Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD | NEWSLETTER 29

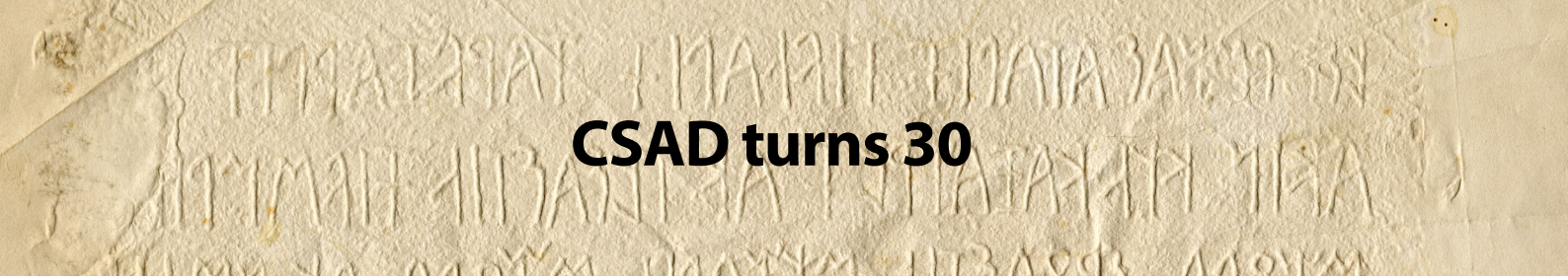
SPRING 2025

CSAD turns 30

The origins of coinage

Small change in ancient Anatolia 650-150 BCE

Deciphering Latin and Lydian



CSAD turns 30

Andrew Meadows

CSAD is now 30 years old. In the blink of an eye, or so it seems, it has arrived at middle age. How did this happen? In origin, the Centre was a brilliant response to a problem and an opportunity.

The somewhat prosaic problem was that, by 1994, the Faculty of Classics had found itself the owner of an immense archive of research materials, with more, as it would turn out, on the way. The nature of these archives is disparate. At their heart lie the extraordinary squeeze collections of Peter Fraser, David Lewis, George Forrest, Susan Sherwin-White and others. But alongside these are the notebooks, sketches and photographs from some of the pioneering figures in Greek epigraphy, Sir Christopher Cox, Sir William Ramsay, Sir William Calder, William Buckler and Lilian Jeffery. With such archives comes a responsibility, not just to house them properly, but also to facilitate access to the next generation of documentary scholars.

Herein, of course, lies the opportunity. From the Centre's inception in 1995, its founding director, Alan Bowman, was acutely aware of the possibilities that were emerging in the fields of digitisation and computer-based analysis, both for research itself, but also for dissemination and accessibility. His own work on the visualisation and presentation of writing tablets of Vindolanda was ground-breaking in this respect. But many other initiatives led or partnered by the Centre have similarly embraced new approaches to the vast archives available. *Local Scripts of Archaic Greece, Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua, Roman Inscriptions of Britain*, titles familiar to us all from the shelves of the library, all now have digital versions hosted by the Centre. We have also been able to provide support to scholars and projects from elsewhere in, and outside Oxford, including Alison Cooley and Susan Walker's Ashmolean Latin Inscriptions project, and Alex Mullen's Latin Now. And we are also home to two British Academy Research projects, Romano-British Writing Tablets and the Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, which draw together expertise from across the globe.

And the work continues. This Newsletter provides, I hope, testimony to the good health of the Centre as it enters its fourth decade. Two ERC projects, Crossreads and CHANGE are surging towards their conclusions (see the pieces by Jonathan Prag, Amelia Dowler, Leah Lazar and Marcus Chin). Scholars continue to visit and work on the archival materials we hold (see the articles by Fiona Phillips, Annick Payne, Yuantao Yin and Mridula Gullapalli). This year we were also able to host two young scholars from Turkey, who presented unpublished material from excavations they are working on (see the article by Fatma Avcu and Hüseyin Uzunoğlu). And all of this has been made possible by our wonderful administrator, Chloë Colchester. I doubt that the CSAD has ever been busier than over the last year, and she has made this happen.

Finally, it would be impossible to reflect on the Centre's 30-year journey, without noting the extraordinary contribution made by the one person who has been here for its entire lifetime. Charles Crowther talks below about his research, just the latest instalment of 30 years of fieldwork that has enriched our knowledge, as well as our squeeze collection. But he has also been at the centre of epigraphic teaching in Oxford throughout that time, as well as the curator of perhaps the world's foremost ancient documentary archive. On the foundations that he and Alan and have laid, we are building an exciting future for documentary study at Oxford.

Alan Bowman

The origin of the CSAD lay in the urgent need to find new premises for the Faculty's important collection of Greek epigraphic squeezes, which in 1994 was about to be evicted from the Faculty of Philosophy's basement at 10 Merton Street where it had been stored for many years. The Centre was established in 1995 in order to promote and develop teaching and research on ancient documents at the highest level. Its premises at 66 St Giles were to be a central feature of the later re-development of that site as the Stelios Ioannou Centre for Research in Classical and Byzantine Studies which opened in 2007.

The decision to launch the CSAD, with its rich archives of notebooks, drawings and photographs, and one of the world's most important collections of 20,000 epigraphic squeezes at its core sprang from my belief as the founding Director that these unmatched documentary resources, when allied to the very wide range of expertise of the members of the Faculty, had the potential to create an international focus for classical documentary studies, very widely defined so as to include texts of all genres from Classical Antiquity written on a wide variety of materials.

The University originally allocated a small grant, to meet the costs of running the Centre and the Faculty provided a subvention for the production of this Newsletter, soon augmented by external grant-aided resources which enabled the appointment of an Associate Director (Charles Crowther) and in due course by a generous endowment from the Greek government. These resources have been further enhanced by a fund established in memory of the late David Lewis and by a consistently successful record of acquiring research grants for specific projects.

My experience of many years working on Greek papyri, often damaged and fragmentary, provided me with the skills of deciphering and analysing Greek cursive documents and these were adaptable to work on the Latin writing-tablets from Vindolanda which had occupied me from the mid-1970s. In this area, the complementarity and collaboration of the neighbouring Oxyrhynchus Papyri project in sharing technical innovation was enormously helpful, especially in research into established and new methods of image capture and enhancement whose potential was becoming increasingly obvious in the 1990s. The creation of a digital archive of the tablets, now part of the British Museum's Romano-British collection, has become an important and ongoing focus of CSAD's research programme. Work with Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) in collaboration with the Department of Engineering Science and the Bodleian Library as well as partnerships with other institutions has led to improvements in the legibility of the Vindolanda writing tablets and the new Bloomberg tablets (see *London's First Voices*,

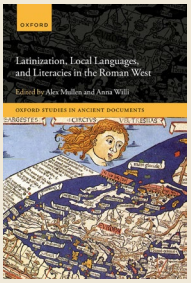
edited by Roger Tomlin). CSAD is now acknowledged as a pioneering world leader in the development of new techniques and technologies for the study and presentation of ancient documentary sources, especially Greek and Latin inscriptions but also including wooden and lead and clay writing-tablets, papyri, potsherds and coins.

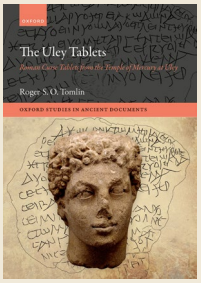
The creation of expanded accommodation and facilities, shared with the Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, in the Ioannou Centre has enabled the CSAD's collections to attract a regular stream of senior visiting scholars from the UK and abroad and to be made more widely available for viewing and downloading as a resource for research and teaching. The geographical scope of research activities and resources based or supported at CSAD is very broad, ranging from the Latin military records of the province of Britannia to Sicily, Asia Minor and Bactria. With the appointment of Andrew Meadows as the current Director, the range of research supported has expanded to encompass the development of new Linked Open Data resources in the fields of numismatics and sigillography.

The legacy of Peter Fraser, the founder of the LGPN, deserves special mention. His close interest and magisterial expertise in the epigraphy of the Hellenistic World led him in 1955 to establish a project to collect and republish the Greek inscriptions of the Ptolemaic period in two parts from Egypt and the empire of the Ptolemies, with about 350 items in each. When he died in 2009 his handwritten manuscripts compiled between 1955 and the early 1970s were deposited in the CSAD, along with his squeezes, photographs and notebooks. A few years later the decision was taken to bring the material up to date for publication and to enhance it by including bilingual and metrical texts which Fraser had omitted and this brought the total number for Part 1 (Egypt) to more than 650, divided into 3 volumes. We were also very fortunate to be given access to the photographic archives of the late Professor Étienne Bernand. The editorial team consists of Alan Bowman, Charles Crowther, Simon Hornblower, Rachel Mairs and Kyriakos Savvopoulos. Volume 1 was published in 2022, Volume 2 is in press (2025) and Volume 3 will follow directly. The compilation of Part 2, a similar number of inscriptions from The Ptolemaic Empire, is under way.

Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents 2003-2025

Alison Cooley & Andrew Meadows





Since 2003, when the first volume was published – *Ancient Archives and Archival Traditions: Concepts of Record-Keeping in the Ancient World*, edited by Maria Brosius – the Oxford University Press series, Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents, has gradually built up a varied list of published volumes. The series has been developed by successive Directors of CSAD, Alan Bowman and Andrew Meadows, along with the Honorary Publications Officer, Alison Cooley. We have benefited from working closely in turn with Hilary O'Shea and Charlotte Loveridge at OUP, together with their colleagues. Twenty-three volumes have now appeared in print, and a healthy pipeline of varied offerings is in prospect. The support that has been on offer from the series editors, OUP editors, readers, and production team has facilitated scholars at all career stages to help achieve our aims of offering unique perspectives on the political, cultural, social, and economic history of the ancient world.

Sometimes these new perspectives arise from the painstaking editorial work involved in producing new editions and commentaries of important individual inscriptions, such as the *Customs Law of Asia* (2008), edited by a team led by Barbara Levick, or the long and detailed decree found only in 2017, which deals with the inter-polis relationships of Teos and Abdera during the Hellenistic period (*Teos and Abdera. Two Cities in Peace and War* by Mustafa Adak and Peter Thonemann, 2022). The editing of epigraphic corpora, such as Roger Tomlin's *The Uley Tablets. Roman Curse Tablets from the Temple of Mercury at Uley* (2024) and the ongoing multi-volumed, multi-lingual *Corpus of Ptolemaic Inscriptions*, likewise provide the solid foundations upon which future work can be built. As well as offering new documentary materials for consideration – whether these are writing tablets, monumental inscriptions, or papyri – the series has regularly featured innovative approaches to documentary studies. Melissa Terras' study, *Image to Interpretation. An Intelligent System to Aid Historians in Reading the Vindolanda Texts* (2006), pioneered the interdisciplinary analysis of the Vindolanda Writing Tablets, blending classics with computing and engineering science.

As well as recognizing the vital importance of modern editorial work, the series embraces new thematic approaches via edited volumes and monographs alike. Edited volumes have included studies inspired by Anne Jeffery's *Local Scripts of Archaic Greece*, which seek to promote further debate about how, when, where, by whom, and for what purposes Greek alphabetic writing developed (*The Early Greek Alphabets. Origin, Diffusion, Uses*, edited by Robert Parker and Philippa Steele, 2021). Coverage has extended from Pharaonic Egypt to Roman Britain, from the Achaemenid Empire to the Pillars of Hercules. Most recently, the ERC-funded LatinNow project led by Alex Mullen has produced three volumes in Open Access that offer new frameworks for thinking about Latinization in the Roman West (*Latinization, Local Languages, and Literacies in the Roman West*, edited by Alex Mullen and Anna Willi, 2024; *Languages and Communities in the Late-Roman and Post-Imperial Western Provinces*, edited by Alex Mullen and George Woudhuysen, 2023; *Social Factors in the Latinization of the Roman West*, edited by Alex Mullen, 2023).

Many of the volumes have their origins in activities held at CSAD, but this is not a prerequisite; nor is this a series only for classical epigraphers. We are happy for anyone with an interesting idea to contact us with a proposal for a volume.

CSAD and Commagene

Charles Crowther

Fig. 1 The discovery of the Zeugma stele on 21 August 2000

It began with a fax…

A fax that arrived unexpectedly at CSAD from south-east Turkey in August 2000 provided the starting point for a collaboration initially with Oxford Archaeology and the Packard Humanities Institute and then with the Forschungsstelle Asia Minor of the University of Münster and the Adıyaman Museum, under its successive directors Fehmi Erarslan and Mehmet Alkan, which has continued for 25 years to the present.

Throughout the summer of 2000, as the waters of the Euphrates rose behind the newly completed Birecik hydroelectric barrage, rescue excavations were carried out by international teams of archaeologists at the site of the ancient city of Zeugma, whose lower levels were threatened with imminent flooding. The progress of the rescue work attracted widespread attention both as a race against the clock and because of the richness of the finds, above all a series of brilliant mosaics now housed in a dedicated museum in Gaziantep. On 21st August the Oxford Archaeology team excavating a headland in the central section of the site uncovered a large basalt stele with a relief on one side and a long Greek inscription on the other (Fig. 1). The fax sent to CSAD on the following day contained a preliminary transcription of the text made by Hugh Elton and a request for help in identifying and translating it for an imminent visit by a Turkish minister (Fig. 2). We were able to respond immediately; a press release circulated later on the same day announced with some hyperbole: 'The inscription is a huge self-advertisement for Antiochus… To find an example at Zeugma is amazing! Its message might be loosely construed as "Don't just celebrate me, celebrate me everywhere and forever". More prosaically, the new inscription preserved the beginning of a long cult regulation composed by Antiochus I, the ruler of the kingdom of Commagene in the middle of the first century BC (*c.*70-35); the relief on the other side showed a life-size depiction of Antiochus shaking hands with Apollo-Mithras represented as a naked Greek figure with a solar halo (Fig. 3).

Similar relief scenes and texts had long been known from other cult sites in Commagene; a fragment of a nearly identical stele from the royal capital of Samosata has been in the British Museum since the late 19th century. The best known Commagenian cult site remains the spectacular location – now a poster for tourism in eastern Turkey – which Antiochus selected for his own tomb, at Nemrud Dağı, on a 2,100m high crest of the Antitaurus mountain range. But the new stele had an unexpected secret which only emerged after detailed examination.

