

## Shedding Light on Ancient Documents

Anyone familiar with the problems of adequate lighting when studying ancient documents will no doubt welcome the fascinating advances being made by a collaborative project between the University of Oxford and the University of Southampton. Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Digital Equipment and Database Enhancement for Impact (DEDEFI) programme, the Reflectance Transformation Imaging Systems for Ancient Documentary Artefacts (RTISAD) project is developing new ways of visualising and understanding ancient documents.

The first of two dome image-capture systems built by the project has already been in use at Oxford in the Ashmolean since late August and for a Cuneiform workshop at Wolfson College in September. In October the dome was set up at the CSAD by Dr. Kirk Martinez from Southampton's School of Electronics and Computer Science, Mr. Hembo Pagi from the Archaeological Computing Research Group and Dr. Kathryn Piquette, who comes to the RTISAD project from the Centre for Digital Humanities at UCL.

Dr. Piquette is responsible for testing the Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) system. She took time out from photographing Vindolanda stylus tablets, lead curse tablets, and a squeeze, to show me how the system works. The imaging dome is fitted with 76 LED lights across its interior, with a digital SLR camera at a fixed position at its apex. The dome is raised up to give space for setting the object to be photographed on a height adjustable platform, and a dark cloth covers the gap to stop any outside light entering the dome. 76 photographs—one per light source—are captured (a process that takes approximately 2-2½ minutes). These photographs are then processed and synthesised using the Polynomial Texture Map fitting algorithm developed at H-P Labs to create an image of the object that can be virtually lit in a viewer application.



*Dr Piquette tests the RTI dome on a lead curse tablet at the CSAD*

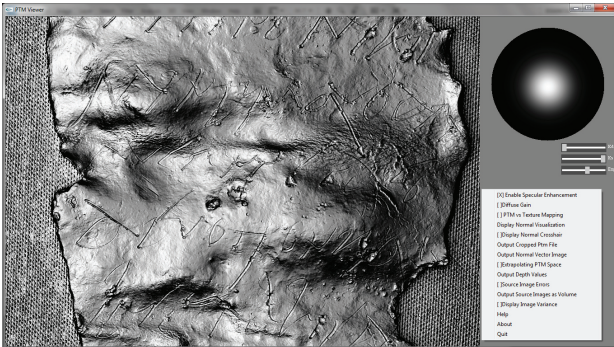
The viewer programme allows the user to control the location of the light sources in order to pick out fine details on the object, which, says Dr Martinez, “you can’t get always with a 3D scan”. Dr. Piquette demonstrated with an image of a cuneiform tablet to show how with RTI we are able to manipulate the image in order to get more information from it—in a way that other techniques do not permit. By setting the light conditions and zooming in on a selected area of the image, we could make out the lines made by the structure of the reed used for the stylus. Such fine detail allows us to look at the process behind the practice of inscribing and ask questions about the materials and tools for styli and to consider the effects of such information on our understanding of scribal habits and workshops. Not only that: Dr. Piquette is hoping to use the RTI dome to support a reconstruction she has recently made to the reading of an Egyptian ivory label of the First Dynasty (ZAS 137, 2010: 54-65). She explained that fractures in the surface of the ivory have been misread as part of the hieroglyphic signs, and that by using the RTI system these fractures (which she has identified after long and close examination of the label) will be made clearly distinguishable from the inscription. The distinction between deliberate incision and surface damage is enhanced through RTI technology.

Hembo Pagi explained how another feature of the RTI system would benefit researchers. Specular enhancement allows us to view the reflective characteristics of an object without, or in combination with, its colour properties. Mr. Pagi said that “colour can sometimes provide too much information”, and so by employing specular enhancement we are able

### Contents

Shedding Light on Ancient Documents .....	1
Roger Tomlin .....	2
MAMA XI Update.....	4
Epigraphy and XRF at Diamond Light Source.....	5
eSAD news.....	6
Visiting Scholars.....	7
Epigraphy Workshop .....	8
Visitors to CSAD .....	8
Circulation and Contributions.....	8

to focus more on the effects of light on the surface morphology of the material to pick out details that colour may obscure. This function is particularly useful for picking out the incised markings on lead curse tablets. Of course, the versatility of the viewer can make these details hard to find again so another member of the team, Mr. Leif Isaksen, is developing an additional function which allows users to create virtual bookmarks. These can store all the settings for a particular 'view' along with a comment and graphical annotation from the user.



