Moving inscriptions
The passage of the Abercius fragment

The language of loss in ancient Sicily

Graffiti from Gebel el-Silsila

Uley curse tablet no. 76

CHANGE in Pontus

CSAD

CSAD Spring 2024

Andrew Meadows

Happy New Year from the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents! We look back on a busy year at the Centre, with three of its associated projects reaching their end, and two more entering full stride. LatinNow, directed by Alex Mullen, is now at the end of its funded period, and this means a flurry of publishing activity, particularly in the Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents Series. *Social Factors in the Latinization of the Roman West* has just appeared, and *Languages and Communities in the Late-Roman and Post-Imperial Western Provinces* will appear this month (for more details on recent and forthcoming OSAD titles see p. 18–19). The Oxus-Indus project has come to an end and sees the publication online of the definitive type-corpus of Bactrian and Indo-Greek coinage: https://numismatics.org/bigr/. It is a pleasure also to be able to report that the two postdoctoral researchers responsible for this achievement have both this year secured themselves permanent new jobs: Simon Glenn as Curator of ancient coins at the British Museum, and Gunnar Dumke as Curator of the coin collection in Winterthur. Congratulations to both! The ARCH project, meanwhile, continues to grow, and provides for the first time an entry-point to a typology for the whole of Greek coinage

Meanwhile, our two ERC-funded projects, CHANGE and Crossreads continue apace. Details of various aspects, of their work (and travel) can be seen on pp. 4–5 and 6–7. A *parergon* of the latter project has just appeared in the form of a special issue of the journal *Phoenix,* edited by me and Jarek Bodzek, entitled *Coinage in Imperial Space.* Looking to the future, we will see the next volume of the *Corpus of Ptolemaic Inscriptions* heading to the press in the spring, as well as Roger Tomlin's long-awaited publication of the *Uley Tablets,* both in the OSAD series. 2024 will bring workshops on palaeography, petrography for Crossreads and a conference on the development of monetary behaviour, to be announced soon. And, last, but not least, we welcome to the CSAD team a new postdoctoral associate, Dr Amelia Dowler, (see p.17) who will be working with us on the CHANGE project until its completion.

Fig. 1. Section of a map from the ARCH portal showing mints that produced coins with images of Aphrodite

The ARCH Project

The ARCH typology is now a year old. Happy Birthday; but what is it?

For over two and a half centuries scholars have been struggling to provide an overview of the massive variety of coinage struck in the ancient world. On the Roman side this led to the creation of the multivolume, multiauthored series *Roman Imperial Coinage* and *Roman Provincial Coinage*. And both of these works have now made the leap to open access, digital presence on the world wide web (https://numismatics.org/ocre/ and https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk). But no such work for the remainder of the ('Greek') world has ever seen the light of day, despite a number of abortive attempts. Given the range, geographical and chronological, at stake, no single author was ever likely to take on this project, and it has long been clear that this too must be a team effort. But how to organise it?

Some 10 years ago, at a meeting convened at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, the decision was taken to create a project, Online Greek Coinage, to provide the framework for a born-digital type-corpus of Greek coinage. This would devolve the work of describing the coinages to a number of smaller projects that could then be united into a single whole. The technology chosen, Linked Open Data, and the decision to harmonise vocabulary and ontology in the nomisma.org project laid the foundations for a truly international, collaborative and yet devolved initiative.

Three projects were already under way: the Corpus Nummorum in Berlin (www.corpus-nummorum.eu) devoted to Thrace, Mysia and the Troad, Moneda Iberica in Valencia (https://monedaiberica.org), dedicated to the pre-Roman coinage of the Iberian peninsula, and a suite of projects devoted to Hellenistic royal coinage in New York (https://numismatics.org/hrc/).

The ARCH project, funded by the AHRC, the ANR and Mineco, sought to fill the gaps for the areas and periods not covered by those existing projects, and to providing an overarching portal to allow for them all to be searched in one place. To this end, the project funded a postdoctoral team in Oxford and Paris to create a typology (IRIS: https://greekcoinage.org/iris/) that filled the gaps, and a data scientist, John Pybus at the Oxford e-Research Centre, to build the portal (ARCH: https://greekcoinage.org/arch/).

The IRIS typology initially drew for illustration on the fully digitised collection at the BnF in Paris but is now being supplemented as part of the CHANGE project with the collections at the British Museum, the Münzkabinett in Berlin and the Ashmolean Museum. Already, it provides a powerful new way to search the coinage of the pre-Roman world, and it is far from static. Searches can be conducted by place of production, by the material of the coinages, by iconography and by date. Results can sorted by a similar range of criteria. For the first time, it is now possible to explore the whole range of 'Greek' coinage in one place (see e.g. fig. 1), and draw maps of the results. New types are being discovered and added on a weekly basis. It is one of the advantages of a digital project that it can grow in this way. And as new collections join, we hope that it will provide the basic resource for numismatic research for decades to come.

The 25th David Lewis Memorial Lecture was given on 24th May 2023 by Professor Anna Magnetto of the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa. Professor Magnetto is the successor as Director of the Laboratorio di Storia, Archeologia, Epigrafia e Tradizione dell'Antico of Professor Carmine Ampolo who gave a memorable Lewis Lecture in 2015 on the *Tabula Cauloniensis*. Professor Magnetto is a Greek historian and epigrapher, with a particular interest in the history of institutions and inter-state relations, on which she has published extensively, including *Gli arbitrati interstatali greci. 337–196* (1997), *L'arbitrato di Rodi fra Samo e Priene* (2008) and a joint article with Professor Luraghi in *Chiron* 2012 on the important Megalopolis-Messene dispute dossier. In her Lewis Lecture she presented a fragmentary inscription found during Italian excavations at Kyme in the Aiolis on the western coast of Turkey. In the first part of her lecture Professor Magnetto examined systematically the surviving words of the inscription evaluating possibilities and probabilities for their reconstruction as the remains of an honorific decree for a prominent individual. This was a technical masterclass in Greek epigraphy, but Professor Magnetto saved the most striking part of her lecture to last, when she offered an attractive and dramatic identification for the honorand of the inscription as a local historian hitherto attested only through isolated fragments of his work preserved by later authors.

We look forward to the 26th Lewis Lecture which will be given by Professor Marietta Horster, of the University of Mainz on 22 May 2024.

Adıyaman after the earthquake
Charles Crowther

In the week before Christmas I had the opportunity to visit Adıyaman with my colleagues Professor Margherita Facella of the University of Pisa and Professor Michael Blömer and Dr Dilek Çobanoğlu of the University of Münster's Forschungsstelle Asia Minor at the invitation of the Director of the Adıyaman Archaeological Museum Mehmet Alkan. Our visit combined the familiarity of returning to a region and museum where we have worked over the last twenty years with sadness: Adıyaman was at the centre of the brutal earthquakes which caused destruction across southeastern Turkey on the morning of 6th February last year. Among the tens of thousands who died was our friend and treasured colleague Muzaffer Özçiriş.

Infrastructure services have been restored in Adıyaman and reconstruction has begun, but the effects of the earthquake were evident everywhere: apartment buildings which once lined the streets await demolition; silent gaps mark those which collapsed and have now been cleared.

Archaeology and tourism have their place in plans to revive the regional economy. Professor Blömer and Dr Çobanoğlu brought from Münster a copy of the digital archive of Friedrich Karl Dörner, the excavator of Arsameia-on-the-Nymphaios and, with Theresa Goell, Nemrud Dağı, which was received at a well-attended ceremony hosted by the Governor of Adıyaman Dr Osman Varol. Ancient sites in Commagene have for the most part survived the human catastrophe; one of the columns of the Karakuş tumulus fell but has now been re-erected. Adıyaman Museum itself suffered only minor damage, and we were able to resume recording and cataloguing of the inscriptions in the museum garden, including a notable collection of boundary markers and an altar to Tourmasgades first noted by Dörner but never published. Excavation continues even in mid-winter at the necropolis and urban site of Perrhe immediately to the north of Adıyaman which has been transformed into a fine archaeological park (pictured above); new inscriptions have been found to supplement our 2011 epigraphical survey of the necropolis. And the archaeology of Commagene continues to offer surprises. Two and a half years ago the remains of a new sanctuary of the ruler cult of Antiochus I were found by chance on a high plateau below the 2100m conical summit of Kımıl Dağı in eastern Commagene. We visited the site in June 2022 and made a preliminary record of inscriptions on two large stelai. In September the stelai were spectacularly brought down from the mountain by Jandarma helicopter, and are now in the Perrhe archaeological park where we were able to examine them more closely.

The Jandarma helicopter lifting one of the two stelai from the Kımıl Dağı sanctuary from the mountainside

Pontic and Paphlagonian peregrinations

Marcus Chin
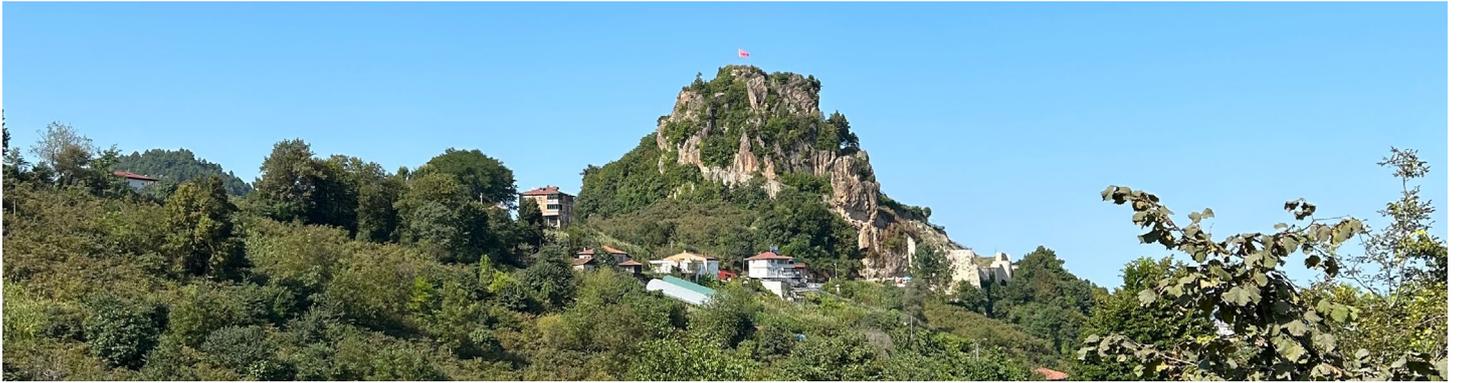
*View of Ünye Kalesi, the likely site of the Mithridatic mint of Chabakta.*

