis praecesserunt volunt ha[nc] diligentiam severissime iniunxit atque mandavit. Nam & Moises in Veteri Testamento ex mandato atque iussu Dei praefectus populo ma[gd]al[en]it<sup>2</sup> ne suo iure Vincerent sed statim in principio libru[m] legis a sacerdotibus datum \_\_\_ atque [l]\_g\_unt,<sup>3</sup> et ex illo quo pasto Deum \_\_\_u\_\_\_um\_\_\_ tam\_\_\_ sua vitam nisi tuere ded\_\_\_to\_\_\_tisc[er] Hanc viam & rationem & [\_]ua\_aliique boni imp[er]atores, [qui] ni populo de regnarunt, sunt secuti nonsolum salutem & incolumitatem vere[\_]*

*etiam benedictionem Dei sunt adepti. Contra vero [qui] hoc tui mandato  
neglecto, non solum sibi ipsis sed etiam suis subditis plurima nocent<sup>4</sup>  
quoniam igitur res ita se habet, propositum sane tuum velut  
laudem ut nullorum te hominum praeforum blanditiis aut exemplis  
a studiis [unocari] sinas teque & rogo & hortor ut quae admodum  
hactenus, ita in posterum vis iis constanter pergas  
cum tibi tuisque honori, tum pateras usui atque emolimento esse poterit*

*Vale*

*Joannes Lamprecht*

*Argentivensis*

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus\\_Tullius\\_Tiro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Tullius_Tiro)
2. possibly “mandavit”
3. possibly “legunt”
4. possibly “nocens” or a word from that route