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Spring Colloquium 2003: St Hilda's College, Oxford, 27-28 March 2003

OLD AND NEW WORLDS IN GREEK ONOMASTICS

2nd Colloquium of the Lexicon of Greek Personal Names,
sponsored by the British Academy

Programme

Thursday 27th March

10.30-1.00

Peter Fraser (Oxford): *Mercenaries in Middle Egypt: the garrison at Hermoupolis Magna*

Denis Knoepfler (Neuchâtel): *Existe-t-il une onomastique d'origine eubéenne dans les colonies chalcido-érétriennes de Thrace et d'Occident?*

2.15-5.00

Jean-Claude Decourt (Lyon): *Importance des noms mythologiques et héroïques dans l'onomastique d'Atrax (Thessalie): raretés, préciosité, snobisme?*

Laurence Darmezín (Lyon): *The twelve tribes of Atrax*

J. L. García Ramón (Cologne): *Thessalian personal names and the Greek lexicon*

[Conference Dinner]

Friday 28th March

10.00-1.00

Louisa Loukopoulou (National Hellenic Research Centre, Athens): *Old and New in Thracian onomastics*

Thomas Corsten (Heidelberg): *Onomastic evidence for the settlement of Thracians and Galatians in Asia Minor*

Stephen Mitchell (Exeter): *Iranian culture in Graeco-Roman Asia Minor: the onomastic evidence*

Rüdiger Schmitt: *Greek Reinterpretation of Iranian Names by Folk Etymology*

2.15-4.30

Maurice Sartre (Tours): *Le nom ambigu: les limites de l'identité culturelle dans l'onomastique de la Syrie gréco-romaine*

Margaret Williams (Open University): *Jewish use of semitic names in Asia Minor: the epigraphic evidence*

Further information, including abstracts of papers, can be found on the conference website: <http://www.britac.ac.uk/events/programmes/2003/030327lgpn.html>

AUTUMN COLLOQUIUM, LONDON

Modern values in a traditional setting was the theme of this year's autumn colloquium, held on Saturday 9 November in London. As is now customary, the meeting was held in the Institute of Classical Studies, and consisted of the usual blend of short reports and longer papers, sandwiched around the smoke-filled room which is the society's AGM, and liberally supplied, as usual, with refreshments of every sort.

But while this much was reassuringly familiar, much else was new. Gaby Bodard (KCL) started the morning session with a report on **Progress on the EPAPP Project**, demonstrating both the general advantages of web publication of inscribed material (accessibility; ease of cross-reference, within and beyond the work; more space for extra illustrations, and so on: examples can be found on the website of the project: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/humanities/cch/epapp/>), and the specific virtues of using the xml-based markup system to encode epigraphic texts. The great virtue of this approach is its stability, its flexibility, and its absolute platform and system independence. A suitably marked-up epigraphic text may look entirely unreadable to the un-computerised eye, but the data can then be presented in any number of ways: using the traditional Leiden system, or different font styles, or colours; as a webpage, a printed document, or even an audio file. The material can also be searched in new ways: for example, it would be a simple matter to locate all the instances of a certain type of abbreviation, or even of the erasure of particular words or images.

Benet Salway (UCL) offered something even more modern: two new epigraphic texts. The first was **A 3rd-century AD**

Latin Ostrakon from North Africa.

This ostrakon, now in the Carthage museum, seems to be a letter, probably from a woman (the name ends with the letters --RONIA), asking her 'brother' Valerius for help in some sort of crisis, involving money, wine, a girl, and possibly (though probably not ...) a chicken. The Latin shows various 'late' features (frequent omission of final 'm', and loss of interconsonantal 'd'), and is, at times, far from comprehensible. The dating of the text is also somewhat problematic. Although the ostrakon has no precise provenance, analysis of the clay suggests that it originated in the Carthage area; and the pottery is of a sort which is usually dated to the mid fourth century and later. But the writing on the sherd is rather earlier: although there are some New Roman Cursive forms, the overall style is Old Roman Cursive – which would suggest a date towards the end of the third century. Either the ostrakon is a fake; or the woman had particularly archaic handwriting; or the datings of this style of pottery need some revision.

Benet Salway's second new text was less exotic, but no less problematic: **Moritix Londiniensium: the recent find from Southwark** had already received a preliminary airing in the BES News (ns no.8). Further points raised here included the prominent position of this inscription (it was probably located by the side of Watling St, just before the important river crossing point at Southwark: a major route into the city from the south), and the excellent quality of the inscription (not just the letter-cutting, but also the 'banana-skin' style interpuncts). Discussion centred on the problem of interpreting the last four lines of the document: should *moritix* be taken with *londiniensium*? Or is there a break between the two words? What should be done with *[pr]imus*? As always, the iron law of epigraphy dictates that the text breaks

up at precisely the point when it becomes most interesting (or vice versa ...).

