Language and Cultural Interactions in the Roman World
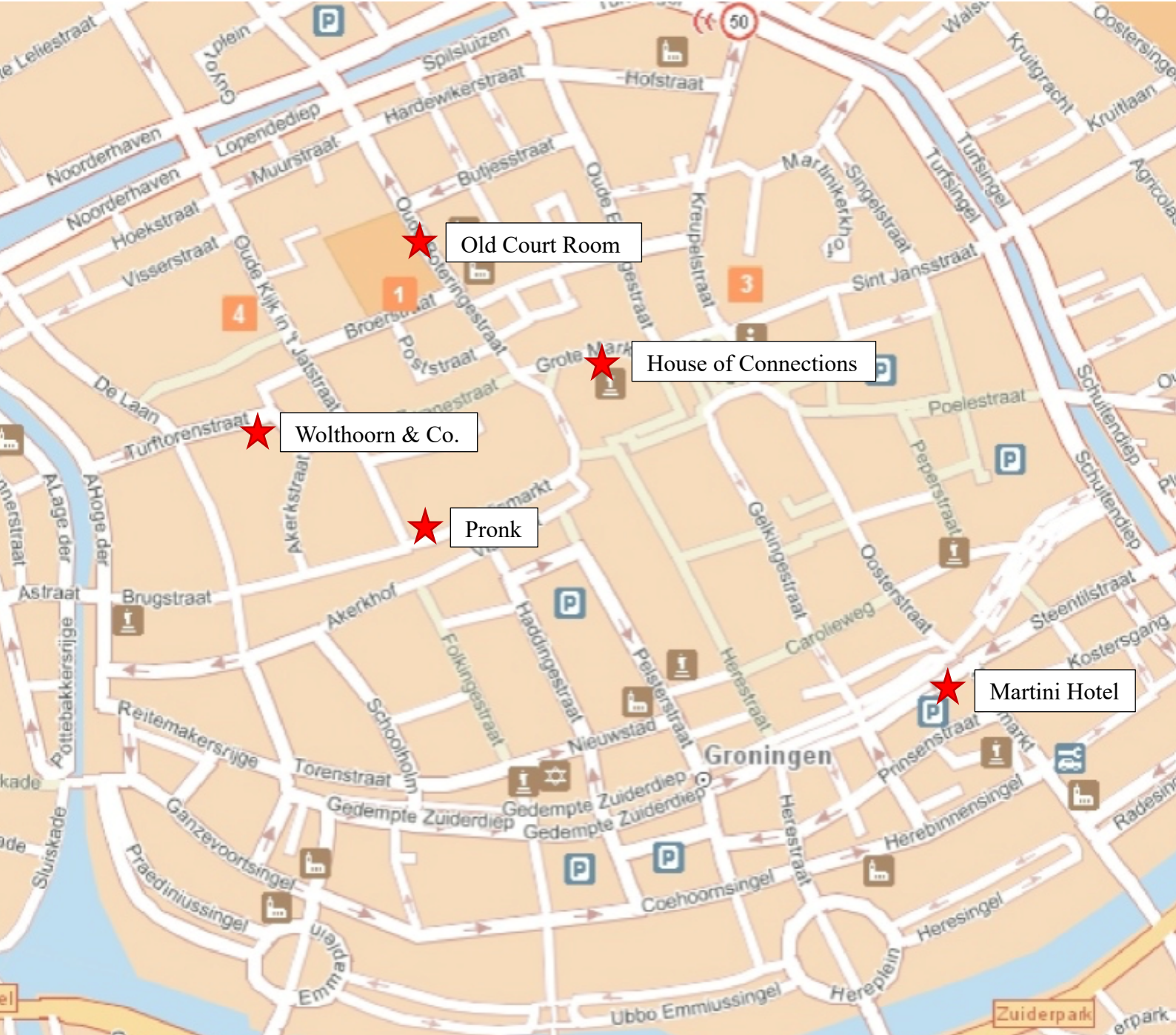
The Impact of Inscriptions