I visited Zeugma in the last week of the excavation season in September to study the new inscription and the other epigraphic finds, including a small, reused wall block

Fig. 2 Fax with transcription of the inscription, 22 August 2000

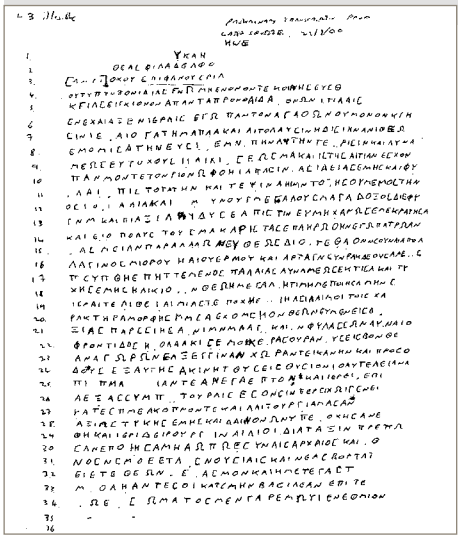


Fig. 3 Rob Early, Director of the Oxford Archaeology exacavation, with the Zeugma relief stele shortly after its discovery in August 2000

Fig. 4 The island sanctuary site near Güzelçay in the Kâhta Çay valley

Fig. 5 Mehmet Turan (Adıyaman Museum) Margherita Facella and Michael Blömer on the slopes of Kımıl Dağı above the Euphrates valley in June 2022

rescued from backfilling which preserved a fragment of a later section of the cult regulation. Over the next two years of study seasons at Birecik, the finds from the Oxford Archaeology excavations were reviewed by an academic team led by William Aylward for the Packard Humanities Institute; CSAD hosted a publication meeting at Wolfson College in April 2003 at which a chronological framework was established. It was to be another ten years before the final publication of the rescue excavations appeared simultaneously in open access online and in three substantial volumes (*Excavations at Zeugma conducted by Oxford Archaeology*, Los Altos 2013). In the intervening years a new collaboration had begun. Margherita Facella, a member of a team from the Forschungsstelle Asia Minor at the University of Münster working at Doliche near Gaziantep, who had recently completed a PhD on the Commagenian dynasty, part of it spent in Oxford supervised by Fergus Millar, contacted me when she heard the news of the discovery of the new stele, and we agreed to work together on its definitive publication.

An unexpected discovery was that faint traces of lettering at the bottom of the stele belonged to an earlier erased text. We were able to reconstruct the underlying inscription which turned out to be a copy of a text dating to the early years of Antiochus' reign known from a stele found at Sofraz Köy and published by Jörg Wagner and Georg Petzl in 1976. This discovery had implications for the development of the ruler cult during the reign of Antiochus, since the reinscribed text belonged to the last years of his life, and led us to re-examine the other inscriptions from sanctuary sites in Commagene.

We have since worked together with Engelbert Winter and Michael Blömer from the Forschungsstelle at Münster on the publication of inscriptions found across the Commagene region, from milestones documenting the Roman roads of northern Syria to an isolated Hadrianic sanctuary site with a concealed underground shrine at Kösk on the limestone ridge of the Kara Dağ. Adıyaman, with its important regional archaeological museum and the adjacent ancient urban site of Perrhe, has been a base and a focus for much of our work. We have documented the museum's epigraphic collection and recorded the funerary notices from Perrhe's necropolis, and a cave sanctuary dedicated to a local variant of the northern Syrian Storm god.

In 2010 a group of inscribed and architectural blocks held in a state-approved private antiquities collection at the excellent Neşet'in Yeri fish restaurant near Kâhta led us to a new Commagenian sanctuary site close to the modern village of Güzelçay in the flooded valley of the Kâhta Çay, a tributary of the Euphrates (Fig. 4). The site which originally overlooked the river is now an island accessible, except on rare occasions when the water level has fallen sufficiently, only by boat or by swimming across the short channel separating it from the present riverbank; for the same reason it has not been systematically explored although new inscriptions continue to emerge from it, including the first texts from the reign of Antiochus' predecessor Mithradates I.

Another new sanctuary site was discovered in 2022 on a plateau below the 2,000 m summit of Kımıl Dağı at the eastern border of Commagene; the inscription on a relief stele brought down from the site by helicopter in September 2023 (Newsletter 28) names it as Mount Koeros sacred to Apollo, who is shown on the relief sitting on the mountain peak shaking hands with Antiochus (Fig. 6).

The epigraphic finds of the last 25 years, together with the continuing Turkish and German excavations at Zeugma and Doliche, have transformed knowledge of the Commagene region in antiquity; the unexpectedness of much that has come to light suggests that more surprises are in store in the years ahead.

Fig. 6 New relief stele from Kımıl Dağı

Andrew Meadows, Marcus Chin and Leah Lazar on top of the tumulus of Alyattes at Bin Tepe. Photo: Frederic Wilner

The origins of coinage on camera

Leah Lazar

On the southern shore of Marmara Lake, near Manisa, in western Turkey, the flat land of the plain is punctuated with numerous mounds. This is Bin Tepe, the elite burial ground of ancient Lydia. Probably the oldest, and the biggest, of the tumuli is the resting place of Alyattes II, the penultimate king of the Mermnad dynasty (in the first half of the sixth century BCE) and the father of the famous Croesus; later elites copied his royal example with their own tombs. At 63 metres high, and with a footprint about the same size as the Great Pyramid of Giza, the tumulus of Alyattes attests to the wealth and power of the Mermnad kings, who were among the first authorities – if not the first – to mint coinage. The top of the tumulus is also the best place to survey the strange landscape of Bin Tepe and to view the capital of Sardis across the plain. So, in April 2024, the CHANGE Project team, not unaccustomed to climbing hills in Turkey, decided to brave the ascent. But this time was a little different, as our efforts were filmed by a drone-mounted camera. Twice, in fact. We reached the top for the first time, only to be asked to climb the tumulus again, to get a better shot.

We were visiting Sardis and Bin Tepe to talk about the origins of coinage for a documentary, produced for the European cultural television platform ARTE. The director, Frederic Wilner, was making four episodes on the history of money, from the origins of coinage to Bitcoin. Needless to say, the expertise of Andrew Meadows and the CHANGE Project team (Marcus Chin and me) was required for the earlier rather than the later part.

For us, it was exhilarating to return to Sardis. Ongoing excavations continue to illuminate ancient Lydia, and the power and sophistication of its Mermnad rulers in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE (see the regular updates at **http://sardisexpedition.org/en**). The physical remains supplement the picture long-known from Herodotus, who describes Gyges' rise to the throne, then the expansionist ambitions of his successors, culminating with Croesus – and a Lydian empire across much of western Anatolia, ruling over many Greek cities. It is now clear that this context, of an imperialistic non-Greek power coming into conflict with nascent Greek communities in the Archaic period, is the one in which the first coinages must be situated. Exactly how remains a subject of debate, but we are getting closer to providing an answer.

Indeed, our understanding of early coinage has been completely transformed in recent years, with the publication of the collaborative volume *White Gold*, edited by Peter Van Alfen and Ute Wartenberg of the American Numismatic Society. There is no better example of how cutting-edge developments in numismatics have huge significance for historical understanding. Mermnad Lydia may well have been the first state to mint coins, to produce lumps of metal with standardised weights and to stamp recognisable images on them. But soon, as *White Gold* makes clear, it was only one of many minting authorities in a competitive environment. There are early coins associated with Greek cities, as well as with individuals with both Greek and Lydian names. There are also coins with mysterious images which cannot be attributed to a particular authority at all. One of the key contributions of *White Gold* is a reassessment of the earliest secure archaeological context in which these coins were found, a famous deposit in the foundations of the temple of

Electrum eighth hecte from Sardis, ANS 1944.100.48854. Electrum hemihekte from Sardis, ANS 1975.218.50

Artemis at Ephesus. We can now confidently say that the first coins were produced between 650 and 620 BCE, perhaps even earlier, either in the reign of Gyges or his successor Alyattes I.

The strangest thing about these early coins is arguably their production in electrum, an alloy of gold and silver. It has long been assumed that this mix was used because it was naturally occurring in Lydia. Supposedly, to make use of this alloy, which had intrinsic but unstable and unclear value, an authority had to guarantee it. Hence the emergence of coined money, with the mark of the state. But scientific analysis in *White Gold* has shown that the electrum used in the earliest coinage was in fact *artificially* manufactured. The use of electrum was probably a deliberate choice, and one which required sophisticated metallurgical technology. Natural electrum has not even been found locally: the alluvial gold of the famous Pactolus river near Sardis appears to have been pure. And gold from further afield may have been used to manufacture the Lydian coins. Many early coins were also produced at scale. Quantifications of some issues, in *White Gold* and elsewhere, have shown that they were minted in their thousands, sometimes without care for their appearance. Undeniably, then, the first coins were objects of monetary use, intended for payments, even if their alloy was not the most obvious choice to facilitate easy exchange.

So what were they for? And why electrum? It has long been suggested that early coinage was minted to pay mercenaries; certainly, later coins were often produced to pay for military expenditure, and this seems a reasonable explanation for the first coins too. The Mermnads expanded rapidly, and operated in a Near Eastern environment in which mercenary forces were regularly used. Andrew Meadows has even suggested a specific context, known from Near Eastern sources: the invasion of Lydia by the nomadic Cimmerians during the reign of Gyges. As the Cimmerians had no land or booty to seize, Gyges would have had to find another way to pay his soldiers. The choice of electrum would have been inextricably tied up with such a purpose. Because uncoined gold and silver were already considered forms of money, coins made from a mix of the two would have also been intrinsically valuable – but their value would have been ambiguous and hard to accept outside the sphere of the Mermnad authorities which produced and guaranteed them. The use of electrum thus made sure that the coins would stay in Lydia, and perhaps find their way back to the Mermnads through gifts or payments or taxes: this was a closed monetary zone. Right from the word go, then, the first coins demonstrated huge conceptual complexity.

An Archaic arms race ensued. Nearby communities, Greeks and others, would have had to respond to the expansionist power of Lydia with this new monetary technology – and so the invention of coinage spread like wildfire. Hence the huge diversity of early types. The very fabric of the Lydian coins may even provide evidence of Mermnad expansion, if they were indeed made of gold sourced from beyond the limits of Lydia itself. How exactly this adoption of coinage interacted with the development of early Greek cities and their political organisation is still unclear. But what is beyond doubt is that the first coinage cannot be understood just in the context of Archaic Greek history. It was a product of rising Lydian power in the diverse cultural landscape of western Anatolia.

The temple of Artemis viewed from the acropolis of Sardis. Photo: Frederic Wilner

At Sardis, we felt privileged to tell this exciting and rapidly developing story to a broader audience. Next year, viewers of the documentary will hear Andy interviewed about Gyges and Croesus on the acropolis of Sardis, watch Marcus wade in the golden waters of the Pactolus, and, of course, follow our climb up the tumulus of Alyattes.

Andrew Meadows being interviewed by the tumulus of Alyattes. Photo: Leah Lazar

Producing and using bronze coins in Hellenistic Bithynia

Amelia Dowler

Silver Drachma of Nicomedes I of Bithynia, 279–255 BCE. Obverse (top): Nicomedes I hd. r. Reverse (bottom): male figure std. ANS 1944.100.41887

Until the 4th century BCE most coins in the Mediterranean world were produced in precious metals – electrum, and then separately in gold, and silver. In this newsletter Leah Lazar describes the significance of this innovation in Anatolia. Denominations were indicated by the weight of the coin through their intrinsic value. To make smaller denominations mints simply produced smaller, lighter weight coins on highly precise weight standards.

The introduction of bronze coins in the late Classical and early Hellenistic periods brought several changes to the production and use of coins. Bronze coins are a token currency, where the value is set by the issuer. The coins and banknotes we use today are a continuation of that same system of token currencies. The value of the coin is set by the issuer, usually higher than the value of the metal content, thus offering a profit, known as 'seigniorage'.

Initially bronze coins were produced in small issues in the late 5th century in only a few mints, and wider uptake of full systems replacing smaller silver coins did not occur until the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE. Earlier reluctance may have been down to local resistance to coins which only had value relatively locally, rather than holding value further afield as precious metal coins did. The ultimate success of bronze was perhaps influenced by the widespread use of the royal bronze coinage produced under Alexander the Great which demonstrated the possibilities of token currencies.

There seems to have been a good understanding among administrative powers of how to set values and profit from bronze coin production. Among the inscriptions gathered by Marcus Chin in the Epigraphy of Monetary Economy in Anatolia inventory is the famous decree from Sestus in honour of Menas (**https://change.csad.ox.ac.uk/inscriptions/item/item-07.5**) 133-120 BCE, which makes clear that the city will profit from seigniorage. Cities and states could also exploit the opportunity to demonstrate civic pride in using their own designs, and this period sees mints open to produce bronze coins in small cities which never produced higher value silver coins, such as Kitanaura in eastern Lycia.

Bronze denominations were not determined by weight but relied instead on typology and diameter to indicate the value. Unlike today, it was rare for denomination or value marks to appear on coins. Rather, the familiarity of producing larger or smaller coins for larger or smaller values remained but the parameters were much freer as there was no constraint of intrinsic value. The weights for individual types can vary dramatically and so the profile of a sample of bronze coins looks very different from a sample of gold or silver coins. The portal created by the CHANGE project and others like it allows deeper metrological work as there is easier access to a greater number of sample coins. Facilitating the examination of large data sets is essential for understanding bronze denominational structures.

This is especially important when looking at the huge number of bronze denominations produced in the Hellenistic kingdom of Bithynia under Prusias I and Prusias II (*c.*228-149 BCE). 27 different types were produced during this period, in stark contrast with the five types under the previous kings (Nicomedes I and Ziaelas) or the two types under the final three kings (Nicomedes II, Nicomedes III, and Nicomedes IV). From analysis of diameter ranges (alongside design differences) there are at least six denominations among the 27 types, and as there are some overlaps in these ranges it may be the case that parameters for production shifted through *c.*228-149 BCE.

The large number of denominations in this period is intriguing – but the historical context may provide the explanation: we know that Bithynia was rapidly expanding both by conquest and by founding new urban areas, which may have driven a need to facilitate local payments and taxation. Another factor is that Bithynia, particularly under Prusias I and Prusias II, was engaged in almost constant warfare with Byzantium, Heraclea Pontica, and Pergamum, which would have required silver for mercenary payments. As Bithynia did not produce its own silver, this may have led to the withdrawal of silver for lower value exchange. As far as we know Bithynian silver production was in tetradrachms apart from a drachm production under Nicomedes I. There are only four examples of these drachms known so far, and it is possible that this production was stopped, or there was a recall of low denomination silver to be replaced by bronze.