This summer the CHANGE team, generously sponsored by the Thomas Whitcombe Greene fund via a Craven award and accompanied by Charles Crowther and Ariadne Pagoni (a DPhil student working on Hellenistic culture at New College), travelled to the Black Sea (Karadeniz) region of Türkiye. Over the best part of a fortnight we traversed the littoral and hinterland between Trabzon in the east and Istanbul in the west, visiting the sites of no less than twenty-four pre-Roman mint-cities (Trapezos, Pharnakeia/Kerasos, Chabakta, Kabeira, Komana, Taulara, Gazioura, Zela, Amaseia, Pimolisa, Laodikeia, Amisos, Sinope, Pompeiopolis, Kromna, Amastris, Tieion, Herakleia Pontika, Dia, Bithnyion, Gordion, Pessinous, Astakos, Nikomedeia); twelve museums; and a few other bonus sites (the Zigana Pass where the Ten Thousand sighted the sea, the excavations on the mound of Oluz Hüyük, Prusias ad Hypium, and Hieron on the Bosphoros, in particular). Viewing this from the relative comfort and convenience of a five-seater Citroën C5, with Andrew Meadows at the wheel, was not how an ancient traveller would have experienced the region. What we gained as a result, nonetheless, was a deeper familiarity with the historical geography of the Karadeniz, and this informed my ongoing work on dynastic power and Lazar's research on the relationships between civic and imperial coinages (the subjects of our respective monographs that are being funded by CHANGE), while also contributing to our common aim of studying the relations between coinage and Anatolian political dynamics more generally. In reflecting on the trip two themes, that roughly correlate chronologically with our itinerary, spring to mind.

One concerns the distinctive regional manifestation of the polis, the state-type whose ubiquity we take for granted in other parts of Anatolia and mainland Greece. In the first few days we passed through a number of the mint-cities of the Mithridatic kingdom, including Pharnakeia (Giresun), Chabakta (Ünye), Kabeira (Niksar), Taulara (Geyraz), and Gazioura (Turhal). Some did go on to become major cities in the Roman period. To judge from the craggy character of several of these hilltop citadels (typically dressed now with later Byzantine or Ottoman fortifications), and their generally rugged and mountainous surroundings, it seems probable that some sites may have served as little more than forts in the Hellenistic period. This brought into further relief the question of the 'polis'-ness of the coinages of these places, many of which include civic legends for the first time in the late 2nd-1st centuries BCE, but feature very regular kingdom-wide imagery – a unifying characteristic of many of the Mithridatic civic bronze coins, on display in museums (Giresun, Tokat, Amasya, Ereğli), which Lazar will be investigating in coming months.

A similar tension surrounded the several rock-cut tombs that we visited – a tomb-type that is attested in other parts of Anatolia, but which seems to have been particularly pronounced here. The most spectacular on the trip were those of the Pontic kings, mentioned by Strabo, and still providing a haughty backdrop to the tranquillities of Amasya.

These made sense as part of the fabric of the Pontic capital, Amaseia, but others were harder to square, like the imposing tomb at Kapılıkaya near Laçin, perched near the top of a crag of rock accessible only by a slightly questionable dirt-road (courtesy again of Andy's driving), without any clear connection to a civic settlement of any sort, and which may yet be the largest such tomb in Anatolia; or the temple-tombs of Asarkale, almost forty kilometres west of Amisos (Samsun), providing scenic accompaniments to a view of the Halys (Kızılırmak) river.
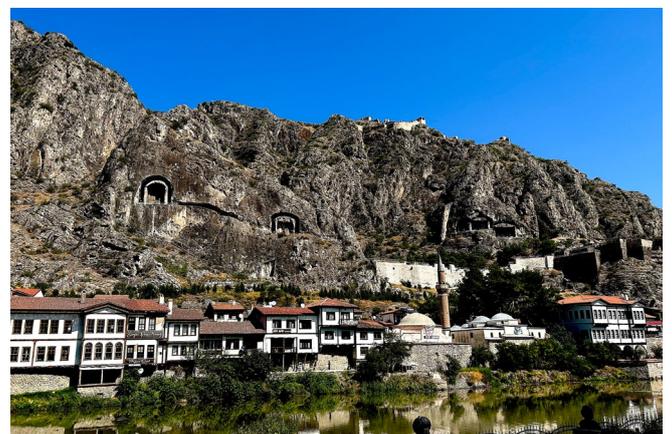
The tombs of the Pontic kings above the modern town of Amasya.

Bronze Coin of Chabakta of the 1st century BCE.

4th-century BCE silver issue of Amisos, with the reverse type inscribed with the legend ΠΕΙΡΑΙ.

Apart from the Pontic kings, we know very little about the individuals who were buried at these tombs: were they Persian satraps, Paphlagonian rulers like the Korylas of Xenophon's Hellenica, or wealthy Greek notables? Whatever the case, the world of the city seemed quite distant, and these silent memorials rather resembled neighbouring estates, or temple-states. Two other stops stoked this suspicion – Komana Pontika near Tokat, the seat of a priestly ruling class even into the Roman period, where excavations have more recently revealed remains of a late antique church, and earlier still the Iron Age mound of Oluz Höyük roughly eighty kilometres further west, which seems to have existed as some sort of centre of commerce up to the 1st century BCE, perhaps for neighbouring village settlements, without ever attaining the mass of a polis. Oluz Höyük has been particularly significant to Leah as one of the few sites from the region with published coins (including, intriguingly, Roman silver) to contribute to her database of excavation finds.

A second theme was the tension between coastal and inland Anatolia, which increasingly became evident as we travelled west from Sinop to Bolu. It was interesting to observe how tightly the towns of Samsun and Sinop (Amisos and Sinope) hugged the coast, and the sheerness of the mountain ranges that limited access to the inland south. As we headed west, we passed settlements with limited connections to the interior, like Kromna (Kurucaşile), Amastris (Amasra), and Tieion (Filyos) – the modern highway was clearly a much

more recent development, and there were no obvious routes for an ancient road. Maritime travel must have been the main way people travelled between these coastal communities, and observing this helped us to make more sense of the coinage – why, for instance, Amisos characterised itself as a second Piraeus (a question Lazar is seeking to answer) or why Amastris (ruler of Herakleia Pontika, the first major port east of the Bosphoros) could establish a synoecism and afford to mint her own coins in the early 3rd century BCE.

Our short, two-day diversion from Bolu to Gordion and Pessinous (near Polatlı and Sevrihisar) further highlighted the disparity between the coast and sites further inland. The centre of an influential Iron Age kingdom, Gordion sits today in the midst of a desert-like plain, making the survival of the huge mound covering the mid-8th century BCE tomb of Midas' father Gordias, and its enormous wooden beams, all the more impressive. The unexpectedly rewarding site of Pessinous also emerged almost out of nowhere, set in an alien landscape of dusty and white-specked hills, and a terrifying murder of crows. The contrast with the lush and verdant ranges that skirted northern Anatolia, which even at times recalled the Alps, was striking.

And then, of course, there were the ancient documents. We studied a number of intensely interesting monuments, in museum courtyards and elsewhere: the classical-era funerary epigram of a Eukleides Atteios mourning his birth, and life as the source of sorrow, in light of his early death at Sinop; the voluble honorific base for Crispus the pantomime at Ereğli, of the high imperial period; sherds inscribed with Phrygian graffiti at Gordion; the enormous letters of the inscription commemorating the Pontic high-priest, Tes, at his rock-tomb in Amasya; the bronze tablet recording the oath of the Assians on the ascension of Caligula in 37 AD exhibited at Istanbul; the lengthy funerary inscriptions at Kocaeli-Izmit that bemused us for their mention of Attic drachmas where denarii might have been expected; all were profoundly intriguing. It would perhaps be apt, however, to put the spotlight on the mid-4th century treaty between Satyros, the tyrant ruler of Herakleia Pontika, and Sinope, which we found prominently displayed at the Sinop

museum: a document outlining a bilateral military agreement between the two parties, revelatory among other things for the close involvement of the Persian king in military mobilisation in the provinces, the monthly pay for a soldier (two and a half staters), and the power relations between the cities of the north-western Anatolian coast, in all providing much fodder for my work on the Herakleian tyrants.

There were also numismatic surprises, foreseen and unforeseen. At Sinop, we were glad to find a display of part of the significant Ordu hoard (not least because we were unable to find any trace of the archaeological museum at Ordu itself), notable for the presence of a previously unattested silver type of the Kappadokian king Ariarathes III or IV, shown wearing Persian headgear (otherwise attested only on their bronze coins). At Bolu museum there was an unexpected surprise – a cluster of late archaic silver coins, including an issue from Lampsakos upon which Leah has conducted a die study, which we think might be part of an unknown hoard. And at Istanbul it was wonderful to see some of the earliest electrum coins from the famous Artemision deposit at Ephesos.

As our plane left Istanbul, it was hard to escape the feeling that the Karadeniz had in its turn left something with us – a deepened sense of the peculiarity of its ancient history, in the contradictions of its landscapes and mysteries of its rock-cut tombs, and as a region where access to the world inland could be sharply segregated from commerce by sea. As ancient historians we are usually confined to the bare remains of literary testimony, coin catalogues, epigraphic corpora, or archaeological reports; it was thrilling to be reminded over these two weeks of the worlds in which ambitious kings and queens, aspiring citizens and concerned mercenary soldiers once lived and thrived.