In collaboration with OIKOS - CIAW
With the patrocinium of AIEGL

University of Groningen
March 6-7 2025

university of groningen

AIEGL · OIKOS · groningen research institute for the study of culture (ICOG) · NINO · OIKOS ANCHORING INNOVATION · ARCHON · MARE

Kwinkenplein in House of Connections, Grote Markt 21

Old Courtroom, Oude Boteringestraat 38

Wolthoorn & Co. Café, Turftorenstraat 6

Pronk restaurant, Vismarkt 56

Martini Hotel, Gedempte Zuiderdiep 8

Language and Cultural Interactions in the Roman World
The Impact of Inscriptions

University of Groningen, the Netherlands, March 6th-7th, 2025

Organizers: Valentina Vari (Groningen-Rome Sapienza), Caroline van Toor (Groningen), Saskia Peels-Matthey (Groningen), Onno van Nijf (Groningen).

In collaboration with Cultural Interactions in the Ancient World - OIKOS Research Group.

PROGRAMME

Day 1 - Thursday 6 March

Kwinkenplein in House of Connections, Grote Markt 21

08:30-09:00	Doors open
09:00-09:30	Introduction by organisers and welcome by Prof. Dr Silvia Orlandi, president of the Association Internationale d'Epigraphie Grecque et Latine (AIEGL)

Chair: Saskia Peels-Matthey

09:30-10:30	Prof. Dr Bruno Rochette (Université de Liège) invited speaker "Bilingualism, diglossia, and language choice in the Roman Empire: the testimony of sub-literary texts"

Session 1: The funerary evidence

Chair: Gavin Blasdel

10:30-11:10	Dr Sandra Muñoz Martínez (Universitat de Barcelona) "Language and metrical choices in the *carmina epigraphica sepulcralia* with bilingual phenomena of the Roman West"

11:10-11:40	Coffee break
11:40-12:20	Hugo Simons MA (Université de Liège) "Linguistic Diversity in Rhegium during the Principate: Evidence from Funerary Inscriptions"
12:20-13:00	Dr Alexis Daveloose (University of Ghent) "The Etrusco-Latin Epitaphs of Chiusi: Identity, Status Display, and 'Romanisation'"
13:00-14:00	Lunch

Session 2: The religious context

Chair: Mathieu de Bakker

14:00-14:40	Prof. Dr Tibor Grüll (University of Pécs) ""Be damned by the written courses". Linguistic, religious and cultural contacts in the Phrygian sepulchral curse formulas"
14:40-15:20	Dr Annalisa Calapà (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München) "Language and Religious Communication. Bilingual Inscriptions in Italic Sanctuaries"
15:20-15:50	Coffee break

Session 3: The civic context

Chair: Floris van den Eijnde

15:50-16:30	Dr Andrea Gatzke (State University of New York at New Paltz) "Defining Cultural Spaces: Bilingual Arches and Gates in Roman Anatolia"
16:30-17:10	Dr Abigail Graham (British School at Rome) "Inextricably Entwined? Literal and Figural entanglements on symplegma bases in the Harbor Gymnasium at Ephesus"
17:30-18:45	Drinks
19:00-	Dinner

Day 2 - Friday 7 March

Old Court Room, Faculty of Religion, Culture and Society, Oude Boteringestraat 38

08:30-09:00   Doors open

Session 4: Roman colonies and Italians abroad

Chair: Pieter Houten

09:00-09:40   Dr Laura Nastasi (University of Manchester, British School at Athens)
"Graeco-Latin Writing Habits in Roman Corinth"

09:40-10:20   Florian Feil MA (University of Trier)
"The funerary inscriptions and social history of Dyrrhachion in Hellenistic-Imperial times"

10:20-10:50   Coffee break

10:50-11:30   Dr Sergio España-Chamorro (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellow, Universidad Complutense de Madrid)
"The Impact of Latin Inscriptions in the Augustan Colonies: A Comparative Study"