Screen capture of the RTI viewer, showing a Roman lead curse tablet viewed with specular enhancement

As well as providing a system that is advancing the ways in which we view the writing of documentary artefacts and infer meaning from it, the project also intends the system to be as flexible and accessible as possible. Firstly, the dome itself has been designed to be easy to travel with, segmenting into four sections for transportation—it has already been used at the Ashmolean Museum and Wolfson College in Oxford, and in late November it travelled to the British Museum in Bloomsbury and the Museum depot at Blythe Road in Earls Court, where Dr. Piquette continued to test it. Secondly, the RTI system is being developed to be both open-access and open-source, and a blueprint for the construction of the dome will be made available on-line in the coming year. A second system, a mini-dome, is currently being developed, and will be used for capturing coins and other small objects.

Dr. Piquette's enthusiasm for the system is evident: "what is really exciting is that we can photograph an object just once using the RTI system, but can continue to extract additional information as new techniques are being developed to do so". Her example of the imprints left by the reed stylus in the cuneiform tablet is a point in question. The RTI system offers us the means by which to ask new and important research questions, and allows us to gain new insights into writing not only with regard to the readability of texts, but how they were constituted through material and technological practice.

## Roger Tomlin

When Roger Tomlin first took over as editor of Roman Inscriptions of Britain (*RIB*) whilst working at Durham University, he agreed to do so only as long as it did not interfere with his own research. 35 years later, as Dr. Tomlin retires, it is impossible to think about the epigraphy of Roman Britain without reference to his immense contribution to the field.

In 1914 F.J. Haverfield began publishing annual surveys of the Roman inscriptions of Britain, and this practice was continued by R.G. Collingwood, who in 1921 began work on a new Corpus of Roman Inscriptions of Britain. He was joined in 1938 by a Junior Editor, R.P. Wright, who took over the project in 1943 after Collingwood's death. Although *RIB I* contained inscriptions recorded up until 31st December 1954, by the time of its publication in 1965 new inscriptions were already coming to light. R.P. Wright saw to the annual survey of inscriptions, first in *JRS* from 1956 to 1969, and then in *Britannia* from 1970 onwards. *RIB I* is, Dr. Tomlin says, a testimony to Wright's "dogged energy, obsessive accuracy and minute attention to detail, all the harmless drudgery required of a great epigrapher" (CSAD newsletter 8, Autumn 1999). In 1970, Wright was joined by Mark W.C. Hassall, who took on responsibility for inscriptions found south of the Mersey and Humber rivers. When Wright retired in 1975, Dr. Tomlin succeeded him and continued the annual surveys. Between 1990-1995 Dr. Tomlin, Prof. Sheppard Frere and Margaret Roxan, with contributions by Hassall, edited eight fascicules of *RIB II*, which survey *instrumentum domesticum* from material collected by Collingwood and Wright. In 1995 he was responsible for a new edition of *RIB I*, the chief aim of which was to collect and evaluate improvements and corrections to the inscriptions. In 2009 Dr. Tomlin and Dr. Hassall published *RIB III*, the long-awaited continuation of *RIB I*, an edition of 550 inscriptions on stone found or notified from 1st January 1956 to 31st December 2006. All but six of these inscriptions were first published in the annual surveys of 1956 to 2007. These publications were supported by the Haverfield Bequest, which appointed Dr. Tomlin as the editor for *RIB III*.