The language(s) of loss in ancient Sicily

Robert Crellin
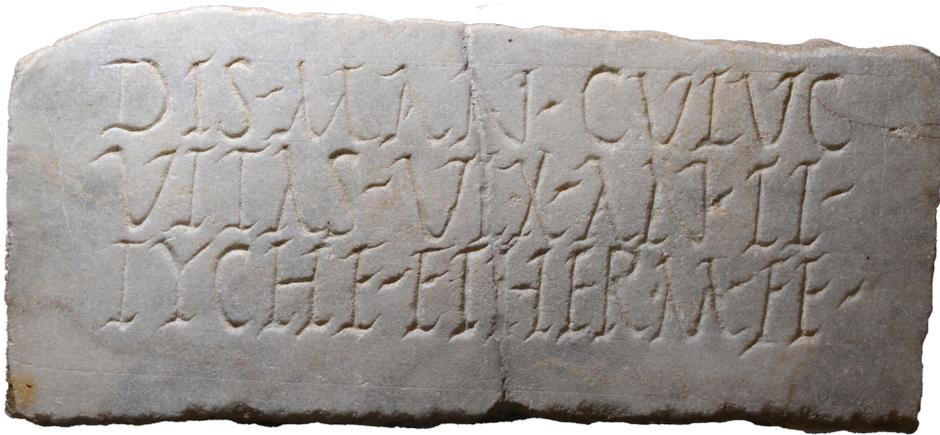
A little under two thousand years ago, two bereaved parents stood by a stone plaque mourning the loss of their two year old son. The text of the inscription (*ISic000003*, Fig. 1) reads:

1. Dis · Man(ibus) · Culuc-
2. uitas · vix(it) · an(nis) · II ·
3. Tyche · et · Herm(es) · fe(cerunt)

"To the shades of the underworld. Culucuitas lived for 2 years. Tyche and Hermes made this."

The text is short, terse even. But it is no less poignant for that. In fact the text follows a structure seen in many other similar texts.

• Dedication to the gods of the underworld
• Statement of how long the deceased person lived
• Statement of who dedicated the inscription

Here we see the same structure in a text (*ISic000323*) commemorating a certain Lucius Arrius Secundus:

1. D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum)
2. L(ucius) Arrius
3. Secundus
4. vix(it) an(nos) XVII
5. marmorari
6. convive(ntes) fecer(unt)

"Sacred to the shades of the underworld. Lucius Arrius Secundus lived for 17 years. The stonemakers living with him made this."

The stone is erected in a different context: it is for a teenager, and those responsible for putting up the stone are not the parents, but the people he lived with. But the structure is identical to that of *ISic000003*.

It might be supposed that the formulaic nature of these texts renders them of little interest for understanding the world of those who commissioned them: they used the formulae because they were 'expected' to be used. There is more to this than first meets the eye.

Not only are there multiple Latin inscriptions sharing the same overall structure, but the same structure can also be observed in Greek inscriptions too. In *ISic003231* we have the second element, the statement of how long the deceased lived, sharing exactly the same structure as that element in *ISic000003*:

1. Ἐπαφρόειτος
2. ἔζησεν
3. ἔτη · ξ ·

"Epaphroeitos [Epaphrodeitos?] lived for 60 years."

The identical structures can be clearly seen from a comparison of their syntax (Fig. 2 and 3 respectively):

Nor is this an isolated occurrence. If we take just those sentences containing the words *vixit* and ἔζησεν, 'lived', in a pilot corpus of inscriptions from across Sicily (mainly from Catania, from the first six centuries AD), there are many inscriptions that share the same syntactic structure. Fig. 4 provides a visualisation (to save listing them all out): each 'blob' (for want of a better word) represents a single syntactic structure. Thus the structure shown in Fig. 2 and 3 would be represented by a single 'blob'. The larger the blob, the greater the number of sentences sharing that syntactic structure. The closer two blobs are to one another, the more similar their syntactic structures are.

Two sets of blobs are particularly close to one another, as indicated by the fact that they are joined together by edges to form a cluster.
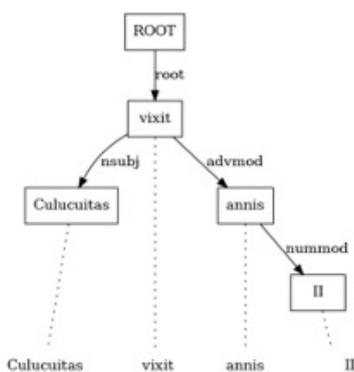

Fig. 2: Dependency analysis of ISic000003 sentence 2 (Universal Dependencies).
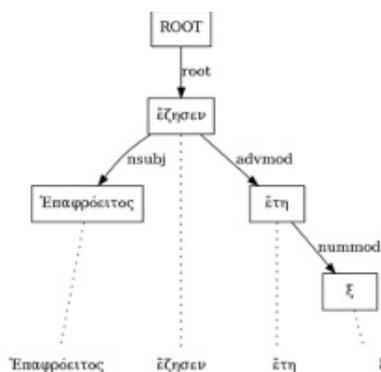

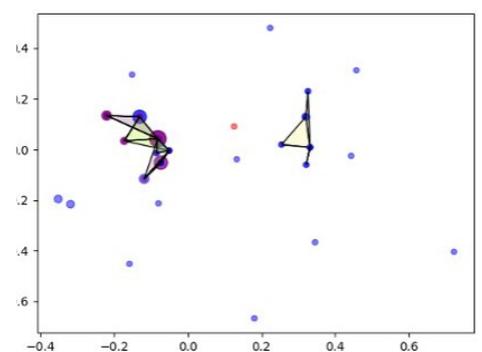*Fig. 3: Dependency analysis of ISic003231 (Universal Dependencies)*

Fig. 4: Distribution of syntactic variation of vixit and ἔζησεν.

Blobs in the representation have different colours: blue blobs represent structures only attested in Latin; red blobs structures only attested in Greek; and purple blobs structures attested both in Latin and Greek. The fact that four blobs are purple in the left-hand cluster indicates that the corresponding structures are attested in both Latin and Greek.

The use of the same formulae irrespective of language tells us that the Greek and Latin-speaking communities in Catania had a common funerary 'metalanguage' at the syntactic, or structural, level, instantiated in Latin or Greek according to the preference (most likely) of those responsible for commissioning the monument.

How did these inscriptions come to be written? It so happens that another inscription, most likely from Palermo, Sicily, (*ISic000470*) gives us a window into the process. It is an advertisement for getting inscriptions made. What makes the inscription particularly interesting is that it is written in both Latin and Greek:

Here's the Greek text:

1. στῆλαι
2. ἐνθάδε
3. τυποῦνται καὶ
4. χαράσσονται
5. ναοῖς ἱεροῖς
6. σὺν ἐνεργείαις
7. δημοσίαις

"Stelai are set out and engraved here for sacred temples together with public works"

And here's the Latin version:

1. tituli
2. heic
3. ordinantur et
4. sculpuntur
5. aidibus sacreis
6. qum operum
7. publicorum

"Inscriptions are set out and engraved here for sacred temples together with public works"

The fact that a single engraver was offering the same engraving services to both Latin and Greek speakers shows that the two communities were living sufficiently close to one another that they went to the same place to get their inscriptions: these

people were talking to one another! It is not surprising that such a community would have a common metalanguage for commemorating the passing of loved ones. The analysis of this metalanguage, in turn, brings with it the opportunity to offer insights into how this community thought about the loss of their members.

Acknowledgements

I.Sicily documents

ISic000003: Prag, J. R. W., Cummings, J., Chartrand, J., Vitale, V., Metcalfe, M. and Stoyanova, S. 'I.Sicily 000003.' Revised 2021-06-30. http://sicily.classics.ox.ac.uk/inscription/ISic000003; doi: 10.5281/zenodo.4333729

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ISic000470: Prag, J. R. W., Cummings, J., Chartrand, J., Vitale, V., Metcalfe, M. and and Stoyanova, S. 'I.Sicily 000470.' Revised 2021-01-19. http://sicily.classics.ox.ac.uk/inscription/ISic000470; doi: 10.5281/zenodo.4337543

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Zhang, K. and Shasha, D. (1989) 'Simple fast algorithms for the editing distance between trees and related problems', *SIAM Journal of Computing* 18, 1245–1262.

Texts and translations follow the associated I.Sicily record.

Rediscovered: Ramsay and the Abercius fragments

Ken Tully

Housed in the Vatican Museum the verse epitaph of Abercius is universally considered one of the most valuable documentary sources of early Christian language and symbolism. Fragments of the epigram, which is inscribed on a *bomos* and dates to the late second or early third century, were discovered in 1883 by Sir William M. Ramsay and J. R. S. Sterrett near the ancient Phrygian city of Hierapolis (Fig. 1). However, controversy ensued over the presence or absence of a single letter, *eta*, on the edge of the inscription, which in turn sparked persistent debate over the reading of a key word in the epigram as either 'king' (βασιλῆ), 'sovereignty' (βασιλείαν), or 'royal' (βασίλειαν). As W. M. Calder declared, 'No disputed reading in the whole range of ancient epigraphy has aroused keener controversy' ("The Epitaph of Avircius Marcellus". *JRS* 29 (1939): 2).

Ramsay insisted that when he first discovered the stone it clearly read ΒΑΣιΛΗ, but for over a century scholars have made appeal to Sterrett's field sketch of the Abercius fragments (Fig. 2) as evidence discrediting Ramsay's reading of an *eta* on the edge of line two where Sterrett reads only ΒΑΣιΛ and where there is no trace of an *eta* today. In addition, the hagiographic manuscripts which recorded the inscription all read βασιλεῖαν, βασίλειαν, or βασιλείαν. Christopher Jones would later write, 'It seems, therefore, as if Ramsay's memory, or notes, had misled him' ("Flavia Politta and Manilius Fuscus." *CP* 84 (1989): 131).

