

# BRITISH EPIGRAPHY SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER

<http://www.csad.ox.ac.uk/bes>

Registered Charity No. 1090249

NS no. 21

Spring 2010

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### New President and Secretary

The Society extends its warmest thanks to Robert Parker and Peter Haarer for their dedication and hard work as President and Secretary, and welcomes its newly elected President, Roger Tomlin, and Secretary, Ulrike Roth, who will take up their posts on 1st October this year. Enquiries about all BES events taking place after 1st October should be directed to Ulrike Roth: [u.roth@ed.ac.uk](mailto:u.roth@ed.ac.uk).

### Subscriptions for 2010/11

Thank you to everyone who has taken out a new instruction to subscribe to the Society by Standing Order at the new rates. We still have one or two members paying at the old rates and would urge you to correct this as soon as possible (if you are not sure what you have paid for the current year, please write either to Peter Haarer or Nicholas Milner and they will be happy to let you know).

### Welcome

To our new members Anna Blennow, Philip Davies, John Pearce, and Joanna Pike.

BRITISH

# EPIGRAPHY SOCIETY

SPRING MEETING

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN



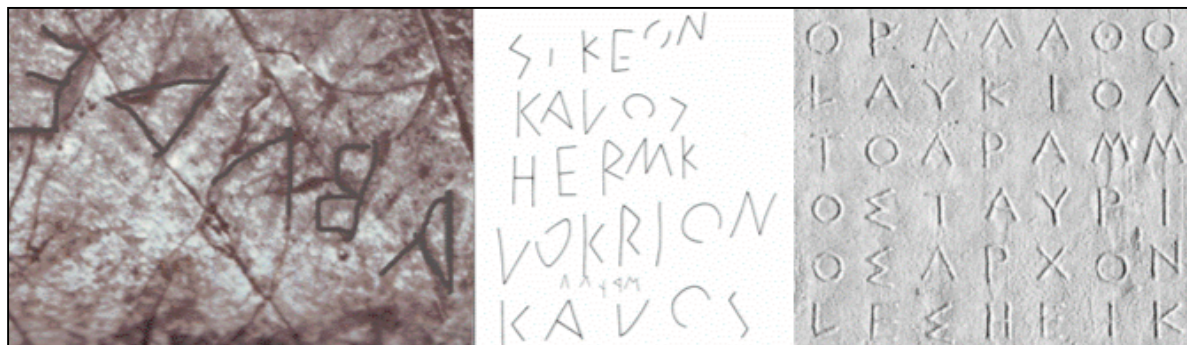
## (IN)FORMAL EPIGRAPHY

SPEAKERS INCLUDE

DR GRAHAM OLIVER (UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL)  
DR JENNIFER BAIRD (BIRKBECK COLLEGE, LONDON)  
DR AMANDA KELLY (NUI GALWAY)  
PROF. ANDREW SMITH (UCD)

AND FEATURING

A TOUR OF THE GREEK & LATIN INSCRIPTIONS IN THE UCD MUSEUM



SATURDAY 24 APRIL 2010  
CLASSICS SEMINAR ROOM  
6TH FLOOR ARTS BUILDING  
TCD

For further information contact Dr Claire Taylor ([claire.taylor@tcd.ie](mailto:claire.taylor@tcd.ie))

## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

### **Spring Meeting 2010**

The next meeting, entitled '**(In)formal Epigraphy**', will take place on Saturday 24th April at Trinity College, Dublin.

Its organiser, Claire Taylor, explains the theme as follows: 'This meeting examines formality and informality within epigraphic culture. What different types of formality and informality can we detect in epigraphic material and to what extent is this affected by the survival and recording of material? How does the use of space (where do we find epigraphic writing?), agency (who writes? who publishes?), or interaction with the inscriptions (who views them and why?) construct notions - or undermine them - about formality/informality? How do these ideas affect the reuse and reception of inscriptions, ancient and modern?'

