

# From Manuscript to Digital: Digitization Strategies for the Marcanova Codex

*Epigraphy.info IX workshop, Aarhus*

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This project focuses on the analysis of the inscriptions transcribed in the urban section of the codex Lat. 992 = α.L05.15, known as the Marcanova Codex. Its realization was made possible through the use of a new technology called IIIF, which enabled the digitization of the manuscript on the [Estense Digital Library](#).

## Preliminary operations

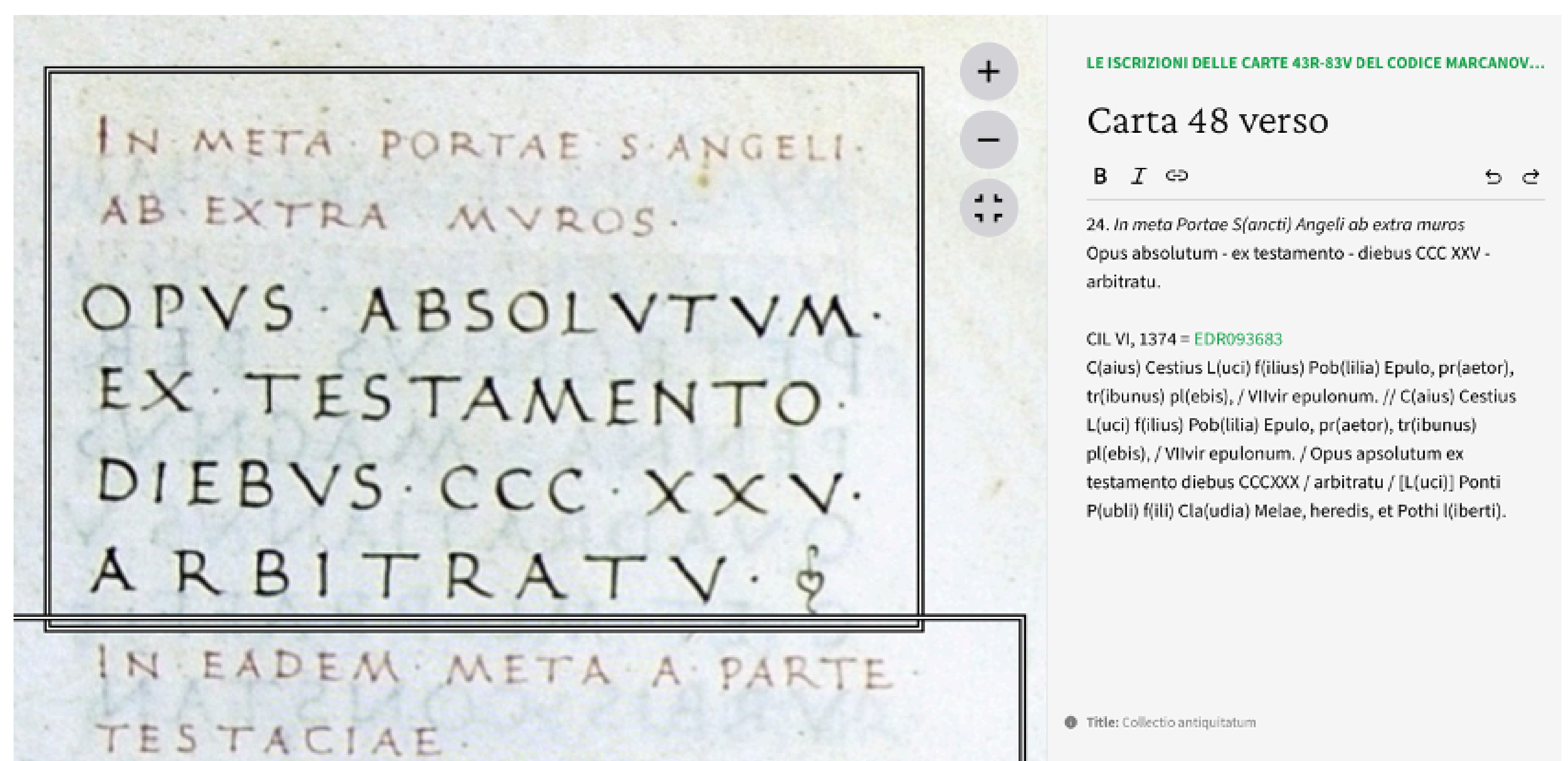
- Delimitation of the material to be examined: Given the high number of transcriptions contained in the codex, it has been decided, for the time being, to limit the scope to just one of the sections into which the manuscript is divided, namely the pages dedicated to the inscriptions of Rome.
- Identification and cataloging of inscriptions not present in online databases ([EDR](#), [EDB](#) o [EDF](#)).

### TOOLS:

The work was carried out using a specific feature provided by the Estense Digital Library platform: "Stories", a digital storytelling tool that allows for the creation of narrative paths.

### CHOICE OF METHOD

It was necessary to reflect on the selection of information to be included on the platform and the ways to do so. Two main approaches could be taken: the first was to consider the transcriptions as representations of the inscriptions, while the second was to treat them as texts. The determining factor was the nature of the codex itself: in the Marcanova Codex, the inscriptions are reproduced as texts to be read rather than as documents to be depicted. For this reason, in selecting the material to accompany the manuscript images, greater emphasis was placed on the transcription itself, which was then juxtaposed with the file.



## Content creation

- For each page of the manuscript, a specific section corresponding to a single inscription was framed using the zoom tool, so that by scrolling through the slides, a motion effect is created that clearly shifts the focus from one transcription to another.
- The texts were numbered sequentially using the annotation system, allowing for easy reference in case of cross-references or when the inscription spans more than one page.
- Next to the well-framed image, the following elements were placed:
  - The caption from the codex that introduces the text;
  - The transcription provided by Marcanova;
  - The critical transcription with the number assigned in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (CIL) and the link to the digital database for access to further bibliography.

LE ISCRIZIONI DELLE CARTE 43R-83V DEL CODICE MARCANOV...

Carta 48 verso → Page number

B I ↻ ↵ ↶ ↷

24. In meta Portae S(ancti) Angeli ab extra muros Opus absolutum - ex testamento - diebus CCC XXV - arbitrato. → Inscription number and caption

→ Transcription of the Marcanova text

CIL VI, 1374 = EDR093683 → CIL number and link to the online database

C(aius) Cestius L(uci) f(ilius) Pob(lilia) Epulo, pr(aetor), tr(ibunus) pl(ebis), / Vllvir epulonum. // C(aius) Cestius L(uci) f(ilius) Pob(lilia) Epulo, pr(aetor), tr(ibunus) pl(ebis), / Vllvir epulonum. / Opus apsolutum ex testamento diebus CCCXXX / arbitrato / [L(uci)] Ponti P(ubli) f(ili) Cla(udia) Melae, heredis, et Pothi l(iberti). → Critical transcription

As for the transcription of the Marcanova text and the critical transcription, two main objectives were pursued, aiming to mediate between two seemingly opposing goals: on one hand, there was an effort to maintain scientific rigor, while on the other, to achieve a sufficient level of accessibility for an audience not just of specialists. This is particularly important since the service is intended for scholars, enthusiasts, and educators.