

## **BES Autumn Colloquium 2011**

### Summary of experiences by the awardees of student travel bursaries

**Davies, Philip** (PhD student, University of Nottingham)

I would like to thank the British Epigraphic Society, as well as the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, and the Classical Association, for the generous bursary with which I was provided. This funded my attendance of the BES Autumn Colloquium, 'Epigraphy in Action', going towards the cost of my travel by train from Nottingham to London, as well as my lunch and other subsistence costs on the day.

The colloquium was a very rewarding experience, with a number of stimulating papers. Somewhat to my surprise, as a Hellenist, one of the papers which I found most interesting was Silvia Orlandi's, which provided valuable insight into a number of the methodological and presentational issues which arise from the re-editing of an epigraphic work of such significance as the *Corpus Inscriptiones Latinae*. The excursion to the British Museum for small group talks on individual epigraphic artefacts was an original and welcome addition to the programme. In my case, Karen Radner enabled her audience to come away with a great deal of information concerning the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III and its socio-historical context, particularly as most of the group (myself included) had little or no previous knowledge of the Assyrian Empire. Thomas Corsten's two presentations on Lycia were both informative and entertaining. However, I must end by saying how useful I found Robin Osborne's paper on the epigraphic history of Thespieae. I had mentioned this in my bursary application as one of the papers to which I was looking forward, and found his attempt to provide insight into the political and social history of Thespieae on the basis of the epigraphic evidence, and its place within the Boeotian confederacy, a very interesting proposition.

I initiated my academic interest in epigraphy, and my association with the BES, at the beginning of my doctoral studies, and in my third year of those studies would like to thank the BES committee once again for enabling me to maintain this through my attendance of their colloquia.

**Evans, Luke** (PhD student, University of Durham)

The BES's Autumn Colloquium and AGM were held on Saturday 19th November 2011, at ICS, Senate House, London. In attendance were ca. fifty-five people from a variety of institutions. The day was planned efficiently with a clear structure offered.

Morning session I was given by Prof. Osborne. The main question raised by Osborne was, can a pattern to what a city writes down be ascertained? Notable features in Thespieai are land leases and religious cults. With such inscriptions it is possible to note that Thespieai ran itself with a relatively light touch. Osborne argues that this failure to inscribe decrees signifies not unwillingness but a failure to enact decrees. From 447 BC the city was always part of a Boeotian confederation.

Morning session II was given by Prof. Orlandi. Orlandi spoke on the structure of a new edition of *CIL*; with a focus on building inscriptions, loca inscriptions, graffiti, painted inscriptions, and inscriptions found in the Colosseum but not necessarily related to the monument. A major issue to be raised when considering such inscriptions emerges when considering the nature of the Colosseum. Many of the bricks were reused for separate sections of the structure and previous inscriptions were erased for new ones. The previous inscriptions are still eligible and thus should be acknowledged.

At 14:00 five epigraphic talks were given by Dr Radner, Dr Clackson, Prof. Crawford, Dr Williams and Dr Salway in the British Museum. I chose Dr Williams' presentation. Unfortunately the item discussed was not present in the museum but thanks to Dr Williams' enthusiasm for the subject, I found the talk stimulating.

Afternoon session I was given by Prof. Corsten and focused on inscriptions in the Lycian region. The inscriptions discussed referred to the political scene in the late Hellenistic period and early Roman period. The image portrayed by the inscriptions is one of constant war and fluctuation on the border. The growth of Roman influence is also noticeable. The coming of Rome brought peace. Despite

losing their freedom to Rome the Lycians now felt free from the strife that afflicted the region. At 16:00 two virtual epigraphic presentations were given. Dr Radner spoke about SAA online. This was followed by Prof. Orlandi's demonstration of EAGLE/EDR and Dr Bodard's demonstration of the Libya project.

Afternoon session II was given by Prof. Crawford on the edict of Diocletian. The façade of the Aphrodisias Basilica offers invaluable evidence of the edict. Crawford focused on the pricing system offered by Diocletian in an attempt to fathom any significance to these numbers. Unfortunately it is not possible to know when the edict took effect. Crawford argued that the edict was put together over a long period of time. Such an argument would help justify the existence of two edicts. At 18:00 news from the field was given on Oinoanda and Kibyrtis by Dr Milner and Prof. Corsten respectively. In the final session at 18:30 young epigraphers were offered the opportunity to present a poster whilst drinks were offered.