### **Programme**

10.30-11.00	Coffee & registration
11.00-11.45	Dr Graham Oliver (University of Liverpool): Formality & informality in Attic inscriptions
11.45-12.30	Dr Jennifer Baird (Birkbeck College, London): Graffiti & inscriptions in Dura-Europos
12.30-1.00	Lunch
1.00-1.45	Dr Amanda Kelly (NUI Galway): Informal invective: inscriptions on sling shots
1.45-2.30	Short reports
2.30-3.30	Travel to UCD (Coffee on arrival)
3.30-5.00	Prof. Andrew Smith (UCD): Tour of epigraphic collection in the UCD Classical Museum

### **Colloquium fees**

Registration including tea, coffee, and the sandwich lunch:

€15.00 (BES or AIEGL members), €10.00 (BES student members),  
€25.00 (non-members).

Registration without lunch:

€10.00 (members), €5.00 (student members), €20.00 (non-members).

Taxi fare from TCD to UCD (for museum trip)

Between €5 and €20 one way (depending on how many people share a taxi. Please bring cash to pay the taxi driver).

**Student members of the BES are very warmly encouraged to apply to the Society for bursaries** to contribute towards the costs of attending the meeting. The Society is very keen to help in this way and is in generous mood. Please write to [peter.haarer@classics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:peter.haarer@classics.ox.ac.uk) with a brief statement of how the event will benefit your studies, a breakdown of your estimated costs, and the name of a referee who we may choose to contact.

### **Booking**

To reserve a place at the colloquium and a sandwich lunch, please contact Dr Claire Taylor by email ([claire.taylor@tcd.ie](mailto:claire.taylor@tcd.ie)) or by post (Dept of Classics, Trinity College, Dublin, 2, Ireland), by **9 April** and include details of any special dietary requirements. **Please note that you will be signed in for the lunch unless you say that you do not want this.** Please pay all fees due on the day in euros during registration.

### **Location**

The colloquium will take place in the Classics seminar room in the Classics Department which is on the 6th floor of the Arts Building at Trinity College. Maps of the campus are available here: <http://www.tcd.ie/Maps/>

The colloquium will include a trip to the Classical Museum (Room K216, John Henry Newman Building) at University College Dublin to see the epigraphic collection. UCD is 5km south of Trinity (which is in the city centre of Dublin) – we will take taxis there and back to the city centre. Please bring cash to pay the taxi fare.

### **Travel**

To Trinity College: <http://www.tcd.ie/Maps/directions.php>

If travelling from the airport, the Aircoach is convenient as it stops outside Trinity College. You can also pick up the Aircoach for a return trip from UCD if necessary. A return to Trinity costs €12; to UCD €14.

### **Accommodation**

TCD is unable to provide accommodation, but there are a number of hotels close by. Please contact Claire Taylor ([claire.taylor@tcd.ie](mailto:claire.taylor@tcd.ie)) if you need assistance.

### **Practical Epigraphy Workshop III**

The third Practical Epigraphy Workshop, organised by Peter Haarer, Charles Crowther and Charlotte Tupman, will take place from 22-24 June 2010 in Newcastle. The course is aimed primarily at graduate students but applications from other interested parties are welcome. Applications will be accepted until 31st March; enquiries should be directed to [charlotte.tupman@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:charlotte.tupman@kcl.ac.uk).

To date we have been contacted by 23 parties interested in attending the workshop, two-thirds of whom are based within the UK; five in Europe; three in the U.S.A.; and one in Australia. We have applied for money to secure bursaries to assist participants in attending the Workshop. Further details will appear on the BES website: <http://www.csad.ox.ac.uk/BES/> as soon as they become available. Programmes and reports on the two previous workshops can also be found at the BES website.

## **London Ancient History Seminar: Epigraphy and the Greek Historian**

Institute for Classical Studies, G 22/26 South Block, Senate House

Thursdays at 4.30 pm

Spring term 2010

Organiser: Christy Constantakopoulou (Birkbeck)

c.constantakopoulou@bbk.ac.uk

**14 January** Graham Oliver (Liverpool) Destroying inscriptions: the authorised and unauthorised removal of inscribed documents in the Greek world [report can be read at <http://www.currentepigraphy.org>]

**21 January** Angelos Chaniotis (Oxford) Moving stones: the study of emotions in Greek inscriptions [report can be read at <http://www.currentepigraphy.org>]

**28 January** Robin Osborne (Cambridge) The letter: a diplomatic history

**4 February** Riet van Bremen (UCL) A Hellenistic list of donors (?) and some other puzzling lists

**11 February** Irene Polinskaya (KCL) A new corpus of ancient inscriptions from the northern Black Sea

**25 February** Stephen Lambert (Cardiff) Priests and priestesses in Athenian honorific decrees

**4 March** Polly Low (Manchester) Constructing lives from stone: inscriptions and biographical traditions

**11 March** Claire Taylor (Trinity College, Dublin) Graffiti or inscriptions? Some problems from Attica

ALL WELCOME.