Chair: Onno van Nijf

11:30-12:30   Prof. Dr Alex Mullen (University of Nottingham, University of Oxford)
keynote speaker
""A micro-cosmically variegated galaxy": the epigraphic habit, regionality, and identities in western provincial epigraphy"

12:30-13:00   Conclusions

Sandra Muñoz Martínez
Universitat de Barcelona

Language and metrical choices in the carmina epigraphic sepulcralia with bilingual phenomena of the Roman West.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the compositional trends within a specific group of inscriptions: the bilingual Greek-Latin carmina epigraphica of funerary nature from the western half of the Roman Empire, with the Roman and Campanian material forming the majority. In studying such inscriptions, it is essential to consider both bilingual phenomena and metrical choices in order to analyse the sociolinguistic aspects of each case and the preferences in composition. Carmina are typically not used to study the "actual" language of the commissioners; rather, they reflect their linguistic choices, which may be influenced by a variety of factors such as literary tradition, paideia, or native language.

The corpus of these inscriptions, comprising 69 epigraphs, reveals a clear predominance of examples where a Latin formula or titulus sepulcralis is combined with a Greek carmen epigraphicum (44 examples). In such instances, each language seems to fulfil a primary function: Latin serves as the lingua franca and is used for biometrical information, while Greek is used for literary purposes and to show off paideia (e. g. IGUR III 1336, Quintus Sulpicius Maximus' epitaph). In contrast, 17 inscriptions feature bilingual metrical epitaphs with metrical texts in both Greek and Latin (a part of this corpus is currently being edited by Professors Garulli and Santin). The remaining eight inscriptions exhibit a mixed distribution of the texts (e. g. CLE 1298, Catilia Marciana's epitaph).

In the 17 inscriptions with bilingual metrical texts in each language, there is a deliberate differentiation from the common practice (Greek for metrical parts and Latin for prose sections). In these cases, the commissioners intentionally chose to include an additional Latin metrical text to the customary Greek carmen, suggesting an additional poetic intention through the use of both bilingualism and metrical composition. This is the situation, for instance, in IGUR III 1427 (fragmentary inscription for a deceased man), AE 2013, 2164 (fragmentary epitaph for an Hemesian individual) or IGEP 395 (Iulianus' epitaph).

This paper will examine funerary inscriptions exhibiting this additional, poetic bilingualism from the first to third centuries CE, with a focus on the geographical origins and social status of the individuals, onomastic analysis, the information conveyed in each language, and the ordinatio of the texts. The aim is to draw conclusions regarding the broader trends in the use of Greek (literary) and Latin (lingua franca) languages, as well as individual linguistic choices influenced by factors such as native language and degree of Latinization. Additionally, the evolution of this epigraphic habit over three centuries will allow for an analysis of its diffusion in the provinces (14 examples, e. g. IGF 119, Caius Vibius Licinianus' epitaph).

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Hugo Simons
Université de Liège

Linguistic Diversity in Rhegium during the Principate: Evidence from Funerary Inscriptions

This paper aims at examining the contribution of the corpus of funerary inscriptions from Rhegium (Reggio Calabria) to our understanding of linguistic diversity during the end of the last century BCE and the three first centuries CE. The continued presence of Hellenistic traditions under Roman rule is corroborated by epigraphic evidence. It appears that Rhegium has maintained some Greek public magistracies, as Neapolis did, during the 1st century CE. Moreover, as a former polis of Magna Graecia, the city of Rhegium was not entirely Latinised following the Roman conquest, as Greek continued to be used there. However, most of the tituli sepulcrales of Rhegium that have survived are written in Latin. In accordance with Strabo (VI, 1, 6), the city was repopulated by Octavian with veterani classiarii (tōn ek tou stolou tinas) in 36 BCE. It seems reasonable to suggest that this Latin-speaking population partly had an influence on the epigraphic habitus of Rhegium. To illustrate to what extant Roman practices had an impact on our corpus, the Latin formulary translated into Greek (Theois Katakhthoniois) has become embedded in funerary inscriptions from the 2nd century CE onwards. Furthermore, a study of these testimonies reveals a variety of bilingual phenomena, as categorised by James N. Adam's typology of bilingual texts, revised by Alex Mullen. The presence of Latinised Greek names, Greek Latinised cognomina, and Greek Latinised names, as well as intra-sentential code-switching, demonstrates the intricate cultural dynamics of Rhegium. As the evidence of the tombstones can be read as a representation of how the dead wished to be viewed, this modest corpus (more or less thirty items) of funerary inscriptions sheds light on cultural interactions in an area where the Greek cultural substrate was considered by ancient authors to be enduring.

