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❖ Editorial

The Carmen project is a European project. It brings together scientists and students with different backgrounds: German, English, Austrian, Italian, Greek, Spanish, French, Dutch and even Brazilian! All the ESRs moved to a foreign country; they left their familiar environments behind and were willing to put some of their opinions and even values to the test.

Although most of the communication takes place in English, each person brings his or her own culture, experience and habits to the meetings. Despite our language choice, we have not “adapted” the English culture. We have, however, been enriched by it. Cultural differences and comparisons are often fruitful and improve working practices and methodology. They contribute to a better understanding of the training standards and study programmes in different countries. CARMEN is building a network of relationships, even friendships, and thus a community of thought. The training events brought the ESRs together again and again. At the end of the three years, they will thus constitute a group of young researchers with an extraordinary openness for sharing knowledge and a mindfulness of diverse perspectives and habits.

The inter-cultural enrichment goes even further. All ESRs have completed a two-month internship in countries and cities that they were thus able to discover under very favourable conditions. They also had and have the opportunity to visit cities and sites that were previously unknown to them. An example are the three ESRs who are working on inscribed Carmina Latina from the African provinces of the Roman Empire. Within the framework of CARMEN, they travel to Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

This sharpens their curiosity and enhances their openmindedness, both essential qualities of researchers! In addition, travelling can be a great way of learning more about different cultures and it encourages to live tolerance.

Like the presence of two ESRs in the city of Rome working on material from the capital of the former Empire, the research trips to North-Africa enable our young epigraphers to be in direct contact with their study material and to place it in a specific epigraphic, historic and material environment, that of a Roman city outside Europe. They receive the support of the curators of the museums or sites and will be able to establish fruitful relations for the future by sharing their knowledge. Research must be done in a framework of interaction and of fair and respectful exchange.

At the same time, it is and was also in the context of colloquia and other scientific meetings that the ESRs met experienced researchers, discussed their subjects, got inspiration and inspired others. There are so many opportunities to enrich ourselves – and the ESRs are making use of many such chances! As Montaigne wrote, “les voyages forment la jeunesse”.



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❖ Organised Events

Workshop “Editing Latin Inscriptions”, Berlin

📅 May 30–31, 2022

by Giovanni Naccarato, Michele Butini and Francesco Tecca

At the end of May 2022, a two-day workshop of the CARMEN project took place at the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* at the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (BBAW). The team of the *CIL*, consisting of U. Ehmig, B. Zielke and U. Jansen as well as two student assistants, R. von Bremen and S. Talarman, gave us a warm welcome and provided us with detailed information about the *CIL* work organisation.

Dr Ulrike Ehmig (managing director of the research centre) introduced us to the history of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, its ups and downs due to the World Wars, financial issues and foreign domination as well as its integration into the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities in 1994 after the reunification when the *CIL* assumed its current organisational structure. She also added information about the relations between the *CIL* and the rest of the Academy, about public and private institutions contributing to its economic sustenance, about the main activities the team carried out in the last years and about its future goals.

Dr Camilla Campedelli (research associate) focused on the creation of *CIL* entries: preparing an entry in the *CIL* based on modern criteria, keeping the best of Mommsen tradition but also making necessary changes on the basis of new tools and knowledge. In the first two hours, we approached the subject theoretically: we learnt a lot about the structure of the entries, which are composed of lemma (metadata like findspot, place of preservation, description of the monument, its measurements and the measurements of the letters, punctuation), transcription (following the Leiden interpretative transcription system devised by S. Panciera and H. Krummrey), bibliography (divided into two parts: firstly, works rendering the text of the inscription completely and, secondly, works quoting the text only in part)

and commentary (supposed to be synthetic and with a dating proposal at the bottom). In the afternoon, we faced the challenge of drafting some entries on our own, using the methods learnt in the morning. At the end of the lesson, we analysed and corrected our works together.

As Dr Ehmig told us, the *CIL* could not carry out its tasks with the same efficiency without its student assistants. Collaboration with students has been part of the story of the *CIL* since the very beginning of the project in the 19th century, and this practice was resumed after 1995. Old tasks continued to be part of the students' job, but due to technological development and innovation, their work has also changed. Stev Talarman (student assistant) told us about his main tasks (linguistic, philological and bibliographical review and work with databases), showing us some incisive samples. He conducts meticulous proof-reading work of the *CIL* volumes, which requires not only accuracy and attention but also a good knowledge of Latin (even in writing) and epigraphy. This allowed him to assist editors by catching various typos and misprints in the past.

As one of the specialists on Pighius (1490–1542), a humanist who gathered an important epigraphic collection, Dr Ulrike Jansen (research associate) gave us a detailed lecture on his activity, his manuscripts and the methodology he used for collecting inscriptions, also in comparison with other contemporary scholars. From the analysis of some of the most relevant manuscripts (like the Codex Pighianus, the Codex Luzacianus and the Codex Musei, respectively the Ms. Lat. Fol. 61, 61h and 61a), the picture of a cutting-edge scholar emerges, who contributed decisively to the development of the discipline of epigraphy as early as the 16th century.