This seminar series, along with other seminars and events of epigraphic interest, is being reported on Current Epigraphy:

<http://www.currentepigraphy.org>

## VARIA

The Society is pleased to announce the publication of Richard Grasby's ***Processes in the Making of Roman Inscriptions: Introduction to the Studies***, together with his four studies examining in detail the processes by which Roman inscriptions were made.

R.D. Grasby, *Processes in the Making of Roman Inscriptions: Introduction to the Studies* (Oxford: CSAD, 2009). Pp. 16, figs 28. £6.00.

Idem, *RIB 2110. Fragments of a Dedication Slab, Birrens, Dumfriesshire*. The Making of Roman Inscriptions, Study 8 (Oxford: CSAD, 2009). Pp. 24, figs 5, diags 7. £5.00.

Idem, *CIL VI. 40310. Fragments of a Dedicatory Inscription, Forum, Rome*. The Making of Roman Inscriptions, Study 9 (Oxford: CSAD, 2009). Pp. 28, figs 4, diags 14. £5.00.

Idem, *CIL VI. 36908. Fragments of a Senatorial Inscription, Forum, Rome*. The Making of Roman Inscriptions, Study 10 (Oxford: CSAD, 2009). Pp. 16, figs 3, diags 6. £5.00.

Idem, *CIL VI. 37077. Sepulchral Inscription, Forum, Rome*. The Making of Roman Inscriptions, Study 11 (Oxford: CSAD, 2009). Pp. 16, fig. 1, diags 10. £5.00.

In this set of five booklets, available via the British Epigraphy Society from the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents, Richard Grasby continues his series of examinations of the processes in the making of Roman inscriptions. This began with R.D. Grasby, 'A comparative study of five Latin inscriptions: measurement and making', *PBSR* 64 [n.s. 51] (1996), 95-138, followed by 'Latin inscriptions: studies in measurement and making', *PBSR* 70 [n.s. 57] (2002), 151-176, and 'The sepulchral monument of the procurator C. Julius Classicianus', *Britannia* 33 (2002), 43-75 (with R.S.O. Tomlin). It is planned that these original studies will also be republished as individual booklets in this series in 2010 in revised form to include recent research findings. A particularly delightful aspect of each of the newly published studies is that the author's own exquisite original drawings of each stone adorn their covers.

The overall aim of Grasby's project is to recover the processes and principles of planning by which Roman stone-cutters produced geometrically constructed monumental capital lettering, of which the finest example is often claimed to be the dedication to Trajan's column (*CIL* VI 690), itself the subject of Grasby's first case-study (*PBSR* 64 [1996], 98-103). While these classic letter-forms derive their design from the brush and ink letters of signwriters, Grasby argues that the spacing of this very regulated style of lettering cannot be attributed solely to supreme hand-eye co-ordination on behalf of the craftsmen. Of the eleven case-studies now published, with the sole exception of Study 6 - *CIL* XII 3261 from Nemausus (Nimes) in Narbonese Gaul (*PBSR* 70 [2002], 157-164) - all are drawn from either Rome and its immediate environs or Britain.

The chronological range that the studies cover extends from the first century BC to second century AD. Most, but not all, the examples were commissioned

by various Roman state organs (the senate, emperors, the army). The inscriptions covered by the four newly published studies can all be considered official in one sense or other. The one provincial example here, *RIB* 2110 (Study 8), was dedicated by an auxiliary military unit, the *cohors secunda Tungrorum milliaria equitata civium Latinorum*, to Antoninus Pius *trib. pot. XXI cos. IIII* (i.e. in AD 157/158); *CIL* VI 40310 (Study 9) is a dedication to Augustus by the *plebs omnis XXV tribuum* (i.e. by all the people of the thirty-five tribes [not 'thirty-fifth tribe' as G.]); *CIL* VI 36908 (Study 10) was dedicated to Lucius Caesar by the senate c. 2 BC; and *CIL* VI 37077 (Study 11) is a statue base erected *ex senatus consulto* to the consul C. Vibius Pansa (43 BC).

The general introduction to the studies describes the working method and draws together observations and conclusions appearing sporadically throughout the individual case-studies. The surfaces of the stones are minutely examined for evidence of the plotting of the lettering in advance of carving. For this, as well as autopsy of the stone, Grasby bases his analyses on various types of 1:1 record (traced drawings made on clear film, rubbings on paper, squeezes). In each case-study Grasby applies his expertise as a draughtsman and letter-carver to working out the modules of measurement underlying the construction of the letters and demonstrates through his own diagrams how the letters may have been plotted using straight edge, ruler, square, and compass. Against the traditional perception that the early second century AD marks the high point in the production of lettering of this type, he argues that the same skill and fine execution can be found already in the Augustan age (e.g. Studies 9 and 10) and even in the statue base to Pansa of 43 BC, despite the compromise of its final execution on a re-used base, and the disfiguring effect of modern rubrication (Study 8). Grasby's conclusion as to the mathematical underpinning to this genre of lettering is that the basic module was a square of 10 x 10 equal units (or 20 x 20 half units). The decimal basis of this system is initially surprising given Roman unit conventions in other spheres. However, the methodical nature of the presentation (particularly notable in Study 11) and the authority of his personal experience as a letterer ought to be enough to dispel the doubts of sceptics.

The author hopes that these studies may provide epigraphists with methods by which to supplement the lacunae of fragmentary texts, or at least control supplements proposed for them. Whatever view one takes, these studies are certainly a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the technical aspects of monumental Latin inscriptions of the early imperial period. It would be interesting to see whether any evidence for similar working methods could be found in monumental Greek epigraphy of the Roman period.

~ Benet Salway, University College London

Those who wish to view a sample extract or to obtain copies should visit the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents: <http://www.csad.ox.ac.uk>. Copies can also be ordered using the form on the following page of this Newsletter. We look forward eagerly to Richard Grasby's next set of studies.

# PROCESSES IN THE MAKING OF ROMAN INSCRIPTIONS

STUDIES BY R. D. GRASBY: SEPTEMBER 2009

Inscriptions speak of the processes employed in their making. It is not difficult to distinguish the great quantity of informal, roughly-chiselled lettering from that which has been regulated within an ordered plan, accurately constructed and carved.

Studies of selected inscriptions in the style *scriptura monumentalis* were first published in *Papers of the British School at Rome* and one in *Britannia*. These are being revised to include recent research findings and will be published as individual Studies in this series in 2010.

The Studies present inscriptions at various stages of their making from draft text to carefully constructed letters set out on the stone itself, brush painted and carved. It is possible to draw a significant amount of forensic evidence of these stages from the stones themselves. Through measurement and an understanding of the processes of making, some epigraphists may find in these Studies another approach to the reconstruction of fragmentary inscriptions.

If you would like the Introduction to the Studies and copies of individual Studies Eight, Nine, Ten and Eleven (which are also available as a set), send this form to the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents, 66 St. Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LU.

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## ORDER FORM

Please send to:

Name:

Address:

Introduction to the Studies £6.00

Study 8, RIB 2110 £5.00

Study 9, *CIL* VI. 40310 £5.00

Study 10, *CIL* VI. 36908 £5.00

Study 11, *CIL* VI. 37077 £5.00

Number  
of copies

Cheques payable in sterling to: **CSAD Epigraphy Summer School**

If you would like to be on the mailing list for all future studies as they are published, please tick the box.



## **REPORTS**

### **Autumn Meeting, 21 November 2009, Oxford**

The Society's Autumn 2009 Meeting, on the subject of '**Foreign Epigraphy (OR "Epigraphy, but not as we know it")**' was organised by Peter Haarer and was held at Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

#### **Elizabeth Frood, 'Claiming Space and Memory: the Development of Priestly Inscriptional Practices in Late New Kingdom Egypt (ca. 1190-715 BC)'**

Elizabeth Frood of St. Cross College, Oxford, began with a paper which showed that although "epigraphy" does not exist as a discrete discipline within Egyptology, and there are elements to the study of Egyptian texts which do not pertain to the study of inscriptions in Greek and Latin, there is much that is familiar to the classical epigrapher.

Frood introduced a new project, currently in its development phase, to study the epigraphy of Egyptian temple environments. There were three elements to Frood's paper: an overview of epigraphy in a temple context; a description of the nature and range of this inscribed material; and a case study of one particular inscription that could affect the way in which we understand Egyptian temple environments.

Frood drew our attention to the visual character of hieroglyphic texts, whose meaning was bound directly to their context. Both hieroglyphic and hieratic (i.e. cursive) texts allow a delineation between text and image, and the distinction between media and between forms of script was sometimes used deliberately by the creators of the inscriptions to shape or enhance their message. Epigraphic texts in temple contexts focused mainly upon the relationship between the king and the gods, and these themes are found in both the internal and the external areas of temple complexes. Extended texts addressed royal actions and endowments, while non-royal figures were rarely included, with the occasional exception of anonymous priests.

The primary means for elites to display their presence in temple complexes was through statues and stelae, but most non-royal stelae are no longer in their original contexts. An exception can be found at the Temple of Amun-Re at Karnak (Thebes), at which statues of four scribes have been found in context. This temple was part of a larger complex in Thebes dedicated to one of the pre-eminent state gods, Amun-Re. Frood is in the process of recording and editing a number of non-royal inscriptions found at this temple, some of which are classed as "graffiti". The identification of a text as a graffito does not mean that it was not officially sanctioned, and so it might be preferable to refer to these texts instead as "secondary texts". These more informal texts tend to be found in the external areas, and illustrate aspects of temple bureaucracy, whereas the more formal texts are found in inner spaces and refer, amongst other things, to cultic practices. A shift in the scope for non-royal representation towards the end of the New Kingdom can be identified at this

site, beginning around 1200 BC. The increase in the representation of non-royals in this period suggests a change in the meaning of the temple space itself, which became a more communicative environment.

As a case study, Frood discussed a hieratic text found at this temple, inscribed at head-height in sixteen lines on a block in the wall of a gateway into the central courtyard, and dated to the period 945-715 BC. This text, whose subject is a priest named Horkhebi, raises questions about how we define and delineate space in temple environments. It begins with a prayer to Amun, followed by a semi-fictional genealogy stretching back five hundred years. Horkhebi's personal access to the sanctuary is mentioned, which, in addition to his priestly ancestry, establishes his claim to initiated status. The text then contains an appeal to Amun, and finally a curse against anyone who might interfere with the inscription. The context and content of this text are unusual: the closest parallels are donation stelae, on which people recorded the dedication of part of their property to temples. Parallels are also apparent between this text and the priestly induction texts that were set up in the centres of sanctuaries. The use of monumental hieratic text aligns it with legal texts. Frood explained that the text points towards a transformation in the meaning of space in the temple context, and that integrated studies of these inscriptions can illustrate the meaning and delineation of Egyptian sacred spaces.

~ Charlotte Tupman, King's College London

### **Matthew Canepa, 'Inscriptions, Landscape, and the Built Environment in the Eastern Mediterranean and Iran in Late Antiquity'**

In this paper, Canepa demonstrated how the rulers of the Sassanian Empire used monumental sculpture and inscriptions to create and emphasise their cultural and racial descent from the Achaemenids, as well as simultaneously interacting with and differentiating themselves from their more recent predecessors, the kings of the Hellenistic Seleucid empire. A crucial feature of this interaction and hence of Canepa's study was the way in which rock reliefs and other inscriptions interact with and become part of the landscape or building on which they are placed; this interaction can be a key part of their significance.

Various functions of inscriptions, including their role in creating and reinforcing memories, symbolising links to earlier and previously forgotten dynasties, claiming space, projecting power and establishing and maintaining cult were discussed, and Canepa then proceeded to illustrate these points by a fascinating and impressive array of examples.

Canepa explained how the Sassanid empire had resuscitated Persian culture, in particular the rituals of kingship first created by the Achaemenids, after the disruption caused by Alexander's invasion and Hellenistic rule. The Achaemenids had themselves inherited inscriptional practices from ancient near eastern powers, and had developed them further, especially during the

reign of Darius (arguably the first “Achaemenid”). Canepa pointed out that texts which claim to have been commissioned by Cyrus might actually date to the time of Darius.

Canepa then discussed one of the best known Persian inscriptions, Darius’ Bisitun inscription, emphasising the way that it dominates the E-W pass SW of Ecbatana. He discussed the possibility that Bisitun was already a sacred site, thus bringing out the complexity of the link between the presence of the inscription and the importance of the site, showing the difficulty of deciding which came first. The point of the Bisitun inscription was perhaps to claim the space, and its innovative nature is clear from the fact that Darius states that he ordered the creation of the cuneiform script for recording Old Persian specifically for inscriptional purposes. Elsewhere inscriptions of Xerxes placed next to those of Darius provide clear examples of the way in which later Persian monarchs positioned inscriptions in order to create visual links between themselves and their forebears.

Bisitun is also the site of the only known Seleucid rock relief, which shows a reclining Herakles and a Greek inscription on a Stele behind him; this suggests that the presence of the earlier relief suggested to the Seleucids that the site was particularly important.

Canepa then moved on to discuss Xerxes I’s inscription at Van in Turkey, the only Persian royal inscription known from outside Iran. It records that Darius made the niche in which the inscription was placed, but that it was left to Xerxes to complete the work of his predecessor, again showing how inscriptions could be used to forge links with the past.

From the Sassanid period, one memorable site discussed in some detail was the cube of Ka’ba-ye Zartosht at Naqsh-e Rostam, an early tower which was supposedly an ‘Achaemenid’ building. Monumental inscriptions were carved on the W, S and E side of this structure, thereby laying claim to Achaemenid work and implying a link between the two dynasties. In addition, the inscription was used to establish a cult at the site: since there were no sanctuaries in Sassanian cult, Canepa suggested that the tower might have been a Sassanian version of a dynastic sanctuary.

Canepa ended his paper by concluding that the Sassanian world was responding to both the imperial trilingual inscriptions of the Ancient Near East, and to Hellenistic inscriptions, in order both to link themselves with past elites, and to forge their own cultural identity.

~ Emma Rix, Corpus Christi College, Oxford

## **Silvia Ferrara, 'Writing in Cypro-Minoan: Beyond Decipherment'**

In this paper, Ferrara introduced the audience to problems in the decipherment and interpretation of inscriptions in the Cypro-Minoan script. Since there are only some 217 documents (comprising 4000 signs) in this script, decipherment is difficult if not impossible, and so identification of the language and context of the texts will depend more upon quantitative elements, the objects themselves, their distribution and other archaeological information.

The traditional classification of Cypro-Minoan by Emilia Masson identifies four versions of the script/language, but this classification is not reflected in the art, style of objects, or geographical features. The majority of the texts are in Masson's Cypro-Minoan 1 (CM1) script, with a wide geographical distribution and range of supports (including many tiny clay boules); this is assumed to be the original form of the language. The corpus of CM2 is made up entirely of three tablets, all from the city of Enkomi and of similar date. CM3 is attested in nine inscriptions from the mainland city of Ugarit. Both Enkomi and Ugarit also give CM1 texts—and the CM1 texts from Ugarit do not seem, as sometimes suggested, to have been imported from Cyprus since their form is similar to that of Cuneiform tablets from the mainland. The differences, identified by Masson, were based on the assumption that some characters were unique in each script, but since none of the scripts are identified, this is a difficult and to some degree subjective identification.

In 2007 Jean-Pierre Olivier published a revised classification of the CM1 script, in which he pointed out that out of 96 distinct signs, CM1 and CM2 share only 42; there are 19 unique signs in CM1, 15 unique signs in CM2 (a quarter of the total signs in that script) and 7 unique signs in CM3 (12% of the total signs in that script). Unique signs mostly occur only once in each script, raising the possibility that in at least some cases these are the result of scribal incompetence rather than deliberate distinction. Nevertheless, if these very significant differences are meaningful, then the introduction of new signs in each script must represent sounds or other real distinctions not recorded in the other subgroups. Leaving aside the incompletely attested CM3, one may either assume that CM1 and CM2 are different languages, or that the subject matter between the two collections of texts was sufficiently diverse that the vocabulary would differ significantly between the two.

Ferrara considered four possible interpretations of the classification of Cypro-Minoan from these texts: (1) the texts represent a single script and a single language, the language spoken throughout the island of Cyprus; the apparent differences between the scripts makes this interpretation problematic. (2) The texts represent a single script used to represent multiple languages; again the script variants are not explained. (3) The texts represent multiple scripts, all used to represent a single language; this is Ferrara's preferred interpretation. The representation of new sounds in a script does not have to mean the introduction of new sounds to the language, as they may simply be sounds that were not previously recorded in the written form of the language, or new complex syllables such as CVC groups. (4) The texts represent three

separate scripts used to record three different languages. This possibility explains the palaeography well, but is problematic archaeologically. Is one of the languages a form of Cypriot *koine*? Were the writers of CM2 at Enkomi perhaps not newcomers but an established population with their own language? Ferrara discussed the issues of multilingualism to examine this final possibility a little further. Looking for parallels to the use of multiple languages and scripts in a single geographical and chronological context (as at Enkomi), she looked at the case of Cretan Hieroglyphic and Linear A, but the archaeological contexts of these two scripts were fairly distinct and so they may have been different ways to record a single language.

A better comparison may be the case of the written archives at Ugarit, where seven languages are recorded in five scripts. The Akkadian *lingua franca* is written in Cuneiform using a syllabic system. Hurrian also uses Cuneiform script, but with an alphabetic system; the syllabic values of Cuneiform are intertwined with these alphabetic values with no apparent difficulty. In this parallel, biliteracy within a single language functions perfectly well.

The linguistic diversity of Cyprus is unknown. If CM2 was derived from CM1 to record a new language, there is no archaeological record of the people whose language this was (but nor is there for Hurrian). Given the limited literacy of the general population at this period, the idea that there would be two separate administrations in a single city, sometimes in identical contexts, using mutually unintelligible scripts and languages, is bizarre and counter-intuitive.

Ferrara concluded that there is no secure reason to consider Cypro-Minoan to be made up of more than one language. She ended her paper with an appeal to epigraphers to make a special effort to integrate contextual and archaeological features in the interpretation of text-bearing objects, along with the epigraphic staples of palaeography and philology.

~ Gabriel Bodard, King's College London

### **Elizabeth Solopova, 'The Earliest Runic Inscriptions: Problems of Language and Interpretation'**

In keeping with the theme of the British Epigraphy Society's Autumn Colloquium, ('Epigraphy, but not as we know it') this interesting paper took us away from the familiar territories of the Mediterranean to consider the Runic alphabet (or, to give it its proper name, futhark) used by Scandinavian and Germanic peoples from the second century through to, in the case of Scandinavia, the early modern period. Specifically, her paper examined the difficulties of interpreting 'older runes', these being the futhark as extant from approximately the 2nd to the 6th centuries AD. After this the futhark entered a phase of transition, developing and diversifying into regional variations, known collectively as 'younger runes'.

As to evidence for these 'older runes', we are limited to some 400 extant inscriptions. In contrast to the 'younger runes', 'older runes' appeared to develop strikingly little across the geographical and chronological range of their usage, as least until the shift to the 'younger runes'. However, their interpretation remains problematic. Inscriptions have been found of words which have defied translation, and indeed appear to be unpronounceable, such as the word 'baijsz', found on the Kårstad Rock in Norway. Furthermore, certain words, which appeared frequently (e.g. 'laukaz' – leek, 'lathu' – invitation, 'alu' – ale?), seem to have had a ritual significance as magic or charms, being used almost as one might the symbol of a cross. For example, we find 'alu' inscribed without any other words upon a gold pendant known as Djupbrunns-C, from Gotland, Sweden. If this might be said to be bordering on non-linguistic uses of letters, we must say this all the more of the Linholm 'amulet' from Skåne, Sweden. In this case, Solopova suggested a numerological significance for the following of a more comprehensible inscription with runes translating as 'aaaaaaa zzz nnn? bmu ttt: alu:'.

Solopova drew attention to the fact that, even where these inscriptions are comprehensible, they are most often highly formulaic, sometimes to the point of foiling interpretation. A large proportion of surviving inscriptions are found upon items made of metal, bone etc. Some of these are obvious in purpose, such as the inscription 'I Hlewagastiz Holtijaz made the horn', upon the golden horns found at Gallehus, Denmark. Others, however, are far more uncertain in their significance, such as an ankle bone from a deer, found at Caistor-by-Norwich, marked with 'of a deer'. As to inscriptions upon stones, some formulae are self-evidently memorial in purpose, observing the pattern 'Eyvindr raised this stone in memory of Gunnhvatr, his son', as found on the Søgne Stone, from Vest-Agder, Norway. However, others say simply 'Dagastiz painted runes' (Einang Stone, Norway) or 'I wrote runes of divine origin' (Noleby Stone, Sweden), without any greater statement of the reason for writing these runes.