Alexis Daveloose
University of Ghent

The Etrusco-Latin Epitaphs of Chiusi: Identity, Status Display, and 'Romanisation'

The epigraphic corpus of Chiusi (Etruria) during the first century BCE is a unique case: for more than a century, this community transitions from Etruscan to Latin. This unusually long process of Latinisation results in a sizeable number of epitaphs that can be considered Etrusco-Latin; the largest collection of such texts in Etruria. However, these inscriptions are typically ignored, as for many scholars they represent either a bastardised version of Etruscan or a failed attempt at proper Latin. By highlighting these products of language interference, this paper argues that the Etrusco-Latin epitaphs of Chiusi fulfilled a crucial role in the process of Latinisation and that they were a sign of and a means for cultural negotiations, reconciling the old with the new. This is not only expressed by the mixed use of alphabets and grammatical elements, but the inclusion of typically Etruscan elements (e.g. the metronymic and the female praenomen) also signals attempts to combine the new epigraphic paradigm with very particular existing traditions. This paper investigates two specific aspects of the Etrusco-Latin epitaphs of Chiusi. Firstly, the social status and gender of the deceased associated with these inscriptions are analysed and compared to the last Etruscan and earliest Latin epitaphs. This informs us about social dynamics and reveals how epigraphic language could be a tool for (elite) representation and status display. The ratio between men and women in this Etrusco-Latin corpus is also of particular interest, as this ratio differs substantially between Etruscan and Latin epitaphs of the region. Therefore, we can wonder whether the Etrusco-Latin texts form a gradual transition from one language to the other, or rather align with one particular language. Secondly, the frequency and use of the various onomastic parts in the Etrusco-Latin epitaphs are investigated in a quantitative manner, demonstrating the various ways in which elements more typical for the Latin epigraphic paradigm are implemented into existing Etruscan traditions. These onomastic patterns are then compared to Etruscan and Latin texts of the late Etruscan period. Noteworthy is the fact that – as opposed to most Roman inscriptions – we are dealing with inscriptions that were only visible during funerals and within closed-off tombs that were only opened when a family member was buried. As such, the Etrusco-Latin epitaphs of Chiusi played a considerable part in negotiating (social) identities, especially within families and close-knit social groups. This gives these inscriptions a unique character, one that has remained unexplored until now.

Tibor Grüll
University of Pécs

"Be damned by the written curses". Linguistic, religious and cultural contacts in the Phrygian sepulchral curse-formulas