Ramsay's contention was that the edge of the stone suffered damage during its transfer from Turkey to Rome in 1893. A sketch of the inscription by Louis Sabuncu,
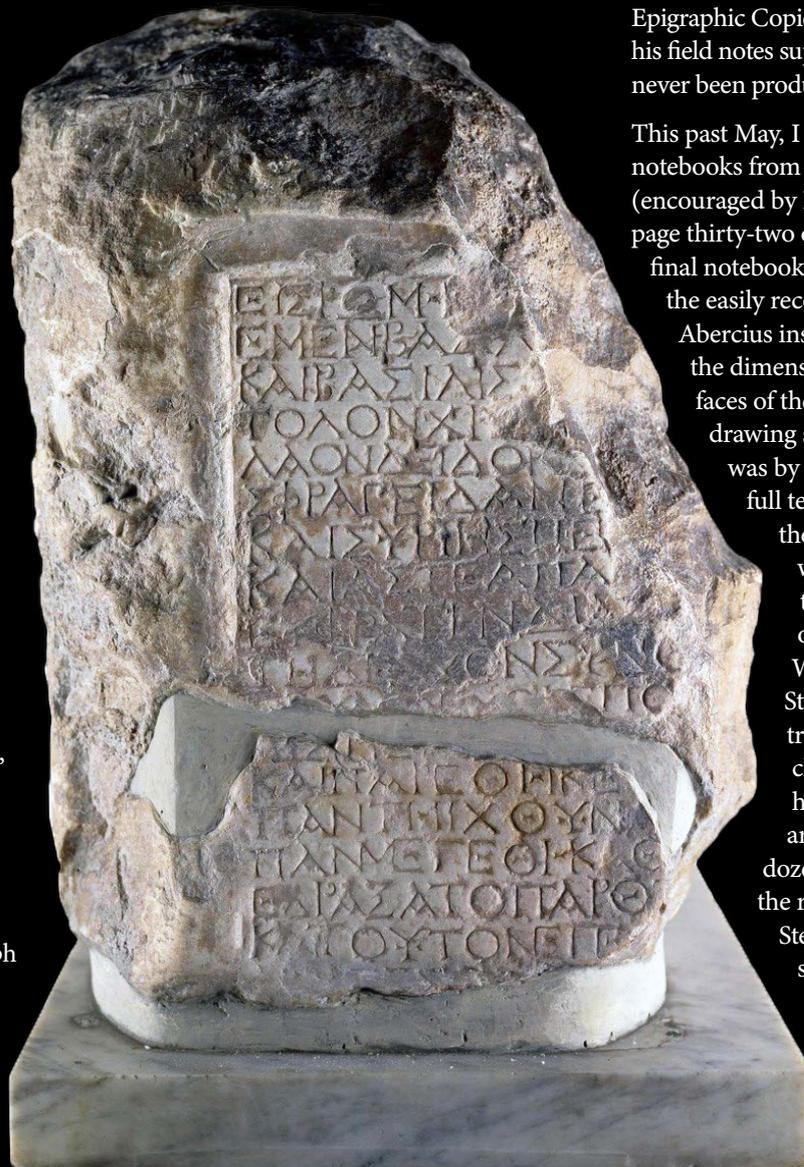

Fig. 1: The Abercius Inscription (Phrygia, before 216 CE). The two extant fragments as displayed today in the Vatican Museum Christian Lapidarium. Courtesy the Vatican Museum.

made before the stone was transferred to the Vatican, clearly shows a vertical and mid-line horizontal stroke at the edge of the stone (Figs 3–4). Shortly after the discovery Ramsay published a reading of the epigraph with a complete *eta* ("The Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia." *JHS* 4 (1883): 424). Years later he wrote, 'the left-hand half of the letter H was not E because there were no cross strokes at top and bottom, only the beginning of a cross stroke in the middle. As the H was certain and as the text had to be reproduced in type, I thought it best to give the letter complete in order to avoid uncertainty' ("The Utilisation of Old

Epigraphic Copies." *JHS* 38 (1918): 190). Yet his field notes supporting this reading had never been produced until now.

This past May, I revisited Ramsay's field notebooks from 1883 housed at CSAD (encouraged by Peter Thonemann). On page thirty-two of notebook no. 32 (the final notebook I consulted), I found the easily recognizable lines of the Abercius inscription accompanied by the dimensions of the two preserved faces of the *bomos* (Fig. 5). The drawing shows that Ramsay, who was by that time familiar with the full text of the epigram from the famous hagiography, was attempting to recall the missing text for some of the lines from memory. What is clear is that where Sterrett's sketch had no trace of an *eta*, Ramsay clearly notes its vertical and horizontal strokes. There are in fact more than a dozen discrepancies between the readings of Ramsay and Sterrett. Sterrett was just a student at the time, and it is possible that the experienced Ramsay had a keener eye for those letters only partially preserved, most notably at the start of the fracture line where Sterrett offers no reading but later pencils in ΠΑΥΛΟΝΕΧ.

The newly discovered Ramsay field notes with corroboration from the Sabuncu rendering perhaps lend fresh support to readings such as Thonemann's βασιληῖς. ("Abercius of Hierapolis: Christianization and Social Memory in Late Antique Asia Minor.", in B. Dignas, and R. R. R. Smith (eds), *Historical and Religious Memory in the Ancient World* (Oxford, 2012): 282). More broadly, it underscores the value of preserving and revisiting the pages of unpublished notes transcribed by past scholars in the hope that they might shed new light on longstanding controversies.
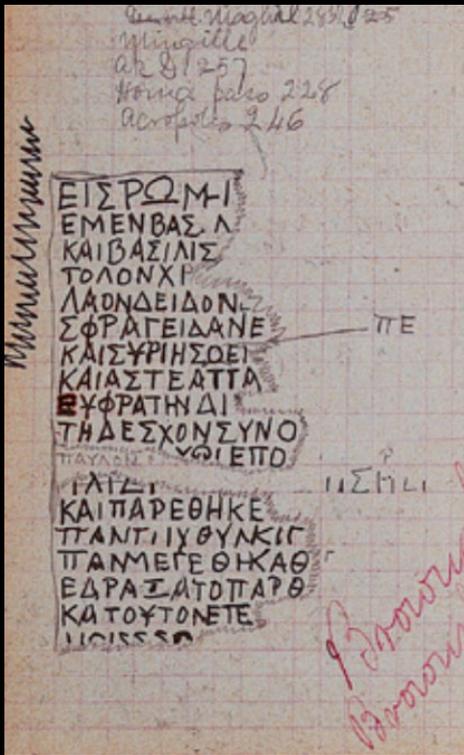
Fig. 2: Sketch of the Abercius fragments from the field notebook of J. R. S. Sterrett. Courtesy Cornell University Library.

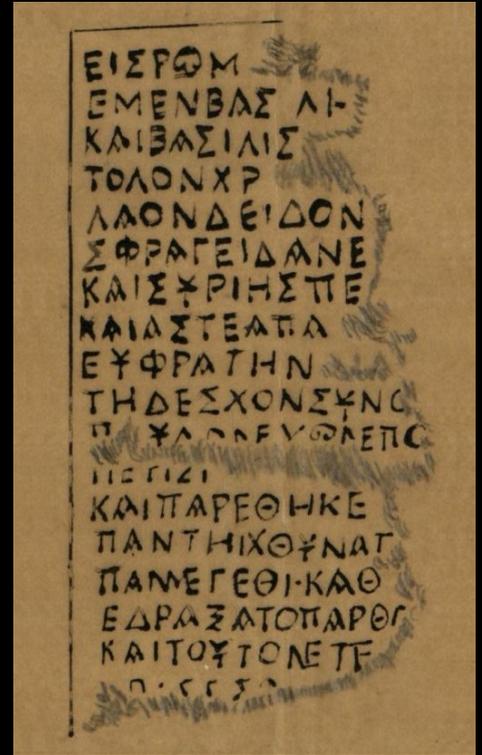Fig. 3: Louis Sabuncu (1838–1931), Turkish Imperial Translator.

Fig. 4: Rendering of the Abercius inscription by Louis Sabuncu prior to the shipment of the upper fragment to Rome. Courtesy of Kasim Hizli.
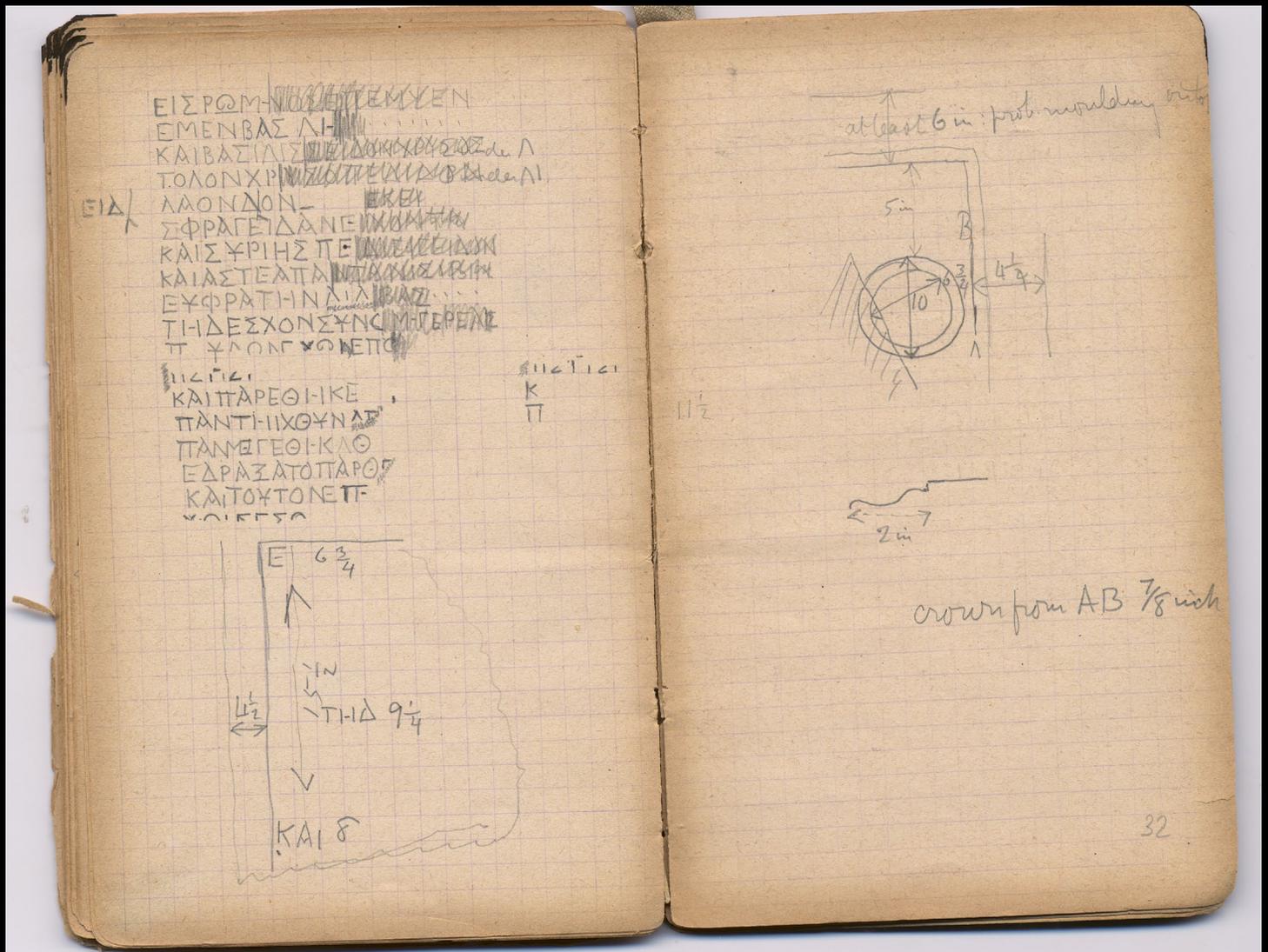

Fig. 5: The newly discovered sketch of the Abercius fragments from the 1883 field notebook of Sir William M. Ramsay. Courtesy of the CSAD.