Beate Zielke (employee for research and technic) introduced us to the archive materials of the *CIL*: squeezes and paper records of individual inscriptions that helped in the preparation of the printed



C. Campedelli explaining the creation of *CIL* entries.
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CIL volumes. These “Scheden” often contain a wide range of information about the redaction of the volumes and occasionally correspondence between scholars. Some of this material is being digitised gradually thanks to the work of B. Zielke and the student assistants, but the process is more complex than just scanning and uploading files, so there is still a lot of work to do.

One of the resources increasing the ‘epigraphic capital’ of the *CIL* are its squeezes, sheets of a particular paper type, used since the time of Mommsen until nowadays to impress epigraphic texts, providing transcriptions even more reliable than pictures. Throughout the many decades of epigraphical work, squeezes have been collected and stored on the *CIL* shelves,

but some have not been identified and inventoried yet. Thus, there is still some unidentified material, and student assistants and interns contribute to determining and recording it. B. Zielke also told us



The ESRs working with squeezes.
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about the requirements for the storage of these documents and the danger of mould. In the afternoon, a practical exercise followed and we worked with the archival materials themselves. We were given hitherto unidentified squeezes (mostly from the 19th century) and had the task to identify them.

The second student assistant, Richard von Bremen, is mainly concerned with the digitisation process. He makes use of his IT skills to digitise “Scheden” (notes and templates of the authors and collaborators of *CIL* for printing the 19th and early 20th century volumes) and squeezes in an elaborate process that takes longer than a layperson imagines. In recent times, he has also started to create 3D models of squeezes, which can give broader information than a simple 2D picture.

The workshop in Berlin provided us with vital knowledge that no student in epigraphy should ignore, and its balance be-

tween theoretical and practical activities made it exhaustive and never boring. Without any doubt, the whole CARMEN team came out enriched from these intense two days.



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Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté
ESR 4



Michele Butini
Universidad de Sevilla
ESR 2



Francesco Tecca
Universidad de Sevilla
ESR 3

Workshop “Data Structure and Linked Open Data”, Rome

June 21–23, 2022

by Eleonora Maiello and Gabriël de Klerk
Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz

In June 2022, we ESRs were invited to attend an EpiDoc workshop organised at the Sapienza University in Rome. The workshop, which was coordinated mainly by Marta Fogagnolo and Elina Boeva, offered the ESRs both critical experience with EpiDoc – useful especially for those who had no previous experience with EpiDoc or coding in general – as well as an introduction to the field of Digital Humanities and epigraphy. The workshop was organised strictly bottom-up; the input for questions, discussions, and practice mainly originated from the needs and demands of the ESRs. Therefore, the ESRs were able to not only acquire significant skills in the application of EpiDoc to epigraphy but, moreover, were able to apply that knowledge to their corpus.

Under the supervision of Dr Boeva and Dr Fogagnolo, the workshop started with



© M. Butini.

the basics of encoding epigraphy. Here, the ESRs were introduced to the most frequently used XML strings prevalent in encoding epigraphy and gained insights into the application of XML-coding in Oxygen. Gradually, the workload was increased by applying the acquired skills to more diffi-

cult or elaborate inscriptions. This process resulted, finally, in the adaptation of the inscriptions the ESRs had brought with them from their corpus. Furthermore, we were introduced to the visualisation tool EFES, used to convert the XML-mark ups to actual epigraphical editions.

Short excursions from the world of digital epigraphy were provided by the lecture of Paolo Monella, who gave a presentation on encoding pre-modern writing systems. This offered insights into the application of encoding outside the realm of the Latin language and allowed the ESRs a glimpse into the fascinating world of pre-modern writing and linguistics in general. Further-



© M. Butini.

more, the workshop in Rome ended by a digital seminar on Natural Language Processing and Historical Maps, provided by SunoikisisDC.

As a result of the different backgrounds of the ESRs and the discrepancies in the students' experience with EpiDoc, the lecturers of the workshop were tasked with providing a programme and workshop that interested both those students who had never worked with EpiDoc as well as those who already were acquainted with coding epigraphy. In this, they succeeded confidently. For those with previous experience, the bottom-up organisation of the workshop allowed for a quick engagement with more challenging material. For those with no experience, the workshop offered an extremely useful first introduction to the matter. This was furthermore expedited by Dr Fogagnolo and Dr Boeva, who showed their competency as lecturers and teachers through their clear and concise explanation of a dauntingly elaborate and complex subject. Their patient and kind approach greatly enhanced the experience of the workshop and our visit to Rome.

Even though not all of us will profit equally or directly from the EpiDoc workshop – the need for EpiDoc arises mainly based on whether we are working on editions for our dissertations – the workshop has allowed everyone to gain a deeper understanding of coding in general, which will surely benefit the students in their future careers inside or outside of academia. Furthermore, the workshop offered an intimate introduction (or, for some ESRs, a welcome follow-up) to the field of Digital Humanities. In this regard, the workshop accommodated the need for a digital approach to editing and comprehending Latin inscriptions – a skill that is of utmost importance in the toolbox of any future epigraphist.