The surviving funerary inscriptions from the 2nd to 4th centuries in Phrygia show lively and vibrant interaction of a linguistically, culturally and religiously diverse environment. Although the indigenous population had been Hellenised for half a millennium, it still proudly preserved Phrygian traditions dating back to the age of myths, most often using Homeric language and allusions, but it was also during this period that the Neo-Phrygian language has enjoyed a renaissance, with some 150 survived inscriptions bearing witness to its existence. There was also a fairly significant Jewish diaspora living in the cities of Phrygia which is also known by their sepulchral monuments. There is not much data on the early spread of Christianity in this region, but it is certain that they made up a significant part of the population by the 3rd century, and more interestingly, the first openly Christian inscriptions appear here, apart from the Roman catacomb inscriptions. In this short presentation, it is of course not possible to go into all the details of the interaction of the three religions, so I have chosen to focus on a single topic: the curse formulas of the tomb inscriptions, and a specific subtype of these, which refers to the "written curses". In most cases these appear within the so-called "Eumenian formula," referring to the "curses written in Deuteronomy." In previous research, these have been considered to be either Christian or Jewish formulas, but in my opinion, which I can support, they were written exclusively by Christians. The interaction of the three religions is clearly demonstrated by the fact that among the ca. 150 Neo-Phyrgian inscriptions (virtually all fall into the category of sepulchral curses against grave robbers) we find 10 that appeal to the "written curse of Zeus." The question is what this refers to, since Zeus is not really known for his literary activities. Is it possible that the pagans, envious of the "holy books" of the Jews and Christians, invented something like this for the King of the Olympian gods? And, if so, why did they publish it only in Phrygian, inserted in their Greek-speaking epitaphs? There are many possible answers to this question, but this example is a good illustration of the interaction of language, culture and religion in a remote province of the Roman Empire.

Annalisa Calapà
Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

Language and Religious Communication. Bilingual Inscriptions in Italic Sanctuaries

The epigraphic evidence from public and private sanctuaries in ancient Italy includes dedicatory and votive inscriptions written in more than one language (Latin/Greek, but also Latin/Oscan, Latin/Etruscan etc.). These bilingual inscriptions, dating from the 3rd century BC to the Imperial age, had different functions and significance according to the historical and cultural context in which they originated. Bilingual texts often aimed to address different audiences, reflecting the role of a cult place as a meeting point for various ethnic and social groups. In other cases, the adoption of multiple languages reflected the gradual linguistic shift that followed the Roman expansion and, later, the grant of Roman citizenship to the peoples of Italy. The choice of languages in these inscriptions was not incidental, but rather a deliberate means of managing the 'common ground' between different cultural actors.

It is interesting to note, however, that the use of bilingual inscriptions in cult places was more than a pragmatic response to linguistic diversity. It could sometimes be traced back to the individual choice of worshippers, who deliberately preferred it to other viable options. The reasons behind such a choice could range from the function of the inscription to specific aspects related to the cult involved. Focusing on selected inscriptions from Republican and Imperial Italy, this paper explores how and why sacred inscriptions could be written in multiple languages. The contribution aims to address several central questions: in which ways could the use of specific languages in dedications be related to religious practice and to the characteristics of a cult? To what extent did bilingual or multilingual inscriptions reflect the social and religious identity of worshippers? How do these inscriptions reveal the shifting power dynamics between local communities and Roman authorities, and how did they mediate the relationship between inscribers and their intended audiences? The analysis of different forms of bilingualism in sacred inscriptions can help understand how bilingual texts could play an active role in the negotiation and expression of cultural and religious relationships.

By examining a range of bilingual epigraphic evidence, the paper will also consider the technical and stylistic aspects of these inscriptions, such as syntactic irregularities, translations, or hybrid linguistic forms, which may signal varying levels of competence in foreign languages. Such linguistic features offer insights into the religious and social hierarchies present at the time, highlighting the ways in which sacred inscriptions became a medium through which communities, as well as individuals, articulated their cultural identities in an evolving society.