Large data sets also help identify phenomena like countermarking processes. In Bithynia, the Apollo/Athena-Nike type produced under Prusias I has a series of three countermarks applied. We lack

Three examples of the Apollo/Athena-Nike AE type with countermarks (BnF M 4787, Y 20243, M 6124)

written evidence about the purposes of countermarks and so must reconstruct the processes and intentions behind countermarking from the coins themselves. There are several possible explanations for countermarking, from revalidation of foreign or local coins, to taxation, to coinage recalls and reissues.

In Bithynia, the countermarking of the Apollo/Athena-Nike type (**https://greekcoinage.org/iris/id/bithynian.kings.waddington.1908.16**) appears to be an internal Bithynian process. The three countermarks – showing the head of Apollo (left), a lyre, and a tripod – do not appear in other regions or on other coin types. While we do not have find-spot evidence for these coins, the sequence of three countermarks strongly suggests that many of these coins remained in Bithynia long enough to be countermarked three times. Additionally, the use of the Apollo-related imagery indicates a connection with the original coin type. Other Bithynian bronze coins also bear Apollo-related imagery, so it was clearly a part of the Bithynian design repertoire.

We can infer the order of the countermarking from examples showing one, two, or three countermarks where the head of Apollo, left (countermark one) always appears, the lyre countermark does not appear without the head of Apollo, and the tripod countermark does not appear without countermarks one and two. There are also some examples of overlap where one countermark must have been applied after another.

The existence of coins with one, two, or three countermarks also suggests that there was a gap between each of the countermarking events rather than all three being applied at once. This suggests that the reason for the countermarking recurred. The likelihood is this was a revalidation, perhaps as part of a taxation scheme. The careful positioning of the countermarks also suggests an officially regulated process. This may also offer some hints of other administrative details in the Bithynian economy.

Since only the Apollo/Athena-Nike type is systematically countermarked in Bithynia – and therefore perhaps the only coin type subject to recall and taxation – then surely the local population would have avoided using it, if they had the option. Instead, we must consider the countermarked coins as the material evidence for a wider process we cannot see. It is possible, for example, that specific taxes or payments had to be made with the Apollo/Athena-Nike coin or that the countermarked Apollo/Athena-Nike coins were the coins given in exchange for a certain number of other coins surrendered as part of a coinage recall. Both of those scenarios would force acceptance and use of the Apollo/Athena-Nike type even if this were at a loss for the consumer. We know from examples elsewhere, such as at Gortyn in Crete in the mid-second half of the third century BCE (IC IV 162 **https://epigraphy.packhum.org/text/200601**), that states could extract penalties from their subjects for failing to use mandated coin types.

Being able to examine bronze coins at scale through CHANGE and allied projects will continue to contribute to our ability to understand how states reacted to the opportunities bronze coins presented.

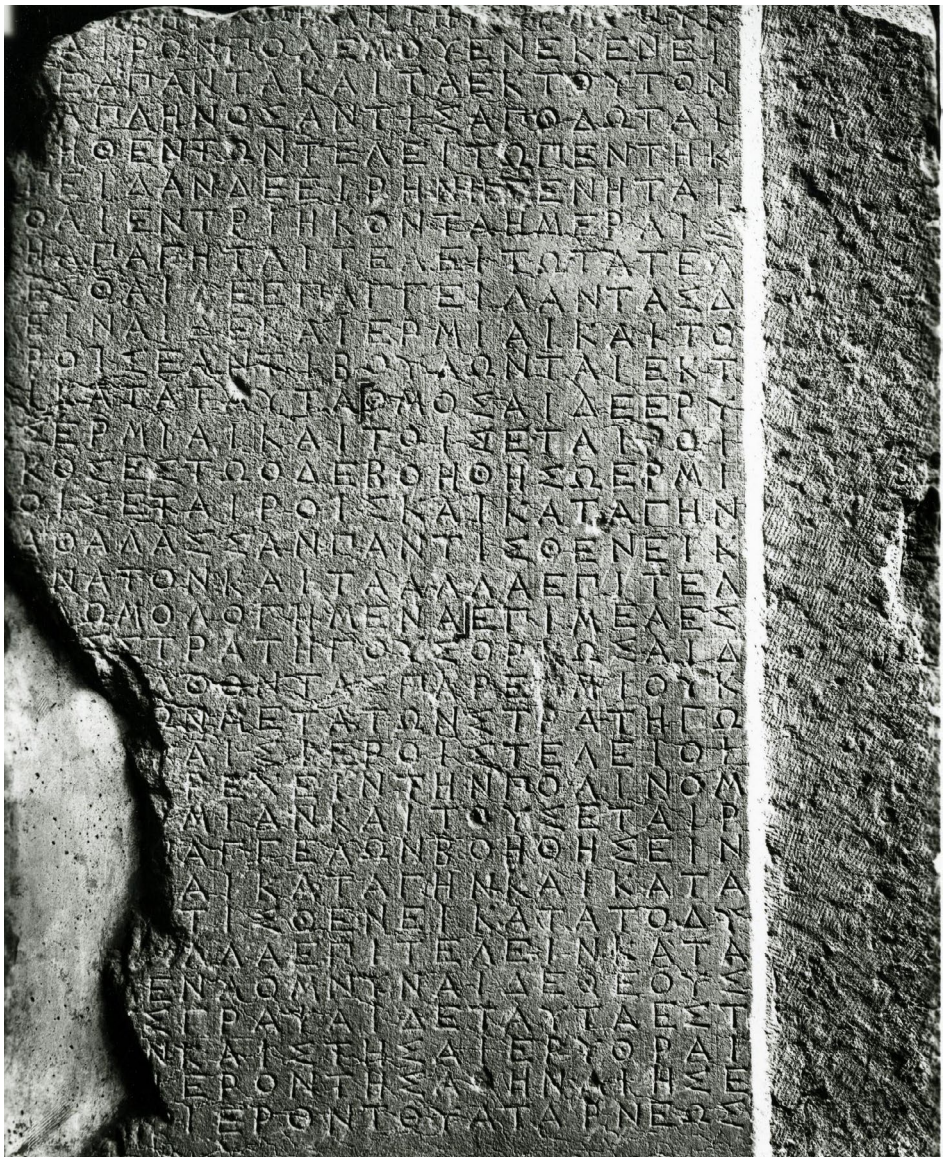
CHANGE: The Development of the Monetary Economy of Ancient Anatolia *c.*630-30 BCE has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement no. 865680)

Dynastic fiscality: Hermias of Atarneus and Erythrai

Marcus Chin

How can we study coinage without looking at coinage? My work on the CHANGE project has addressed this question by examining the large record of texts inscribed on stone surviving from Anatolia from the Archaic to the Hellenistic periods. It is ongoing but has resulted so far in an online inventory of inscriptions concerning the economic and monetary history of the region (**https://change.csad.ox.ac.uk/inscriptions**). The most obvious value of inscriptions for the study of the economy and money is that they often illuminate the frameworks of social and institutional power about which coins themselves are often mute – or only capable of offering tantalising hints. Another facet to my work on the project is a book-length treatment of one of these frameworks – that of locally and regionally based powerholders, 'dynasts', for want of a shorthand, who crop up throughout Anatolia's history in this period. The following contribution comprises a snippet from this longer story, and centres on one of these figures, and his association with the monetary economy of north-western Anatolia, as illustrated by an intriguing inscription.

Fig. 1, I.Erythrai 9, dating to the late 340s BCE, courtesy of The Trustees of the British Museum



One of the more enigmatic and fascinating characters of the fourth century BCE must have been the philosopher and local ruler Hermias. For roughly two decades in the years *c.*360-341 BCE he operated a petty fiefdom in north-western Asia Minor, from his base at the city of Atarneus (near modern Dikili). He came from Bithynia, and was originally the eunuch servant of a certain Euboulos. Euboulos was a banker, and had laid the way for Hermias by gaining hold of Atarneus and Assos in the southern Troad – this happened sometime in the early fourth century, and probably during the upheavals of the 'Great Satraps' Revolt' of the 360s. Euboulos ruled jointly with Hermias for a while, before Hermias succeeded him, whether peacefully or violently (one source claims he murdered Euboulos). Much of the subsequent tradition around Hermias, however, centred less on his statesmanship and more on his association with Plato and Aristotle, for Hermias had studied at Athens under both, and was even addressed in Plato's Sixth Letter. Aristotle married Hermias' niece and adopted daughter, Pythias, and he composed a hymn in Hermias' honour after his death.

What does Hermias of Atarneus have to do with ancient documents? Well, he has something to do with at least one. This is a treaty between Erythrai and Hermias himself, inscribed on a stele that has been known for some time, and is now in the British Museum (I.Erythrai 9). Although some way south of Atarneus, Erythrai was on the Çeşme peninsula just opposite Chios, which had had some disagreements with Hermias about its mainland territory, which was probably located around Atarneus itself. This was also a time (the later 340s BCE) when the Persian King may have been regrouping after subduing the revolt of Egypt, and Hermias may have been seeking future allies. The treaty with Erythrai was,

Fig. 2 Silver coin of Atarneus, possibly from the time of Euboulos and Hermias, showing a youthful head (Apollo?) on the obverse and a coiled snake on the reverse, with the legend ATAP. cn type 7577

in any event, the organisation of a military alliance. The opening earlier portion of the text is lost, and most of what remains concerns the oaths that would be made by both parties; the Erythraians were to swear that 'I shall go to support Hermias and his companions both by land and sea with all my strength as far as possible, and I shall accomplish the other things in accordance with the agreement' (ll. 12-18, RO 68 translation). What especially interests us, however, are the surviving lines of the treaty itself, preserved in the top part of the stele:

[If the Erythraians deposit anything] in the territory of Hermias and his companions on account of war, everything is to be free from taxes, including their offspring (τὰ ἐκ τούτ<ω>ν [γενόμεν]α, i.e. calves or children of slaves), except for whatever one sells; on these, a tax of a fiftieth [2%] is payable. When peace is made, these are to be removed within thirty days; if they are not removed, taxes will have to be paid. They shall deposit after giving due notice. These terms are to hold also for Hermias and his companions, if they wish to deposit anything. The Erythraians made an oath to Hermias and his companions; this was the oath. (ll. 1-14)

The regulations of the treaty deal with what must have been a mundane aspect of interstate relations in the classical Greek world – the organisation and taxation of mobility, in particular of agricultural produce, livestock, and probably also slaves, as a means of expressing authority over space. For example, an important document from Teos, of a century later, outlines taxes on the movement and sale of items as diverse as slaves and wool. The distinguishing feature of this treaty, however, is the distinction in political space that is implied.

The designation of Hermias as 'Hermias and his companions' (*hetairoi*) is especially curious. It shows the way that the Erythraians thought about Hermias, and what Hermias thought about the nature of his power: in effect, his 'state' was understood to comprise Hermias and the companions who made up his court. Aside from the Macedonian royal court, which was becoming more influential at this very time under Philip II, there is no earlier or other contemporary instance of rulers having 'companions'. Hermias, indeed, would become an ally of Macedon, so the designation of his associates as 'companions' may be conscious emulation of the Macedonian court. Another factor, however, was that Hermias' power was simply coming to resemble Macedonia's – Plato's letter mentions that he had a strong force of cavalry (probably from controlling the southern Troad), and this may have created an equestrian ruling class that made his power base resemble that of Macedonian royal 'companions', whose identity was often attached to their being cavalrymen.

We have then two legal entities – the city of Erythrai and its territory, and Hermias and his companions, and their territory. Presumably, 'Hermias and his companions' included not only people on their estates, but also citizens of communities under Hermias' rule, like the people of Atarneus and Assos. The principle of equality underpinning the treaty's terms meant that fiscal immunity applied to both, although it should be obvious that this probably favoured the Erythraians – at a time of war, an Erythraian landowner had, in theory, a larger territory in which to deposit livestock and slaves than a landowner from Atarneus. This is probably why the treaty outlines a thirty-day grace period, which would have limited the territory an Erythraian could gain access to.

There is in all nothing spectacular about these arrangements – they merely illustrate once again the care with which things like import tax could be overseen by city-states and dynastic rulers at this time. Nonetheless, there is a further temptation to associate them with Hermias' reputation as a philosopher. Making sure that tax arrangements would be in place as much as possible, even when Erythrai found itself burdened by war – note the exception that goods sold would still be taxed – was hardly an innovative scheme worthy of inclusion among the many money-making anecdotes of the pseudo-Aristotelian Oeconomica, but it perhaps comes from the same sense of calculated pragmatism advocated by Aristotle's school. Indeed, Hermias placed Aristotle and two students of Plato in charge of Assos for a time. There is also the fact that his predecessor Euboulos was a banker, and it is possible the whole principality he established around Atarneus was a reward for loans he made to neighbouring satraps. Whatever the case, the regulations of this treaty derived from a keenly honed monetary mindset.