Greek Epigraphy in Gebel el-Silsila

Adrienn Almásy-Martin

Greek Inscriptions
on the East Bank

Maria Nilsson, Adrienn Almásy-Martin
and John Ward

BRILL · THE SWEDISH EXPEDITION TO GEBEL EL-SILSILA

The site of Gebel el-Silsila is situated in Upper Egypt, around 65 km north of Aswan, 130 km south of Luxor, on both sides of the Nile. The modern Arabic name, 'Mountain of the Chain', reflects the landscape of hills of the East bank while on the West bank a New Kingdom temple, the Speos of Horemheb, and a series of cenotaphs are located. The complex on the East bank — the largest sandstone quarry in Ancient Egypt — was used from the New Kingdom. To the south of these New Kingdom 'galleries' were the important Graeco-Roman quarries which were the source of stone for temples built or enhanced in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods: Edfu, Koptos, Dendara, Esna.

Early research in the late 19th century was

The recently published volume on Greek epigraphical material in Gebel el-Silsila'

undertaken by Georges Legrain who was the first to explore the East Bank of Gebel el-Silsila and systematically to document all the visible graffiti. 306 inscriptions in Greek and Demotic were subsequently published by Preisigke and Spiegelberg in 1915 (**Ägyptische und griechische Inschriften und Graffiti aus den Steinbruchen des Gebel Silsile (Ober-ägypten)**, Strassburg, 1915). Another survey was conducted between 1955 and 1984, led by Ricardo Caminos on behalf of the Egyptian Exploration Society, but the inscriptions recorded during this mission remain unpublished.

The Swedish Gebel el-Silsila project started in 2012 with the aim of continuing this work and providing a comprehensive corpus of all written and pictorial material from the East bank in its archaeological context. *Greek Inscriptions on the East*

A Google Earth image of the East bank, showing Roman quarries and other features.

Bank covers all the Greek epigraphical material. The archaeological work is ongoing and further volumes on the Demotic inscriptions and ostraca and pictographical material are under way.

The written material found on the East bank includes mainly Greek and Demotic graffiti engraved with iron chisels on the walls of the quarries. The numerous commemorative and dedicatory Greek and Demotic inscriptions reflect the presence of workers living in the area, including a soldier, a *sitometros*, engineers, a director of works, blacksmiths, and stone-cutters.

The new corpus of the Greek graffiti includes 193 texts from nine quarries. The majority are dedications by individuals and include their personal names, patronyms and sometimes status or occupation (e.g. no. 29: Πατέχνουβις; no. 109: τῶ προσκύνημα Νεμωνίου στρατιώτου τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ Διονυσίου καὶ Διονυτᾶτος τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ 'the dedication of Nemonios the soldier and his father Dionysios and his son Dionytas'). The noun *proskynema* 'act of worship', which is otherwise commonly used in dedications written by visitors on temple walls, is often added to the personal information (e.g. no. 36: τὸ προσκύνημα Παράθης Φατρῆς, 'the *proskynema* of Parathes son of Phatres'), but there are cases where the personal names are omitted and the text is confined to just τὸ προσκύνημα (e.g. No. 2). There are only a few long or bilingual inscriptions. These are full sentences either with a greeting formula (no. 39: Λούκιος Γαίου χρηστὲ χαῖρε, 'Lucius son of Gaius, worthy one, farewell!') or with simple words for adoration (no. 57: Ἀπολλώνιος Ἰσιδώρου εὐχαριστῶ τῇ Τύχῃ τῶν ὧδε, Apollonios son of Isidoros. 'I thank the Tyche of the ones here').

Only a few texts were provided with dates and just eight mention specific rulers, all from the early Roman period: Augustus, Tiberius and Claudius (e.g. no. 183: Τὸ προσκύνημα Μασῆς Δράκων εἰς λατομίαν (ἔτους) ιζ' Τιβερίου Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ Θωὺθ ιθ' 'The proskynema: Mases (son of) Drakon in the quarry. Year 17 Tiberius Caesar Augustus, Thoth 1') The same three emperors are mentioned in the demotic material. The popularity of personal names varied geographically and by time, and the onomastic material of Gebel el-Silsila is consistent with the regional patterns and the early Roman period dates. The anthroponyms from the quarries written in Greek reflect the name-giving traditions of the early

The 'Main Quarry' (Q34).
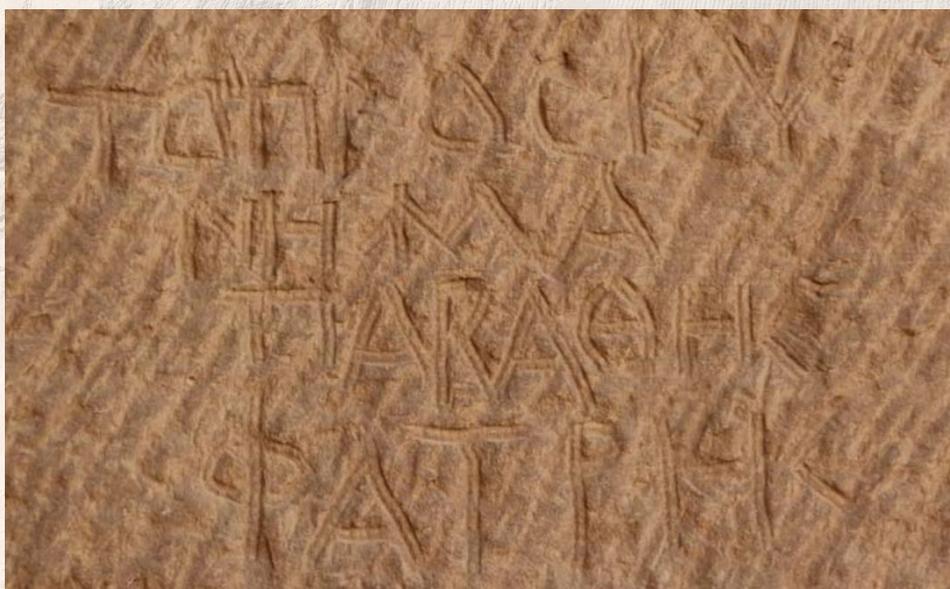
Inscription No. 36.
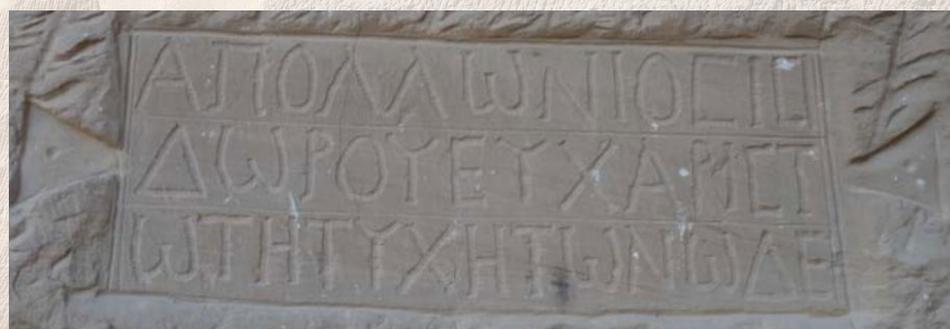
Inscription No. 57.

Roman period. Egyptian (e.g. Petosiris) and Greek names (e.g. Apollonios) are both well-represented. Roman names (e.g. Gaius), however, are only ocasionally found.

The Gebel el-Silsila Project is the first systematic study of the material from the East bank. Until now most of the work in Gebel el-Silsila has been on the New Kingdom site on the West bank. This new volume will make a substantial contribution to our knowledge of this community of quarry workers, with many novel and improved readings and interpretations of known texts and of previously unpublished material.

Adrienn Almásy-Martin was the Research Associate for LGPN VII Lower Egypt and the Fayum; for the academic year 2023/24 she will move to the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (University of Oxford) as Departmental Lecturer in Egyptology.

FAIR Epigraphy Projects

Imran Asif

FAIR Epigraphy aims to serve as a hub for digital epigraphers, providing access to FAIR and linked open data for epigraphy. Our mission is to promote the use of FAIR (*Findable - Accesible - Interoperable - Reusable*) data principles within the epigraphic discipline. To meet this end, we will provide projects in digital epigraphy with access to high-quality Linked Open Datasets, tools and sets of guidelines to promote best practice.

The FAIR Epigraphy project stands at the forefront of this data revolution, aiming to establish a linked data cloud that ensures the Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reusability (FAIR) of epigraphic data. Collaborating internationally, the project consolidates community-wide standards, develops tools for implementing these standards, and hosts Linked Open Data published by individual projects. By embracing the power of Linked Open Data and cutting-edge interface technologies, FAIR Epigraphy is set to transform the digital age of epigraphic research.

A prime example of this transformation is the RDF Pilot, which showcases the potential of the FAIR approach through a pilot project. Utilising published and publicly available epigraphic data (I.Sicily, Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg – EDH, Greek Verse Inscriptions of Cyrenaica, The Roman Inscriptions of Britain – RIB), this initiative employs technologies like XML-to-RDF conversion, Bootstrap 5 (GUI), SPARQL Editor (Play with RDF), and JavaScript (Backend) to make epigraphic data visible and searchable. This seamless integration of technology and epigraphy enables scholars to delve into the comparable data of inscriptions (e.g., Name, Object Type, Material, Location, Trismegistos ID, Language, and Inscription Text) of inscriptions, thereby enriching our understanding of ancient cultures.

A second project, the Inscriptiones Identifier Resolver (IDR), tackles the challenge of disambiguating multiple editions and digital identifiers assigned to inscriptions. By utilising the Trismegistos TexRelations Matcher API, this tool efficiently fetches Trismegistos Identifiers (TM IDs) using other epigraphic identifiers, streamlining the identification process and promoting accessibility through a simple user interface. Epigraphers can obtain Trismegistos Identifiers and other digital corpora identifiers from the Trismegistos TexRelations MatcherAPI by providing the different source identifiers. This process takes time because epigraphers need to fetch TM IDs by providing them one-by-one from different source IDs; but it is also a non-trivial task for most epigraphers to query the API directly. The Inscriptiones Identifier Resolver (IDR) helps the epigrapher to fetch the IDs in a more efficient, user-friendly and less time-consuming way.