The afternoon session was kicked off by John Davies (Liverpool), who offered, he said 'not a paper, but a discussion about the problems of writing a paper': a meta-paper. More specifically, his **Revisiting Gortyn: Laws, Documents, and Debates** explored the problems involved in presenting – for a non-specialist audience – a coherent account of the Gortyn law code. These problems are many and various. What is to be done with the huge and involved body of specialised scholarship on this subject? How are the laws themselves to be explained? Their content requires discussion, but so too does their telegraphic, hyper-'laconic' style, and the way in which the discrete laws combine (or fail to combine) to form a coherent 'code'. And, perhaps hardest of all, what sort of social, or intellectual, context can be supplied for these laws? Roman law – a traditional favourite – is clearly not appropriate, and Athenian law may be no better; the ideal context would be the Gortynian one – but that is the one thing we don't have. The laws prompt many questions: how do laws get made in Gortyn? why are they then inscribed (and why are they set up in particular places)? what is to be made of the various gaps in this code (nothing on homicide, for example)? But firm answers are hard to come by.

Finally, Riet van Bremen (London) presented **Two(?) Letters of the Empress Plotina to the Epicureans of Athens**, or rather, two dossiers of letters, from the 120s AD, both apparently concerned with the regulations for the running of the Epicurean school. The first, relatively uncontroversial dossier, shows Plotina petitioning Hadrian on behalf of the Epicureans, Hadrian's favourable reply,

and Plotina's letter to the Epicureans, passing on the good news. The second dossier is less well-preserved (it consists of two non-joining fragments), and its text is, not surprisingly, more problematic. Traditionally, this dossier has been thought to contain two letters from Hadrian, one to the Epicureans, the second to a certain Heliodorus. It was suggested that this reconstruction should be rejected: the two fragments of which the inscription is made up should be recombined, in such a way as to allow for a bigger stone, and a longer line-length. This would, in turn, allow a very different text to be reconstructed: the most important difference would be that the second letter might be, not from Hadrian, but from Plotina. In favour of this reconstruction is the strikingly 'Epicurean' language of this second letter – a feature which is also prominent in Plotina's letter in the first dossier, and which would seem much more appropriate for this philosophy-loving empress than for the emperor.

Polly Low

ENTEELLA TABLETS WORKSHOP, OXFORD

The inspiration for this day was the existence at the Centre of a set of papers belonging to the late David Lewis. These provide a certain amount of extra information on the unusual recent history of these fascinating bronze tablets from western Sicily. More importantly, they were also the source of a crucial set of photographs made prior to cleaning of several of the still-missing tablets. The Centre made this material available to Prof. Carmine Ampolo (Scuola Normale, Pisa), who has taken on the mantle of the late Prof. G. Nenci as co-ordinator of work on the tablets and the site of Entella. The workshop was organised by Dr. Charles Crowther with a view to integrating this new material and bringing both the tablets and Prof. Ampolo's work to a wider audience.

The day itself was preceded by a well-attended lecture at the Centre, on Friday 24 January 2003, by Prof. Ampolo, in which he outlined some of the material that he would cover in more detail the following day, and re-stated in very convincing terms the case for the Tiberius Claudius C.f. Antiatas of tablet IV (=Ampolo B1) to be a client and/or relative of P. Claudius Pulcher, cos. 249 (the man who threw the sacred chickens into the sea prior to the disastrous battle of Drepanon). Additionally, Prof. Ampolo considered the helmet depicted upon tablet IV (a proxeny decree), which has all too often been ignored in past discussions. In line with the majority of such decrees, the helmet should be understood to relate to the honorand rather than the Entellans. It would seem to be an Italic type typical of the earlier C3 BC and, as Prof. Ampolo observed, this has certain implications: firstly that Roman soldiers were not only utilising an Italic type in this period, but were potentially identified with it; and

secondly, given that this helmet appears to match exactly the type described in Polybius VI.23, that elements of the account in Polybius VI, as has been suggested in the past, date firmly back to the C3 BC. In questions afterwards, the unusual colour of tablet VIII (Ampolo A2), mimicked by the fake tablet VII*, was attributed to a particularly harsh act of cleaning by the original recoverer(s) of the tablet.

The workshop began with a presentation on 'the Oxford story' by Jonathan Prag (UCL/Leicester), in which he outlined briefly the story of the tablets' peregrinations after their departure from Sicily in the mid-1970s, and David Lewis' involvement with tablets I-V, in the light of information from the papers of David Lewis. This material does not significantly alter the story as it is already known, but does fill in some interesting gaps. As most had already guessed, David Lewis was the 'anglicus interpres' in published accounts of the tablets.