Andrea Gatzke
State University of New York at New Paltz

Defining Cultural Spaces: Bilingual Arches and Gates in Roman Anatolia

Within the cities of the Roman Empire, gates and archways served as important monuments for dividing and distinguishing one space from another. Because of their prominent position over important passageways, providing access to buildings, gathering spaces, and cities themselves, arches and gates were particularly well suited for disseminating messages to the populace about the dedicator, the space which the gate marked, or the broader urban layout. In the cities of Roman Anatolia, such monuments frequently bore fully or partially bilingual Latin-Greek inscriptions. These bilingual texts certainly aimed at communicating essential information to a variety of language speakers, but differences between the content of each language's text, and the varying ways that the languages adorned these transitional spaces, suggest that these inscriptions also played a role in defining the urban spaces in terms of their relationship to local, regional, and/or imperial identities. This paper aims to explore how multilanguage inscriptions may have helped to produce and reproduce spaces of meaning, social belonging, and group identity in Roman Anatolia. Multilingual inscriptions can reveal a great deal to us about the individuals responsible for – or honored in – these texts, especially in terms of their identities and loyalties *vis-à-vis* both the local communities and the Roman imperial sphere. Yet there has been little consideration of the ways that these texts could simultaneously assign meaning to the urban spaces themselves and help to delineate certain buildings, squares, or neighborhoods as belonging to, appealing to, or being dominated by a particular ethnolinguistic group. Through this use of written space, provincial residents, imperial administrators, and even emperors could use language to claim or present certain areas of a city as belonging to the Greek-speaking citizenry, and other areas as relating more strongly to the imperial Roman sphere. In cities such as Ephesus, Perge, Laodicea ad Lycum, and Hierapolis, bilingual texts on gates, arches, and other passageways show that these structures served as both physical and ideological markers.
This paper incorporates a wide variety theoretical approach from both within and outside of traditional Classical studies. I connect the work of Roman archaeologists and epigraphers (e.g. Mitchell, Laurence, Cooley, and Burrell) to theories from sociolinguistics (e.g. Landry & Bourhis), semiotics (e.g. Scollon & Scollon), social theory and geography (e.g. Lefebvre; Massey) to connect the physical world of Roman Anatolia to the complex identities and social structures of the people who inhabited it.

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Abigail Graham
British School at Rome

Inextricably Entwined? Literal and Figural entanglements on *symplegma* bases in the Harbor Gymnasium at Ephesus.

The city of Ephesus has a unique trove of bilingual inscriptions which present varying images and messages of cultural engagement. Three bilingual bases from the Harbour Gymnasium (*I.Eph* 509, 857, 858) are particularly fascinating as reflections of duality that are conveyed not only in the use of languages (Latin and Greek) but also in the benefactor pairs and the *symplegma* "entwined" sculptural figures. While bilingual inscriptions are often viewed as state or official proclamations from imperial or local officials, these dedications reflect the inclusion of a broader social spectrum, including freedmen, men and women, husbands, wives, and daughters, each of whom expresses diverse messages and engagements with Roman and Greek cultures.[1] As a collection, the bases provide a precious opportunity to assess how benefactors and viewers, participated and defined their roles within a thriving cosmopolitan community of 2nd c. CE Ephesus. Dedicated within a decade (*ca*. 103-109 CE), the texts provide a rare snapshot of civic participation in a specific time and space. Each base reflects subtle differences in the use of languages (syntactic, spelling and formula), the inclusion/exclusion of titles and officials, as well as the visual presentation of bilingualism: the arrangement and execution of the inscription. How does the visual juxtaposition of language, like a sculpture of two entwined figures, create an image of cultural engagement?

Previous scholars have considered the text of the inscriptions and/or the sculptures, but there has not been a holistic study of the bases considering text and language, alongside materiality and imagery.[2] While linguistic assessments tend to focus on similarities in formula, expression, and vocabulary, this case study draws attention to variation and individuality: how the language, message, and appearance of the bases interacted with benefactors, viewers and each other. Careful assessments of physicality including new photographs and corrected measurements allow one to explore the experience of viewing these bases from a range of perspectives. Stepping beyond conventional constraints of literacy, which was not necessarily required to recognise the presence of two languages, this survey also considers engagements with broader audiences: those who may not have been conventionally literate but could read the imagery and the visual layout of the inscription. These dedications present diverse and dynamic cultural and linguistic syncretism, reflecting an emerging concept of "Graeco-Roman" identity that is not decidedly Greek or Roman but an inextricable amalgamation of both.