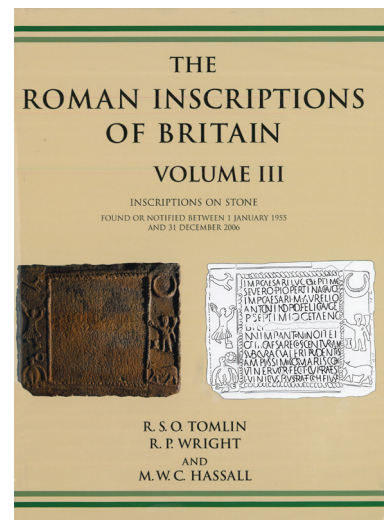
Dr. Tomlin's interest in Roman Britain started as a boy, visiting sites with his parents, and he recalls being particularly fond of Hadrian's Wall. His interest in Roman Britain has continued throughout his career, and he is now planning to finish a book, which will deal with the history of Roman Britain through the inscriptions. The project initially began as an attempt to re-write A.R. Burn's *The Romans in Britain*, until Dr. Tomlin decided that it was "actually rather difficult to rewrite someone else's book". He will also be seen in the near future talking with the archaeologist and TV presenter Neil Oliver, on his new BBC programme

*Stonehenge Britain*, which looks at the history of Britain down to the withdrawal of the Romans in the fifth century A.D. Oliver was keen to talk about the arrival of writing in Britain, and so together they spent several very cold hours filming at Bath, sitting well wrapped up beside the Great Bath, discussing Roman cursive writing and lead curse tablets.

For such an established career as a Roman epigrapher Dr. Tomlin says that he came to the job somewhat coincidentally. Working at Durham University he says he was the natural successor of R.P. Wright, although epigraphy was hardly taught as a specialist subject and he only really received one formal lesson from Wright. Having always been interested in manuscripts, writing and puzzles, Dr. Tomlin admits that “looking back, [the study of epigraphy] clearly appealed to something in me”. He approaches epigraphy as a series of small puzzles, which the epigrapher must question and seek to solve. He is described by colleagues as “an imaginative historian who always grounds his imagination in mastery of technical detail, allied to flashes of intuitive insight”. Such insights, coupled with Dr. Tomlin’s interest in codes and writing, comes across clearly in his work on Roman curse tablets. In 1979 a number of tablets were found at Bath, which technically fell within Dr. Hassall’s area, but it was Dr. Tomlin who took up the challenge of solving the puzzle of the curse tablets. Some of these clearly required a code-breaker’s mentality: he has deciphered one tablet, recording the theft of six silver coins, as being written backwards, so whilst the text was written from left to right, the letter sequence was reversed. Professor Alan Bowman recalls an instance from 1994 where “Roger was able to present, in the manner of a magician pulling a rabbit out of a hat, a new edition of a document which had for almost a century been understood as a fourth century Christian letter from Roman Britain; by the simple expedient of turning it through 180 degrees, he showed that it should be read as a curse tablet of a well-known type and that the original editor had read it upside down”.

Through his work on the curse tablets, Dr. Tomlin has had the opportunity to work with the newly developed RTI dome capture system, described elsewhere in the Newsletter. The specular enhancement function of the system, which controls the effects of light on the surface morphology of the material to enable details to be picked out that are otherwise obscured, is, Dr. Tomlin believes, a particularly helpful tool for the study of incised metal tablets. Dr. Tomlin is currently working with Dr. Wouter Vos of Hazenberg Archeologie, Leiden and Dr. Ton Derks of Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, on 18 new writing tablets found at Vechten, and is also now hoping to start work alongside Professor Alan Bowman on *RIB IV*, which will collect all the writing tablets from Roman Britain.

However, Dr. Tomlin still emphasises the importance of studying inscriptions with the naked eye, and his drawings of all the inscriptions edited in *RIB III* are a testimony to his attention and observation of the inscriptions. Dr. Tomlin’s predecessors, R. G. Collingwood and R. P. Wright, were equally concerned with concentrating on the inscription and as objective a read of it as possible, producing line-drawings of all the inscriptions for *RIB I*. Dr. Tomlin illustrates the value of drawing inscriptions with an example of an altar that Wright recorded over 50 years ago (*RIB I*, 1688). The altar, from near Vindolanda, has now been completely weathered away. Wright’s fair-copy of the inscription preserves an accurate and objective record, though Wright himself was unable to give a full reading of the text (the prefect’s name is fragmentary), due to damage. The discovery of a new altar from Vindolanda (R.S.O. Tomlin, ‘Roman Britain in 2009’, *Britannia* 2010, No. 4) allows us to understand and interpret the first altar – the prefect’s name can now be restored as [SV]LPI/CIVS PVDENS – something that, without Wright’s drawing, would not have been possible. A vindication, Dr. Tomlin says, of the practice of drawing inscriptions.