Eleonora Maiello
Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz

ESR 8



Gabriël de Klerk
Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz

ESR 5

Workshop “Latin Sociolinguistics: Methodology, Problems, Questions, Research Trends”, Rome

📅 September 16–17, 2022

by Penelope Faithfull and Eleni Oikonomou

In the middle of September, we attended a workshop on Latin sociolinguistics in Rome, at the University La Sapienza, led by Piera Molinelli (Università degli studi di Bergamo), and included presentations by Molinelli, Chiara Fedriani (University of Genoa) and Irene de Felice (University of Genoa), on historical sociolinguistics and the Latin language and tracing sociolinguistic variation in literary and non-literary texts respectively. It was interesting, although not surprising, to observe features of spoken English in Latin, such as borrowings from other languages, code switching and the links between politeness markers and gender. Although



© C. Fedriani.

Latin is no longer spoken in everyday life, it was intriguing to contemplate the use of contemporary sociolinguistic theories being applied to the use of a language spoken two millennia ago, the spoken version of which is no longer accessible to us. Yet, arguably, studying the language of inscriptions offers us the closest insight into spoken Latin, as we can see the features of spoken language and its variations immortalised in stone.

We were encouraged to think beyond the inscription, to contemplate the geographical, social, cultural, religious, transmission and gender contexts in conjunction with

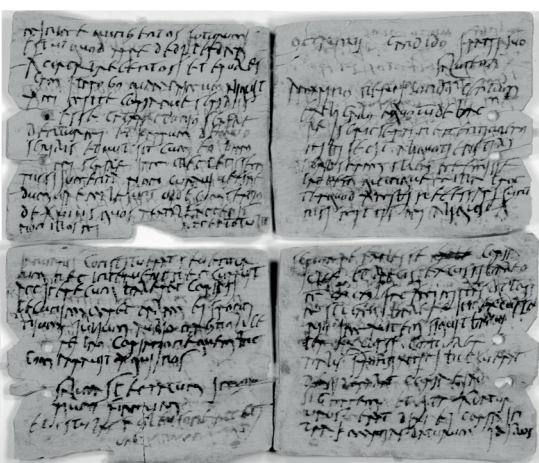
the language setting itself, to contemplate the representation of language, and why. We discussed language beyond inscriptions, such as in Plautus' plays, and some of the Vindolanda tablets, as they, too, contained remnants of verbal Latin preserved in writing. This allowed us to not only ponder the development of Latin in relation to our field, but also to consider the implementation of multiple aspects of the methodology which is the aim of the CARMEN project as a whole: to approach our research in a multidisciplinary way, to go beyond the methodology of the field of epigraphy, and to apply those of other disciplines, such as philology, history and linguistics.

Additionally, in the framework of this workshop, four of our group of ESRs, who study especially the impact of social contexts for Latin epigraphic production, were given the opportunity to present part of their work and research so far. In more detail, Eleonora Maiello (ESR 8) discussed about the ways of speaking of the Hereafter and resurrection in ecclesiastical and secular inscriptions in 4th–5th century Italy. Gabriël de Klerk (ESR 5) presented the relationship between emotion and masculinity in ancient metrical epitaphs. Penelope Faithfull (ESR 6) gave a presentation on military lives and identities in Latin metrical inscriptions and, finally, Eleni Oikonomou (ESR 7) on the ways in which the affection towards children is projected in Christian Latin verse inscriptions. It was extremely stimulating for us to be able to share our thoughts with the rest of the CARMEN team and



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the lead-speakers of the workshop, and exchange views on the progress of our research. Undoubtedly, we are looking forward to participating in such interesting discussions about all the different and – at the same time – extremely interesting subjects that CARMEN project consists of.



Wood writing-tablet with a letter from an Octavius to Candidus, concerning trading cereals and hides, dated between 105–125 AD. London, BM (1989,0602.74). This is one of the tablets from Vindolanda, an auxiliary fort in the north of England, we examined in the workshop. © The Trustees of the British Museum.



Penelope Faithfull
Universität Wien

ESR 6



Eleni Oikonomou
Universidad del País Vasco

ESR 7

Seminar-Conference “What’s in a Manuscript?”, Rome

September 19–23, 2022

by Christin Rochlitzer and Timo Eichhorn
Sapienza Università di Roma

Immediately following the workshop “Latin Sociolinguistics”, our second seminar-conference “What’s in a Manuscript?” took place at the University La Sapienza in Rome. In the five days of this event, combining a seminar (19–20 September) and a conference (21–23 September),

we ESRs were introduced to the wide and exciting field of manuscript studies by great experts. Since our theses focus on verse inscriptions that are sometimes already lost and can therefore not be studied ‘in persona’ anymore, we often rely on unique handwritten documentation such as transcriptions of texts and drawings that are preserved in manuscripts from the time before printing took over. Therefore,

the purpose of the seminar-conference was to provide us with the fundamental basics of manuscript studies to be able to properly deal with and use manuscripts as sources for our studies.