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[1] Kearsely, R. (1999) "Bilingual inscriptions at Ephesos: The statue bases from the Harbor Gymnasium," in H. Freisinger & F. Krinzinger (eds*.) 100 Jahre österreichische Forschungen in Ephesos.* Vienna: ÖAW: 147-155.

[2] Keil, J. (1952) "Skulpturengruppen in Ephesos," *JÖAI* 39: 42-50; Picard. C. (1955) "Les "symplemata" du gymnase hellénistico-romain d'Éphèse et la décoration statuaire des édifices de sport à l'époque romaine impériale," *CRAI:* 21-29; Betz, A. (1970) "Ephesia" *Klio* 52: 27-32; Kearsely 1999.

Laura Nastasi
University of Manchester, British School at Athens

Graeco-Latin Writing Habits in Roman Corinth

After the foundation of the Roman colony Colonia Laus Iulia Corinthiensis around 44 BCE, the epigraphic material of Corinth and of the areas under its influence saw the appearance and widespread diffusion of Latin, which survived as one of the main epigraphic languages for at least two centuries.[3] The socio-historical situation of the city and an attentive exam of the epigraphic material can make us think that (at least) the elite had been bilingual. In a context of continuous linguistic and sociocultural interaction, it is no surprise that the contact extended beyond the language alone.

In this paper, I will argue that the cultural interaction in a Roman colony like Corinth is visible also in certain epigraphical features, such as the adoption of punctuation in Greek inscriptions.[4] That word division and punctuation were used in Greek inscriptions in some phases of their history, including in the Roman imperial period, is not surprising.[5] However, their usage in Corinth in some particular inscriptions seems intrinsically connected with the presence of Roman/Latin elements, to the point that we wonder if their use could in some instances count as a form of (code)switching in a bilingual and bicultural context.

The use of punctuation in Greek inscriptions in Corinth did not always consist simply of its adoption by following the rules of Roman epigraphic practices. In some cases, we see the possible adaptation of Roman practices to make certain elements more prominent in the text. For example, in the Greek funerary inscription Corinth 8.3.294, a middle point is not used to separate each word, as we would expect in Latin, but to separate the full name of each of the Roman (and Greek?) deceased commemorated. The fact that this practice appears in a Greek inscription that additionally shows the adoption of a formula typical of Latin (see Kent 1966: 116, Adams 2003: 82) makes us suspect that the signs were deliberately adopted to strengthen the portrayal of the deceased as Roman.

A striking example is the imperial dedication (Corinth 8.3.116) from the later period of Roman Corinth's history (251-253 CE). This Greek inscription exhibits a unique character switch in the name of the Emperor being celebrated. Furthermore, there is only one instance of punctuation, placed after one of the most "Roman" elements of the imperial naming formula. This suggests that the association between punctuation and Romanness was so strong that the stonecutter momentarily adopted more Roman practices when inscribing part of the imperial nomenclature.

The current working hypothesis is that the use of punctuation in the inscriptions in Greek further testifies the bilingual and bicultural situation of Corinth in the Roman period.

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[3] Latin was dominant in the public domain, but Greek was still attested in the private domain: Millis 2010, p. 31.

[4] Crellin suggests a similar hypothesis of the influence of Latin practices on two inscriptions from Sicily in the imperial period: Crellin 2022, pp. 211-217. Cf. also Del Corso 2017, pp. 43-59, about Egypt.

[5] See, for example, Threatte 1980, pp. 85-91.

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Florian Feil
University of Trier

The funerary inscriptions and social history of Dyrrhachion in Hellenistic-Imperial times

The immigration of Italians to the conquered regions is often assumed to have been the cause of political, economic, cultural and linguistic change in many regions of the Late Hellenistic Mediterranean. However, the extent of the phenomenon (apart from Delos, clearly exceptional), as well as the interests and strategies of historical actors involved in this phenomenon, remain largely unclear. Overarching studies are lacking since Wilson's *Emigration from Italy in the Republican Age of* Rome (1966).