The FAIR Epigraphy Bibliography project advances the cause of bibliographic Linked Open Data for ancient epigraphy. This pioneering effort generates and maintains stable identifiers (URIs) for bibliographic items referenced in epigraphic studies. Anchored by the International Society for Greek and Latin Epigraphy's (AIEGL) List of Abbreviations, the project employs the Zotero bibliographic software to create a robust and accessible platform. The web interface provides search, export, and unique item identifiers, further facilitating the integration of scholarly resources.

This project also overcame various limitations in Zotero, enabling the definition of hierarchical relationships between bibliographic items, a richer classification of bibliographic item types, the ability to record multiple abbreviations, the ability to record equivalent resources in other platforms, the ability to record additional semantically rich metadata such as VIAF identifiers for authors, and most importantly the maintenance of a unique and stable item identifier. Using an efficient alignment tool, this project also facilitates the alignment between the FAIR Bibliography and other Zotero Libraries.

The achievements of the projects detailed above lay a strong foundation for future endeavours in the field of epigraphic FAIR research. As we look ahead, several promising directions emerge that can build upon the successes of these projects, as well as existing work by the epigraphic community and groups such as epigraphy. info. The FAIR Epigraphy project is consolidating a powerful framework for linking epigraphic data, building on earlier ontology modelling (https://doi. org/10.5281/zenodo.4639507). Future work could focus on enhancing the integration of diverse datasets, allowing researchers to access a broader spectrum of inscriptions. The FAIR Epigraphy Bibliography project's success in creating stable identifiers for bibliographic references paves the way for expanding its scope. Future efforts could involve collaborating with additional scholarly societies and organizations to include a wider range of abbreviations and references, establishing a comprehensive and standardized bibliographic network. We plan to publish a series of research papers on this work in the coming months.

Alongside these projects, Dr Imran Asif, the Senior Research Software Engineer on the FAIR project is also working with DiSc (https://digitalscholarship.web.ox.ac. uk/), mainly on the Semantic Network project. The project involves creating a semantic network of individuals using the Resource Description Framework (RDF) approach. This network aims to model relationships, attributes, and connections among people in a structured and semantic manner. The project encompasses technical aspects such as RDF data representation and utilization of tools like Apache Jena.

The Practical Epigraphy Workshop

Peter Haarer

Participant presentation and Roger Tomlin teaching drawing at Chesters 2023. Photos: Henning Schulze

The Practical Epigraphy Workshop was founded in 2007 to give graduate students an opportunity to get to grips with inscriptions — quite literally — through a short, intensive course which would offer a supportive and egalitarian environment, would be taught by enthusiastic instructors both young and old, and would be centred on a collection of material which participants could touch, handle, and record as if discovering the text for the first time. Many of the guiding principles of the Workshop were carried over from the Epigraphy Summer School which had run very successfully several times in Oxford but was much more substantial in length and offered less frequently.

The Workshop itself has developed considerably since its first iteration at the National Roman Legion Museum at Caerleon. The timetable has expanded to three full days of study plus, depending on location, an additional day or so for visiting archaeological sites. Key to success has been a superb team of instructors. Charles Crowther has provided indefatigable quiet enthusiasm plus infectious pleasure for studying and teaching epigraphy, besides being irreplaceable as the 'grand master' of squeeze-making. Roger Tomlin, now in his eightieth year, has proved equally fundamental to the Workshop, making a monumental contribution, especially through his encyclopaedic knowledge of the Roman inscriptions of Britain. Others who have played an instrumental role include Graham Oliver and the several invaluable Assistant Directors including Charlotte Tupman, Abigail Graham, and Olivia Elder. I am enormously grateful, too, for the administrative support provided by Maggy Sasanow and Chloe Colchester of the CSAD.

The programme often includes sessions delivered by invited specialists. A major feature incorporated into the first few Workshops was a demonstration of lettering. Inscriptions tend to be studied from the perspective of the ancient viewer but that of the letterer can help considerably with the reconstruction of missing text, or with technical aspects. For many years we had the benefit of Richard Grasby, who had cut many inscriptions (including the replica of the legionary inscription now standing outside the CSAD). Professional letterers with a knowledge of Roman inscriptions are hard to find though we have benefitted in other years from the expertise of Wayne Hart and Jane Cowan. For photography, Nick Pollard (Oxford) proved a mine of information on the difficulties of photographing, in particular of the Ashmolean fragment of Marmor Parium. More recently, of the Henning Schulze (University of Lincoln) has provided endless patient technical instruction to participants on the niceties of newer methods of digital image capture.

Another intention at the outset was that the location used for the Workshop should change regularly, allowing us to view material in storerooms which is seen rarely. Finding locations with a sufficiently large collection of epigraphic material, good facilities on-site for studying this and, of course, helpful museum staff to arrange access to inscribed material can be challenging. So far, all these factors have met happily together at Caerleon, York, Newcastle, Oxford, Lincoln, and especially at Corbridge and Chesters.

To date 183 students have attended, the number of participants per Workshop being limited by space to between eight and twenty. Over the twelve iterations, 46 % of participants have been male and 54 % female; and over the ten iterations between 2010 and 2023 (for which data is available), 46 % of participants have been drawn from the UK, 37% from Europe, and 17 % from the Rest of the World. Graduates have made up the vast majority of participants but we have also taken undergraduates, post-docs, senior academics and some others (for example, from the Heritage sector). The programme is intense but one of the most important aspects of the Workshop has been providing a welcoming environment which allows participants to build personal links.

Finally, the Workshop would not have been possible without generous financial support through many grant-giving bodies (especially the Craven Committee) and through the framework provided initially by the British Epigraphy Society and latterly by the CSAD.

PEW 2024 will be held at the Corinium Museum, Cirencester June 18–20, the call for applications closes 16 February.

Visitors at the CSAD

Maria Barbieri

I am an Italian student who graduated in Classics at the University of Palermo and in Historical Sciences at the University of Turin. I am currently completing a master's course in AI for the Humanities at the Polytechnic University of Turin. Last September, supported by funding from the Erasmus Traineeship programme, I had the incredible opportunity to work for three months alongside Professor Prag at the CSAD. Under the supervision of the entire team, but especially Professor Prag and Simona Stoyanova, I worked on the *I.Sicily* digital corpus of inscriptions, gaining new and fundamental digital skills and methodologies in the study of ancient textual and material evidence. With the use of TEI, specifically through the EpiDoc schema, and thanks to the Knowledge XML editing software, I acquired the ability to encode ancient texts, such as inscriptions, following the guidelines established by the international community. In addition, I developed specific skills in the dissemination of ancient cultural heritage.

I believe that one of the main aspects of this experience has been learning how to communicate the value of written heritage to a wider audience, using user-friendly interfaces, interactive visualisations and multimedia tools to engage and inspire both enthusiasts and researchers. I am convinced that these skills will be invaluable in any project or initiative related to digital humanities and heritage conservation.

Sergio España-Chamorro

The epigraphy of the Augustan veteran colonies

Augustus founded several dozen veteran colonies — the exact number remains uncertain — during his reign (27 BC–14 AD). The *Res Gestae* records their establishment:

> "The Roman citizens who took the soldier's oath of obedience to me numbered about 500,000. I settled rather more than 300,000 of these in colonies or sent them back to their home towns after their period of service; to all these I assigned lands or gave money as rewards for their military service" (*Res Gestae* III, 3).

> "I founded colonies of soldiers in Africa, Sicily, Macedonia, both Spanish provinces, Achaea, Asia, Syria, Gallia Narbonensis and Pisidia" (*Res Gestae* XXVIII, 1).

Augustus was implementing a model of settlement that had been developed during the Republic and used mainly in Italy. In Republican Italy, settlement involved encounters with other languages, writing and epigraphic systems that were closely related to Latin (i.e. those of Oscans, Umbrians, or Faliscans). But the new settlements in provincial territories involved encounters with societies with their own languages, cultures and dynamics of writing and communication.

IMPACTVM, funded by the ERC, uses case studies from Mérida, Lyon, Carthage, Corinth, and Philippi to study the sociolinguistic impact and the local variations of this process. While being supported by a Marie Curie Fellowship under the supervision of Prof. Alex Mullen, I have explored the penetration and evolution of Latin in different socio-cultural environments.

For example, the foundation of Augusta Emerita involved the creation of a new province (a scission of a part of Hispania Ulterior) and epigraphy was adopted by its new citizens as a new media for the colony. The emulation of inscriptions and sculptures from the forum of

Augustus, and the wholesale export of late Republican Italian epigraphic habits to this part of Hispania, shows how closely they sought to follow the Roman model.

In Carthage, the demands of administrating the colony forced veterans to move to multiple *pagi* (fortified rural settlements) dispersed across the territory, meaning that diverse workshops were developed. They used local materials and produced a distinctive epigraphic language, marked by the absence of certain formulae (i.e. *Dis Manibus Sacrum*) that were popular in Italy at the time.

In Philippi, Roman veterans introduced Latin to the Greek-speaking population of the city as well as to Thracian people settled in vici across the territory. Although the primary epigraphic language switched to Latin Greek epigraphic habits exerted an ongoing influence on Latin epigraphy through the choice of materials, iconography as well as techniques of production.

The fortnight spent at the CSAD and my time at the university of Nottingham were very fruitful in terms of sharing ideas and for receiving training in sociolinguistics, drawing inspiration from the work of the late Jim Adams (All Souls College).
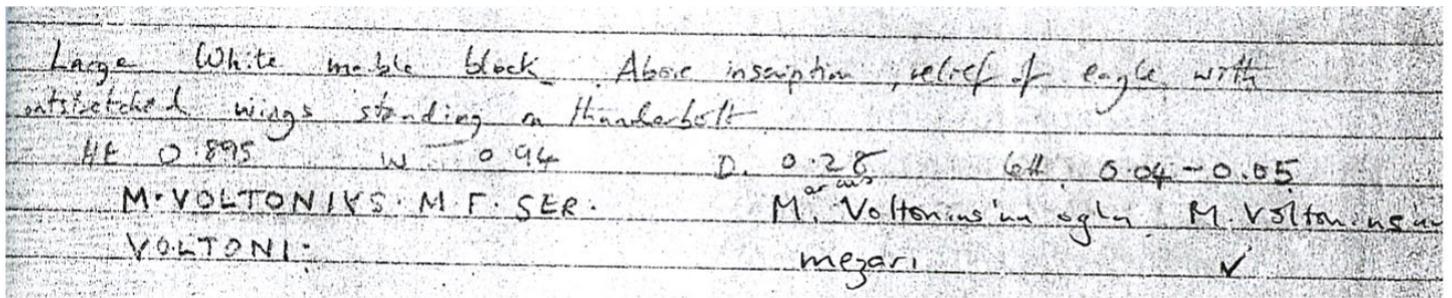
Fig. 1: The inscription of M. Voltonius © St. Mitchell / M. A. Byrne.