The seminar of two days served as an introduction for the ESRs to the most important and well-known antiquarians and epigraphists of the Renaissance period

such as Felice Feliciano and Pirro Ligorio who have transmitted a great number of inscriptions and drawings of their supports. In this context, we also became acquainted with the problems in the reconstruction of ancient inscriptions that make working with epigraphic manuscripts a particular challenge, especially when faced with readings that differ between authors or forgeries, which Ligorio is notorious for. Furthermore, we were familiarised with the internal structure of manuscript collections (geographically, topographically, thematically) and how these have changed over time. The first comprehensive print editions published in the 16th century, like Mazzocchi's "Epigrammata Antiquae Urbis", marked another important step, as they allowed for a wider dissemination. Beyond that, we learned how currently ongoing projects make use of up-to-date techniques in Digital Humanities for manuscript studies. Transkribus, for example, is a platform for text recognition and the transcription of manuscripts using Artificial Intelligence. This thematic focus was complemented by insights into the related field of codicology when we were presented the Sapienza-based ERC projects NOTAE and PAGES.

Within the framework of the conference that followed, many of these topics were addressed in greater detail in additional



Visit to the Biblioteca Vallicelliana. © L. Sarli.



Visit to the Vatican Library. © A. Lemes.

presentations on specific research questions and examples. We were lucky to get a guided tour of the Biblioteca Vallicelliana by Elisabetta Caldelli and of the Vatican Library by Marco Buonocore († December 2022) who taught us about the history and organisation of these libraries. Above all, they made a hands-on experience with some selected manuscripts from different time periods possible. Three ESRs also had the opportunity to present the first results of their research projects. Michele Butini (ESR 2) dealt with the issue of authenticity of some Carthaginian poems in the Codex Salmasianus, Francesco Tecca (ESR 3) drew our attention to the history and difficulties of collecting the epigraphic documentation concerning the Carmina Latina Epigraphica of North Africa and Christin Rochlitzer (ESR 10) presented the epigraphic collections of the 15th century humanist monk Michele Fabrizio Ferrarini. On the sidelines of the event, we were also able to discuss current questions and problems regarding our dissertations in

personal conversations with our supervisors and exchange ideas with our fellow ESRs.

All in all, the week of the seminar-conference provided us with essential knowledge and methods for our current and future work thanks to the wide range of topics, the interactive character and the excellent organisation for which we would like to thank the responsible organisers and speakers most sincerely.



Christin Rochlitzer
Sapienza Università di Roma
ESR 10



Timo Eichhorn
Sapienza Università di Roma
ESR 1

Workshop “Cultural Heritage: Everyday Life in the Depths of a Museum”, Madrid

📅 October 17–19, 2022

by Ana Lemes and Laura Sarli

Last October, the workshop “Cultural Heritage: Everyday Life in the Depths of a Museum”, organised by Dr María Limón Belén (University of Seville) and Prof. José María Luzón (RABASF), took place in the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid.



Staircase of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando. © L. Sarli.

During our visit, we were presented with some of the work that goes into running a museum and everyday problems and solutions. The workshop was divided into practical and theoretical activities, which, respectively, consisted of visiting different departments and storage rooms of various museums and attending lectures of specialists in the field.

During the practical activities, we were lucky to have the opportunity to explore, under the guidance of José Luis Valverde, the storage rooms of the Royal Collection Gallery, which is a new museum and still



Library of the RABASF. © M. Limón Belén.

closed to the public. Moreover, Paloma Otero, the chief curator of the Department of Numismatics and Medalistics of the National Archaeological Museum of Madrid, guided us through the administration, restoration and numismatics sectors of the MAN. With José María Luzón, we visited part of the collection of the RABASF, and Paula Ramírez Jimeno, the deputy director of the Museum of Costume, showed us the exhibition as well as the working and storage rooms of the museum.

Thanks to these experiences, we have been able to understand how much work and how many people are needed to create an exhibition and to preserve pieces of art or the archaeological finds in the museums. Each collection has specific needs that depend on several factors: its objects might be composed of different materials, be in diverse conditions of conservation or even come from various distinct contexts



Hall of the National Archaeological Museum of Madrid, exhibiting sculptures and other finds from Roman Hispania. © L. Sarli.



Restoration and cast room of the RABASF. © L. Sarli.

and periods. For these reasons, the museums we visited used different technologies and procedures to fulfil their purpose of conserving and enhancing the cultural heritage they manage.

As for the lectures we were given, Paula Elbaile led us to the restoration and cast room of the RABASF where she elaborated

on the work she has been doing for the museum. Silvia Viana led a discussion on a similar topic, on accidents in museums and the restoration techniques she has developed over the years.

The engraving specialists Javier Blázquez and Dr Jorge Maier presented the RABASF's collection of engravings and its

digitalisation in progress. Later, Juan Victor Mejias, responsible for developing the RABASF's website, digital archives and databases, showed us a bit of his work and the 3D models created for the museum.

In a lecture held by Paula Gil, Cristina Molina and Isabel Zayas, representatives of the non-profit society Friends of the Museums of Spain, we learned not only about their mission and work but also about the importance of bringing the community closer to the museums, of promoting cultural events that involve the public at different levels.

In conclusion, the workshop helped us to better understand how museums really work, giving us another perspective on the study and management of cultural heritage.



Ana Lemes
Universität Trier

ESR 9



Laura Sarli
Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier

ESR 11

Small Training Event “Exhibition and Public Relations”, Madrid

 October 20, 2022

by **Eleni Oikonomou**
Universidad del País Vasco

Around the middle of October 2022, Dr María Limón Belén (Universidad de Sevilla), in collaboration with the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (RABASF), organised a Small Training Event on Exhibitions and Public Relations. The four ESRs for whom the event was held (ESRs 4, 7, 8 and 11) had the opportunity to attend, within the building of the RABASF, a presentation by Prof. José María Luzón on “How to create an exhibition”. We discussed the procedure of planning, preparing and running a suc-

cessful exhibition with him step-by-step in great detail, and we talked about all the problems and issues that might occur on the way. It is extremely impressive how long it can take to organise and prepare any kind of exhibition, even if it only lasts a short period of time, and how many factors, economic, social, cultural, etc., have to be taken into account.

This stimulating lecture was followed by a visit to the restoration hall of the Academia RABASF under the guidance of the conservator and restorer Silvia Viana Sánchez. Here we were informed about specific products that are used for pre-

serving and cleaning the plaster statues and, additionally, we were given the opportunity to participate in the procedure of cleaning the surface of a plaster cast. Silvia Viana Sánchez continued this interesting tour by explaining the history of some individual statues as well as entire collections that are being kept in the space of the restoration hall.

This small but intensive training event was concluded with a guided tour of the Instituto del Patrimonio Cultural de España (IPCE), an institution dedicated to the research, conservation and documentation of the Spanish cultural heritage.



Guided tour of the collections preserved in the restoration hall of the RABASF. © E. Oikonomou.

The tour consisted of an explanatory lecture on the history and the construction of the building and a visit of its impressive library, which is open to the public and specialised in the conservation and restoration of cultural assets as well as in different aspects of Historical Heritage. We were also informed about the archive of the IPCE. It is of great significance and

essential for the knowledge on the conservation and restoration of the Historical Heritage in Spain, as it holds the documentation created by all the institutions that, since the 1940s, took over the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage. Undoubtedly, this training event was extremely interesting, and it offered many stimuli, making us feel especially grateful for attending it.



The circular patio of the IPCE building. © E. Oikonomou.



The circular library of the IPCE beneath the patio. © E. Oikonomou.



Eleni Oikonomou
Universidad del País Vasco

ESR 7

Small Training Event “Verse Encoding in EpiDoc”, London

📅 November 7–8, 2022

by Gabriël de Klerk, Michele Butini,
Francesco Tecca and Timo Eichhorn

As part of our personalised training network plan, the four of us were invited to travel to London to attend a workshop on verse encoding in EpiDoc. The workshop, which was organised by Dr Gabriel Bodard, was hosted at the Senate House that, among other organisations, houses the Institute of Classical Studies. In the span of two days, we ESRs got the chance to actively interact with EpiDoc. On the one hand, the activities built upon our existing knowledge of the encoding tool, but, on the other hand, they demanded a detailed analysis

of what EpiDoc has to offer for the edition of verse inscription and – perhaps more importantly – in what ways verse inscriptions require additional features for their encoding. Thus, both the EpiDoc Team and the ESRs were encouraged to put their heads together and critically contemplate the way in which the encoding of poetic inscriptions was carried out in the past and which problems arose from such editions.

As it turned out, much of the discussion was concerned with the usability of iconographical representations of, among others, the meter or rhythm of the inscription as well as with the use of the *caesura* and

diaeresis in verse encoding. At first glance, these punctuation marks and characters seem straightforward and self-explanatory; upon closer inspection, however, it became clear that their past usage was anything but uniform and required, to a certain extent, a renewed explanation and representation.

Eventually, the results of the workshop were formalised as additions to the EpiDoc guidelines. This offered the ESRs the chance to catch a glimpse of the online platform the EpiDoc Team uses for the management of their website. Therefore, the workshop went beyond the expectations we had held prior to it: rather



Michele and Francesco in discussion with Dr Bodard. © G. de Klerk.

than the expected top-down engagement with a particular subject, we ESRs got the chance to actively participate, in a hands-on manner, in the creation of additions to the encoding-language for verse inscriptions in collaboration with some of the world's leading experts in the field of inscription-encoding. Furthermore, this activity was extremely valuable because it made us partake in a close-quartered discussion on a subject that, for all its intents and purposes, still remains rather

unexplored. At times, the considerations required us to think outside of our comfort-zone, while on other occasions no definite answer to a certain problem arose and we were forced to structure an answer through different methods and reasoning.

Of course, the event was also the perfect opportunity for us to explore the rich cultural history the city has to offer; besides the mandatory fish-and-chips, we ESRs had the chance to visit the local museums,

enjoy the London cuisine and visit some of the compulsory tourist-traps that one cannot escape when visiting the capital of the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, our stay was too short to visit everything the city has offer, but luckily for us, this is a justification (if one ever needs one) to visit London another time in the future. Finally, we would like to thank Dr Gabriel Bodard, Marta Fogagnolo, Simona Stoyanova, Polina Yordanova as well as Chiara Cenati and Victoria González for their hospitality and inclusive cooperation.



Gabriël de Klerk
Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz
ESR 5



Michele Butini
Universidad de Sevilla
ESR 2



Francesco Tecca
Universidad de Sevilla
ESR 3



Timo Eichhorn
Sapienza Università di Roma
ESR 1

Field Trip in Tunisia & Congress “L’Africa Romana XII”, Sbeitla

📅 December 12–19, 2022

by Sabine Lefebvre
Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté

As part of the invitation to present a paper at the congress “L’Africa Romana XII” in Sbeitla in December 2022, two ESRs, Giovanni Naccarato and Francesco Tecca, accompanied by Sabine Lefebvre and Sergio España-Chamorro, took the opportunity to verify in the field

some of the *carmina* selected for their theses. It was also an opportunity for the ESRs to discover Tunisia and to visit major sites of Tunisian heritage, ancient Africa proconsularis.

Arrived in Tunis on Monday 12 December, the small group first went to Thugga (Dougga) on the next day. This city, first part of the *pertica* of Carthage, obtained its

autonomy by Septimius Severus. The urban space is rich: a Capitolium built under Marcus Aurelius (Fig. 1), a theatre, a forum, several temples, two triumphal arches, numerous houses and a Libyan-Punic mausoleum. The quantity of inscriptions allowed training on the ground, especially concerning the particular status of the *pagus* of Roman citizens and the autochthonous *civitas*, but also on the *abolitio memoriae*.



Figure 1: G. Naccarato, S. Lefebvre and F. Tecca in front of the Capitolium of Thugga. © S. España-Chamorro.

Giovanni Naccarato was able to focus on a *carmen*: he photographed all four sides of the base on which the *carmen* was engraved, took its measurement ... (Fig. 2).



Figure 2: G. Naccarato taking pictures. © S. Lefebvre.

The group then moved to Mustis, where many of the inscriptions were reused in the walls of the Byzantine citadel, and then to Uchi Maius, which was excavated by Italian archaeologists approximately ten years ago. The site is not very accessible, but the epigraphic documents are very interesting.

The next day was devoted to two remarkable but very different sites: Chemtou, the ancient Numidian city of Simithus, was the place where the yellow marble (*marmor Numidicum*) so prized in Rome was extracted. A local museum informs about the history of the city and the administrative functioning of the imperial quarry. A walk

in the quarry and up to the summit, which accommodated a Numidian mausoleum, allowed a view over the layout of the work camp where the administrative service was held. Afterwards the group visited Bulla Regia and some of its famous houses with basement rooms. The ESRs were able to see an unpublished inscription on which Hernán González Bordas was working (Fig. 3): the publication is awaited!



Figure 3: The team at work. © S. Lefebvre.

On the fourth day, in Makthar, Francesco Tecca examined, photographed and measured a stone block broken into two parts with a *carmen* that had been misread (Fig. 4). Such field exercises are part of a young epigraphist's apprenticeship: we all tried eagerly to read letters that were sometimes quite erased! The visit of the site allowed us to go through the famous *schola* of the *iuvener* and commemorate the simple harvester from Mactar who became a respected farmer and member of the city-council (CIL VIII 11824 [ILS, 7457] Mactar). The day ended with a visit to Sufetula (Sbeitla) with its sumptuous forum and its three adjoining temples: a long debate on the capitolia occupied the small group!



Figure 4: F. Tecca and S. España-Chamorro in front of a *carmen*. © S. Lefebvre.

After two intense days of presentations at the conference, with unpublished material and interesting discussions, the organisers of the event offered a visit to the site of Ammaedera guided by François Baratte, who has been excavating there for 20 years: a new small museum houses a number of inscriptions and we were able to see the Byzantine citadel, the building with the troughs and the beautiful arch of Septimius Severus ... On the way back to Sbeitla, a stop in Kasserine allowed Giovanni Naccarato to inspect the mausoleum of the Flavii (Fig. 5).

On Monday, 19 December, everyone headed back to Tunis airport. Taking flights home to join their families for the Christmas holidays they all had images of the visited sites still fresh in their minds.



Figure 5: The mausoleum of the Flavii in Kasserine. © G. Naccarato.

Francesco Tecca, ESR 3
Universidad de Sevilla

This week in Tunisia has been truly rich and inspiring. Thanks to the expertise of Prof. Sabine Lefebvre and Dr Sergio España-Chamorro, we were able to admire and investigate Tunisia's impressive archaeological heritage in complete safety.

The Africa Romana congress was a breath of fresh air in terms of diplomacy and co-operation between European and Magh-

reb authorities, which bodes well for the future of this field of study.”

Giovanni Naccarato, ESR 4
Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté

The field work on the archaeological sites and the epigraphic autopsy with Prof. S. Lefebvre, Dr S. España-Chamorro and Dr H. González Bordas has provided us with the necessary tangibility of our research-

es, until then limited to the study of the literature, carried out in libraries. The two sides are now more balanced and we can return to work with a consolidated knowledge and a renewed spirit.

The great congress in Sbeitla gave us the possibility to meet the world's leading scholars of Roman Africa. Tunisian, Algerian, French, Italian and Spanish researchers at every level, young and experienced researchers spoke at the conference, dis-

cussed, voiced their remarks and their appreciations, so that everyone (not least us) left the congress enriched from several points of view.



Sabine Lefebvre
Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté
Editor of the Newsletter and supervisor

❖ Attended Event

Science Fair “Science is Wonderful!”, Brussels

📅 March 16–17, 2023

by Ana Lemes and Laura Sarli

In March 2023, we took part in an event called “Science is wonderful!” in Brussels (Fig. 1). The fair was organised within the framework of Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions and funded by the European Commission. The purpose of this event is to present research projects and innovations to primary and secondary school students across the EU. During the fair, through interactive formats such as talks, hands-on experiments, games, quizzes and other engaging activities, students can learn more about the work of a researcher and ask questions related to scientific careers.

The entire MSCA fellowship community was invited to take part in the selection process around October and November 2022. The call motivated us to create

a proposal and invited us to rethink our studies in a practical and different way, given the Science Fair was intended for schoolchildren and adolescents between the ages of 5 and 18. In January of this year, we received the good news that our proposal had been approved, and the preparations began.

During the two-day fair, approximately 4,000 students from Belgium and other countries took part in the event. Our stand was called “Write like the ancient Romans”, and we had the opportunity of inviting Professor Stephan Busch (University of Trier, supervisor of Ana Lemes) to be part of our team (Fig. 2). His experience in the study of Latin language and epigraphy, the main themes of our activities, was an added value to our project.

When creating the activities, we took into consideration the principles related to the Heritage Pedagogy, which were developed by the Council of Europe. Heritage Pedagogy is a teaching approach that actively engages students in interdisciplinary learning and integrating heritage into the school curriculum. Considering these principles, we aimed to provide students with a deeper understanding and appreciation of our research field while encouraging a sense of connection to cultural heritage.

At our stand, we tried to include these pedagogical principles by offering participatory activities involving disciplines of



Figure 2: Team and booth ready for the first day of the fair. © European Union.



Figure 1: A section of the booths, organised in the Maison de la Poste, Brussels. © European Union.

different humanities, since interdisciplinarity is also a key aspect of the CARMEN project. Considering the different themes of our research, we divided the activities in two parts: the first was “The everyday use of Roman writing”, which is related to the research carried out by Ana Lemes (ESR 9) on the formulaic language in Roman poetic inscriptions; the second part was “The study and documentation of archaeological finds and the importance of interdisciplinary research”, linked to Laura Sarli’s research (ESR 11), which focuses on the communication of archaeology in archaeological parks and museums to a wide audience. When presenting these topics through our activities, we tried to avoid oversimplification and trivialisation of concepts, while ensuring that the scientific information remained accessible and interesting to all age groups.

Our proposed and applied activities

From the very start, we were informed by the organisers of "Science is Wonderful!" to take into account the limitation of time and space when designing our activities. We knew that the students would come in groups of up to 25, and they would have about 15 to 20 min with us. To explain the everyday use of Roman writing, we decided to explore different types of materials used at that time, such as wax tablets, ceramics and stones (Fig. 3), which allowed us to quickly compare the Roman instrumenta with objects used today, making it easier for us to explain how the purpose of the writing was also connected to the material which was used. As the activities had to relate to our research, we were interested in presenting the main characteristics found in Roman inscriptions, such as the abbreviations, recurrent formulas and the 'ordinatio', for example. But how to fit it all into 20 min? We finally came up with the texts scratched in the objects shown in Figures 4 and 5.



Figure 3: Fast-drying clay, wooden tools simulating the stylus and other sculpting tools, wax tablets, stamps with capital letters and Roman graffiti letters. © A. Lemes.

It was important that the students should be able to read, even if they had no earlier knowledge of Latin. For this reason, we chose one example with capital letters; the text carved was the famous palindrome "sator arepo tenet opera rotas" (Fig. 5). Because it can be read in different directions, after we broke the clay



Figure 4: Clay pieces drying to be broken later, made by A. Lemes and L. Sarli. © L. Sarli.



Figure 5: Clay inscription produced for educational purposes, based on the graffiti and palindrome "sator arepo tenet opera rotas". © S. Busch.

into pieces, even if the students could not find all the pieces in the sandbox (which happened often), they would be able to imply what was missing due to the repetitiveness of this text. Based on their discovery, we could talk about the work of epigraphists in recovering missing texts, just as they had done, through a formulaic language, for example, as well as the importance of this type of object in the phases of interpretation and dating of an archaeological context. With this activity, we achieved the 'WOW' and the 'AHA' effects so important in a science fair, where the students come to conclusions on their own and are surprised by their findings.

To challenge the students and show that we are not always lucky enough to read in capital letters, we included graffiti writing, as seen above in "Rufus est" and his profile drawing (Figs. 4, 6), and Felicis' cup (Fig. 4). The graffiti alphabet was also used to write on the wax tablets (Fig. 7).

The last activity related to writing was clay stamping (Fig. 8). We provided hand-



Figure 6: Students reassembling the pieces and trying to read the graffiti lettering with the help of guides we provided. © A. Lemes.



Figure 7: Most students wrote their own names. © S. Busch.



Figure 8: Stamping activity on clay. © A. Lemes.

outs with pictures of Roman bricks and pottery, for example, to show the possible designs used in Antiquity. In this activity, students often complained about the lack of space to finish stamping their message. On such occasions, we were able to talk a bit about the use of abbreviations in the inscriptions, about the ligatures of letters, or about the organisation and drafting that preceded the act of inscribing a text.

With the second part of our activities, "The study and documentation of archaeological finds and the importance of interdisciplinary research", we wanted to provide a general overview of the investigation process, starting with the discovery of artefacts, followed by documentation, restoration, translation and interpretation of epigraphical material.

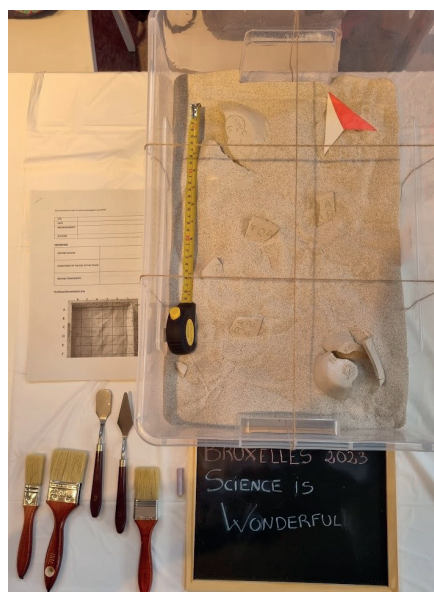


Figure 9: Simulated excavation activity. © L. Sarli.

We set up a very simplified version of an archaeological excavation (Fig. 9). Unfortunately, due to the limited space available, we were unable to physically present and emphasise the significance of stratigraphy in archaeological research. In addition, to ensure the safety of children, we have carefully selected non-dangerous objects similar to the tools used by archaeologists, such as non-sharpened trowels.

The students had to look for the objects we had created, broken into several pieces



Figure 10: Students searching for objects in the excavation. © L. Sarli.

and hidden in the sand (Fig. 10). Subsequently, they had to document, reassemble and interpret the finds discovered.

During this activity, our main goal was to communicate that inscriptions can be found during archaeological excavations on different materials, such as stones or ceramic objects that were part of the daily life of ancient Romans. Another aim was to emphasise that some of these inscriptions may be partially destroyed or unfinished but still provide valuable data related to the archaeological context: for example, information regarding dating, to whom these objects belonged, their functions, who produced them, the workshops in which they were produced etc. Therefore, the students learnt that these finds could provide us with a lot of information to understand and learn more about our past and that this is possible thanks to the collaboration of experts in different fields.

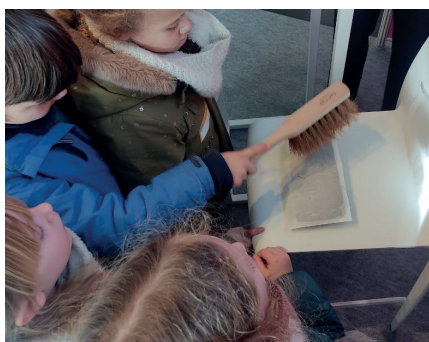


Figure 11: Students practicing the squeeze technique. © L. Sarli.

The last activity had been proposed by Professor Busch: the use of the squeeze technique for the documentation and study of stone inscriptions (Fig. 11). He explained to the students how, despite the advanced technology we have today, this is still a very functional technique for the documentation and study of these kinds of inscriptions.

In particular, we would like to highlight a very interesting aspect noticed during this activity. The inscription used, a model made purely for educational purposes, was written in Greek characters and, initially, the students said they could not read it. Upon closer inspection, however, they realised that they were able to recognise certain letters thanks to what they had learnt in mathematics and physics. Therefore, they were eventually able to read the inscription and translate it with the help of Professor Busch, once again reaching the 'surprise effect'.

The children asked intelligent questions, were curious and open-minded. They used the knowledge they had gained in other disciplines to address the challenge we proposed to them. We were glad that our activities were appreciated and helped primary school children as well as older students to learn new concepts.

To conclude, we made it a priority in our communication to place the children at the centre of our activities. We designed the proposals specifically with them in mind, ensuring that these activities were inclusive and engaging for students of various ages, skills and educational backgrounds. By addressing a heterogeneous audience, we aimed to create an inclusive learning environment where all participants could actively contribute and benefit from the experience.



Ana Lemes
Universität Trier
ESR 9



Laura Sarli
Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier
ESR 11

❖ Upcoming Event



Final Seminar & Conference (Universität Trier)

📅 April 9–12, 2024

❖ Consortium



Universidad del País Vasco, Vitoria/Bilbao



Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté, Dijon



Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz



Sapienza Università di Roma



Universidad de Sevilla



Generaldirektion Kulturelles Erbe Rheinland-Pfalz



Universität Trier



Universität Wien