After coffee, Dottoressa M.C. Parra (Pisa) provided a lucid summary of the archaeological information so far obtained from the site of Rocca d'Entella, ancient Entella. The site occupies a large and naturally very strong hill-top site. Evidence of human presence goes back to pre-historic times, with clear occupation from the early C6 BC. In the main area of excavation (in the eastern valley of the hill-top), a complex of apparently public buildings has been uncovered, which show two phases, C6/5 and C4/3 BC. The former has the character of an oikos, the latter of a food storage building. Both this part of the site and two other locations show evidence of a destruction layer with burning to be dated around the middle of the C3 BC. The site also has three necropoleis at different locations around the foot of the hill.

This was followed by a detailed exposition of the coin finds from the Rocca d'Entella excavations by Dr. Susanne Frey-Kupper (Geneva). This included a complex analysis of the patterns of coin finds by type on the site in comparison with other sites in the region. The key element to emerge was the total absence of coin types belonging to the period between the last quarter of the C4 BC and the mid-/later-C3 BC. At first sight, this sat uneasily with the dating of the destruction layer in the archaeological record, and also the generally accepted context for the tablets (viz. second half of the first Punic war, after upheavals in the first half of the same war). However, as Prof. Michael Crawford (UCL) pointed out (after Richard Reece) in an impromptu exposition later in the day, the temporal pattern of numismatic site-finds (i.e. so-called 'casual' loss), somewhat counterintuitively, is unlikely to reflect actual habitation, but rather the impact of particular events. Hence a gap in the coinage between say 310 and 250 BC need not reflect anything other than peaceful existence. The interpretation of the gap is a matter for debate; but Dr. Frey-Kupper's analysis placed it in sharp relief, and raised further questions regarding the tablets' historical context.

In the final presentation before lunch, Professor Ampolo deployed the photographs from the David Lewis papers and a certain amount of technology, to demonstrate quite categorically that the tablets constitute a dossier in the full sense of the word. What the pre-cleaning photographs reveal is that, as in the case of the Locri tablets, wherever one tablet rested upon another, it left a 'shadow' in the patterns of corrosion. It is thus quite clear that the tablets were in fact found in a single deposit by whoever 'excavated' them in the mid-1970s. Most significantly, Prof. Ampolo was able to demonstrate that tablet III (Ampolo Nakone A), the tablet

recording the Nakone adelphothetia, was deposited together with the tablets explicitly relating to Entella. Additionally, the dimensions of the still-missing tablet IV (Ampolo B1) can be deduced from the marks in the corrosion on another tablet: the tablet is revealed to be the smallest of all eight, no more than 10 x 15 cm. Of course, the fact that all eight tablets were discovered together does not resolve the thorny questions of how, why, when, or by whom, they were collected together and 'deposited'.

After lunch, Dr. Alan Johnston succinctly discussed the numerals which appear in tablet V (Ampolo A1). The small number of both published and unpublished comparanda which can be brought to bear demonstrate that the numerals are not in themselves unusual for the historical and geographical context. Allowing for the occasional vagaries of the cutter, 3 symbols, for 10, 50 and 100 are deployed in what Nenci called the pseudo-ascending system, i.e. smallest numbers first, left to right – so-called, because the influence of Phoenician (in which numerals would be read from right to left, and so actually still largest first) has been adduced. Such a system is relatively common in Sicily in this period. Dr. Johnston also cast a brief eye over the letter forms, which are largely what one would expect for this period. As yet, no-one has made a study of the various hands responsible for the tablets.

Numbers were followed by letters, and detailed exposition and discussion of the texts of all eight tablets: first by Jonathan Prag, who had provided participants with a set of texts based upon the photographs, and who highlighted a range of points of interest (cutters' errors; aspects of layout; varieties of form) and offered the various loci incerti for discussion. Professor Ampolo followed this up with the convincing resolution of several of the

thornier black spots on the tablets – the fruits of a forthcoming Italian edition of the texts (first in ASNP and subsequently in monograph form), which, in the light of all the new material which he presented on the day, should be eagerly awaited by all.

Discussion of the texts was concluded by discussion of the ever-problematic Nakone text (Entella III = Ampolo Nakone A). This was kick-started by Charles Crowther (Oxford), who neatly took participants through the text, asking all the difficult questions as he went. The procedures in the text are largely unparalleled and in turn raise possibly unanswerable questions regarding the relationship of the Nakone text to the other seven. Did, as Prof. Ampolo suggested, the Nakone diaphora resolution, proposed by the Segestans, serve subsequently as a model for the resolution at Entella of stasis accompanying the synoikismos? Did the community of Nakone subsequently join the synoikismos described in the Entella tablets, bringing the decree with them? Or was the tablet merely gathered together with the others from separate locations at some later date, for whatever reason?