A fragment of the Alexander historian Kallisthenes further relates that the poet Persinos, being unhappy at the pay he was receiving from Euboulos, went to Mytilene (just a short sail west) and found that his Phokaian staters were worth more there. These staters were the electrum coinage minted by Phokaia and Mytilene, and the anecdote makes sense in terms of the exclusivity that we know this coinage had, as enshrined in a well-known fourth-century decree making sure of the purity of their electrum. They would have been fully exchangeable as legal tender, whereas at Atarneus, which

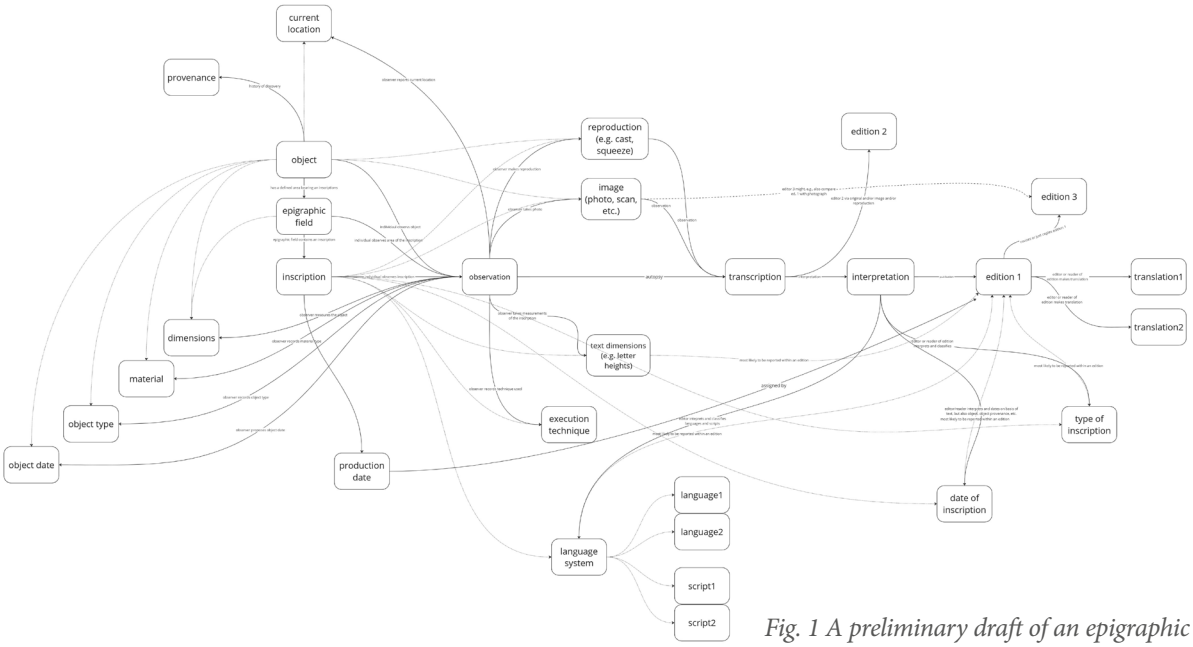
was not part of the Mytilene-Phokaia monetary pact, these staters would have had to have been exchanged for a fee. The fact the anecdote survives, however, suggests it was a jibe at Euboulos' banking background, and it probably implies that an unusually high exchange rate was run at Atarneus. That is to say, Euboulos, and likely also Hermias, may have been taking advantage of their proximity to the monetary zone composed of the Phokaian-Mytilenian electrum staters to make a handsome profit. Some of Atarneus' earliest coins, silver hemidrachms and bronze coinage, may be the result of this financially astute approach to statecraft.

In the end, the wealth and influence Hermias accrued, alongside his friendship with Philip of Macedon, placed him in a dangerous position. Mentor of Rhodes had him arrested and tortured in Persia about Philip's plans. Hermias did not survive the ordeal. With him went his fiefdom – so firmly had the chain of command and trust been built that Mentor merely needed to issue letters sealed by Hermias' signet-ring, so we are told, to persuade his subjects to transfer their allegiances.

The few lines of this treaty therefore offer an insight into the poorly understood world of Asia Minor's minor rulers, figures like Hermias who loomed large over cities like Erythrai, but were themselves small fry from the perspective of the Achaimenid Great King. Hermias' micro-state was by no means the first in this corner of the Aegean – in fact, it neighboured and perhaps encompassed a dominion in Mysia run by the descendants of Greek exiles dating back over a century earlier, and into whose family Aristotle, son-in-law of Hermias, would have his own daughter marry. Nor was it to be the last. Just over a century later, Philetairos from Tieion in Paphlagonia, another eunuch from northern Anatolia, would become treasurer at Pergamon. The well-known Attalid dynasty he would create would pick up where Hermias left off, adroitly devising means of enriching themselves, and carving out their own piece of earth.

Fig. 3 Bronze coin of Atarneus, possibly from the time of Euboulos and Hermias, with the legend ATAP. BM 1847,1120.8

Fig. 4 Electrum hekte of Phokaia, c.477-388 BCE. ANS 1944.100.4641



1

Fig. 1 A preliminary draft of an epigraphic ontology

FAIR Epigraphy?

Jonathan Prag

The quantity of epigraphic data available digitally grows every year. The EAGLE project united some 450,000 digital editions of Latin epigraphy from the main federation of Roman epigraphy databases, which they reckoned to represent some 350,000 unique inscriptions (many records were duplicates). The *PHI* database makes over 200,000 Greek inscriptions available. An ever growing number of smaller regional or thematic corpora (*RIB Online*, *IRT*, *IGCyr*, *ISicily*, etc.) adds to this dataset, and with ever greater levels of detail. However, the essential difficulty remains that of how such resources can be used. The efforts of the LatinNow project to achieve a usable dataset of inscriptions for the north-west provinces of the Roman Empire, spending several years cleaning and deduplicating data in order to build a dataset of 130,000 unique texts from existing resources, are eloquent of the current challenge.

There are many different aspects to this problem, ranging across diversity of formats, licensing, documentation of data handling and agreed standards (for instance, the PHI dataset is formally not available for re-use; the *EDCS* database offers no clear information on the source or editing of the texts it publishes; some projects are traditional databases with text fields, others use the EpiDoc format; despite the creation of the EAGLE vocabularies, the use of standardised controlled vocabularies is extremely uneven). These issues are increasingly recognised under the umbrella of the 'FAIR' label, established in the sciences: the principles that data should be Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Re-usable. Easier said than done.

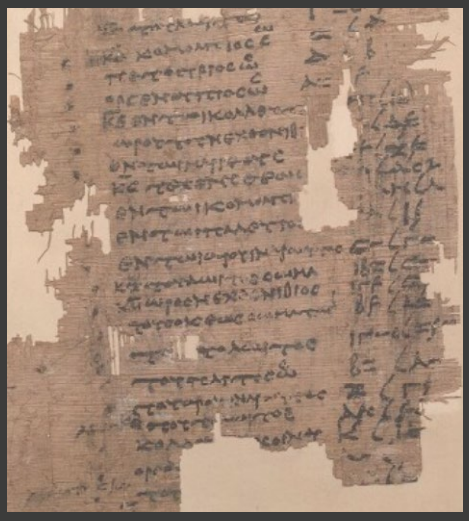
Since early 2022, the CSAD has been home to the FAIR Epigraphy project, a joint AHRC-DFG funded project (running to mid-2025), co-directed by Jonathan Prag (Oxford) and Marietta Horster (Mainz, and director of the *CIL*). The project sets out to tackle this problem from a number of angles (see **https://inscriptiones.org/**), principally through the work of its senior research software engineer, Dr Imran Asif (Oxford), and the project's principal researcher, Dr Petra Heřmánková (Aarhus). In order to compare data on inscriptions from different projects, we need to be able easily to disambiguate records from different sources. The Trismegistos project at Leuven had already addressed this problem by issuing unique identifiers for all ancient inscriptions. In order to make it easier for researchers and projects to incorporate the TM numbers in their records, Imran Asif built a user-friendly ID-resolver that makes the Trismegistos data querier easily accessible to humans.

Once you can align records for inscriptions between projects, it becomes desirable to compare and combine the available data from those records. This is only possible, however, if different projects describe the material in comparable ways. The EAGLE project recognised this in its first attempt to construct standardised vocabularies for key epigraphic categories (e.g. type of inscription). Under the leadership of Petra Heřmánková we have been working to refine and redevelop those vocabularies, aligning the terminology across existing projects and making the vocabularies fully accessible through a standard web tool. As a second step, if these individual data points are to be usable and interrogated at scale by a computer, it is necessary to be able to explain to a computer how these different data points relate to one another. This requires an ontology, a conceptual framework which connects every aspect of the epigrapher's work and an epigraphic edition. Earlier efforts by other members of the epigraphic community have laid the groundwork, but we are now close to having a complete draft of this crucial piece of the puzzle, and a workshop in Oxford in February will help finalise this.

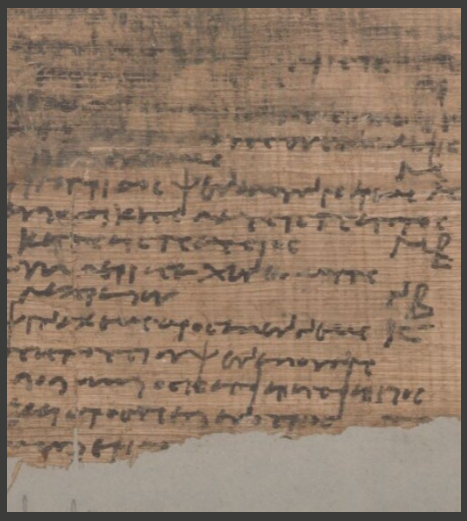
Other parts of the puzzle include an attempt to build a bibliographic platform which will enable consistent reference across projects to epigraphic publications, resolving once and for all the age-old challenge of bibliographic abbreviations (obscure to humans and unusable by computers), and enabling cross-project searching by publication: this already boasts some 3000 records, thanks to the sterling efforts of two of our graduate research assistants, James Hua and Joel Pollatschek, who spent many hours cleaning and aligning the data provided by existing projects. There is a long way to go, and FAIR 2.0 is very much on the cards; but we are definitely making progress.

LGPN-Egypt online

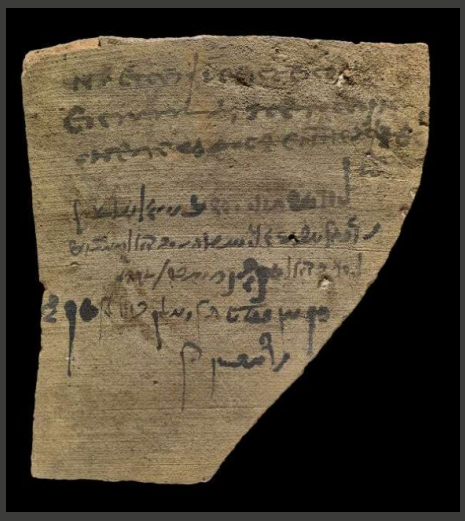
Adrienn Almásy-Martin



1. Greek papyrus (List with names of skippers), Bodleian Library MS. Gr. class. d. 33 (P). Photo: © Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford



2. Greek papyrus (Assessment of a vineyard for taxation), Bodleian Library MS. Gr. class. e. 26 (P). Photo: © Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford



3. Greek-Demotic ostracon (Harvest tax receipt), EA 249263. Photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum

The *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* (*LGPN*) project was set up in 1972 with the objective of collecting the Greek names of all individuals who lived in the Mediterranean area in Antiquity. By 2019 the project had compiled a printed and online dataset of personal names written in Greek and Greek names attested in other scripts from the ancient Greek-speaking world. The final stage of this gargantuan task was the study of the Greek onomastic material from Egypt and this commenced in 2019.

Adding the Egyptian onomastic material to the existing *LGPN* database is both essential and innovative. Greek material found in Egypt had historically been studied separately from that of the rest of the Mediterranean for various reasons and this was also the case with onomastic studies. As one of the fundamental objectives of the *LGPN* database is to bring together all the names on one platform, this means connecting Graeco-Roman Egypt with the rest of the Greek-speaking world.

With the establishment of Macedonian Ptolemaic rule over Egypt after the conquest of Alexander the Great in 332 BCE, Egypt rapidly became a bilingual country. While Greek was used in the higher levels of the administration, in the military and in the royal court, Egyptian remained the language spoken by the majority of the population and the Egyptian scripts continued to be widely used well into the Roman period. But people with Egyptian names, albeit written in the Greek script, held senior positions in the administration; conversely, people with Greek names are often found worshipping Egyptian deities. In the Ptolemaic period, an Egyptian wishing to get ahead in a Greek environment or born from a Greek-Egyptian marriage could have both an Egyptian and a Greek name; the same individual might appear under either of these names in different documents, depending on the nature of the text. Just to give one example: there was a man whose name was Leon (Greek Λέων) who lived in 2nd century BCE Hawara in the Fayyum, but he 'was also called Sesophnois', which is the rendering in Greek of the demotic *S-wsr-pꜣ-mꜣy*. His Greek name, Leon, appears in the Greek documents, while his Egyptian name is found in the demotic texts and, written in a Hellenized form as Sesophnois, in some Greek documents. This is the cultural and linguistic environment of the material studied by *LGPN*.

The Egyptian section of the *LGPN* database collects (a) all personal names written in Greek script; (b) Greek names (i.e. names of Greek origin) written in non-Greek scripts, which means in the case of Egypt mainly in demotic and hieroglyphs; and (c) identifies all the named individuals. Non-Greek names written in Egyptian or other scripts are not included. The Egyptian material is much more extensive than that of any of the previously studied regions and for this reason the first part of the project focused only on names attested in Lower Egypt and the Fayyum. Chronologically, it covers the period from the beginning of the Greek presence in Egypt (7th century BCE) up to the end of the 3rd century CE. As written material after this date, i.e. in Late Antiquity, represents a new cultural and linguistic phase, Greek texts from the reign of the Emperor Diocletian onwards and names written in the Coptic script are not included.

The Egyptian database currently contains over 110,000 attestations and identifies 70,000 individuals with Greek names, written in Greek and/or in Egyptian (and

other languages), along with their family relationships and, importantly, the occupation of the individual (where available). All of this information, based on the source material of Papyri.info, Trismegistos and various printed publications, was checked name by name and the data corrected accordingly. This first phase of the project, with a newly designed database, has just been launched and is now accessible to researchers on the *LGPN* database portal (**https://www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk/**, under Search database, Search *LGPN*-Egypt). This is complete up to the end of the Ptolemaic period and contains part (roughly half) of the dataset for Roman Egypt. The intention is to finish the collection and processing of the material from Lower Egypt and to incorporate that of Upper Egypt as soon as new funding is acquired.

The impact of the project goes far beyond that of 'just' a list of names, as it will create a dataset that can be used for detailed onomastic, bilingual and bicultural studies. For example, by expanding the already extensive *LGPN* database the structured information gleaned from onomastic analysis can be used to investigate the extent of cultural interaction and assimilation from both a regional and chronological perspective. The completion of the Egyptian database will also allow the diffusion of particular names connected with different immigrant populations to be identified and studied.

To highlight the value of *LGPN*-Egypt for onomastic studies, we organized an international conference at CSAD in 2022. Researchers from Europe, Israel, USA and Australia gave presentations on Greek and Egyptian name-giving practices, on biculturalism and on language interaction in onomastic sources. The papers from this conference will be published in *Greek Personal Names in Egypt* in the Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents Series in September 2025.

Diversa Membra: P.M. Fraser's small artefact collection

Adrienn Almásy-Martin and Thomas Mannack

No. 1

Peter Marshall Fraser, the Oxford classicist, who *inter alia* founded the Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, and whose magnum opus was *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (1972), visited Egypt many times during his long career.