Christian Wallner

The Archive of Maurice A. Byrne at CSAD

In 2017, Charles Crowther invited me to review the Maurice Byrne (1940–2016) archive and potentially publish some of its contents. I was a member of the Pisidian Antioch research team at the time, and I agreed without hesitation. My knowledge of Maurice A. Byrne was limited to two publications: his collaboration on a corpus of Antioch and his article about the City Gate of Pisidian Antioch (M. A. Byrne, G. Labarre, *Nouvelles inscriptions d'Antioche de Pisidie d'après les Note-books de W. M. Ramsay (IK 67)*, Bonn 2006; M. A. Byrne, 'The Date of the City Gate of Antioch', in T. Drew-Bear, M. Taşlıalan, C. M. Thomas (eds.), *Actes du Ier Congrès International sur Antioche de Pisidie* (Collection Archéologie et Histoire de l'Antiquité – Université Lumière Lyon 2; 5), Lyon 2002, 193–200).

Compiling an inventory of the existing material revealed an array of handwritten notes, copies, photos, and sketches primarily focused on the ancient cities of Antiocheia ad Pisidiam (modern Yalvaç) and Thiounta (modern Gözler).

After taking an undergraduate degree in inorganic chemistry at Exeter College (Oxford), Byrne developed an interest in archaeology which led him to Asia Minor. He spent most of his final years in Gözler, a small town near Pammukale (ancient Hierapolis / Phrygia). His material related to Thiounta and its surroundings dates from this period.

His interest in Pisidian Antioch seems to have been developed through his friendship with Stephen Mitchell, a researcher who has dedicated decades to studying the most important Roman colony of the eastern empire (see S. Mitchell – M. Waelkens, *Pisidian Antioch. The Site and its Monuments*, London 1998). The material on Antioch includes several sketches of the City Gate which record Byrne's attempts to reconstruct this monument and its inscription. Of great value is a copy of Stephen Mitchell's handwritten notes on inscriptions of Antioch, which document over a hundred inscriptions from the museum of Yalvaç as well as other fragments which had been reused in various buildings across the city and were still visible in the seventies. The photographic record of most of these inscribed monuments is of great value since much of this material remains unpublished or has since been lost.

I have prepared an initial draft of a study that aims to present many of these unpublished or inadequately published inscriptions to the professional community. This draft contains inscriptions associated with buildings, honorary monuments, dedications, and, of course, grave monuments.

Two examples of inscriptions to demonstrate the value of the Byrne Archive as well as the challenges it presents. Take the building inscription of M. Voltonius (Fig. 1). Unfortunately, the records do not specify which building M. Voltonius was responsible for. Nonetheless, this inscription provides insight into another citizen of Antioch who indisputably belonged to the social upper class, and it offers clear evidence of the *nomen gentile* Voltonius (see O. Salomies, 'Roman Names in Pisidian Antioch. Some Observations', in: *Arctos* 40, 2006, 101–2, with n.54).

Then there is the funerary altar of Matrona and Maximus (Fig. 2). Both the handwritten notes and the photograph do not allow for a clear reconstruction of the couple's *nomina gentilia* . Nevertheless since the current whereabouts of this funerary altar are unknown the records and the photograph are of immense value.

Fig. 2: The funerary altar of Matrona and Maximus © St. Mitchell / M. A. Byrne.

After completing the section on Antiocheia, I will proceed to investigate Thiounta. There, too, I am confident that the Byrne Archive holds valuable documents pertaining to the history of this city.

I am very grateful to Charles Crowther, Deputy Assistant Director of the CSAD, for allowing me to work on the legacy of M. A. Byrne, and Chloe Colchester, Research Coordinator, for all her help.

Anna Willi

For the past four years I have been a research fellow on the LatinNow project, researching the spread of Latin literacy in the Roman Germanies through the evidence of non-monumental epigraphy and finds of writing equipment. LatinNow came to an end in June 2023, and this September I started my new project, 'Tabulae Ceratae: an object-based approach to Roman stylus tablets', which is funded by the Gerda Henkel-Stiftung.

Texts preserved on stylus tablets range from writing exercises to contracts and personal letters and often provide glimpses of those aspects of Roman everyday life that are not accessible through monumental inscriptions on stone or metal. With the British Academy programme 'Romano-British writing-tablets,' the CSAD has been at the forefront of researching and publishing Roman wax tablets for decades, and more recently also of using RTI imagery that helps to decipher the often superimposed and faint traces of writing preserved on them. The Tabulae project now allows me to contribute to the newest instalment of this programme (2023–2028) by looking at them as objects of Roman everyday life.

Stylus tablets feature on reliefs, are mentioned in Roman literature, and hundreds have been preserved throughout the Roman empire where conditions were favourable. But there is still much we do not know about their everyday use. Why, has writing been preserved on so few writing tablets? Does it have something to do with the text type, or with the materials used? Was it a choice made by the writer? To


Anna working on the Roman styli found at Vindolanda.

Replicas of a Roman stylus tablet and wax spatula.

answer such questions, I will conduct the first comparative study of tablet finds from several sites in the Roman northwestern provinces, including Londinium and Vindolanda in the UK. With the help of existing photos and RTI-images, I will study their design and affordances, use and wear marks, text preservation patterns, and, where possible, text types in conjunction with all of the above. By including tablets from a range of different settlements, this will allow me to gain a better understanding of the use of the stylus tablet as a medium in different social environments and in a range of different sites across the northwestern provinces.
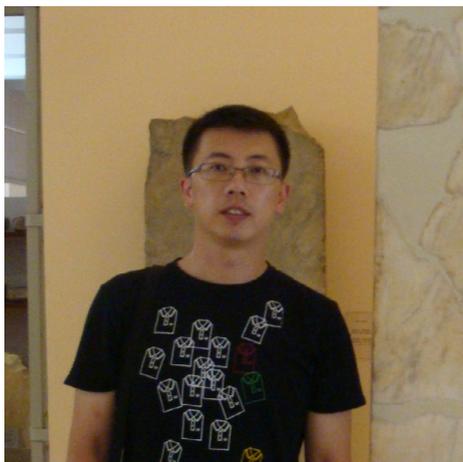
Yuantao Yin

I am an ancient historian at the Institute for the History of Ancient Civilizations (IHAC), Northeast Normal University, Changchun P. R. China. Founded in 1984, IHAC was the first Chinese institute to establish chairs and research positions in Assyriology, Hittitology, Egyptology and Classics, followed by Byzantine studies in 2016. Each year, we invite three to five long-term visiting scholars to work at IHAC, as well as short-term visiting professors for lectures. We have had the pleasure of hosting reputed professors from Oxford University, such as John Baines, Averil Cameron, Angelos Chaniotis, Charles Crowther, Elizabeth Jeffreys and James Howard-Johnston.

My research concerns Greek epigraphy and Greek political and cultural history. This is my third visit to Oxford University. As a visiting student (2009–2010), inspired and guided by Charles Crowther, my research interest turned to Greek epigraphy and Greek history in the 4th century BCE. My PhD dissertation was about the Second Athenian League based on epigraphical evidence. As an academic visitor (2016–2017), I worked on my project, 'Public Inscriptions and Democracy in Classical Athens', supported by the Social Sciences Research Fund of the Chinese Ministry of Education, which was completed in 2020. My current project, supported by the National Social Science Foundation of China, focuses on Athenian decrees in the Classical Period. During my stay at Oxford over the forthcoming year, I plan to collect important historical inscriptions and translate Greek texts into Chinese with brief commentaries, with the aim of exploring the usefulness of the concept of 'decree culture' as a way of thinking about the political culture of Classical Athens. I've taught Greek socio-cultural history and Greek historiography to the undergraduates, most of whom are new to Classics. I am also participating in some new translations, such as Xenophon's Hellenica, J. B. Bury's A History of Greece, and some entries in The Oxford Classical Dictionary. In short, I'm trying my best to pave the way to Classical studies for the next generation of Chinese students and readers.

Amelia Dowler

Amelia has joined the faculty from the British Museum where she was the Curator of Greek and Roman Provincial Coins. She oversaw the documentation phase of the CHANGE project while at the BM and will continue project work in Oxford by completing a monograph on bronze coinage. The book will examine the introduction of bronze coinage across the Greek world with a focus on the rapidly expanding use of bronze alongside silver and gold in Hellenistic Asia Minor. Amelia's work examines the development of fiduciary currency using die studies, metrology, and metal analysis to assess production methods, volume, and coin circulation patterns. Her book will cover the rise of token coinages in the Greek world and how they interacted with precious metal coinages.

British Museum 1947,0606.168
Bronze coin of Prousias II with a portrait of Prousias II in winged diadem (obverse) and Herakles (reverse). This coin type is the only one of the 27 bronze types of Prousias I and Prousias II to have a portrait of the king.

British Museum 1914,0709.27
Bronze coin of Prousias I with Apollo (obverse) and Athena-Nike (reverse). This coin shows the countermarking common on this coin type.

The View from Uley

Roger Tomlin

The view west from Uley Bury

If you stand on the rampart of Uley Bury, a pre-Roman hillfort on the western edge of the Cotswolds, you can look across the Severn estuary towards the temple of the god Nodens in Lydney Park. This is the site where the first Roman curse tablet ever found in Britain was discovered, a small sheet of lead inscribed in Latin: 'Silvianus has lost his ring and given half (its value) to Nodens. Among those who are called Senicianus do not allow health until he brings it to the temple of Nodens.' The tablet's first editor, in 1879, was amused that a god should be promised a fee for recovering stolen goods: 'There is something very humorous to the modern mind, though doubtless grave enough in its primary intention, in this earnest appeal to divine aid in such a case.'

A century later, in 1979, the *annus mirabilis* of Romano-British curse tablets, when the Sacred Spring of Sulis was opened at Bath and the temple of Mercury uncovered at Uley, there was less need to smile.

More than two hundred lead curse tablets were found in these two excavations, revealing that in Roman Britain many victims of theft addressed a god with a written prayer for justice.

I am grateful to CSAD for adding The Uley Tablets to its *Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents*, with a view to publication in 2024. Introductory chapters set the tablets in context, discussing their method and content, the handwriting, the language and spelling, the authorship. Then come the ninety-odd texts themselves, each with a photograph and line-drawing, transcribed with translation and line-by-line commentary.

Here is No. 76 which uses typical anti-theft formulas to complain of anti-social behaviour – or rather, to illustrate the classic anthropological thesis that personal misfortune is attributed to someone else's witchcraft. It is a sheet of lead (what No. 80 would call a *carta*) inscribed on both faces in fluent Old Roman Cursive:

[deo] sancto Mercuri[o qu]er[or] | tibi de illis qui mihi male | cog[i]tant et male faciunt | supra ed[iti]s iumen[tis] | si seruus si liber si m[ascel] | si [fem] ina ut [n]on illis per/mittas nec stare nec | sedere nec bibere | nec manducar[e] n[e]c h[as] | iras redemere possit | nessi sanguine suo ... 'To the holy god Mercury. I complain to you about those who are thinking evil towards me and doing evil to the above-mentioned beasts of burden, whether slave or free, whether male or female. May you not permit them to stand or sit or to drink or eat, or be able to redeem these (causes of) anger unless with their own blood ...'
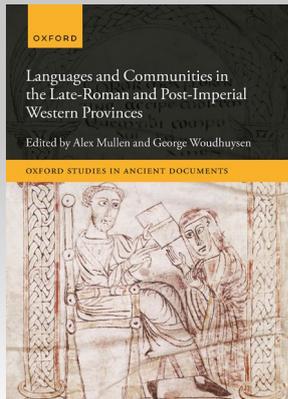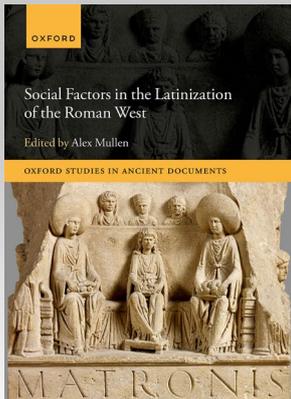
Its Latin ranges from the clerical 'above-mentioned' to the idiomatic: 'thinking evil' is a phrase used by one of Cicero's correspondents, 'redeeming (causes of) anger' by the playwright Publilius Syrus. Reading such sophisticated documents in the countryside of Roman Britain, the god Mercury must have felt like the younger Pliny visiting his Tuscan estate: 'I am beset on all sides by the peasants with all their petitions full of complaints.' But what a privilege the god has given us: to be reading over his shoulder. Thank you again, CSAD, for publishing The Uley Tablets.
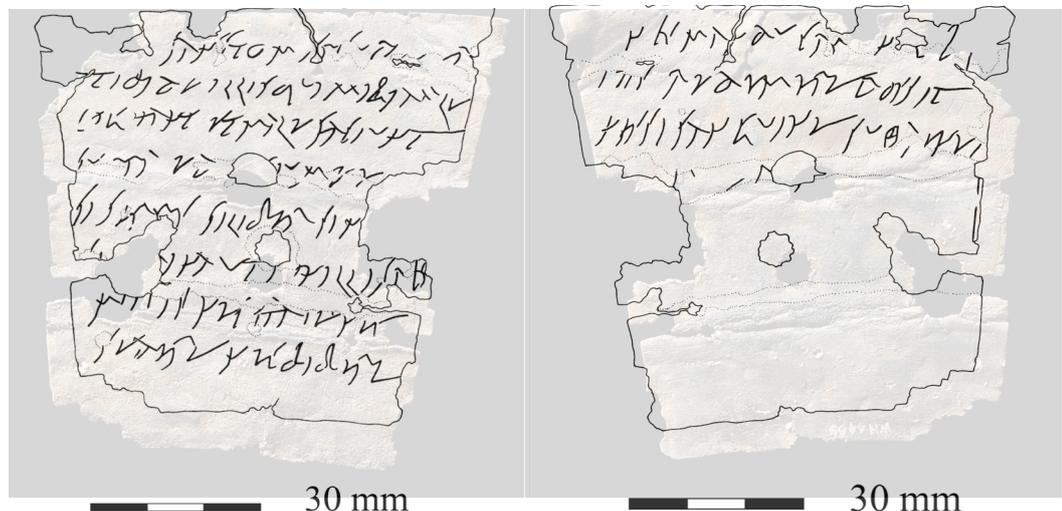
Uley curse tablet No. 76 found at the temple of Mercury inscribed in Old Roman Cursive (c. AD. 150- c. AD. 275). Drawing by Roger Tomlin.

Linguarum varietas

Alex Mullen

Two Open Access volumes treating languages and communities in the Roman world have recently been published in the OSAD series. Historians have noted that Latinization has been taken for granted and viewed as an unremarkable by-product of 'Romanization', despite its central importance for understanding the Roman provincial world, its life and languages. The first English-language volume devoted to Latinization, *Social Factors in the Latinization of the Roman West*, takes a multi-disciplinary and thematic approach to the vast subject, tackling administration, army, economy, law, mobility, religion, social status, and urbanism. It offers a guide to the topic, with a mix of more familiar syntheses and experimental work. The sociolinguistic, historical, and archaeological contributions reinforce, expand, and sometimes challenge our vision of Latinization and lay the foundations for future explorations.

Languages and Communities in the Late-Roman and Post-Imperial Western Provinces, wrestles with later-Roman and post-Imperial sociolinguistic histories. A deeper understanding of these is crucial to any reconstruction of the broader story of linguistic continuity and change in Europe and the Mediterranean, as well as to the history of the communities who wrote, read, and spoke Latin and other languages. The volume offers a study of the main developments, key features and debates on the Iberian Peninsula, North Africa, Gaul, the Germanies, Britain and Ireland. The chapters collected in this volume help us to consider (socio)linguistic variegation, bi-/multi-lingualism, and attitudes towards languages, and to confront the complex role of language in the communities, identities, and cultures of the later- and post-imperial Roman western world. This volume is intended to create a starting point for further research.

The final book of the OSAD trilogy will be coming soon. This will encapsulate the views of the LatinNow team on how we can best explore life and language in the Roman west and will present the latest research on Latinization, local languages, and literacies in the provinces in their regional complexity. It will be last major publication of the LatinNow project ERC no 715626 and is based in part on the project's Open Access web GIS: gis.latinnow.eu. To read more about the project, please see latinnow.eu.

Athenian Power in the Fifth Century BC

Oxford Classical Monographs OUP, Leah Lazar

This monograph provides a new analysis of the fifth-century BC Athenian empire, a central topic in ancient Greek history.

Challenging orthodox approaches, which have been mostly empirical, monolithic and focused on Athens, the book argues that Athenian power was flexible and a matter of negotiation between the Athenians and their allies. It brings the allies to centre stage as active agents, and considers how the Athenian empire operated in different regions. The first three chapters focus on political, fiscal and religious interactions between the Athenians and their allies in Athenian contexts, largely relying on epigraphic evidence.

The subsequent three chapters then offer studies of the empire in three different regions - the North Aegean, Rhodes, and the straits between the Aegean and the Black Sea - showing how the empire employed overlapping but differentiated regional strategies.

This book is distinct from previous contributions in three key ways. First, it offers new perspectives on well-known Athenian epigraphic and literary sources, while also utilising different categories of non-Athenian evidence, including varied forms of material culture. Second, it provides sophisticated economic analysis. Third, the monograph makes use of critical historical comparison: with other imperial powers, with later Athenian power, and with the operation of fifth-century Athenian power in different regions.

Dr Leah Lazar is a Research Associate of the CHANGE project, ERC no 865680, working on a complete inventory of coin hoards from Anatolia in co-ordination with the coinhoards.org project, and a study of the mint of Lampsacus. In January 2025 she will be leaving to take up a permanent position as a Lecturer in Hellenistic Culture at the Department of Classics, Ancient History, Archaeology and Egyptology, University of Manchester.
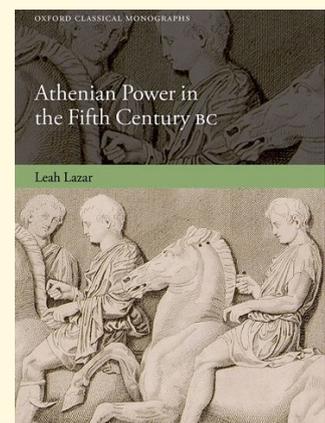
Oxford Epigraphy Workshop Hilary Term 2024

Monday 1–2pm, in the First Floor Seminar Room (Ioannou Centre).

Week 1 (15th Jan) – Fiona Phillips (Oxford): 'From Šarkbiom to Ioneλ: The Carian Diaspora in Egypt'

Week 2 (22nd Jan) – Jerome Mairat (Oxford): 'RPC, EpiDoc & OpenAI: a practical approach to translating and encoding 150,000 coin inscriptions'

Week 3 (29th Jan) – Rebecca Flemming (Exeter) - 'A world full of doctors? Professional designations in Roman imperial epigraphy'

Week 5 (12th Feb) – Alfredo Tosques (Bologna): 'A Migration Engraved in Stone: (non)Epigraphic Approaches to the Frentrani of Lilybaeum and Human Mobility in the Ancient Mediterranean'

Week 6 (19th Feb) – Marco Santini (Oxford): 'The Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscription MARAŞ 1: An Experiment in Rhetoric'

Week 8 (4th March) – Alberto Esu (Zurich): 'Judicial Review in Inscribed Decrees beyond Athens: Exploring Similarities and Differences in Greek Constitutionalism'

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Circulation and Contributions

This is the twenty-eighth issue of the Centre's Newsletter. The Newsletter is also available online (**www.csad.ox.ac.uk/CSAD/Newsletters**).

We invite contributions to the Newsletter of interest to scholars working in the fields of the Centre's activities — epigraphy, papyrology and numismatics understood in the widest sense.

Contributions, together with other enquiries, should be addressed to the Centre's Administrator.

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Cover image: The Albercius fragments, courtesy of the Vatican Museum

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