*RIB vol. III [2009]*

The value of drawing is also shown in Dr. Tomlin’s edition of *RIB III*. All the inscriptions are accompanied by a photograph and a line-drawing made from the stone itself, not from the photograph. The benefit of the drawing alongside the photograph is particularly clear in the case of *RIB III* 3331. This is a quarry-face inscription on the north-facing sandstone outcrop of Queens Crags, near Housesteads. The location of the inscription means that it receives no direct sunlight at all, making it impossible to photograph by natural light alone. Dr. Tomlin’s drawing of the inscription gives us a far clearer reading of the text. The application of drawing in the recording of inscriptions is, according

to Dr. Tomlin, a “wonderful combination of objectivity and the control of one’s own hands”.

Perhaps this aspect of epigraphy, both objective and creative at the same time, is another reason why Dr. Tomlin is so well suited to his role. It is quite clear, from glancing around his office at Wolfson College, that art is a personal passion: piled on a large table are several life-drawing sketches and landscapes in oils. He remembers starting drawing at school aged 10, and then some 30 years later he was encouraged to take it up again by Diana Bonakis, an archaeological illustrator, whom Dr. Tomlin describes as a remarkable landscape artist. Dr. Tomlin is modest about his own artistic achievements, calling himself someone who can draw, rather than an artist. Yet Dr. Tomlin is described by friends and colleagues as a considerable artistic talent. Indeed his enjoyment of recording the landscape has on occasion overridden more mundane practicalities, as Professor Alan Bowman recalls: “it was on an excursion to Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli from the Epigraphical Congress [in Rome] that the departure of the coach was delayed by the need to find Roger, who was obviously and blissfully sitting and making marvellous sketches of the villa in the evening sun”.



Roger Tomlin leading a Practical Epigraphy Workshop at York in June 2008.

Despite his initial hesitation over the job of editing *RIB*, Dr. Tomlin admits that it had an immediate appeal to him, and that there is a certain romance about it—to be linked with the great epigraphers Hübner, Haverfield and Collingwood. As Dr. Tomlin recalls trekking over bog land to reach the Queens Crag inscription, taking his mobile phone in case he ended up with a broken leg, one cannot but think that his description of Wright’s “dogged energy, obsessive accuracy and minute attention to detail”—the requirements of a great epigrapher—apply equally to Dr. Tomlin himself.

## MAMA XI Update

One of the major research projects being undertaken at the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents is the eleventh volume of *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua* (MAMA XI). The project is funded by an early career grant awarded to the project Director, Dr. Peter Thonemann, Forrest-Derow Fellow and Tutor in Ancient History at Wadham College, by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The grant began in April 2009 and runs until March 2012. Approximately 600 inscriptions from Southern Phrygia, Lycaonia and Cappadocia are being edited for online publication from the archives of Sir William Calder and Dr. Michael Ballance, compiled during their travels in Turkey in 1954-1957. A first report on the MAMA XI project, by Caillan Davenport, appeared in CSAD Newsletter No. 12 in Winter 2009.

The team, which also includes Dr. Charles Crowther, CSAD’s Assistant Director, and Dr. Edouard Chiricat, who also works for the Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, has completed the editorial work on two thirds of the inscriptions. The editions give details on each inscription’s find-spot and dimensions, and will be accompanied by high-resolution photographs. The editions are marked-up in EpiDoc XML so that any browser will be able to read them, and each word of an inscription will be marked-up individually to facilitate indexing and searching the archive. At present the team is preparing a trial online version of the website, with 57 monuments from Akmoneia and Sebaste published in order to test browse and indexing functions. The trial website will be tested in early 2011 by a limited user group. The project plans to launch a final version of the website in summer 2012.