Wounded at the battle of El-Alamein and recovering in Cairo, he was recruited by the Special Operations Executive (SOE) to work for them in occupied Greece. To improve his modern Greek he went to Alexandria – the love of Alexandria would stay with him for the rest of his life. In 1953 he was elected to an Extraordinary Research Fellowship at All Souls to pursue research on the Greek Inscriptions of the Ptolemaic Empire.

Over the years Fraser collected a few small artefacts from Egypt and Greece. These were left to his colleague Elaine Matthews, who in turn gave them to Alan Bowman. The exact find-spots of the objects or the name of dealers through whom they were acquired are not recorded. According to his notes, they were 'acquired', 'bought' or 'picked up' in Alexandria, in the Fayyum, in Dendera (Upper Egypt) and in Athens between 1950 and 1965, at a time when antiquities could still be legally imported from Egypt.

The Fraser Collection consists of five small figurative objects and ten ceramic fragments from the Ptolemaic, Roman and Byzantine periods. A selection is presented here with our comments and Fraser's original notes.

No. 1: **Relief fragment with representation of Sarapis**

This fragmentary limestone relief of Sarapis-Agathodaimon, the protector god of Alexandria, represented with a human head crowned with a *kalathos* (grain measure) and a coiled-up snake body, has very few parallels.[1] It is probably the right part of a stela on which the god appeared together with his partner, Isis-Termuthis. Similar representations are also known from terracotta statuettes and coins.[2]

Fraser's note:

Plaster relief of Sarapis with body of snake, publ. Miscellanea in on(ore) Adriani by me.[3]

From Egypt ? Alexandria

Acquired in Alexandria c.1965

Date: H-I[4]

No. 2: **Terracotta lamp handle with representation of Sarapis**

[1] See Rijksmuseum van Oudheden *F.1960/9.1; Bibliothèque Nationale de France inv. 57.172a; British Museum EA 1539.*

[2] F. Dunand, 'Les représentations de l'agathodémon. À propos de quelques bas-reliefs du musée d'Alexandrie', *BIFAO* 67 (1969), 9–48; see Fig. 11.

[3] N. Bonacasa (ed.), *Alessandria e il mondo Ellenistico-Romano. Studi in onore di Achille Adriani, Rome,* 1983.

[4] = Hellenistic – Imperial.


No. 2


No. 3


No. 4


No. 5


No. 9

This terracotta fragment was originally the handle of a lamp. The figure of the deity is seated on his throne, holding a sceptre in his left hand and placing the right on the head of Cerberus, the guard dog of Hades.[5] Sarapis was associated with Osiris, the god of the afterlife. There are window-motifs on the back representing the temple where the god was depicted.

Fraser's note: ***2. Terracotta of Sarapis seated on his throne in the Serapeum. The dog Cerberus as always at his right hand. The object is the handle of a large lamp such as might be used in the Sanctuary. Note the windows on the back.***

Egyptian work, perhaps Alexandrian.

Acquired in Alexandria c.1955.

Date H-I

No. 3: **Terracotta lantern with the representation of Silanus**
Cylindrical lantern with a cupola-roof representing a temple. There is a framed relief of a bearded man's head on the front and the back is open for the insertion of a candle. The two sides are decorated with torch-motifs. There is a suspension hole on the top of the roof and two other holes on the front of the figure. This type of lantern is well known from Alexandria.[6] The gods or goddesses represented in this type of small temple could be Dionysos, Harpokrates, Silanus, Athena, Aphrodite or Isis. Fraser interpreted the deity as 'Sarapis', but the locks of hair framing the face and the lack of the typical attributes of Sarapis (such as the *kalathos*) rule out this identification. It is more likely to be Silanus or a satyr.

Fraser's note: ***3. Terracotta hanging lantern representing head of Sarapis with characteristic forked beard.***

Acquisition and provenance same as fn 1 + 2; probably Alexandria

Date H-I

No. 4: **Figurine of Harpocrates**
While this hollow clay figurine may have been part of a handle of a terracotta oil lamp, as Fraser thought, it also could also belong to a seated figurine. The modern note, 'Fayy' written on the back refers to the acquisition place, the Fayyum.

Harpocrates' head is crowned with a wreath and the Egyptian double crown, his right hand touching his lips, his left holding a cornucopia. Fraser suggested the object is from the Roman period, but these types of figurines were equally widely used in the Ptolemaic period.[7]

Fraser's note: ***Terracotta lamp-handle representing Harpocrates, the child of Isis + Osiris, & the third figure of the Egyptian Trinity. He carries, as usually, a cornucopia under his right arm, + [as] always sucks his finger + has a long lock of hair the so-called 'Harpocrates-lock'.***

From the Fayyum.

Acquired in Egypt c.1955–1965.

Date: I.

No. 5: **Head of a goddess**
The fragment was possibly part of a clay figurine. On the left-hand side there are traces of a broken wreath that originally framed the head. The hair is parted in the middle with locks on both sides, which are the typical features of Isis-Hathor.

Fraser's note: ***5. Terracotta head of Goddess Hathor (= Aphrodite)***

Acquired ca. 1955 at Dendera in Upper Egypt, where her temple of the Roman Period is.

Date: I.

No. 9: **Lid of an Athenian 'West Slope' type pyxis.** Dm. 11cm, h. as preserved 3.3cm. Reassembled from two large fragments, surface rubbed, especially around the edge, some encrustation and salt excretions. Top of knob lost.

Orange-brown clay. The top of the lid painted in slightly glossy black and adorned with ochre ovolo with double outlines and dots in centres, small leaves, and berries in relief around the base of the knob. Encircling reserved grooves around the base of the knob and the edge, painted ridge around edge, underside reserved.

West Slope pottery, named after the find-place of examples on the west slope of the Athenian acropolis, was made in the eastern Mediterranean and Athens from around 320 to 150 BCE. The decoration imitates gilding. West Slope ware is closely related in style and technique to Apulian Gnathian vases. For the fabrics, see Alexandropoulou, A., *Gnathia- und Westabhangkeramik: eine vergleichende Betrachtung* (Durham, 2002); Hayes, J., *Greek and Italian Black-Gloss Wares and Related Wares in the Royal Ontario Museum: a Catalogue* (Toronto, 1984). Doctor, R.F., *Der Neue Pauly*, 11, 487–488, *s.v.* Westabhangkeramik.

Fraser's note: ***9. Lid of Attic pyxis of 'west slope' style (top-piece missing).***

Date c.300-250 BC

Acquired Athens, c.1950 BCE.

[5] Close parallels: Metropolitan Museum of Art inv. number 17.194.2115, 2nd century CE British Museum G & R 1888,0601.120, 2nd century CE; E. Breccia, *Le Musée Gréco-Romaine, Alexandria*, 1930, pl. 21.

[6] F. Dunand, 'Lanternes gréco-égyptiennes', in *Dialogues d'histoires anciennes* 2 (1976) 71–72, type A; see also 72–73, A3 and 4 pl. IV–V.

[7] See for example British Museum EA 37543, from the Fayyum, 3rd century BCE.

Latinization, Local Languages, and Literacies in the Roman West

By Alex Mullen

Fig. 1 The 'hand of Irulegi' (Government of Navarre)

What do Irulegi in Navarre and Uley in Gloucestershire have in common? Not much, one might think, but inscribed objects from these locations have generated recent epigraphic publications which force us to reconsider our understanding of epichoric epigraphies. From Navarre we find our first example of non-numismatic written ancient Basque, in the form of an inscription written on a metal hand which was probably originally hung from a door. And from closer to home at the temple of Mercury in Uley, we find two tablets which may be at least partially inscribed in British Celtic. Since one shares a verb with one of the two Celtic tablets from Aquae Sulis in the nearby county of Somerset, we might seriously start to think that the Celtic vernacular did make it into writing in the province of Britannia.

In the recently published volume, *Latinization, Local Languages, and Literacies in the Roman West,* the last from the LatinNow project, we offer a detailed anatomy of local and regional patterning across Britain, Gaul, the Germanies and the Iberian Peninsula primarily from the later Republic to the end of the Principate. The project team plus invited experts draw on a combination of various sets of evidence and an interdisciplinary perspective – historical, archaeological, sociolinguistic, and epigraphic – to uncover local voices. They track 'differential Latinization', and reveal the probable survival of local languages, alongside, or even to the exclusion of, Latin in some communities, especially in non-Mediterranean areas. The results underscore the variety of factors involved in language change and the importance of sensitivity to local communities, their bilingualism and distinctive identities.

The contributors constantly functioned at complementary scales of analysis, at times working with evidence from a single site, and at others taking a regional, provincial or cross-provincial view. In doing so they grappled with the 'characterful' epigraphic and non-epigraphic datasets that we had collated, created and cleaned, and to which so many colleagues kindly contributed. These data can be explored on our open access webGIS: **https://gis.latinnow.eu/**. One of the layers of the GIS contains our filterable inscribed object records, the cleanest all-language epigraphic dataset for any multi-provincial area of the Empire. Users of the data should exercise caution and consult the information in Chapter 1 for guidance.

By including everyday writing in the epigraphic evidence, the contributors reveal regionality in the varieties of Latin used and disparities in engagement in both the epigraphic habit and broader literate practices. New data enable the description of types of literacies, and move us away from debates on provincial percentages of literacy and from simplifying generalizations about associated social dynamics. In particular the lapidary epigraphy is shown to encompass strikingly divergent presentations, forms of language, timings, and social groups across the provinces. MacMullen's curve of the rise and fall of the epigraphic habit might still just about hold on a very zoomed out pan-provincial view, but, as John Bodel remarked, 'a micro-cosmically variegated galaxy of epigraphic behaviors appears to us deceptively regular and uniform when viewed from a distance'. We have attempted to reach deep into this galaxy, but much remains to be charted. We hope that the complexity uncovered by these studies will form a starting point for future investigations.

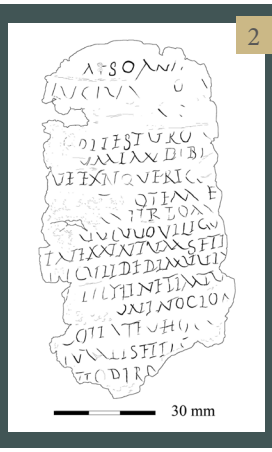


Fig. 2 One of the tablets from Uley with possible British Celtic (Tab. Uley 7), drawing by Roger Tomlin

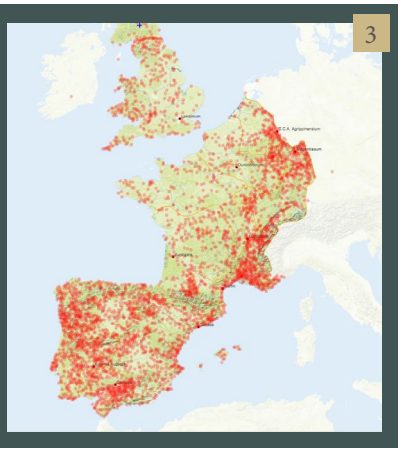


Fig. 3 Screen-shot of the LatinNow webGIS showing the inscribed objects layer filtered to show stone inscriptions

Illuminating the Vindolanda writing tablets

Alexander Meyer and Alex Mullen

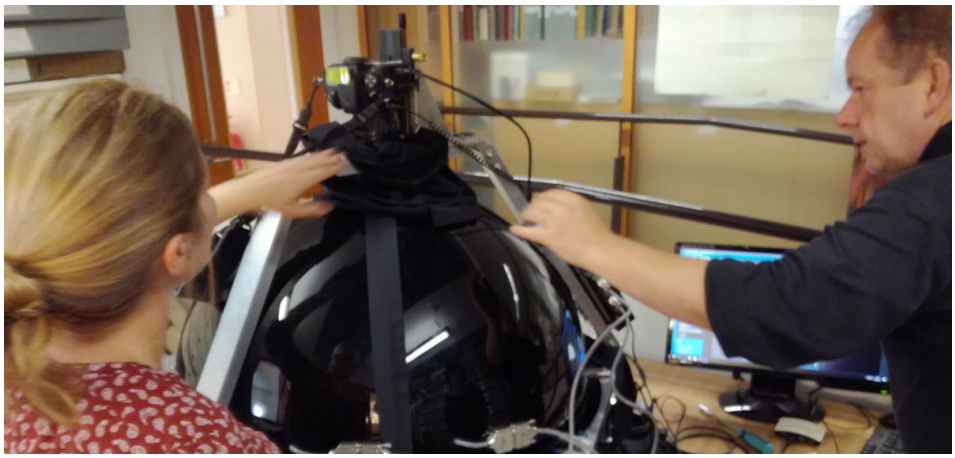
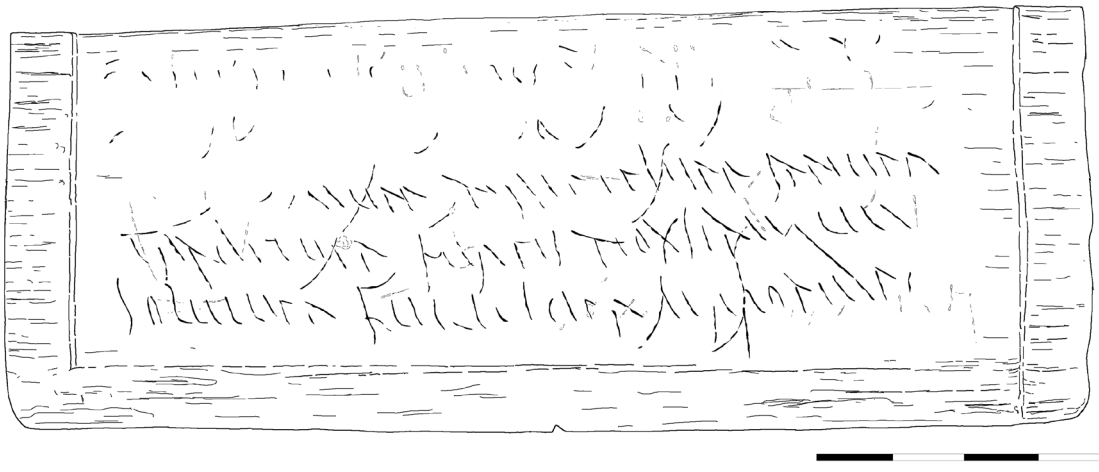


Fig. 1 Charles Crowther and Alex Mullen using the 'Superdome' Reflectance Transformation Imaging machine at CSAD

In March of 1973, Robin Birley and his staff were removing infill from a drainage trench they had opened the previous year in an area off the southwest corner of the stone fort at Vindolanda in Northumberland. In the process, Birley discovered what he thought were plane shavings and evidence of woodworking in the area. He passed these to his assistant who noticed peculiar markings on them. Closer inspection revealed two slivers of wood attached to each other. They detached the pieces to reveal ink writing on the inner surfaces. These were the first writing tablets discovered at Vindolanda. The first to be read was a letter, perhaps to a soldier from his family listing the contents of a package of socks, sandals and underpants: **https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/inscriptions/TabVindol346**. In the last fifty years, the number of writing tablets recovered from Vindolanda has grown to over 1700. They include ink tablets, around 900 of which have been published to date, and approximately 400 fragments of stylus tablets, only a few of which have been published.