### **Gartland, Sam** (PhD student, Leeds University)

Arriving early at any BES colloquium is a requirement. The discussions with acquaintances new and old that precede the days formal structure always offer new perspectives and an injection of enthusiasm that enhances the enjoyment of the formal side of the colloquium. Before Prof. Osborne's paper on Thespias, I had discussed everything from Bronze age palace records to Cyprus in late antiquity. The pairing of Osborne's paper with that of Prof. Orlandi was enlightening in itself, the former being a paper dense in information on an area I know intimately, the latter presenting a more general illustration of the problems of epigraphy in the Coliseum. Both offered much food for thought, especially marked being the travails of the epigrapher when it comes to publishing. This featured heavily in the discussion following Professor Orlandi's paper, and is a useful example of the difficulties behind the published epigraphic material on which so many histories (including my own) rest.

Lunch provided a continuation of lively discussion with other participants in the colloquium, and this was followed by a treat of a presentation by Dr. Salway on two inscriptions from Ephesus in the British museum. Rushing back from there to attend the AGM of the society, the mechanisms of the function of the BES were laid bare, and as with Prof. Orlandi's paper earlier in the day, this 'behind the curtain' view of the process of academia was enlightening, and made one appreciative of all of the hard work that attends the continuation of an organisation that undertakes such important and beneficial work.

The afternoon continued with a lively and enjoyable paper by Prof. Corsten on some issues around the epigraphy of Lycia. The paper provided interesting insights into the picture of Hellenistic and Roman Lycia, and with this the effects of 'Big Power' changes to political and epigraphic trends. This paper was followed by three exciting online projects to record the epigraphy of Assyria, Italy and Libya. Once again, the different stage of development and general format of each of these projects helped to elucidate the process by which these projects are born and managed, and the difficulties and successes that accompany them. Following coffee and more new acquaintances, Prof. Crawford gave a personal and practical take on the price edict of Diocletian. In this he emphasised both the serendipity of initial discovery and the long term task of understanding monumental inscriptions. His paper was followed by Dr. Milner and Prof. Corsten reflecting on their previous year's work in parts of Southern Turkey.

A final session of wine and posters brought the colloquium to a fitting end; convivial company and further academic discussion. The day was a ubiquitously enjoyable experience and alongside the significant academic insight offered by each of the sessions, I will take from the day an increased awareness of the practicalities of epigraphy, whether it be discovering, publishing or organising a society. I am very grateful to the BES for allowing me to attend by means of their student bursary.

### **Homann, Margit** (PhD student, Universität Leipzig)

For me the main reason to attend the BES autumn meeting (Nov. 19th 2011 in London) was to hear Prof. M. Crawford's lecture on Diocletian's Prices Edict, for I am writing my dissertation on the Edict.

The lecture was very helpful for my studies and showed up many interesting aspects, which I did not even know until that day. Furthermore, I had the possibility to talk to Prof. Crawford about my dissertation, which was a great fortune. But not only him, but also Dr. Simon Corcoran and Dr. Benet Salway, which I met at the meeting, gave me helpful hints and literature on the Edict, for they both were working on the topic in the past. Of course, I also enjoyed the other lectures, especially those on the databases and online editing, for the same questions and problems do exist in papyrology (I am also active in this scientific field). All in all the meeting was a complete success: I met very friendly and helpful scholars, which promised to help me with my dissertation and heard very interesting lectures on various topics. Furthermore I got to know some PhD candidates, with whom I definitely will keep in touch. The location of the meeting was large enough and good to arrive, the technique was working well. So finally, I was very happy to be there, and if time allows I am definitely not averse to visit one of the next meetings.

**Labonia, Francesca** (PhD student, Università del Salento)

My participation in the BES Autumn Colloquium in London was one the most profitable and interesting experience in the epigraphic field. I had the opportunity to present my PhD research project with a poster entitled "Towards a new *corpus* of Greek inscriptions from Lucania" during the young Epigraphy session of the meeting. I had the wonderful chance to discuss my work for over an hour, to let it be known, to put it to the test, and to receive feedback and suggestions. I met colleagues from other universities with whom I discussed at length my poster and exchanged contacts. I had the honor to receive appreciation on my work by Prof. Crawford (who suggested me the existence of a Greek inscription from the Sanctuary of Mefite in Rossano of Basilicata), Prof Roy (interested in the possible presence of bilingual inscriptions in my collection), Prof Davies (interested in the Greek texts from indigenous settlements), Dr. Milner and other scholars interested in the Greek background of the region. Some of the participants with whom I had the opportunity to discuss - as the colleague Katherine McDonald, who studies the pre-Roman languages of Southern Italy - or Professor Crawford - who coordinates the publication of the first *corpus* of Italic inscriptions (*Imagines Italicae*) - carry out research on Southern Italy, very interesting for my project.

Secondly, but certainly not least, this conference was a full immersion into epigraphy. Nine reports have offered a broader view of both Greek and Latin epigraphy, and on technological tools applied to the study of inscriptions. In particular, there have been papers that, through the epigraphic documentation, offered a historical reconstruction of local and regional areas of the ancient world: Prof. Osborne presented the case of Thespiiai in Boeotia, offering not only an epigraphic overview of the city, but also drawing attention to some epigraphic anomalies (such as the absence of inscriptions about politics); Prof. Corsten offered a historical view on a regional scale, presenting new documents from Lycia, and Dr. Milner, also about Lycia, presented the case of Oinoanda, which interested me, in particular, for the activity of epigraphic survey that I have also started in Basilicata: really "epigraphy in action". Prof. Orlandi presented a report which I strongly appreciated (even though I am a Greek epigraphist), since the aim of my PhD research is to create an epigraphic *corpus* re-editing IG XIV (Lucania section). The results her project about the re-editing of CIL VI (inscriptions from the Flavian Amphitheatre) offered elements to consider for my study about the publication criteria.

The Colloquium was well structured, with two sessions spaced-out by epigraphic talks within the beautiful and very apt setting of the nearby British Museum. I found very important the virtual Epigraphy session, with the presentation of three epigraphic databases, a very useful open-source instrument to share and improve research. I also created for my research an information database, within which texts have been recorded according to topographic criteria.

**Lewis, Juan** (PhD student, University of Edinburgh)

At the BES Colloquium 2011, I participated with the presentation of a poster, which basically summarized my article "Hapax legomenon? A new reading of *Inscriptiones Latinae Jugoslaviae* 3, 2119", published in *ZPE* 179 (2011), 244-246. The poster was well received and the comments were

in general positive and encouraging. Most questions were directed towards how my new reading fitted into my doctoral research, as it was not self-evident at first sight. There was practically no discussion about my method or conclusions, which most commentators agreed were sound and solid.

I was particularly interested in Professor Orlandi's talk on the epigraphy of the Colosseum. During the question session, I communicated my concern about the shortcomings of online epigraphic databases and printed collections of inscriptions. Professor Orlandi was very incisive in her answers, laying out both the technical and the political constraints practitioners of the discipline have in furthering the public access and understanding of the epigraphic record. Her invitation to participate through voluntary collaborations and suggestions in the elaboration of the EAGLE/EDR epigraphic database was more than welcome. As the main appendix of my PhD thesis is a collection of inscriptions, many of which are still incompletely described by that database, I am planning to send her my own findings and new readings after submission.

Another presentation that was very stimulating was Professor Crawford's paper on the Edict of Maximum Prices. His skeptical approach to the process of reconstruction of the epigraph and the type of information recorded by the extant fragments of that imperial pronouncement was very instructive, as it showed in one paradigmatic example the limits of the evidence epigraphists work with.

The poster session featured some young epigraphists from Italy and Britain. Due to community of interests, I was particularly inclined towards the work of Francesca Lai, Francesca Labonia and Serena Zoia. We decided to follow each other's work through academia.edu with the aim of keeping updated about our research and establishing a network of epigraphists in the early stages of their academic career.

**Matuszewski, Rafal** (MA student, Universität Göttingen)

The BES Autumn Colloquium "Epigraphy in Action" took place the 19th of November in London. Due to my interest in the history of mainland Greece and the political organization of small poleis, of particular interest for me was the first paper of the day delivered by Prof. Robin Osborne, who presented the epigraphic history of Thespiiai. Inscriptions Prof. Osborne presented displayed a variety of issues and problems - from the border *horoi* of a sacred place, dedication to the deity, reorganization of the Mouseia, inscriptions concerning land leases (which have again become a popular investigation topic), to various kind of lists - lists of magistrates, cult group for Thamyris, temple inventory or military catalogs. From this collection of inscriptions emerged the picture of a rather limited political life, mainly due to the membership in the Boeotian Confederacy. The second paper in the morning session - "Re-editing CIL VI, Inscriptiones in Amphitheatro Flavio repertae: new methods and results" by Prof. Sylvia Orlandi of Rome - dealt with problems and dilemmas confronted nowadays by epigraphists, which are responsible for the edition of inscriptions in the Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum. On the example of the material of the Colosseum, Professor Orlandi raised the question of how to choose the best way of editing inscriptions, often engraved on some older ones - a kind of "inscriptional palimpsest". Prof. Orlandi showed also some inscriptions with visible gaps, probably designed for attaching bronze letters. Therefore, the problem lies in the choice of the editing method, as the text of the inscription itself, without its full visualization, does not give the whole picture to the researcher using the CIL.