The presence of 20+ participants from as far afield as Belfast and Liverpool (besides the involvement of Ampolo, Frey-Kupper, and Parra), ensured that the day was highly productive and clearly enjoyed by all. The hospitality and organisation of the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents (together with a subsidy from the Oxford University Classics Faculty) contributed to this in no small part. It is to be hoped that the workshop marks merely the beginning of a wider knowledge and appreciation of a quite remarkable set of documents from Hellenistic Sicily.

Jonathan Prag

**EPIGRAPHIC SATURDAY,
CAMBRIDGE
(22nd February 2003)**

Michael Crawford (UCL, London) began with an exposition of the work he has done with Christina Kuhn (Heidelberg) on a small number of ivory or bone *tesserae* that have generally been categorised with the so-called *tesserae lusoriae* (gaming counters) that have numbers on one side and letters on the other. However, what distinguishes this sub-category of *tessera* is that, while indeed inscribed with a number on one side, the other bears the name, in abbreviated form, of one of the thirty-five tribes into which the Roman citizen body was divided by the period of the late Republic (e.g. ROM | V and OVF | XVI). In all, seven such *tesserae* are known to survive – though there may well be more lurking out there unidentified in museum collections – each representing a different tribe and number and all with a demonstrable or probable provenance from the city of Rome. The numbers on the reverses appear to correspond to the official order of the tribes as it existed in the late Republic. Relating this evidence with the scattered and incomplete literary evidence for the order of the tribes, including a previously unexploited guide to tironian notes in a manuscript from the Bodleian Library in Oxford, it has been possible to draw up a revised listing of the tribes that largely confirms that produced by Lily Ross Taylor in her *Voting Districts of the Roman Republic* (Rome 1960). It is clear that the order is neither straightforwardly chronological nor geographical. Rather, after the four urban tribes, the rural tribes form groups lying along the main roads radiating out of Rome, running anticlockwise from the via Ostiensis to the via Clodia-Cassia. While the *tesserae* themselves may have been tags attached to the pots into which votes were cast (cf. the depiction

on a late Republican sestertius [Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage* No 473]), the order may reflect an originally military purpose, following the order in which requests for the levying of troops according to tribal groupings were despatched from the centre.

Ginette di Vita Evrard (ENS, Paris) guided the audience through the complexities of onomastics in the mixed Latin and Punic context of ancient Leptis in Tripolitania (Libya), where she is attached to the excavations by the Università di Roma III. The number of named individuals known from Leptis has been recently expanded by the discovery of three funerary *hypogea* during the excavation of a suburban villa along the coast. Added to this, Professor Evrard has been able to get access to the chance finds brought in to the museum depot from building activity resulting from the expansion of the modern village. Together this new corpus comprises more than a hundred funerary urns, inscribed either in Neo-punic script (that of North Africa of the period after the fall of Carthage) or in the Latin alphabet. However, there is not a simple correlation between language (or name etymology) and script. There are many Latin or Greek names in Neo-punic script and many Libyo-Punic names in Latin letters. This reflects the complex linguistic mix of Roman Leptis. Originally founded as a colony of Carthage, the majority of the population was nevertheless Libyan, though there was also some Greek influence from Cyrenaica to the east. Punic was the written language of the city and continued to be so under the Numidian hegemony following the fall of Carthage and on into the early Roman period, during which Leptis was a free city (*ciuitas libera*). In this latter period there was an epigraphic explosion in both Punic and Latin. On public monuments there are many bilingual inscriptions (for which see J.M.

Reynolds & J.B. Ward-Perkins, *Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania* [Rome 1952]), though even before the city became a Roman *colonia* Latin is already being used as the language of the primary text (the Punic often merely summarises the most important information for the benefit of the local population). However, even in the Latin inscriptions, the Punic naming-system has to be understood to decode the information provided. One needs to know that, as was usual in the Mediterranean world, the Libyans and Carthaginians had a system of single personal names and significantly also that in Punic these had a single, indeclinable, form. When greater definition was required it was usual in Punic to qualify the name by appending the name of the father (sometimes with the conjunction *byn/ben*) and/or the title of a function (usually preceded by the definite article *h*). Ancestry beyond the first generation back was indicated by appending the name of the grandfather, etc.; so, for instance, *Mago ben Aris ben Anno* is Mago, son of Aris, grandson of Anno. All this is straightforward enough until one runs into the mixed onomastics of the more Romanised locals, who regularly adopted a Graeco-Latin name alongside their Libyo-Punic single name and then listed their filiation. Thus the magistrate Annobal Rufus Himilchonis Tapapi f(ilius) of *IRT* 321 (cf. *IRT* 322: Annobal Himilchonis Tapapi f(ilius) Rufus) should be decoded as Annobal *sive* Rufus Himilchonis filius Tapapi nepos in full Latin style, equivalent to Punic *Annobal ben Himilcho ben Tapapi*. On occasion the grammar of the underlying Punic exerts sufficient influence that the patronyms appear in Latin in indeclinable, but Latinised, nominative forms. So the same man is described in *IRT* 319c as Annobal Himilcho f(ilius) Tapapius Rufus. Conversely amongst the funerary epitaphs one finds grammatically and phonetically pure Punic texts in Latin

letters, even when the name elements are Graeco-Roman: e.g. *Getulith* (= Lat. Gaetula), *Pudens byn Tyrane* (= Lat. Pudens Tyranni f.), and *Micho asth Marce Bibie* (= Lat. Micho Marci Vibii uxor), as well as more complex mixed forms, such as *Iulia Folliu* (= Lat. Iulia Polla). The two languages and systems can be found side by side in reference to the same individual on the same monument. Thus, on the outside of a tomb (of probably first-century AD date) one local with Roman citizenship is called in the dedication by his son 'Q. Licinius Piso' but inside, on the urn, he is called 'Licini Piso' (= Pun. *Licine Piso*), demonstrating the redundancy of the *praenomen* to provincials of peregrine origin already at this early period.

After lunch Riet van Bremen (UCL, London) offered new insights into two epigraphic dossiers of imperial letters relating to the ordinances of the Epicurean School at Athens. The first dossier, of AD 121, inscribed on a broken marble block and comprising at least four texts, is relatively well known and understood (J.H. Oliver, *Greek Constitutions of the Roman Emperors* [Philadelphia 1989], No 73). It carries the tail of a Greek text, the Latin text of a letter of Plotina Augusta to her stepson Hadrian, his response (again in Latin) addressed to one Popillius Theotimus, *diadochos* of the Epicureans, and an accompanying letter from Plotina in Greek addressed to 'all her friends'. The second dossier is less well known. What survives are the incomplete texts of two documents on two (now quite different-looking) fragments of a block that, although originally similarly proportioned to that of the first dossier, suffered cutting down to make capitals for a Byzantine building. As a result what survives are two slices of the inscribed surface bearing a portion of c. 15 letters in length from near the beginning of each line and one

of c. 20 letters from the end, with a substantial lacuna in between. Both texts are in Greek and the first is certainly a letter of the emperor Hadrian, dated clearly to February/March AD 124, perhaps reconfirming the privilege granted in 121. The second is more problematic. It appears to be a letter in which the recipient's name survives as Heliodorus but the sender's is lost in a lacuna of uncertain length at the beginning of the line. James Oliver, who in 1938 was the first to recognise that the two blocks belonged together, thought that it might be the actual Greek testament of the *diadochos* of the school. The first complete reconstruction of the dossier was attempted some years ago by Simone Follet (*Revue des Etudes Grecques* 107 [1999], 158-171). Follet had identified the second document as a further letter of Hadrian. However, Dr van Bremen, offering a new reconstruction of the text, pointed to the large number of 'Epicureanisms' in its language; for the Epicureans were very fond of coining new abstract nouns. Accordingly she proposes that it is another letter of Plotina, since, as demonstrated in the first dossier, the special affection for, and connection with, the sect seems to be hers rather than Hadrian's. It seems, then, that to some extent the content of this second dossier mirrors the combination of correspondence found in the first: a letter of advice or encouragement from Plotina with a letter of Hadrian granting (or confirming) privileges accorded out of his filial piety (this time probably posthumous).

Nicholas Milner (ICS, London) elucidated the text of a recently noted stele, currently in a private collection at Fethiye (ancient Telmessos in Lycia). It is a limestone slab bearing twenty-three lines of text in a single column and in a Greek script of early imperial date. This text is incomplete, beginning and ending in mid sentence, and it is clear from

marks on the stone that it was originally flanked to left and right by similar slabs, so that the original monument comprised at least three slabs. The contents would appear to be the proceedings of a legal case involving the covert sale of lands to foreigners, even though, in some cases, dues are still being paid on them. The foreigners are at one point specifically referred to as Lycians, which seems odd given the current location of the stone. It is probable that the defendants were accused of selling as their own public lands that they possessed on the basis of inherited perpetual tenancies, perhaps even continuing to pay the rents in order to mask the fraud. Amongst the defendants is one Claudius Mnasagoras son of Antipater. As Dr Milner demonstrated with reference to the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, the name Mnasagoras has a strongly Rhodian flavour, added to which a certain Tib. Cl. Antipater son of Mnasagoras is recorded as a priest of the imperial cult at Lindos on Rhodes in AD 97/98; he might plausibly be identified as the father of the defendant. This suggests that the legal case relates to Rhodes and, while the stele might be a *pierre errante* from across the water, it is most likely to have come from one of Rhodes' onshore possessions (the *peraia*) and, most specifically, from one of those territories it retained after being stripped of the greater *peraia* by Rome. The remaining territories, known as the 'incorporated *peraia*' included the Loryma peninsula and Physcos (Marmaris), the island of Megiste (Kastellorizon) near Antiphellos on the Lycian mainland, and Daedala (Belenpınar) in the Gulf of Makre (Fethiye Körfezi). This last, lying below Mount Daedalus (Kızılda), given its proximity to Fethiye and the fact that it had once been a border town between Lycia and Caria but was, by the imperial period, surrounded by a Lycia whose border had moved westward to Calynda,

appears the most plausible context for the stele. It would seem, then, most likely that the stele was erected at the site of the disputed lands to record the verdict as a warning to future Rhodian vendors and prospective Lycian buyers.

Benet Salway

SLAVE SALE CONTRACT FROM LONDON REVEALED

On 21 March 2003 the Museum of London announced to the press that that it had put on public display for the first time a wax writing tablet dug up in 1996 during the Museum of London Archaeological Service's excavations at 1 Poultry, London EC4, on the site occupied since 1998 by a new office block by James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Partners. The tablet, which is still undergoing conservation as part of the 1 Poultry Excavation Project funded by CAPIT (City Acre Property Investment Trust) and English Heritage, was recovered from water-logged debris deposits along the Walbrook stream at the eastern end of the site. It is made of silver fir and measures about 14 cm x 11 cm. Holes drilled through the bottom edge of the frame and grooves in the top and bottom outer edges show that it was once part of a set of linked tablets, hinged together by loops of cord and then closed up as a sealed unit. Although the original wax writing surface has long since decayed the scratches left by the scribe's stylus on the wood base below have now been deciphered by Dr Roger S.O. Tomlin of Wolfson College, Oxford, who has dated the text to around AD 75-125.

This tablet (only the second such tablet from London to be completely deciphered) preserves the first eleven lines of the text of a contract for the sale and purchase of a slave according to Roman law of a type known from other second-century examples recovered from the silver mining district of Transylvania (*FIRA* III Nos 87-89). These documents comprised triptychs of tablets strung together and folded to protect the wax inside. A copy was fixed to the outside before they were bound with string and seals of wax with the impressions of the signet rings of seven witnesses. This document can

be thought of as 'a little like a car log book' according to one of the Museum's curators, Francis Grew; 'if there was a sale, you could open it up and check whether the wax on the outside had been tampered with.'

*Enhanced photograph of the text ©
MoLAS 2003*

The Walbrook text is particularly exciting for historians and legal scholars alike not only because it is the first such deed of sale recovered from Britain but also because it attests the purchase of a slave by another slave. A girl named Fortunata, of the Gallic tribe of the *Diablintes* (based around modern Jublains, near Mayenne), is purchased for 600 denarii by one Vegetus *uicarius* (slave of one who is also a slave) of Montanus, himself currently a *seruus Augusti* (slave of the emperor), though he would appear to have been owned previously by one Secundus or Lucundus. The opening paragraph of the text appears, according to Dr Tomlin's drawing (see photograph) to read:

*Vegetus Montani imperatoris Aug. ser.
Secun- (or Lucun-)
diani uic. emit mancipioque accepit pu-
ellam Fortunatam siue quo alio nomine
est natione Diablintem de Albiciano
<ethnic of vendor> X sescentis.*

Although Vegetus is a slave, and so could not technically own property fully in his own name, the *emit mancipioque accepit* formula is identical to that found in the Transylvanian documents where the purchasers are free individuals. The description of Vegetus' master, Montanus, as *imperatoris Aug(usti) ser(uus) Secundianus* (or *lucundianus*) is paralleled by *Phosphoro Ti(berii) Claudi Caesaris Augusti seruo Lepidiano* in one of the Pompeian tablets of the Sulpicii, dated 13 June AD 51 (*TPSulp.* 69 = *AE* 1973, 157, lines 5-6), where the editor, Giuseppe Camodeca, interprets the adjectival *agnomen* (Lepidianus) as referring to the identity of the owner before Phosphorus passed into the *familia Caesaris*. In the case of the Montanus, then, his previous owner would have been a certain Secundus (or Lucundus). The second paragraph continues with the usual guarantees by the vendor of the slave's well-being and lack of propensity to wander or run away, familiar from the Transylvanian tablets. The vendor further promises that, if anyone does establish a better title to her, in whole or in part, he will reimburse the purchaser.

So the Walbrook text attests a complex hierarchy of slave ownership that can be conceived as akin to a set of Russian *matryoshka* dolls; a girl from north-western Gaul was bought (possibly in London) from a certain Albicianus (whose single name suggests that he was not a Roman citizen) by Vegetus, slave to the imperial slave Montanus, both of whom are likely to have been serving on the imperial staff in the capital, a reasonably privileged position. As the Museum's press release emphasises, Vegetus and Montanus are the first imperial slaves to be explicitly named in Britain and the discovery of the tablet in London provides further evidence that by this date, after the Boudiccan revolt, London had

succeeded Colchester as the capital of the province. David Miles, Chief Archaeologist at English Heritage, said of the discovery's significance: 'The Roman Empire was built on slavery and this amazing survival gives us a unique insight into the intricate structure of London's slave society and its links with the continent.' On the historical context of the document, Roger Tomlin is quoted as observing 'To appreciate the purchaser, we must remember how Britannia was governed. While the legate ran the army and civil administration, an independent procurator looked after imperial estates and the provincial finances. His office was staffed by imperial slaves and freedmen who handled large sums of money, in the process making fortunes of their own. Vegetus, who was strictly speaking the property of one of these slaves, made enough to buy his own slave. She cost him 600 denarii, two years' salary for a Roman soldier.'

The tablet will be on display in the entrance hall of the Museum of London (no entry fee) until 27 April 2003. The excavations at the 1 Poultry site are described by Peter Rowsome, *Heart of the City: Archaeology at 1 Poultry* (Museum of London, 2000).

Benet Salway

NEW PRESIDENT

At the Society's Annual General Meeting in November, **Professor Robert Parker** (New College, Oxford) was elected President of the Society. He will serve until 2006. Other new members of the steering committee are Jonathan Prag (Leicester) and Alison Cooley (Warwick).

A NEW UNORPHIC GOLD TABLET

The last quarter or so of the twentieth century was an exciting period for anyone interested in the famous passports to the underworld inscribed on gold leaf and buried with the dead. Extraordinary new specimens were published from Hipponium in S. Italy (1974) and from Pelinna in Thessaly (1987), and the 90s brought a succession of lesser finds. Amid all the excitement, the fact that Apostolos Arvanitopoulos had discovered such a gold leaf at Pherai in Thessaly in the first decade of the century vanished almost completely from collective memory. The chances of re-discovering a tiny object of this kind, excavated almost a hundred years ago and never published, scarcely seemed promising. But we owe it to the determination of Maria Stamatopoulou, who noted Arvanitopoulou's one brief reference to the object, to have done just this; she has found the leaf in the storerooms of the National Museum in Athens. She presented a brief account of the object to the First Conference on Thessalian archaeology held in March of this year in the University of Thessaly, Volos, and has kindly invited me to collaborate in an eventual publication.

Wonderful images generated from Maria's photographs by 'Photoshop' have allowed much of the text to be deciphered, tiny though the writing is (the leaf is only 7 by .8 cm.). What we have are two hexameters, written on separate lines, each missing a foot at the end; probably nothing is lost except the end of the two lines. It begins with a bold order to an unnamed addressee in the underworld 'Send me to the bands (*thiasoi*) of the initiates.' On what basis does the dead man or woman adopt such a tone? Connoisseurs of the gold leaves will know that opinion has divided of late into two camps. A majority of scholars take the view that the text from

Pelinna finally confirmed the 'Orphic' character of these texts. A minority insists that there is nothing Orphic in them and that they derive rather from 'Bacchic mysteries'. What does the new text contribute? A few letters in the second line cannot be confidently read, but for the moment the text's answer appears to be 'A plague on both your houses'. There is nothing Orphic here, nor Bacchic either; instead it speaks of orgia of Demeter Chthonia and apparently of 'Mountain Mother'. By the second half of the third century B.C. (the provisional date for the tablet) the possible routes to salvation had apparently multiplied. . .

Robert Parker

THE POWER OF THE INDIVIDUAL: PEOPLE, GROUPS AND GREEK ECONOMIES

A conference in honour of J.K. Davies; 5th July 2003; The Gallery, Foresight Centre, 1 Brownlow Street, The University of Liverpool

Speakers: Robin Osborne; Nick Fisher; Vincent Gabrielsen; Michele Faraguna; Sally Humphreys; Dorothy Thompson.

Further information is available from the conference organisers (Graham Oliver: gjoliver@liv.ac.uk; Zosia Archibald: z.archibald@liv.ac.uk); by post from SACOS, 12 Abercromby Square, The University of Liverpool, Liverpool, L69 3BX; or on the web at: <http://www.liv.ac.uk/sacos/events/jkd/>

WORDS ON THINGS

There will be a small conference to celebrate Harold Mattingly's 80th birthday held at the Classics Faculty in Cambridge on October 3rd and 4th. Speakers: Polly Low, Graham Oliver, Tracy Rihll, Andrew Meadows, Jonathan Williams, Christopher Howgego, Richard Alston and Roger Tomlin. Anyone interested in attending will be welcome, and should contact Robin Osborne (ro225@cam.ac.uk).

VINDOLANDA TABLETS ONLINE

An online edition of the Vindolanda tablets was launched on March 20th 2003. The website includes texts, translations, notes and new high-resolution 'zoomable' digital images of all the published tablets. A virtual exhibition also uses the texts and archaeological evidence from Vindolanda and other sites on Britain's northern frontier to introduce the content and context of the tablets to a non-specialist audience. Other resources within the website include the scholarly introductions to the tablets, an account of the creation of digital texts and images and a reference guide to specialised aspects of Roman life encountered in the documents, such as currency and military terminology.

The website is a collaborative project between the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents (Faculty of Classics) and the Academic Computing Development Team at Oxford University, sponsored by the Andrew W. Mellon foundation.

The site has three main elements: the 'Tablets' link opens a searchable on-line edition of volumes I and II of the tablets; 'Exhibition' takes one to an introduction to the tablets and their context; and 'Reference' opens up a guide to various

aspects of the tablets' content. There is also a 'Help' facility on navigation around and use of the site. The on-line edition includes text, apparatus, translation, and images of the mostly ink-on-lime-wood tablets. While the casual visitor is catered for by the 'highlights from the tablets' feature, it is also intended as a serious research tool. Accordingly, as well as a general 'Search' facility, the tablets can be viewed by tablet number, browsed through, or the text searched. The authors of the site particularly welcome feedback from those using *Vindolanda Tablets Online* for teaching, research or just general interest.

URL: <http://vindolanda.csad.ox.ac.uk/>
Further information:
vindolanda@classics.ox.ac.uk

EPIGRAPHY OF THE GREEK THEATRE

Oxford 14 & 15 July 2003

This colloquium (held under the auspices of the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents and the Faculty of Classics, Oxford) will bring together leading experts from around the world who are working on the Greek theatre from a primarily epigraphic perspective. It will provide an occasion for an exchange of news and ideas, with particular emphasis on new material, neglected material and what light new methods and questions might throw on the familiar.

Early booking is recommended as places may be limited. Similarly, limited full board accommodation (bed, breakfast, lunch and dinner) is available at an advantageous rate in St. Catherine's College, and anyone interested in booking this is advised to do so at once.

Further details (of the programme, and of how to book) can be obtained from Margaret Sasanow, Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents, 67 St. Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LU. Tel: 01865 288255. margaret.sasanow@classics.ox.ac.uk

RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIP IN LATIN EPIGRAPHY

Professor Patrick Sims-Williams (Professor of Celtic Studies, University of Wales at Aberystwyth) is looking for a research assistant with expertise in Roman epigraphy.

He has been awarded a research grant by the British Academy for work on the incidence of Celtic compound personal names (the most recognisable type of Celtic name) in the Latin inscriptions of the Roman Empire, and would like to find a Roman epigrapher who would be able to collaborate with him in compiling geographical and other data on the 700 or so relevant inscriptions, working full or part time for a few months from about May onwards.

The pay is “not very generous” (£8 per hour up to a total of £3,600), but there is money for travel costs and an allowance of £50 per day for up to three weeks working in libraries on the Continent. The work ought to lead promptly to a joint publication in which the researcher will get full credit. Professor Sims-Williams’ part will be limited to identifying the relevant names in Lorincz’s *Onomasticon*, the research assistant will look the inscriptions up in the corpora and collect relevant data, and there is a budget for a cartographer to complete the task within the year.

The research assistant could be based anywhere convenient so long as he or she was in regular contact with Prof.

Sims-Williams. Anyone interested should contact him at pps@aber.ac.uk

COMING SOON I ...

Those interested the recently-discovered dedication to the *Numina Augustorum* and the god *Mars Camulus* by a man describing himself as *moritix Londiniensium* (featured in BES News no.8) should keep an eye on *ZPE*. Professor J.N. Adams (All Souls, Oxford) has written a short paper on the etymology and meaning of the obscure term *moritix* that will appear in a forthcoming issue.

COMING SOON II ...

Following a decision of the last Annual General Meeting of the British Epigraphy Society and a generous offer of support from the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, a bursary competition was launched to help graduate students with the costs of attending the BES/LGPN conference on ‘Old and New in Greek Onomastics’.

The bursary committee is pleased to report that it was able to make four awards, enabling the following students to attend the colloquium: Cristiana Doni (Exeter University), Ina Hartman Doettinger (St. Hugh’s College, Oxford), Pasi Loman (Nottingham University), and Olga Tribulato (Pembroke College, Oxford). You will be able to read their accounts of their experience of the conference in the Autumn issue of this newsletter.