Our team, funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and the European Research Council has been working to correct this imbalance by reanimating research on the stylus tablets from Vindolanda. The publication of stylus tablets has always been hampered by the condition of the texts themselves, which survive only as accidental incisions in the wood frame that received the wax which served as the primary writing surface. With the support of the CSAD, the Vindolanda Trust, and the British Museum, where most of the tablets now reside, we have been experimenting with new and improved imaging technologies to produce optimal 2D and 3D images of stylus tablets to facilitate the recovery and publication of the texts they once held. We have employed RTI/PTM technologies, first tested for this purpose by Alan Bowman in the 1990s,

Fig. 2 Drawing of the tablet and text by Roger Tomlin



'LatinNow. The Latinization of the North-western Roman Provinces: Sociolinguistics, Epigraphy and Archaeology' received funding from the European Union's European Research Council, grant agreement no. 715626

Fig. 3a and b The final word of the tablet with and without Photoshop annotation

3D laser scanning, Computer Tomography (CT), photometric stereo, and other methods to recover texts and the first results appear in the 2024 volume of *Britannia* (Meyer, Mullen and Tomlin). That article presents a fragmentary deed-of-sale for an enslaved man, which was discovered in 2014 and dates to the late 1st century CE. The recoverable text reads:

eum ḥọmịṇem sanụm

tradịtum furtịs noxsịsque

solụtum fugiti(u)ụm erroneṃ

'[It is warranted that] this man handed over healthy is free from deceit and wrongdoing, and [is not] a fugitive or a wanderer.'

Comparison with more complete documents with the same formulae helped us to determine that our tablet is the bottom part of the first of three that would have originally been bound together as a triptych.

The Vindolanda deed-of-sale is just the second such document from Roman Britain and the twelfth in Latin from the empire as a whole. It is the first to have been discovered within a Roman fort and the context and associated tablet finds suggest it forms part of the archive of Iulius Verecundus, the commander of the Tungrians stationed there. Though the enslaved population at Vindolanda is virtually invisible in the broader material culture of the site, numerous texts witness the ubiquity of enslaved labour. Indeed, just a few weeks ago we read a new ink tablet with Alan Bowman and Roger Tomlin which seems to have been a letter between conservi. This new stylus text reminds us of the pervasiveness of Roman law and legal knowledge in the provinces, and highlights the importance of recovering the faint scratches left in the wood.

In the course of our experimentation we have identified photometric stereo as the most promising technology to improve current readings of stylus tablets and read previously illegible texts. We are planning to apply this technology to the stylus tablets from Vindolanda and to 700 or so finds from across Roman London, with support from SSHRC. We will also be expanding our project to include the use of artificial intelligence to recover texts, thanks to a new collaborative doctoral partnership co-led by the University of Nottingham and the British Museum (UKRI funded).

New hardware and software technologies, and seemingly limitless modern computational power, make this an exciting time to be studying both stylus and ink tablets. We can now produce ultra-high resolution 2D and 3D images quickly and inexpensively. These assist museums in recording the conservation status of the objects and allow virtual access to the objects without potentially destructive handling. We are particularly excited to see what AI can bring to the problem of the usually indecipherable palimpsest texts. These technologies should soon reveal new texts for us to explore.

Further reading: Meyer, A., Mullen, A. and Tomlin, R. S. O. 2024 'Slavery on the northern frontier: a stylus tablet from Vindolanda', *Britannia* 55 (**https://doi.org/10.1017/S0068113X24000230**).

Fig. 4a and b The find spot of the tablet marked with a red circle

W.H. Buckler's papers from Sardis

Fiona Phillips

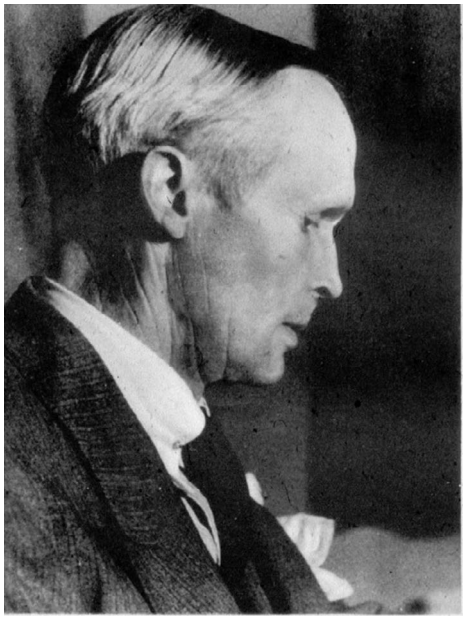


Fig. 1 W.H. Buckler

Pasted inside the Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library's copy of W.H. Buckler's *Sardis Excavations Volume VII, Part II: Lydian Inscriptions* is a note: 'Squeezes of Buckler's *Lydian Inscriptions* are stored in the Greek Epigraphy Room. (Apply to Librarian).' Buckler's archive is now housed in the CSAD, having been transferred from the Ashmolean Library some ten years ago. In support of a new project to reanalyse the Lydian-language inscriptions, I spent part of this summer examining and digitising the Buckler archive; the scans are now available in an online repository and plans to create a digital archive are in progress.

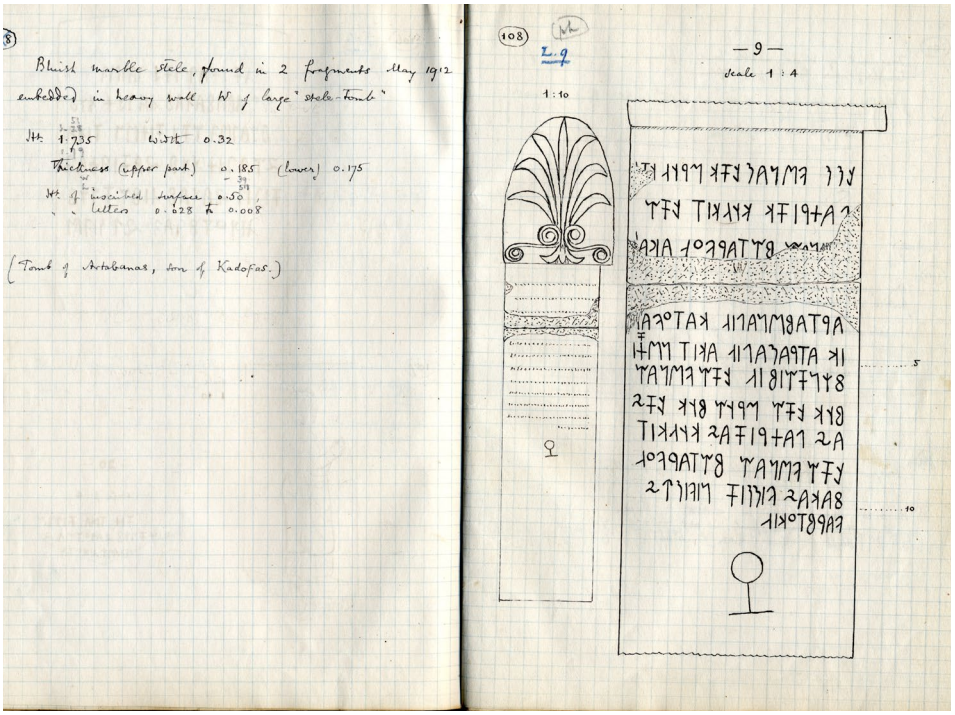
William Hepburn Buckler FBA (1867–1952) was a distinguished diplomat and epigrapher. Born to American parents in Paris, he completed an undergraduate and subsequent legal qualification at Cambridge (1887—1891). As a practising lawyer in Baltimore, he gained an interest in antiquity through his wife, the Girton-educated classicist Georgina Grenfell. He most notably became the Assistant Director, and part-funder, of the American excavations at Sardis 1910–1914. After a break during the war — during which he served as 'competent assistant' in the American Embassy at London 1914–1918 and negotiator at Versailles — he undertook the publication of epigraphic material from Sardis. After WWI Buckler was the prime mover in setting up the American Society for Archaeological Research in Asia Minor, which funded the expeditions and publications of *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua* (*MAMA*); Buckler himself prepared vols. IV–VI with William Moir Calder. Among other honours, Buckler received an honorary D.Litt. from Oxford, where he lived from 1922, and later became an Associate Member of All Souls.

Buckler's archives have been scattered across various institutions in the twentieth century. Much of his private correspondence, especially that relating to the Paris Peace Conference, was deposited in Yale by his daughter Lucy Seymer in 1957/8. Some of his epigraphic materials relating to *MAMA* was deposited in Aberdeen University in 1961 among the papers of Calder, to whom they had been given by Buckler's widow. The material in Aberdeen (now in the University's Archives) was surveyed most recently by Charlotte Roueché in 2010.

The CSAD archive consists of miscellanea relating to the Sardis excavations, particularly in preparation for his epigraphic publications. Alongside three notebooks, two boxes of glass plate negatives, and a folder of photographs, are the essential materials for the study of Lydian: forty-seven squeezes of Lydian-language inscriptions.

Lydian was an Indo-European language of the Anatolian family, distantly related to Hittite and Carian. Known to its users as 'Sardian' (*sfardēti-*), it was written and spoken in Sardis and nearby from the Archaic well into the Hellenistic period. Lydian appears on some of the earliest coinage in history and Lydian poetry was inscribed on gravestones in the Achaemenid Persian period. The Lydian alphabet was created after and following the Greek and Phrygian scripts. It quickly developed a distinct style of tall, narrow letters, written exclusively from right to left. *Scriptio continua* was not used (as in Greek) but words were separated with spaces. As such, Lydian writing is hard to confuse with its sister-script Greek, even though the two were used alongside one another in Sardis and Ephesus. Thankfully both the script

Fig. 2 Lydian inscription no. 08, the epitaph of Artabanes son of Kadoas, from Buckler's notebook



and language are now fairly well-understood, and most inscriptions can be read with few difficulties.

Buckler was a leading expert on Lydian, studying the language as its decipherment was coming to fruition. His archive in CSAD contains notes systematically identifying case endings and personal names, in preparation for the five linguistic appendices to his *Lydian Inscriptions* (1924). A century later, it has not yet been surpassed as the principal epigraphic edition of most Lydian-language inscriptions.

The squeezes are important because many of the inscriptions in question are no longer accessible. More recent scholarship has been primarily linguistic rather than epigraphic; the standouts are Roberto Gusmani's *Lydisches Wörterbuch* (1964, supplements 1980–86) and the new annotated 'philological-etymological' corpus provided by the digital project *eDiAna*. Significant progress has been made in our understanding of the Lydian language, but inscriptions are often treated as texts rather than stones.

This archive, digitised and accessible for the first time, will prove an invaluable resource for epigraphers. The Lydian-language corpus is in dire need of a new edition, contextualising Buckler's editions with those found since and reanalysing them in light of our improved understanding of Lydian. Such an edition is being prepared as part of the ERC-funded project *Communication in Ancient Anatolia* (CAncAn), by Prof. Annick Payne at Ca'Foscari University Venice. She is paying the CSAD a series of brief visits in 2024-2025 to review the archive in pursuit of a new volume on Lydian epigraphy. The coming year will see CSAD and *CAncAn* collaborate to make the digital archive accessible on the CSAD and the Sardis Expedition websites.

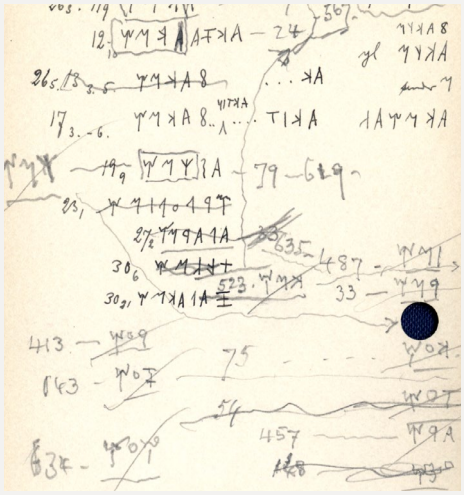


Fig. 3 Buckler's notes on the decipherment of Lydian: words ending -mλ

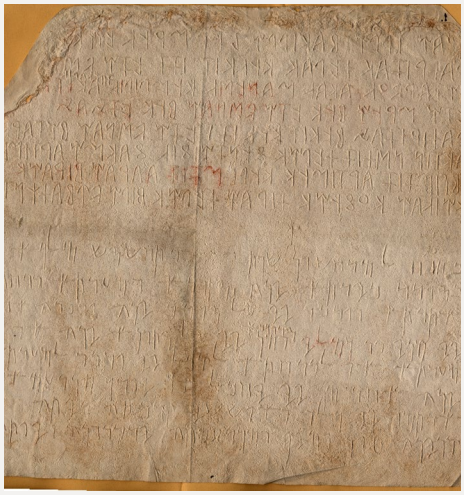


Fig. 4 Squeeze of Lydian inscription nr.01 – the Lydian-Aramaic bilingual epitaph

Fig. 5 The temple of Artemis at Sardis, part-excavated, 1911

LW3

LW3 with traces of pigment

The Lydian squeezes in the Buckler Archive

Annick Payne – University Ca'Foscari, Venice

In 2024, after presenting at the Ancient Anatolia day at Wolfson College and at the CMTC Seminar at Queens I made a fleeting visit to the CSAD. I am a Hittitologist with a background in the early alphabetic writing systems of Anatolia h**ttps://data.snf.ch/grants/grant/168104** and the study of Anatolian hieroglyphs.