Not surprisingly, it has been suggested that runes were seen at this time as having an almost magical power, rather than simply being the writing of language. Supported by this apparent lack of linguistic development, Solopova made the point that the introduction of the runes does not appear to have changed the oral nature of the cultures by which the runes were used. Indeed, though she acknowledged that administrative documents, and other such evidence of everyday use of the 'older runes', would be less likely to survive to the present day than the stone, metal and bone objects which form our evidence, the absence of any such evidence supports her argument. Rather she suggested that the futhark remained largely confined to elite groups, nobility, religious figures etc. This would also account for both the archaism and uniformity of the 'older runes'.

Finally, building upon this, Solopova addressed the question of the origins of the futhark. It is widely agreed that similarities in letter forms and sounds indicate that the futhark was inspired by at least one of the Mediterranean languages, though Latin, Greek and Etruscan have all been suggested as the progenitor in question. At the same time, however, there is a notable

difference from these alphabets in the ordering of letters within the futhark. Indeed, the term futhark derives from the first six letters of the runic alphabet (f-u-th-a-r-k). Solopova argued that this indicates a conscious effort to differentiate the futhark from whichever language, or languages, provided its inspiration. In conclusion, Solopova suggested that this was the action of an individual or small group of individuals, associating it with priestly figures, who would also have formed a large part of the 'rune literate' population, arguably encouraging its ongoing conservatism.

~ Philip Davies, University of Nottingham

The papers were followed by a number of short reports:

### **Nicholas Milner on recent work at Oinoanda**

Nicholas reported on the ongoing epigraphic work at the Oinoanda excavations (where he has been responsible for new inscriptions since 1994), funded by the DAI. New finds since 2007 include:

- several inscriptions on an octagonal tower in the Hellenistic wall including references to Apollo Hypsistos; the tower seems to have been an outdoor shrine to the Sun, and seems to settle the taxing question of which god was referred to by Hypsistos at this site;
- an inscription marking the foundation by C. Iulius Moles of a temple to Caesar, which appears to belong to the reign of Augustus;
- in 2009, a base bearing a verse inscription to Nemesis and a sundial;
- an inscribed lintel block from an early Christian church.

### **Ulrike Roth on Albert Rehm**

Ulrike (incoming BES Secretary) addressed the meeting with a question rather than a report. Albert Rehm was a German school-teacher and ancient historian (known for his epigraphic work), active in the periods before and after the Second World War, and was outspoken on the subject of the Nazi approaches to ancient history. He described himself as a "Third Humanist", although this clearly meant something different from Werner Jaeger's use of the same label. Rehm believed firmly in the importance of working in the field (where Jaeger was reluctant to sully his view of the ancient world by visiting modern Greece), hence his epigraphic research. Ulrike is looking for information, even stories and anecdotes, about Rehm's fieldwork, in the hope that this might cast light on his vision of "Third Humanism".

### **Jonathan Prag on financial inscriptions from Taormina**

Jon described a collaborative project to republish and analyse thirteen financial inscriptions from the Sicel city of Taormina (which was allied to Rome in the Second Punic War), that have been published in scattered publications of variable quality. (8 of the inscriptions are in *IG* 14; four were published by Manganaro from inadequate photographs.) The inscriptions

reveal many details of the city's finances and administration in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC: there are changes over time in the math used, as well as in the administration, the calendar, and the currencies in use. One text in particular offers a thorny problem of dating: it is written in Greek, so should be from before the Roman colony in 27 BC; the reference to the month of "Quinctilis" should be from before 46; the reference to "duoandres" should be after 44. Manganaro suggests that the text may date from the period when Sextus Pompeius governed the city between 44 and 36, but much remains unclear. The new publication will make new joins between some of the text fragments, and will also thoroughly address issues with the provenance of the inscriptions, some of which are moved and only partially recorded in the excavation reports.

~ Gabriel Bodard, King's College London

### **Your Next Newsletter...**

... will be produced after the Spring Meeting. Members of the BES are warmly encouraged to submit material for consideration for inclusion, such as reports on events, reviews, notices of forthcoming events, notices of new discoveries or interpretations, notices of books or articles published, posters, etc.

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