Dr. Thonemann has already published articles on some of the inscriptions from the Calder-Ballance archive, which are notable for the unexpected insights that they offer us into the social and religious history of inner Anatolia. The first is an honorific Greek stele from Akmoneia in Phrygia, dated to A.D. 6/7 (Ballance archive no. 1955/109). The monument honours Tatia, a high-priestess, as voted for by a body of “Greek and Roman women”. What is striking about this monument is that it has no real parallels in the Greek or Roman world for collective political activity by a corporate group of women. Dr. Thonemann’s recent article in the *Journal of Roman Studies* 2010 (‘The Women of Akmoneia’, 163-178), sets the monument in the context of Roman mercantile presence in central Phrygia under the Augustan principate, and suggests that this unique female collective is a result of a local (mis)interpretation of the ideological prominence bestowed on Livia, the wife of the *princeps*. Dr. Thonemann is also planning to publish a paper on this monument in *Omnibus* this year.

Dr. Thonemann is also preparing a paper on ascetic Christian sects of the third and fourth centuries A.D. from inner Anatolia: *Amphilochius of Iconium and Lycaonian Ascetism*. The article considers nine funerary texts illustrating individuals' associations with the ascetic religious sects of the Encratites and Apotactites, who flourished in the latter half of the fourth century AD, and a remarkable altar-base inscription. The inscription, recorded by Calder in 1954 at Gene Yaylası (Ballance archive no. 1954/50), is a prayer, which Dr. Thonemann has attributed to the Encratite or Apotactite sects. The texts allow us valuable insight into the Encratite and Apotactite communities of Lycaonia in their own words, which Dr. Thonemann contrasts with their representation by Bishop Amphilochius of Iconium, who sought to establish hegemony over his diocese in the 370s.



*Honorific Stele of Tatia, high-priestess,  
from Akmoneia in Phrygia, dated to A.D. 6/7.*

For further information on MAMA XI, visit the project's website, located at <http://mama.csad.ox.ac.uk>.

## Epigraphy and XRF at Diamond Light Source

One of the major problems epigraphers face in reading stone inscriptions is the condition of the stone. The weathering and damage sustained by a stone's surface has long been a problematic aspect of epigraphy. Technologies such as polynomial texture mapping (used by the RTI systems being developed by a joint team from the University of Southampton and the University of Oxford) and surface laser scanning can only offer improved legibility when enough traces of the inscribed lines of the inscription remain. In all too many cases, however, the wear on the stone is too great for even these methods to offer assistance. A collaborative project between Cornell University and the University of Oxford is investigating the use of X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) as a tool for improving the legibility of stone documents, following experimental work at the Cornell High-Energy Synchrotron Source

(CHESS) undertaken by Professor R.E. Thorne (Department of Physics, Cornell), and Professor K. Clinton (Department of Classics, Cornell).

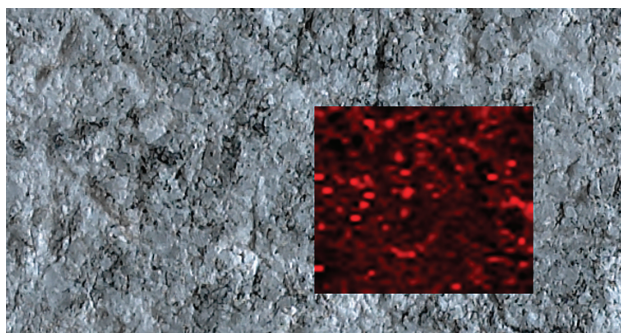
XRF is used to identify trace elements left behind from paint pigments and from the inscribing tools on marbles and limestones. The fluorescence for trace elements such as lead (Pb), zinc (Zn), iron (Fe) and copper (Cu) is found to be higher in inscribed regions of the stone than unscribed, whilst calcium (Ca) fluorescence is usually higher in the unscribed regions. The concentrations of the trace elements are measured and mapped, allowing the creation of images which potentially provide us with more legible versions of the texts. The collaboration between Cornell and Oxford, led by Professor Thorne and Dr. Charles Crowther, Assistant Director of the CSAD, is taking place at the Diamond Light Source facility at the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus in Oxfordshire (<http://www.diamond.ac.uk>), and uses stone inscriptions from the Ashmolean Museum.

Diamond is jointly funded by the Science & Technology Facilities Council (STFC) of the Government and the Wellcome Trust. Begun in 2003, it became operational in 2007, with further work planned to increase the number of experiment stations to a total of 32 by 2017, and will receive £69 million over the Government's Spending Review period. The facility is open access, with the majority of its use given over to research, and about 10% to Industry. Funding from the Research Councils and the Wellcome Trust means that academic research projects are not charged to use Diamond as long as the results of experiments are made public; industrial users meet the costs of their experiments. The Synchrotron is used for a wide range of research including structural biology, chemistry, material science, environmental science, engineering, and cultural heritage.

Set over a 45,000m<sup>2</sup> area, the Diamond Synchrotron generates brilliant beams of light, from infrared to X-rays, in an accelerator 561 m. in circumference, by bending the path of electron beams with magnets so that they lose energy as light, which is channelled into experimental stations called beamlines. The beamlines consist of three hutches: the optic hutch, which filters the light, the experimental hutch, and a control cabin where data is collected and analysed. Experiments on the Ashmolean stone inscriptions have taken place on Dr Kawal Sahney's beamline B16, which is specifically used for trialling new experimental techniques.

Two Greek inscriptions from the Ashmolean have already been tested in June 2010 as part of an exploratory experiment, and Dr. Crowther is enthusiastic about the results the experiments produced. One of the inscriptions scanned was of white Pentelic marble that had been rather thoroughly washed cleaned over time. Whilst no traces of paint were revealed, iron (Fe) traces were detected in the letter grooves.

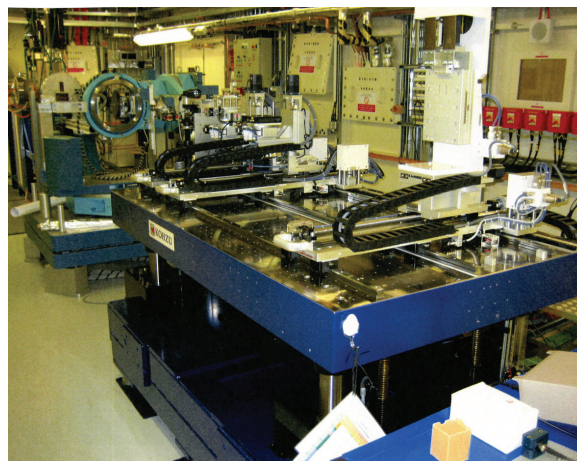
The second inscription is an honorific proxeny decree from Delphi from the late third century B.C. for a group of individuals from Tanagra, in Boiotia (Ashmolean C2.30: *SGDI 2674 [CIG 1962]*). The stone is badly worn, and has previously been interpreted as referring to two unrelated individuals: 'Patrondas son of [-] and Eudoros son of [-]tarchos'. An examination of a small region of the surface, which previous transcriptions had interpreted as a Sigma, revealed iron fluorescence traces that indicates a Theta. The traces of iron (Fe) have, Dr. Crowther explains, really helped with the reading, for it indicates that we should now understand the decree as honouring three brothers: 'Patrondas, [-]on, and Theudoros, the sons of [-]tarchos'. The inscription will be re-examined in 2011 to confirm this new reading and form the basis for a peer-reviewed publication of the experiment. Whilst the team members were hopeful of such useable results from the preliminary experiment, their main purpose, Dr. Crowther says, was to explore the potential for working at Diamond and isolate any issues that would need to be addressed in later experiments.



*Small area of C2.30 tested using XRF and showing traces of Fe in the shape of a Theta*

First, there were notable variations in the fluorescence intensity due to variations in the surface orientation of the stone in relation to the X-Ray beam and the detector. New experiments planned for 2011 will follow the method employed at CHESS of using two Vortex detectors symmetrically disposed about the beam. Second, in order to improve the photographic image and XRF image registry, a fixed camera and laser X-ray beam locators will be used, and the inscription will be oriented at an angle relative to the incident beam. This will enable the project to produce images that accurately correlate the inscription and the chemical traces recorded. The 2011 experimental campaign, which has now been approved by Diamond, will survey a larger group of Greek and Latin inscriptions, and some of the more eroded stones will be examined in detail. It is hoped that the Latin inscriptions in particular will have significant traces of lead (Pb) from paint, which is known from the earlier CHESS experiments to penetrate well below the original inscribed surface, unlike iron (Fe). All the inscriptions are quite small, which allows for

easy transport and mounting. In the experimental hutch the inscriptions are mounted on a metal plate which has horizontal and vertical movements, and allows for a scan of specifically targeted areas of the stone such as the Theta on C2.30.



*Experimental hutch of beamline B16*

Even from the preliminary results, the significance of XRF imaging for the interpretation of ancient documents is clear. The recovery of just one letter has provided a new and far more coherent reading of Ashmolean C2.30. The possibility of recovering lost texts from the traces of paint pigments below the stone's surface and from traces left behind by the engraver's tools demonstrates the ever-growing applicability of cutting-edge science to the study of ancient documents, and the fact that the Diamond Light Source synchrotron provides these facilities for academic research can be expected to lead to further interesting discoveries.

## e-SAD news

The Eikonopoiia symposium in Helsinki

Dr. Ségolène Tarte reports on a symposium entitled "Digital Imaging of Ancient Textual Heritage: Technological Challenges and Solutions" organised on 28-29 October 2010 by the Centre of Excellence "Ancient Greek Written Sources" of the Academy of Finland, on the instigation of the advisory board, of which Prof. Bowman is a member.

As the chosen brand name for the symposium, *Eikonopoiia*, also indicates, the themes of the meeting revolved around "image-making", encompassing both image capture and image processing for the use of documentary scholars and historians. Attending the conference and presenting their work were a group of experts all working closely with papyrologists, palaeographers, and epigraphers, and all specialized in the digitization of and image processing for textual heritage. The intent of digitization is usually to

reveal hidden text, as in the case of the Archimedes palimpsest, but also for non-palimpsest texts that are difficult to read, such as the Vindolanda tablets, to enhance the legibility of these texts, and to create digital avatars of the documents that can be further digitally manipulated, processed, and eventually interpreted by documentary scholars and historians.

This very enjoyable symposium achieved the remarkable feat of assembling technology experts who are usually dispersed and rather isolated from one another. It thereby created a community of “image-making” experts (ειδωλοποιοι? image-makers, literally shape-makers), in which design strategies, technological challenges and solutions to the questions of how usefully to image ancient textual heritage could be shared. The speakers presented the technologies they used, ranging from X-ray systems and multi-spectral imaging to 3D and Reflectance Transformation imaging; why they used them, e.g. the choice of an imaging modality based on the composition of inks; and how end-users take an active part in the design and implementation of these imaging projects (Proceedings available at: <http://www.eikonopoiia.org/programme.html>).

Besides a *Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum* volume, which the organisers are currently editing, regrouping the papers presented at the symposium, all present thought that one or even two books could constitute a further output of the event. There was a consensus that imaging technologies have reached a certain maturity and that tried and tested imaging techniques should be gathered, documented and detailed along with the type of textual artefacts to which they are most suited. All participants were also eager to keep this community alive, and it was agreed that a second instalment of *Eikonopoiia* would take place some time in 2011, probably in Washington DC.

## Visiting Scholars 2010/2011

Takashi Fujii

Takashi Fujii is a postdoctoral visiting research associate at CSAD from October 2010–September 2012, funded by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. He is also attached to Wolfson College as a Research Fellow. Originally born in Yamaguchi, and having completed Bachelor and Master degrees in European History at Kyoto University, he has earned a doctorate in Ancient History and Epigraphy at the University of Heidelberg. Before coming to Oxford, Takashi worked for a year as a visiting researcher at the University of Zurich. His research is concerned with the social, cultural and religious history of the Hellenistic and Roman East and with Greek epigraphy, currently focusing on Cyprus, the third largest island of the Mediterranean. One of his most important missions

in Oxford is to publish his dissertation *Imperial Cult and Imperial Representation in Roman Cyprus*.