The Lydians spoke an Indo-European language, which is transmitted to us in a small text corpus. It comprises a mere *c.*120 items, recorded in a local alphabet: mainly inscriptions of various length preserved on stone, and a smaller number of inscribed objects and sherds. In addition, there are Lydian legends on seals and coins, markings and graffiti. These written sources date from the end of the 8th century BCE to the Roman period. The great majority originate from Sardis, with only a small number from further afield, which were found both within Lydian territory and outside it. Other traces of the language are preserved in glosses, and tales of ancient Lydia abound in classical sources.

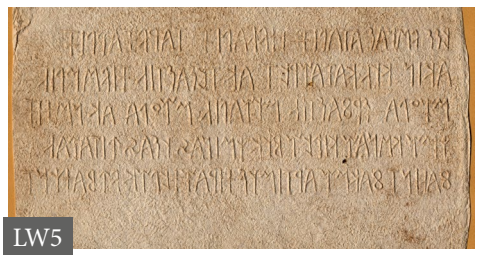
The archive of W.H. Buckler at CSAD contains, amongst other material, forty-seven squeezes of native Lydian inscriptions on stone. These were taken mainly from finds made during excavations of the Lydian capital at Sardis at the beginning of the 20th century. They are of significant value for making contemporary editions of Lydian inscriptions. Lydian texts were first published by E. Littmann (1916) and W.H. Buckler (1924) as volume VI parts I and II of the series of publications of the American Society for the Excavation of Sardis. The most recent text editions by the Italian scholar R. Gusmani (1964 with supplements 1980; 1982; 1986; 1975) only offer transliteration and limited commentary, and apart from the latest volume, no photos, drawings or translations. This situation, in combination with the prominence of Greek and Latin sources on ancient Lydia, has given the Classical perspective greater dominance than the native Lydian voice, which is why better access to, and understanding of, the Lydian corpus is required to address this imbalance. A modern edition of the Lydian text corpus in its entirety is needed.

In my capacity as PI of the ERC-funded research project "Communication in Ancient Anatolia" (CAncAn Grant no.101088363), based at Ca' Foscari University Venice, my team and I are preparing new editions to analyse these text sources (and those of two neighbouring cultures, the Phrygians and Luwians) as narratives and to study patterns of communication. In our research we are placing particular emphasis on religious practices and political discourse, linguistic boundaries and acculturation, construction and the transmission of narratives, and the narrative bias in external sources. We are very grateful for the chance to collaborate on the Lydian material from the Buckler archive with Fiona Phillips at CSAD.

The first part of our joint effort is the preparation of reliable transliterations of Lydian inscriptions, combining the squeezes with the available photographic records, which include photos from the Buckler archive as well as the early Sardis excavation volumes, and some private photos from other scholars. This forms the main basis for transliteration, as the original material supports are frequently not accessible to current study. Another issue is the deterioration of stone monuments, which happened in part during the early phase of rediscovery – as comparison of squeezes and photos shows – and, of course, continues to this day. It goes without saying that solid epigraphic work is essential as the basis for future translations, including the restoration of damaged texts.

Initial study of the squeezes has already shown that this material will enable us to make better editions, but also contributes significantly to a range of other questions, such as letter formation, the textual layout and use of colour pigmentation. In contrast to photos, squeezes can preserve more accurate and/or different character contours; they give a more realistic view of the monument's size, and are more life-like. At the same time, they preserve a single and particular impression, which benefits from comparison with other data – occasionally, such that a different angle may be provided by another squeeze, or by the photographic record. As many inscriptions are also preserved as drawings in Buckler's notebooks, the archive alone provides a very rounded picture that will inform new text editions.

LW5: (2 squeezes): A standard Lydian funerary epigram for one Atas and his wife Kile, ending in a curse formula invoking Artemis. Of the two squeezes in Oxford, the earlier preserves the entire text, while the later shows damage to the left edge such that the ends of lines 2, 3, and 5 are lost.



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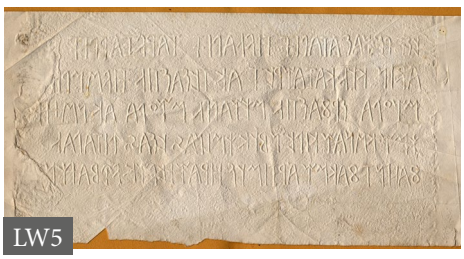

LW5

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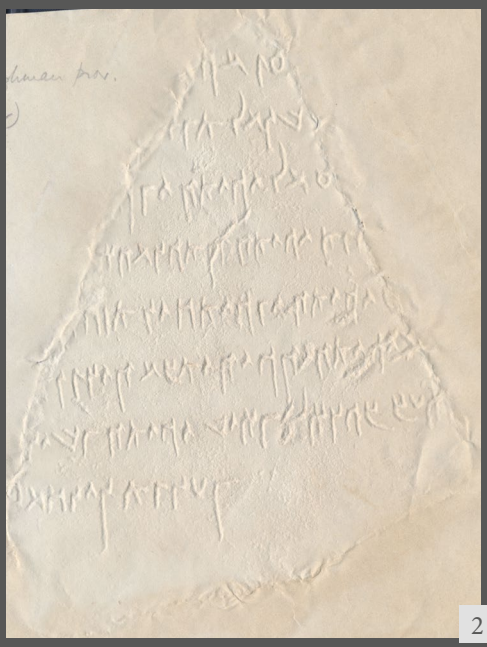


2

The Kandahar Edicts of Aśoka

Mridula Gullapalli

The Edicts of Aśoka have had a marked place at the intersection of empires. Somewhere around the mid-3rd century BCE, the Emperor Aśoka of the Mauryan Dynasty ruling from Pataliputra in North-East India, instructed a number of 'messengers of Dharma' to spread the message of Buddhism throughout his empire. This encompassed Kandahar (Alexandria in Arachosia) in southern Afghanistan, which occupied the liminal space between the far-eastern Greek 'Orient', and the westernmost territories of the Indian kingdoms which evolved in the wake of Alexander's campaign over the Hindu Kush. Inscribed in Greek (and in one case, in Aramaic too, see Fig.3), the Edicts narrate how at the turn of the first decade of Aśoka's reign, he converted to the peaceful religion of Buddhism and wished for all subjects in his empire to exhibit piety in the form of 'Dharma', translated into Greek as *eusebeia*. The Edicts were therefore produced by an Indian ruler, borrowing from the Achaemenid Persian genre of imperial rock edicts, referencing a form of religion which evolved on the Indian subcontinent, but transposed through the language of Hellenistic philosophy in Greek, and with Zoroastrian strains in the Aramaic version, bearing in mind the mixed Greek and Persian populations in Kandahar. Roughly two millennia later, the older, bilingual edict was discovered by local workmen excavating in Shar-i-Kuna in Old Kandahar, and was initially mistaken for a monument to British imperial rule, dating from Afghanistan's recent history as a British Protectorate. Fortunately, news of the inscription was conveyed to the Kabul Museum, after which it could be secured for further study. In 1968, a second Greek Aśokan edict was discovered in the same area, the pair thus forming some of the easternmost Greek inscriptions of antiquity.

These two inscriptions were made available to me as part of my studies by CSAD, in the form of squeezes made by Peter Fraser, as an example of the cross-cultural epigraphic connections from the Mediterranean to South Asia in antiquity. Currently, I am researching the edicts as evidence for intercultural negotiations at Kandahar, analysing their multifunctional nature as religious and imperial monuments by comparing the Greek inscriptions with the Aramaic and Prakrit versions. The Greek Edicts of Aśoka are a fascinating case study in transnational documents. The figure of Aśoka still has a central place in the Indian national-political self-image, with Aśoka's 'Wheel of Dharma' symbol, first appearing on the Prakrit versions of his Rock Edicts, now depicted on the Indian flag. It is hard to miss the poignancy of references to a ruler who explicitly advised peaceful coexistence amongst diverse communities in his imperial writings, in a country which today struggles to preserve its constitutional secularity in the churn of partisan politics. From a global perspective, a reappraisal of these documents may help to remind us of the transhistorical need for layered multiculturalism in economically and politically connected worlds.

Fig 1: Old Kandahar Citadel (photographed by Sir Benjamin Simpson, 1881)

Fig 2: Peter Fraser's squeeze of a fragment of the Aramaic version of the Aśoka inscription

Fig 3: The Bilingual Graeco-Aramaic Rock Edict (from Carratelli et al 1964, A Bilingual Graeco-Aramaic Edict by Asoka)

3

Visitors at the CSAD

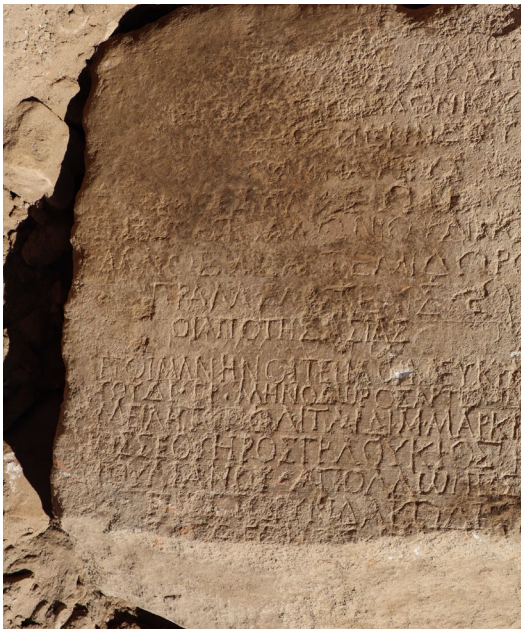
Fig. 1 The bouleuterion of Alabanda

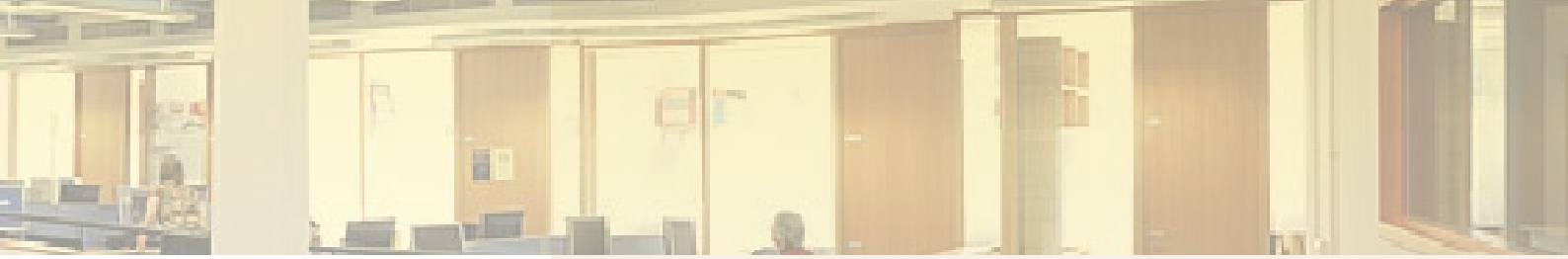
Fatma Avcu and Hüseyin Uzunoğlu - Akdeniz University

At the kind invitation of Andrew Meadows, Charles Crowther, Leah Lazar and Marcus Chin, we visited the CSAD last November. Besides meeting with colleagues at Oxford, and attending some enjoyable college dinners, we shared our epigraphic experience with the graduate students at the epigraphy class run by Charles Crowther and gave two consecutive talks at the Oxford Epigraphy Workshop. Our presentations covered the recently discovered inscriptions from Alabanda, an ancient city located seven km west of the Çine District of Aydın Province in Türkiye. We are both members of the Alabanda excavation team, run by archaeologists from Atatürk University, that has been at work since 2015, and we are responsible for recording as well as publishing any new inscriptions that are brought to light.

By contrast to other ancient Carian cities Alabanda has been little researched. Although close to a hundred inscriptions have been documented at the site (or its environs) and compiled by Wolfgang Blümel in his *Inschriften aus Nordkarien* (2018), a significant proportion of these are either highly fragmentary or relatively simple epitaphs, offering limited insight into the city's history in antiquity. Just recently however, the excavations focusing on the bouleuterion (Fig. 1) have yielded several new documents. A group of new lists of foreign judges in Alabanda dating from the 2nd century AD (Fig. 2), has enhanced our knowledge of the judicial history of Alabanda, demonstrating that the city continued to receive delegations of foreign judges during the Roman Imperial period.

One of the most interesting discoveries during the 2023 excavation at the bouleuterion was a Hellenistic decree—albeit in a fragmentary condition. It comprises two inscribed blocks which were unearthed from in front of the *scaenae frons* of the bouleuterion where they had been repurposed. The decree can be dated to a period either before 268 BCE, or after 190 BCE, because the name of the city is given as 'Alabanda'. However, the apparent absence of intervening blocks, renders the restoration of the text a challenging endeavour. It appears that the inscription pertains to a resolution by probably the *kosmoi* (magistrates) of Aptera in Crete regarding the renewal of a kinship treaty and alliance between the two cities. Taking comparable decrees into consideration, in particular from Teos, Miletos and Mylasa, we suggest that, although a significant part of the inscription has been lost, this represents an *asylia* agreement between the cities of Alabanda and Aptera.





It was during the season that the inscribed lists of judges were discovered that many other fragments containing lengthy name lists (ranging from 27 to 63 lines) were unearthed. The lettering style on these fragments allows us to date them to the Hellenistic period, further corroborated by the typically Greek names listed. Even though the nature of these lists remains unclear, they are of note because they provide many onomastic novelties. From an archaeological point of view, the site offers potential for further investigation and discovery, and epigraphy can be of help here. A new honorary (and agonistic) inscription dating from the second half of the 2nd century AD provides insights into the archaeology of Alabanda, revealing some unknown details regarding the building activity in the city, such as the construction of a new macellum building, and an Isis Temple. A full interpretation of this document may help archaeologists to plan their future excavations of the city. It is good news that the excavation has now been accepted as part of the Heritage for the Future project run by the Ministry of Culture, and we hope that ongoing findings will further our understanding of Alabanda.

Fig. 2 The list of foreign judges

Yuantao Yin - Northeast Normal University Changchun

Life is full of wonderful experiences, and my visits to Oxford are undoubtedly among those I cherish most. I have found myself returning to Oxford roughly every seven years since 2009 to further my exploration of Classics and Greek epigraphy. For this, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Charles Crowther and the CSAD, as well as to the other staff members at the Centre, for their support and kindness.