I was notably impressed by the talk given by Prof. Thomas Corsten, whose main area of research is Asia Minor. In his lecture entitled "Epigraphic sidelights on the history of Lycia", Prof. Corsten focused first on the presentation of the richness of the epigraphic material which is now at our disposal for investigating the history of the area localized in today's South-Western Turkey. Corsten discussed very interesting findings, including some coming from Xanthos, Patara, Bubon and Olbasa. A constantly increasing collection of inscriptions from this area forces us to revise our knowledge on the local elites of Lycia, organization of the province of Lycia, or on the relations between Rome and the Lycian Confederacy in the late Hellenistic period.

Three papers delivered in the short panel "Virtual Epigraphy" were aimed to present practical concerns and features of various new technologies applied to the epigraphic research: on-line databases and publications, digital drawings and reconstructions, etc. I found the information about databases such as SAA Online particularly valuable.

The paper of Prof. Michael Crawford concerned one of the most important sources on the economy of the Roman Empire known to historians nowadays - the famous Diocletian's Edictum De Rerum Pretiis Venalium. In his speech, Prof. Crawford discussed what can this edict tell us at all (and what cannot!) on the functioning of ancient economy.

In the panel "Field Epigraphy", I had the opportunity to hear the most recent news on the last excavations and surveys in Lycia. Dr. Nicholas Milner presented several new inscriptions from Oinoanda, while Prof. Corsten discussed the inscriptions from a wider area of Kibyrtis - the tetrapolis consisting of the cities Kibyra, Oinoanda, Bubon and Balbura.

To sum up, participation in the BES Autumn Colloquium has been an extremely valuable and stimulating experience for me and beside listening to fascinating and (I must admit), very inspiring speeches, I also had a very first opportunity to visit the British Museum exhibitions. I am extremely grateful for the support granted to me, which allowed me to participate in the Colloquium.

**Zoia, Serena** (PhD student, Università di Bologna)

The experience of attending the Autumn Colloquium of the British Epigraphy Society was very exciting and profitable. First of all I had the opportunity to know young researchers from both Italy and the United Kingdom: we discussed about our studies and past experiences and we exchanged our email addresses. Therefore, I met prof. Silvia Orlandi, who co-opted me in the EDR project, and prof. John Wilkes, who made me know an inscription found in Stobi (Macedonia) which will be quoted in one of my next publications; prof. Wilkes sent me a photo of this inscription by mail and we maintained contact. I talked a lot with prof. Nicholas Milner too, who was very interested in my poster and made me lot of questions.

Since I am a Roman epigrapher, I found extremely interesting prof. Orlandi's paper on the publication criteria of the inscriptions found in the Flavian Amphitheatre, and prof. Crawford's paper on the Diocletian's Edict on Maximum Prices. In both cases the way in which a monumental location for the studied inscriptions was reconstructed grabbed my attention.

Anyway, the papers on Greek epigraphy were quite enlightening too. Prof. Osborne's speech on the inscriptions of Thespias was of particular interest because he was able to link an epigraphic oddity (the absence of political actions recorded on stone) to a specific historical background (Thespias's affiliation to the Boeotian Confederacy); I was also struck by his definition of lists as "an epigraphic habit phenomenon" because finding epigraphic habits in Milan is the object of my PhD studies.

Thanks to prof. Corsten and prof. Milner I learnt about the epigraphy of Lycia and especially of the Lycian city of Oinoanda, which was a completely new topic to me. I found particularly interesting the pillar found in Patara in 1993, which has a list of Lycian roads and distances. The builder of these roads was a Tiberius Claudius Drusus, probably emperor Claudius, who presented himself as the one who had stopped civil disorder and anarchy in the country to start an era of order and fairness: it seems to me a good example of using a milestone inscription to propagandize the emperor's power.

Also the display of the three epigraphic databases was of a certain interest to me, because I'm building a computerized database too. I particularly appreciated the choice of an opensource software to catalogue the cuneiform texts in The Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus and prof. Orlandi's call for cooperation in the EDR since a complete epigraphic database can exist only as a "collaborative project".

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