“I cannot remember” Takashi says, “how many times during my stay in Europe I have been asked: ‘Why are you studying Ancient History?’” Most people here seem to have difficulty in understanding why a student from Japan—often portrayed as an enigmatic country of Sushi, Samurai and the Takeshi’s Castle—should, can or even want to study Ancient History. He has learnt to reply to it with a set of answers ranging from a rather mundane one (“Because I like the movie *Gladiator*”) to a more sophisticated one (e.g. “Do you know Japan is also a democratic country? Democracy goes back to...”). In fact, Takashi has begun to enjoy the ritualised conversation. “What I can learn from this ritual is, above all, the questioner’s attitude to Ancient History. Some willingly confess their faith in ‘Classical’ culture, others like to impose multidisciplinary and rather untraditional perspectives on Ancient History. I very much look forward to talking with students and teachers at Oxford, no doubt a very old, but ever innovative city”, he says.



Takashi Fujii

Marijn Visscher

Marijn Visscher is a Masters student in Ancient History at the University of Leiden. She is attached to the CSAD as a visiting student for the next two terms. Marijn is looking forward to her time in Oxford, and is particularly keen to attend epigraphy classes and seminars. Whilst here she will be carrying out research for her Master’s thesis, which looks at multilingualism in the Hellenistic kingdoms and the Roman Empire. Marijn is planning to use epigraphic material to give her a broader insight into the use of different languages and the meaning of written texts in societies of the Ancient World. She says that her interest lies “not first and foremost in bi- or multilingual inscriptions, but in the totality of the multilingual landscape”.

## Epigraphy Workshop

Lunchtime (1pm) seminars were held on Mondays throughout Michaelmas Term 2010, with papers from Oxford faculty and graduate students, as well as visiting scholars. The papers covered a wide range of topics:

### Michaelmas Term 2010

October 18, Albert Schachter, 'The re-organization(s) of the Thespian Mouseia'

October 25, Nikolaos Papazarkadas, 'Attica-Boeotica'

November 1, Robert Parker, 'Aiolians at the Thessalian Olympia: a new text from Aigai (*Epigraphica Anatolica* 2009)'

November 8, Charles Crowther, 'New evidence for the ruler cult of Antiochus of Commagene from Samosata'

November 15, Will Mack, 'Pastoral production and territorial definition at Thebes on Mykale: reconstructing *I.Priene* 361-3'

November 29, William Slater, 'Crowns for the Delia'

Reports on all these seminars can be found on Hannah Cornwell's CSAD blog: <http://cairo.csad.ox.ac.uk/users/csad/>

Meetings continue through the academic year, during Oxford Term time. Details on forthcoming seminars can be found on the online lecture list at [www.classics.ox.ac.uk](http://www.classics.ox.ac.uk). Scholars interested in offering papers to the workshop should contact one of the convenors:

Professor Robert Parker (New College)

Dr. Charles Crowther (CSAD)

Dr. Jonathan Prag (Merton College)

## Visitors to CSAD

The Centre is able to provide a base for a limited number of visiting scholars working in fields related to its activities. Enquiries concerning admission as Visiting Research Fellow (established scholars) or as Visiting Research Associate (for postgraduate students and younger researchers) should be addressed to the Centre's Director. Association with the Centre carries with it membership, for which a small administrative fee may be levied, of the University's Stelios Ioannou School for Research in Classical and Byzantine Studies.

## Circulation and Contributions

This is the fourteenth issue of the Centre's Newsletter, which is published on a biannual basis. The Newsletter is available online in HTML and pdf formats (<http://www.csad.ox.ac.uk/CSAD/Newsletters>).

We invite contributions to the Newsletter of news, reports and discussion items from and of interest to scholars working in the fields of the Centre's activities - epigraphy and papyrology understood in the widest sense. Contributions, together with other enquiries and requests to be placed on the Centre's mailing list, should be addressed to the Centre's Administrator, Maggy Sasanow, at the address below.

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