Since 2004, I have been studying and working at the Institute for the History of Ancient Civilizations (IHAC) at Northeast Normal University in Changchun, where I continue to this day. Founded in 1984, the IHAC was once the flagship institution for the comparative study of ancient world civilizations in China and it remains one of the country's most important research centres today. Its scope of research spans a wide range of fields, including Assyriology, Hittitology, Egyptology, Classics and Byzantine Studies. The IHAC is rooted in the study of primary materials, but its research methodology embraces the comparative study of ancient civilizations. We study the commonalities and unique characteristics of ancient civilizations worldwide, while also examining their interactions and exchanges.

In recent years, the IHAC has paid more attention to philology, epigraphy, and numismatics. Take epigraphy for example: under the leadership of Professor Zhang Qiang, Director of the IHAC, we have established an academic team engaged in the translation, commentary, and study of ancient Greek and Latin inscriptions. All team members have been awarded research projects funded by the Chinese National Social Science Foundation. Our work has gained significant attention and recognition from peers in the field. We have invited renowned professors in the field of Greek epigraphy, such as Angelos Chaniotis, P. J. Rhodes, and Charles Crowther, to deliver lectures at the IHAC. Péter Kató and

Yuantao Yin

Irene Berti have also worked as foreign experts at the institute for one year each, teaching courses on Greek epigraphy. This demonstrates that the IHAC is a highly internationally oriented academic institution. Each year, it hires at least three foreign scholars to work at the institute for one or two years. Additionally, the IHAC frequently organizes academic lectures, international conferences, and other scholarly events. We are particularly eager to establish a collaborative relationship with the CSAD, maintain academic ties, and invite scholars from the University of Oxford to work or give lectures at the IHAC.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the IHAC, and we take great pride in our past achievements. The institute has played an important role in advancing the study of ancient world history in China. Our graduates are spread across the country, making valuable contributions to various fields through their academic work. We also are confident in our future development. The dedicated colleagues at the IHAC continue to work on the frontline of teaching and research. With unity and collaboration, we are committed to shaping a bright and promising future for the IHAC.

The digital home of the Roman Inscriptions of Britain

by Alex Mullen

'RIB Online', **https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org**, the digital home of the Roman Inscriptions of Britain (RIB), is constantly developing, thanks to the tireless work of Scott Vanderbilt. It does not simply present the stone inscriptions from Britannia, but since 2019 it embraces the Vindolanda and Bloomberg tablet collections and, most strikingly, since 2023, the records from all eight fascicules of the second volume of RIB containing so-called 'instrumentum domesticum' (a misnomer for it includes objects which are neither). This digitization of RIB II was far from simple, and we plan to improve the object-related data, which are often partial and out-dated in the printed volumes, as part of a future project in collaboration with small finds experts.

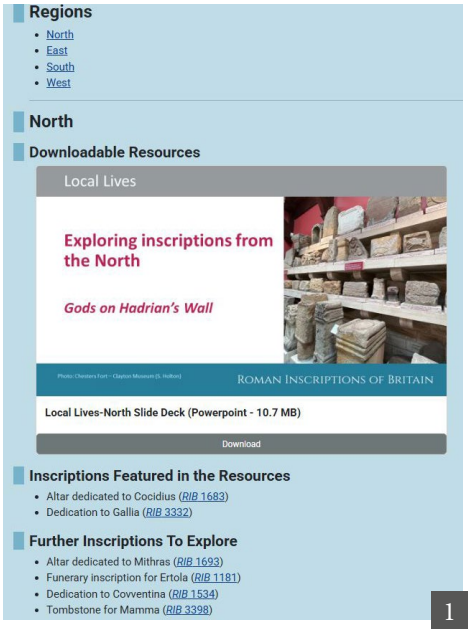
Recently we have added the records for the Bath curse tablet collection, part of the UNESCO Memory of the World UK register, to the website. This fascinating collection, found in the imperial-period sanctuary at Aquae Sulis, is full of petitions to the goddess for justice following theft. As an illustrative example we can offer Tab. Sulis 44 (**https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/inscriptions/TabSulis44**), the first side of which can be translated as follows:

(The person) who has lifted my bronze vessel is utterly accursed. I give (him) to the temple of Sulis, whether woman or man, whether slave or free, whether boy or girl, and let him who has done this spill his own blood into the vessel itself… (trans. Roger Tomlin)

The advantage of this digital format is that it brings together the now numerous Romano-British epigraphic corpora, and incorporates the new inscribed finds, corrections and re-readings published in the annual roundups published by Roger Tomlin in the journal *Britannia* and elsewhere. This means that users can see the most up-to-date information on each inscription. We also enhance the information available in print, adding dates and colour images.

The website allows easy browsing and sophisticated searching, thanks to a vast amount of encoding 'behind the scenes', so anyone can easily find the tombstone of Regina, search for inscriptions in their local museum, find out which texts were produced in Oxfordshire, or easily collect records mentioning beer, for example. The website is constantly expanding and now currently hosts over 16,000 records. We hope to add the newly published Uley tablets soon, to ensure that every published inscription from Britain can be found on the website.

The website is freely accessible from anywhere in the world and is hosted by the Faculty of Classics at the University of Oxford. Work on it has been funded since 2017 by the European Research Council (via the project LatinNow) and UKRI. The website is very widely used, both by museum staff and archaeologists and in schools, and will appear throughout the new edition of the Cambridge Latin Course. In order to support teaching of Classics-related subjects in schools through these epigraphic resources, we teamed up with the charity Classics for All, to create the Roman Inscriptions of Britain in Schools project, funded by the UKRI's Arts Impact Accelerator, which has so far created bespoke resources for Key Stages 2 and 5 (including materials for the current and planned OCR Ancient History syllabus): **https://romaninscriptionsofbritain.org/schools**. Some of the work has drawn on the multilingual resources already created and road-tested by the LatinNow project team. School children enjoy hearing the diverse voices of the provinces through these fascinating objects and learning more about their local histories. We hope to improve and expand this provision in years to come.



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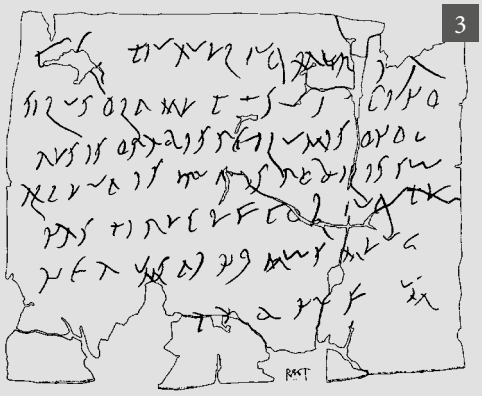
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Fig. 1 RIB Online Schools page showing resources for KS 2

Fig. 2 Deciphering military messages in cursive Latin in Millau, France

Fig. 3 Drawing of Tab. Sulis 44 by Roger Tomlin

Practical Epigraphy Workshop 2024: Corinium Museum, Cirencester

Peter Haarer

For the 13th iteration of this popular course (we have now welcomed our 200th participant), the Workshop travelled to the Cotswolds. We were delighted to try out the epigraphic splendours housed in the Corinium Museum, Cirencester. As ever, the Workshop attracted a strong international field: of the 17 participants, 8 were British, 7 European, and 3 from the US. We also had a good mix of epigraphers at different stages of their careers, including one postdoc, 10 graduates and 7 undergraduates. There were 7 takers for Greek epigraphy and 10 for Roman, all of whom worked individually on an inscription, chosen to suit the level of expertise and specific interests, in addition to the sessions which covered recording inscriptions by drawing, photography and squeeze-making. A welcome addition to the timetable was the presentation by Roger Tomlin of a new Roman lead document. Museum-work was supplemented by visits to local Roman sites including those in Cirencester itself (the amphitheatre and town walls) and Chedworth Roman villa. The team of instructors included Roger Tomlin and Charles Crowther both of whom gave expert guidance to participants on the stones and squeezes which they were studying, and Henning Schulze from the University of Lincoln, who gave instruction on photography from the basics up to a demonstration of more sophisticated techniques. Oliver Turney, who is both a current Oxford undergraduate reading CAAH and a regular volunteer at the Corinium Museum, supported the team superbly by looking after the practicalities and liaising with the Museum staff. The latter have been extremely helpful and accommodating throughout, from the planning stage back in September 2023, through to site visits and delivery of the Workshop itself: our heartfelt thanks to Emma Stuart and Caroline Morris for making us so welcome. We hope that, in return, we shall be able to encourage others to visit their very splendid museum. PEW 2025 will be held on March 25-27 at the Corinium Museum.

Tagging coins to hoards

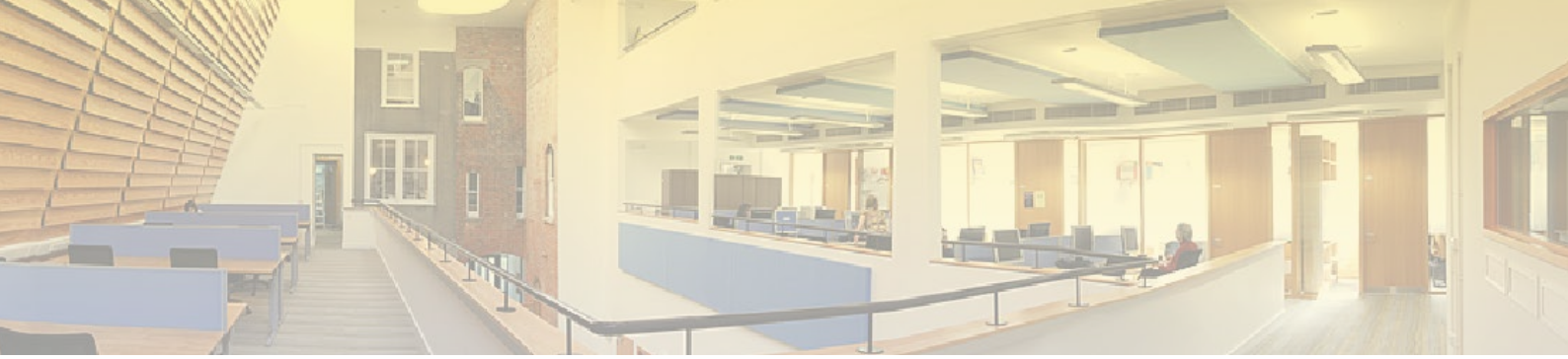
Finn Conway

I am a first-year DPhil student working on Hellenistic Ionia, with a particular focus on coinage and inscriptions. I have also been working with the CHANGE Project in two areas. The first has involved identifying coin types in Anatolian coin hoards recorded in the *Inventory of Greek Coin Hoards* (1973). Such identifications allow greater granularity in discussing these hoards, which have not always been conveniently published in a single place. Knowing not only that a hoard contained, for example, 4 tetradrachms from Ephesos, but *which types* of Ephesian tetradrachms makes dating both the coinage and the hoard less obscure and also makes possible analyses of particular series. The second project has involved similar efforts to identify the types of published coins from archaeological excavations in Anatolia. My work will supplement the identifications already made by Dr Leah Lazar in the *CHANGE Project Site Finds Database* (**https://change.csad.ox.ac.uk/sitefinds/index.html**). This database is the first of its kind for Greek coins and will enable researchers more easily to access this data to investigate both monetary production and circulation in Anatolia. It is planned that the coin hoards database will go online this spring. Where identifications have been possible, they will refer to the typologies in the ARCH database, allowing interoperability between these numismatic databases.

Work on the typology of coins from Asia Minor

Oliver Clarke

Since October, I have been working for CHANGE going through the fascicules of Volume V of the long-running *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum* (SNG) project, which publish the collection of the Heberden Coin Room. These volumes contain 5782 gold, electrum, silver and bronze coins issued between the beginning of coinage in the 7th century BCE, to the end of the Roman Republic in the 1st century. They come from a wide variety of cities: there are hundreds of coins of large and wealthy cities such as Smyrna or Miletus in the collection of the Ashmolean, while other, minor cities and islands such as Pordoselene, Oenoe or Sinde are illustrated by a handful or just a single coin. Some of the coins were issued under the authority of kings, others by satraps, governors of the Achaemenid Persian Empire. Using these three publications, I am tagging each specimen with the types contained in the IRIS high-level typology, itself part of the wider ARCH project. This will allow the Ashmolean's coins to be viewed alongside those of the same type from the collections at the British Museum, the BnF in Paris and others. In the process, I have found dozens of new types to be added to IRIS that are not represented already, and two are illustrated here: HCR108734 (Fig. 1), a silver coin weighing 2g, most likely from Miletus, minted towards the end of the archaic period in the late sixth or early fifth century; and HCR108152 (Fig. 2), a silver diobol from Clazomenae, from the first half of the fourth century, with Apollo on the obverse and a swan on the reverse with ΚΛΑΙ above its head.



Oxford Epigraphy Workshop

Hilary Term 2025 – Ioannou Centre

We are delighted to share with you the programme for this term's Epigraphy Workshop. The workshop will be held on Mondays 1–2pm in the first-floor seminar room.

As always, all are extremely welcome, and you are free to bring along lunch if you would like to.

Week 1 (January 20th): Maggie Day (Oxford): 'Spatial Narratives and Material Realities: Considering Gender and Genre in CIL 4.5296' and Isabel Doherty (Oxford): 'A Ptolemaic Dorea in Lycia: An Epigraphic History of Telmessus in the 3rd Century BC' (two shorter talks)

Week 3 (February 3rd): Anna Heller (Université François-Rabelais, Tours): 'The "bakers' strike": popular unrest and bread price at Ephesus'

Week 4 (February 10th): Lorenzo Calvelli (Università Ca' Foscari, Venice): 'Ancient Epigraphy through Travel Diaries. Unveiling Cyriac of Ancona's Lost Commentaria'

Week 5 (February 17th): Edward Jones (British School at Athens): 'Mentalities of punishment in Classical Athens: penalties for officials in inscribed decrees'

Week 6 (February 24th): Florian Feil (Universität zu Koln/Oxford): 'Funerary Monuments and the Social History of Dyrrhachion'

Week 8 (March 10th): Pauline Cuzel (Otto-Friedrich-Universität, Bamberg): 'Tracing Life Beyond the Administrative Machine: Social and Professional Networks in the Two Cemeteries of the Officiales in Carthage (Africa Proconsularis)'

We look forward to seeing you there.
With all best wishes,
Charles Crowther, Marcus Chin and Olivia Elder

Circulation and Contributions

This is the twenty-ninth issue of the Centre's Newsletter. The Newsletter is also available online (**https://www.csad.ox.ac.uk/newsletter**).
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 treaty between Erythrai and Hermeias and his companions (I.Erythrai 9), courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum