

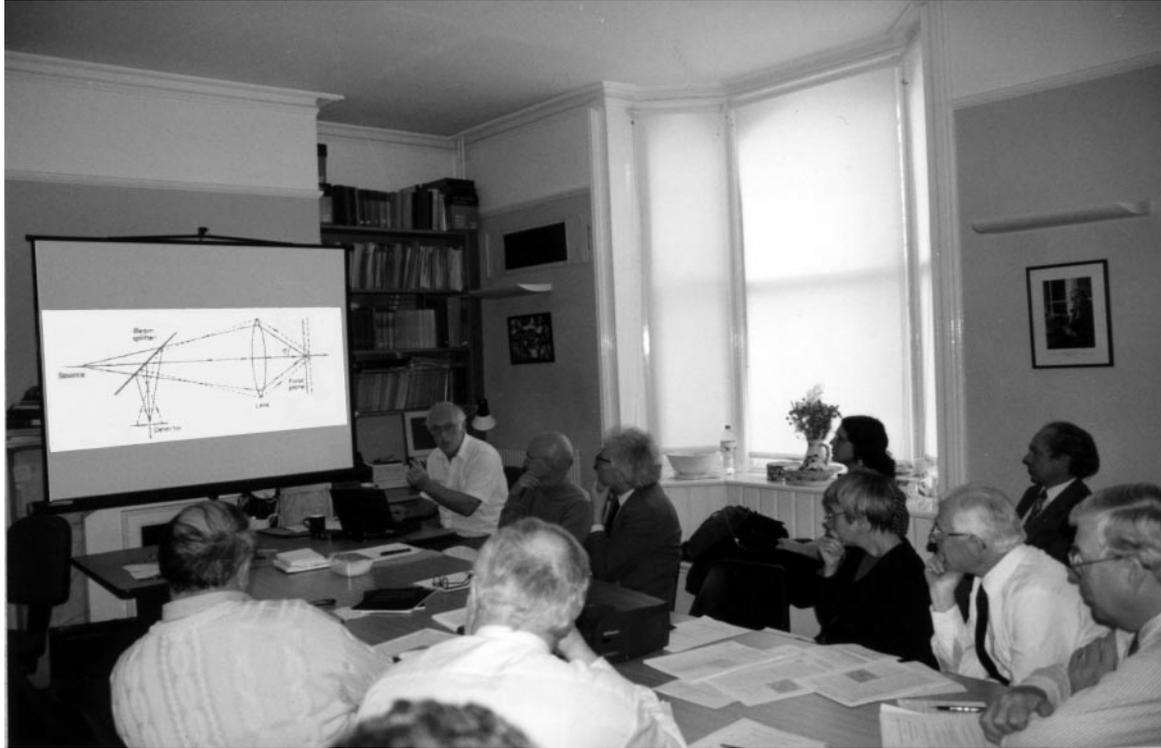


Oxford University

Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents

Newsletter no. 6

Spring, 1998



Professor Mike Brady describes to an invited audience the techniques of image processing under development in the Centre's joint project on wooden stylus tablets with the Department of Engineering

CSAD Computer Vision Seminar

A day-long seminar was held at the Centre on Saturday, 8 November to explain the aims and results of the Centre's recent work with particular emphasis on projects involving the interaction of documentary studies and developments in the field of computer vision. The seminar had both a symbolic and a practical purpose: to offer thanks to individuals and representatives of institutions which have supported our work in the past two years, to explain the progress we have made and to invite comment and advice on future progress and plans. Those who attended by invitation were: Prof. Roger Cashmore (Oxford: Chairman, University Research and Equipment Committee), Dr. David Clark, (Director, Engineering and Science, EPSRC), Sir Anthony Cleaver (Chairman, AEA Technology plc), Dr. David Cooper (Libraries Automation Services, Oxford), Professor Michael Crawford (University College London), Dr. Marilyn Deegan (Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford), Professor John Krebs (Chief Executive, Natural Environment Research Council), Professor Paul Langford, (Oxford: Chairman Designate, Humanities Research Board), Professor John Laver (Chairman, Humanities Research Board), Mr. Hamish Orr-

Ewing (former Chairman of Rank Xerox UK and of Jaguar plc), Mr. Chris Peters (Oxford University Development Office), Dr. Tim Potter (Keeper of Prehistoric and Romano-British Antiquities, The British Museum), Dr. Seamus Ross (Director, Humanities Computing and Information Management, University of Glasgow).

The Centre and its projects were represented by Alan Bowman, Charles Crowther, Roger Tomlin, Dirk Obbink and Gideon Nisbet and, from the Department of Engineering Science, Professor Mike Brady, Dr. Andrew

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Zisserman and Veit Schenk.

The day's programme was framed by presentations of the particular problems facing documentary historians in dealing with damaged and difficult documents written on a variety of surfaces: wood, stone and papyrus. Advances in computer vision applications have been deployed to resolve analogous problems in other fields – in medicine, for example, or structural engineering. The focus of the seminar was on how similar techniques might be applied to the decipherment of intractable ancient texts. Epigraphers and papyrologists have developed their own practical techniques for working with problematic texts and the integration of this body of expert knowledge into the design of image processing applications can offer insights that may lead, in turn, to progress in other applications of computer vision.

The central section of the seminar was an exposition by Mike Brady and Veit Schenk of how this interaction works in practice in the Centre's current project on wooden stilus tablets from Roman Britain:

"The aim of our work is to combine the historian's knowledge, skills and techniques with modern computing technology in order to develop tools which facilitate the reading of some tablets and extend the range of documents that would otherwise remain illegible.

A variety of factors makes stilus tablets particularly difficult to interpret: the letter traces are shallow and they can only be seen properly under intense low-raking light; the background on which the incisions were made almost always has a comparatively heavy wood-grain producing a distracting background texture—emphasised by the fact that the softer parts of the wood tend to degrade more than the harder ones resulting in a wave-like undulating surface; incidental and casual pitting further complicate the enhancement of writing; and, as if all of this was not already bad enough, a single tablet would often have been used more than once, thus offering two or more overlaid texts that need to be distinguished.

So, in order to help the historians read stilus tablets more effectively there are several issues we have had to address: we want to be able to remove woodgrain and other distracting features so that the end-user can work on 'clean' images containing 'useful' information only. We also need to be able to isolate features that correspond to incisions and give the end-user the tools to interactively accept or reject and manipulate these features on a computer in the process of decipherment.

Woodgrain removal: The woodgrain on most stilus tablets is usually more or less uniform over the surface of the tablet and is relatively large compared to the incisions we are looking for. When taking images we arrange for the woodgrain to be aligned in the horizontal direction. This particular property is then exploited in our process

of woodgrain removal which is based on masking out low-frequency components in the vertical direction, keeping all high-frequency information corresponding to incisions. The resulting images contain much less distracting information and are a great improvement for the human reader.

Finding incisions: The incisions the historian is interested in typically measure 0.5 mm across and are of varying but shallow depth, to a maximum of 1mm. Visually, the incisions are of low contrast, often just a few grey values, so that they are very difficult to distinguish from background noise. We employ a technique which models the working practice of the epigrapher by combining the key properties of photometric stereo and shadows. In practice, the scholar 'reading' a stilus tablet uses low-angle raking light: the tablet is moved 'over' and 'around' the light source, casting 'moving' shadows where the incisions are approximately perpendicular to the incoming light. The 'over'-movement is used to determine whether there are incisions in this particular direction, i.e. to distinguish incisions from other surface markings. The 'around'-movement is used to find incisions in varying orientations on the tablet. To model this 'manual' technique we take a number of pictures of the same tablet with a light source moving in an arc 'over' it, beginning at a very low-raking angle and moving up in 5 degree steps. A major advantage of the computerised over the manual approach is that the historian no longer has to remember where exactly an incision is located before moving the light-source or to draw it on paper in order to combine individual scratches into a letter or coherent writing; the results of the 'around'-movement are 'integrated' in the computer.

The major problem to overcome is to find the appropriate features in each image: current techniques such as histogram equalisation, standard edge finders, and anisotropic diffusion give poor results because of the low-contrast and high-noise content of the images. We have had promising results, however, using image features that correspond to locations of high phase congruency (PC). Current implementations of PC are determined by a range of specific design choices. We believe that a theoretical and practical analysis within the context of our stilus tablets application will lead to greatly improved performance of PC both in this and in other applications."

The Centre's work on wooden stilus tablets is breaking new ground in developing techniques of imaging damaged surfaces which will eventually be applicable to many different kinds of material—from deciphering other types of ancient document, to spotting hairline flaws in turbine blades or examining the ducts and structures in the human heart.

Kilroy in the Desert

A Database of Bedouin Graffiti

Literacy has never been of much use to nomads. Most have preferred to develop their phenomenal memories rather than trust the data they want to record or communicate to materials which are difficult to obtain in the desert and all too easily lost or damaged in tent-life.

For this reason, most nomadic societies have remained resolutely non-literate, functioning perfectly well at all levels without use of the written word. It is important to emphasise that this is a *choice*, since nomads, at least in the Near East, have been in contact with literate societies on the desert's edge for millennia and learning to read and write poses few problems to an individual with a well-developed memory.

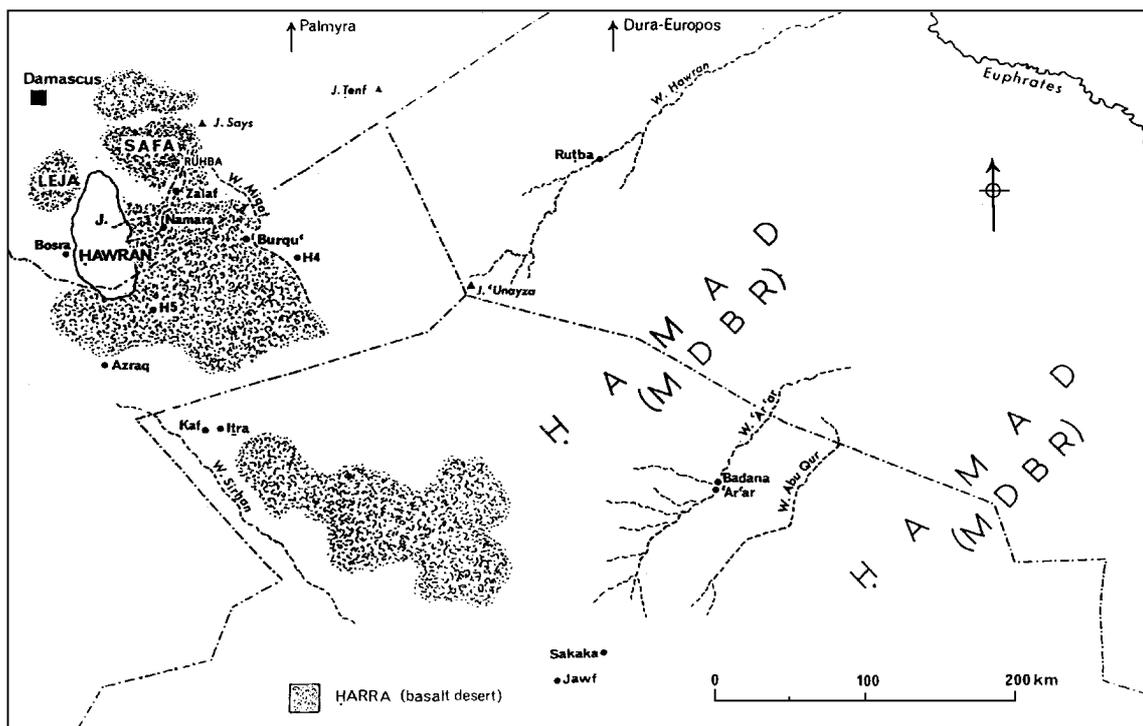
However, between the first century BC and the fourth century AD the nomads on the borders of the Roman Provinces of Syria and Arabia learnt to write and practised the art with an extraordinary exuberance, leaving scores of thousands of graffiti on the rocks of the desert in what is now southern Syria, north-eastern Jordan and northern Saudi Arabia.

They spoke a language related to Arabic, which would have been incomprehensible to most of the peoples of the settled lands—who spoke Aramaic and Greek. The script they wrote in (which was labelled "Safaitic" in the 19th century) was a form of the South Semitic alphabet. Forms of this script were in use throughout western Arabia and in Ethiopia, but would have been entirely foreign to the inhabitants of the Roman Provinces of Syria

and Arabia. Moreover, although this script is related to other forms of the South Semitic alphabet it is sufficiently distinct that someone familiar with one of the other forms would have had difficulty reading it.

Thus, whatever their reasons for learning to read and write, it is unlikely that communication with the outside world was one of them. Nor does communication within their own society seem to have been uppermost in the minds of those who embraced literacy. After all, there would have been a distinct shortage of soft or portable materials on which to write—the price of papyrus or parchment put them beyond the reach of most people, and pottery was not readily available in the desert, so, unlike people in the settled areas, the nomads could not use sherds to write on.

We do not know how or why they learnt to write but we might speculate that a nomad, perhaps guarding a caravan, may have seen a merchant from Arabia writing a letter and said "teach me to do that". Having learnt this skill, he would have showed it off to his friends and relatives. Indeed, we have found several examples of the Safaitic alphabet written on rocks, but in each case in a different order: the letters being grouped according to the individual writer's perception of similarities between different letter-shapes—an obvious mnemonic tool. None of these orders bears any relation to the traditional alphabetic orders of the North-West or South Semitic alphabets and this suggests that the art of writing spread informally from one individual to another and was not taught in schools, where rote learning of a fixed alphabetic order is the norm.



Sketch map of the area from which the Safaitic inscriptions derive



*Safaitic text from the Wadi Sham inscribed boustrophedon
(CRAI 1996, 461 no. E2)*

Given that the only writing materials readily available in the desert were rocks, and flints with which to scratch them, literacy cannot have seemed of much practical use to these nomads, and they might well have ignored it. Instead, however, they used it to while away the time during the long hours spent guarding the grazing flocks and herds or keeping watch. Over 20,000 of these "inscriptions" have been found so far and these are merely the results of a handful of expeditions over the last 140 years. Wherever one goes in the lava desert east of the Hawran, one comes across literally thousands of these texts. They were written by men and, to a lesser extent, by women and by slaves. Given that the desert could not have supported a huge population at any one time, the vast numbers of texts (which can probably be reckoned in hundreds of thousands) suggest the existence of almost universal literacy among these nomads. One is thus faced with the curious paradox of near-universal literacy in a society which had no practical use for it and which therefore remained, to all intents and purposes, "non-literate", its population using the skill purely as a pastime; while, by contrast, in the settled, *literate*, societies of Roman Syria and Arabia, it is very doubtful if more than a minority of individuals could read and write.

The Safaitic inscriptions are almost entirely works of self-expression rather than of communication – graffiti rather than messages. The only texts which might be said to serve a useful purpose are those used as grave-markers, which were placed on the large cairns built over the graves of certain individuals. But these texts are rare and are expressed in exactly the same terms as the graffiti, i.e. "by so-and-so son of so-and-so, etc." with the addition that "the cairn is his/hers".

Though always laconic and often enigmatic individually, these thousands of graffiti when taken together provide a rich source of information on the way-of-life, religion, social structures and history of the nomads of the Syro-Arabian desert in the Roman period and of their relations with the authorities and the populations of the settled regions. They also tell us much about their personal lives,

their hopes and griefs and relationships, for these are entirely personal documents. Thanks to the Safaitic graffiti we know far more about the daily lives of these nomads than we do about any other sector of the population in these provinces.

They are therefore of much greater importance than at first they might appear. They are potentially of as much value to historians of the Roman East as they are to linguists. Unfortunately, the state of publication of most of the texts is inadequate, often inaccessible and frequently misleading, and research tools such as a dictionary and an up-to-date list of names are non-existent. The texts are therefore very difficult for the non-specialist to use.

The Safaitic Database Project was established to enter the texts of all the known Safaitic inscriptions onto a computer database, together with translations and all available information about them, including a full *apparatus criticus*. The intention is to use this database to produce up-to-date editions (and re-editions) of the texts and to provide the "raw material" for vocabularies, onomastic indexes and studies, concordances of the, often lengthy, genealogies in the inscriptions, and so on; and thus to make the information in the inscriptions more easily available.

At the same time, the **Safaitic Epigraphic Survey Programme** is working in Syria to rediscover, and make a photographic record of, the inscriptions copied in the 19th and early 20th centuries, often by people who could not read the script, so that the readings can be verified. In the process, several thousand previously unknown texts have been discovered, recorded and entered on the Database.

The Safaitic Database Project is based at the Oriental Institute, Oxford and has been in receipt of a three-year Leverhulme Research Fellowship (1995-1997) as well as major grants from the University, the British Academy, the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History and the Seven Pillars of Wisdom Fund. It is a joint project of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Oxford and URA 1062 du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris.

The Safaitic Epigraphic Survey Programme is a joint project of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Oxford, and the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums of Syria and is funded by the British Academy, the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History, the Seven Pillars of Wisdom Fund and URA 1062 du CNRS, Paris. Work on both projects is continuing and it is hoped that the first publications will be ready for the press by the end of 1998.

M.C.A. Macdonald. (michael.macdonald@orinst.ox.ac.uk)

CSAD News and Events

Equipment Purchases

Michaelmas Term began brightly with a successful (and highly commended) application to the University's Research and Equipment Committee for £33,000 to allow the purchase of three major items of equipment: a state-of-the-art Phase One PowerPhase digital camera, with a resolution of 7,000 x 7,000 pixels, for use in the Stilus Tablet and Oxyrhynchus Papyri digitisation projects, a UMAX Mirage A3 flatbed scanner for scanning squeezes, and an InFocus data projector for presentations—the latter available for teaching, seminars and conferences to members of the Faculty of Literae Humaniores. The PowerPhase camera has been extensively used—a sample of its output, reduced to grayscale and downsized by a factor of 40, accompanies Gideon Nisbet's report opposite. The Mirage scanner has arrived more recently, but has already proved an important acquisition; its image quality matches that of the PowerLook scanner available to the Centre since 1995, and its larger scanning area should speed up the task of scanning the squeeze collection considerably.

CSAD in the News

The Centre's collaboration with the Department of Engineering Science has attracted an unexpected quantity of attention recently in the popular media. A half-page report by Dalya Alberge ("Science delivers a postscript from the past: medical technology will let scholars read Roman letters") appeared in the Times of 5 January (now available online at www.the-times.co.uk/news/pages/tim/98/01/05/timnwsnws02015.html?2152723), and extended radio interviews have been broadcast on popular science programmes on BBC Radio 4 and the World Service. A five minute television report on continuing work on the stilus tablet project, featuring Mike Brady and Alan Bowman, was broadcast live from the Centre on Thursday 7 May at 8.45 am for the Innovations Report on BBC Breakfast TV News.

Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, Macquarie University

CSAD continues to maintain its close links with the Ancient History Documentary Research Centre at Macquarie University. Dr. David Phillips from AHDRC visited Oxford in November, and called in to the Centre to check squeezes of Attic inscriptions in the epigraphical archive. On 20 November, he presented an outline of his current research into the dating of fifth century Athenian proxeny decrees to a seminar in the Centre.

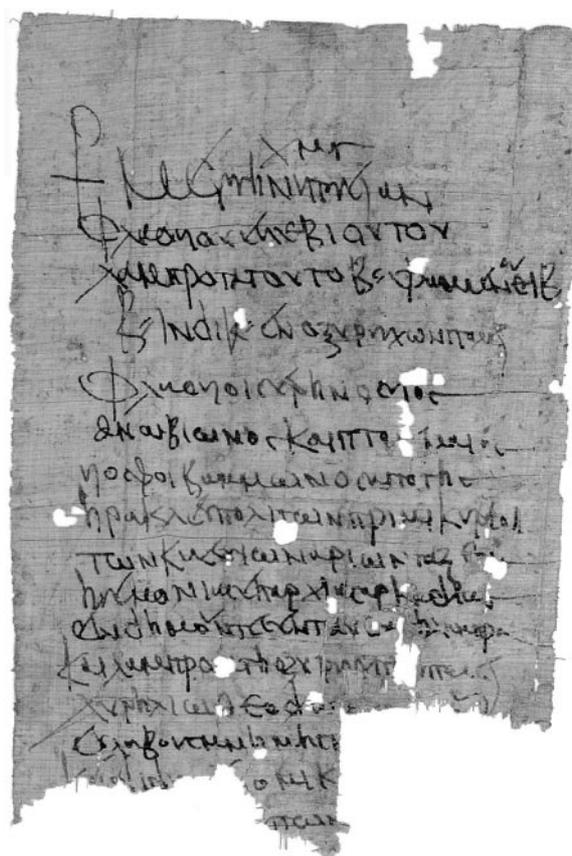
Digitising the Oxyrhynchus Papyri

Gideon Nisbet, researcher for the Oxyrhynchus Papyri Digitisation Project, reports on recent progress:

Since October I've been working on establishing an online presence for the Oxyrhynchus papyrus collection, housed in the papyrology rooms of the Ashmolean. The first phase of the 'POxy' web site (www.csad.ox.ac.uk/POxy) went online just before Christmas, featuring a range of resources on the town and its texts. There have been some revisions and updates since then, with an emphasis on feedback and requests from users.

The first really major advance will appear in the next few weeks. POxy 'phase two' will offer digital images of an entire volume of *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (vol. 59). More volumes will be added over the summer. Our long-term aim is to make available images of every papyrus we can get our hands on, but our first priority will be to move forward from vol. 59 and catch up to the present day. Contributors to volumes still in the works may find that high-quality digital images can be used to help them resolve difficult readings—a real and substantial addition to the arsenal of tools available to the papyrologist.

The digitisation project is getting up to speed. The Centre's PowerPhase camera is a joy to work with—it shoots fast, at any resolution you care to think of, and makes the cutest humming noise! The technical issues are mainly resolved; now our priority is to shoot, shoot, and shoot again.



P.Oxy 3986: fragment from the heading of a contract between officials, dated 8 March, 494 AD

“Ancient Documents Old and New”

The Centre’s seminar series continued in Michaelmas Term 1997 with a group of four papers on literary themes chaired by Dirk Obbink. An additional series of papers in Hilary Term focused on papyrological and epigraphical topics.

Short summaries of the papers, with the exception of Michael Macdonald’s seminar on Safaitic Inscriptions, of which an extended report appears on pages 3-4, follow:

The Epigrams of Philodemus (David Sider, 16 October, 1997)

Elaborating on the general point made in my book (*The Epigrams of Philodemus*) that Philodemus – a philosopher writing poems for, in the first instance, an audience comprising philosophers, poets, and critics – developed several topoi that derive from passages found in Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, et alii philosophi, in this talk I further argued that several of the epigrams should be seen as reflections of some particular points Philodemus makes in his “Peri Parrhesias” (“On Frankness in Speech”). In particular, the notion that true friends must offer each other frank criticism is illustrated in AP 9.412 and 9.570, where the “friend” criticized is a persona of Philodemus himself, chided for being an imperfect Epicurean. This results in the wit required by epigram, and the allusion (and no more) to “thought” (i.e., philosophical ideas) that Philodemus calls for in his literary treatise “On Poems.”

Dreams and Prophecy from Ptolemaic Saqqara

(Dorothy J. Thompson, 30 October, 1997)

Based on documentary, epigraphical and archaeological material from Saqqara, this paper was a discussion of dreams from the mixed Ptolemaic community of North Saqqara. Imhotep was the Egyptian god who answered prayers in dreams, as did Asklepios in Greek. The dream of the Taimouthes, wife of a first century BC high priest of Ptah who prayed for a son, can be seen in an Egyptian context, and also compared to Greek material from Epidaurus. The dreams, recorded in both Greek and demotic, of the sons of Glaukias and their circle in the Serapeum were placed in a religious and a personal context. Hor’s predictive dreams, foretelling the date when Antiochus would leave Egypt in 168 BC, belonged to a well-established Egyptian tradition. Like Greek dreams, such dreams were primarily concerned with foretelling the future. Dreams form yet another area where relations between the two communities may be investigated.

Poetry on Stone: Subliterary Verse Inscriptions and Sub-elite Culture in Greco-Roman Egypt

(Teresa Morgan, 13 November, 1997)

This paper examined the corpus of some 200 published verse inscriptions, including epitaphs, graffiti, dedications and honorific inscriptions. Looking at who set up verse inscriptions and what they wrote (or had written) gives us access to the literary culture and aspirations of a wider social spectrum than we find in literary texts. The paper examined the language and literary references of inscriptions and attempted to reconstruct something of their cultural significance in their social and geographical context.

A New Orphicorum Fragmenta

(Alberto Bernabé, 27 November, 1997)

This paper dealt with the author’s new edition of the Orphic fragments, which will include testimonia and fragments from Orpheus, Musaeus, Epimenides, Onomacritus and Linus, to be published in Leipzig, in the *Biblioteca Teubneriana* series. The presentation was divided into three parts.

1. Definition of Orphic fragment. The author considers the following to be Orphic fragments: a) Verse fragments or prose references assigned by the source either to Orpheus or to τὰ Ὀρφικά. b) Fragments referring to doctrines supported or shared by Orphics, which are assigned to a παλαιὸς λόγος, to a ἱερὸς λόγος, or to τελεταί, etc. c) Some inscriptions or papyri showing certain forms of thought that can be labelled as Orphic in a broad sense. In the editions he includes also: d) *Testimonia*, i.e. texts that allude to the existence of certain Orphic literature or certain practices, but do not give references about the contents; and e) *Vestigia*, non-Orphic texts, which, nevertheless, show clear traces of doctrines which we may consider as Orphic.

2. Criteria of the edition: The format of the edition will be the usual one for the *Biblioteca Teubneriana*. There are many differences from the criteria used by Kern: the author has tried to remove from the indirect sources references that do not provide information for the reconstruction of the Orphic poem. He also prefers to follow a thematic arrangement scheme, flexible enough to assign fragments to entitled works when possible, but also accepting ample and less definite thematic grouping when it is not possible to be more precise. He has tried to reconstruct the order of the events in the *Rhapsodie*. Since the Neoplatonists, the main source for the reconstruction of this work, quote the fragments in a “philosophical” order, putting together passages from very different origins with the intention of proving the Orphic character of some aspects of the Platonic doctrine, it is necessary to divide Neoplatonic references, detaching the different sections referring to different

passages of the *Rhapsodies*, and then regroup those that refer to the same passage of the Orphic poem.

3. New fragments. These are of three types: a) New inscriptions or papyri (e.g., Theogony from the *Derveni Papyrus*, gold leaves from Hipponion, Pelinna, Entella or Pherae, etc.); b) Fragments transmitted by manuscripts, not taken into account by Kern in his edition; and c) Texts derived either from new readings or from reconstructions made from prose references.

A Numismatic Problem in Fourth-Century Papyrology: What is a Monad? (Revel Coles, 28 January, 1998)

This paper centred on a currently unpublished Oxyrhynchus papyrus, inv.no.119/78, scheduled for publication in vol. LXVII of the series which will appear perhaps late in 1999.

The text is dated 29 June, AD 361, and forms part of a small archive all from this year which relates to the transportation of various commodities from the Oxyrhynchite nome to Pelusium at the eastern angle of the Nile Delta. The motive for delivery to Pelusium (instead of expected Alexandria) is unclear; conceivably these deliveries might have been in aid of a projected campaign by Constantius II against Julian, aborted at Constantius' death in November, 361.

The main aim of the paper was to investigate the meaning of what was transported in this text: 'in silver of the coinage of the Augusti, seven monads of myriads of denarii', that is a quantity of everyday coins. 'Silver' is a euphemism, the silver content perhaps being no more than 1%; a 'myriad of denarii' may – it has been argued – mean just one coin. The real issue is the nature of the monad, or 'unit'.

The rest of the evidence amounts to only a handful of texts which were discussed in turn: P.Oslo III 162 (a monad equal in value to 5 gold solidi, equal in value to 1 lb. silver bullion), P.Oxy.IX 1223, P.Hamb.III 215, P.Oxy.LI 3636, P.Oxy.XLVIII 3402 (a monad = a myriad of myriads-of-denarii, not less than 10,000 coins), P.Oxy.XXXIV 2729 (the subject of an important article by Carrié in *Aegyptus* 64 for 1984), and lastly a Michigan papyrus published by Sijpesteijn in *ZPE* 61 (1985) with which Sijpesteijn in *ZPE* 62 (1986) 153 and P.Oxy.LVIII 3958.26 n. should be read. This last item is a challenging text where the numismatic data appear to be wildly inconsistent with a date for the papyrus on palaeographical criteria.

With our increased information, it was clearly possible to reject the view of Johnson and West, writing in 1944 (*Currency*, p.131), that the monad meant a pound of silver bullion; nevertheless, an extensive discussion after the paper failed to reach an agreed solution.

A version of the paper is to be presented at the Papyrology Congress in Florence in August. Meantime, its author will welcome any enlightenment from readers of the *Newsletter*!

Papyrological Evidence for the Transport of Stone in Roman Egypt (Colin Adams, 11 February 1998)

The transportation of decorative stone from the Eastern Desert of Egypt to Rome entailed a huge physical and bureaucratic effort. My paper studied the papyrological evidence for this transport and argued that considerable technological progress enabled animals and wagons to be used. Further, it considered the system which existed to supply such transport operations with food and other necessities, suggesting that Egypt possessed the economic and social infrastructure which made such long distance transport possible by spreading the burden of transport costs and labour.

New Perspectives on the Epigraphy of Roman Italy

Alison Cooley's Workshop on recent developments in Italian epigraphy will be held in the Seminar Room at Corpus Christi College on Saturday, 9 May. A programme for the workshop is available on the Centre's WWW site (www.csad.ox.ac.uk/CSAD/Italy.html).

Lewis Memorial Fund and Lecture

The Lewis Lecture for 1998 will be given by Prof. Pierre Briant of Toulouse University at 5.00 pm on Wednesday 20 May in the Garden Quad Auditorium. St. John's College. The title of Prof. Briant's lecture is "Greek Epigraphy and Achaemenid History: from Sardis to Xanthos".

Epigraphy and its Afterlife

The aim of this two-day conference, to be held on 3-4 July, 1998, is to explore responses to inscriptions through the ages, from Late Antiquity to the 20th century. Two major themes will be the rediscovery of actual inscriptions and the ways in which they have been given new life by being reinvented in new forms.

A provisional programme is available on the Centre's WWW site (www.csad.ox.ac.uk/CSAD/EpigrConf.html). Further details can be obtained from Alison Cooley at Corpus Christi College, Oxford OX1 4JF (alison.cooley@ccc.ox.ac.uk).

Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts A British Academy Symposium, 15-18 July, 1998

A provisional programme for the Symposium, which marks the centenary of the publication of the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, has been posted on the Centre's WWW server (www.csad.ox.ac.uk/CSAD/Symposium.html). The registration fee is £20.00 (£10.00 for students). Further details and registration forms are available from Dr. A.K. Bowman, Christ Church, Oxford OX1 1DP.

CSAD Events, Spring-Summer 1998

Trinity Term 1998 Seminar Series

The Centre's regular seminar series on documentary subjects continues in Trinity 1998 with two papers on Near Eastern documentary themes to complement Prof. Briant's Lewis Lecture:

- 6 May: Jeremy Black and Eleanor Robson, "The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian literature"
 3 June: Heather Baker, "Private Family Archives from Neo-Babylonian and Early Achaemenid Babylon"

The meetings are on Wednesdays at 5.00 pm in the Centre.

CSAD and Related Events Spring/Summer 1998

- 9 May New Perspectives on the Epigraphy of Roman Italy
 20 May D.M. Lewis Lecture
 3-4 July Epigraphy and its Afterlife: reusing, rediscovering, reinventing, and revitalising ancient inscriptions
 15-18 July Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts. British Academy Symposium
 17-19 September Ancient Archives Workshop

Visitors to CSAD

Dr. Kerstin Höghammar of Uppsala University visited the Centre during February and March to continue her fruitful work on Koan archaeology and history. On 4 March she presented preliminary results of her current research project on "the Roman community on Kos in the late Republic and Augustan period" to a seminar at the Centre.

Advertisement

Roman Inscriptions of Britain

The Administrators of the Haverfield Bequest invite applications for the post of Research Assistant for 12 months from 1 January, 1999. The Assistant will work under the direction of Dr. R.S.O. Tomlin and Mr. M.W.C. Hassall on the collection of material for inclusion in Volume III of the Corpus of Roman Inscriptions of Britain (inscriptions on stone found since 1955). Detailed knowledge of the epigraphy of Roman Britain is not a requirement but applicants should have some experience of dealing with epigraphic and documentary sources for Roman history. The salary of the post, which is non-renewable, will not exceed £16,045 p.a. (RS IA, point 2).

Applications, including a curriculum vitae and a letter of not more than 600 words describing the applicant's qualifications and relevant experience, should be sent to Dr. A.K. Bowman, Chairman of the Administrators of the Haverfield Bequest, Christ Church, Oxford OX1 1DP, to reach him by 31 May, 1998.

Other News

Praemium Hondianum

The Praemium Hondianum, established to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of J.J.E. Hondius, the founder of SEG, was awarded to Dr. Rolf Tybout, Assistant Editor of SEG, at a ceremony in Leiden on 6 March, in recognition of his contribution to the renaissance of the Supplementum since 1978.

Circulation and Contributions

This is the sixth newsletter of the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents. The Newsletter is circulated in Autumn and early Summer. The Newsletter invites contributions of news, reports and discussion items from and of interest to scholars working in the fields of the Centre's activities – epigraphy and papyrology understood in the widest sense. The Newsletter is circulated to individual scholars on the Centre's mailing list and is also available from the Centre's WWW site (URL <http://www.csad.ox.ac.uk>) in HTML format or for downloading, either as a text file or as an Adobe Acrobat™ PDF file. Contributions, together with other enquiries and requests to be placed on the Centre's mailing list, should be addressed to the Administrator at the Centre.

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