One reason for this has been scholarly caution in the interpretation of Italian names attested in Greek Hellenistic inscriptions. Do these names attest to actual Italian immigration or to locals borrowing their names from the new ruling power? The most promising approach to this problem is a large-scale statistical evaluation of the epigraphic/onomastic record. In the introductory section of the paper, epigraphic data from Carthage, Sicily, Illyria and Greece will be used to demonstrate that in foreign contexts, Italian names were either passed on through generations (appearing as both a person's patronymic and their actual name) or given up in favour of epichoric names (leading to an Italian patronymic combined with a non-Italian personal name; alternation through generations seems to be rare), but were hardly ever adopted by non-Italians (leading to a rarity of Italian names combined with non-Italian patronymics). This justifies the assumption that Italian names outside Italy in the Republican period generally belong to Italian immigrants.

On this assumption, the patterns associated with Italian names in inscriptions in a given situation acquire relevance for the historical questions sketched above. In the main part of the paper, the epigraphic record from Dyrrhachion will be examined in dialogue with literary, archaeological and numismatic sources. In this important Graeco-Illyrian trading centre with a long-standing Italian/Roman presence, many Hellenistic (mainly Greek) and Imperial (mainly Latin) inscribed funerary monuments have been preserved. This permits a statistical approach to local social history, both by the names and by the monuments themselves.

The case study is based on more precise dating of the several hundred Greek funerary monuments, which are mostly plain *cippi/kioniskoi* similar to those found in Athens from the late fourth c. BC onwards. Many of them are recorded without their findspots, and none with a documented archaeological context, so their style and palaeography have rightly been excluded as too insecure criteria for dating. Recent archaeological re-examination of the necropoleis, however, has confirmed the assumption that the Hellenistic Western necropolis was abandoned in the Augustan period, probably with the establishment of the Roman colony, after which a different necropolis was established in the North (Shehi et al. 2020, in Lepore/Muka (eds), *L'archeologia della morte in Illiria e in Epiro*), where stylistically Roman, Latin-inscribed monuments dominate.

The implications of these findings for the dating and historical interpretation of the funerary monuments haven't been discussed. They give a rough date (i.e. before or after 35 BC) of those Greek-inscribed monuments which can be assigned to either necropolis. This allows for a closer (but still rough) estimate of their chronology based on palaeography, as well as the tentative application of palaeographic dating to some of the monuments for which no findspots are noted, but which have an indicative palaeography.

Based on this closer dating of the funerary monuments of Hellenistic-Imperial Dyrrhachion, patterns in funerary monuments, linguistics and onomastics of individuals can be studied, and a bottom-up perspective on group identities emerges. Summarily, Italian immigrants first integrated into a Graeco-Illyrian society, often assimilating onomastically to the Greeks, but rarely to the Illyrians. In the late second and early first century BC, Italians begin displaying special strategies of distinction in funerary forms and nomenclature (displaying two names instead of one). After a short period of experimentation with Latin or Roman-style *kioniskoi* and bilingual *stelai* in the Caesarian period, the

Roman colonists distinguished themselves by erecting Roman-style, Latin-inscribed monuments, while the newly disenfranchised Greek *incolae* continued to set up their Greek *kioniskoi* in the new necropolis. Both Illyrian and Latin names are virtually absent from them, suggesting strict social segregation and a stark loss of prestige of Illyrian culture – the latter coinciding with the destruction of traditional native hillforts and the redistribution of land to the colonists.

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The Impact of Latin Inscriptions in the Augustan Colonies: A Comparative Study

The Augustan period saw the foundation of numerous veteran colonies across the Roman Empire, profoundly influencing the cultural, political, and social landscapes of the provinces. A key element of this transformation was the introduction of Latin epigraphy, which served as both a medium of communication and a tool of cultural assimilation. This study proposes to explore the impact of inscriptions in the Augustan veteran colonies [with the particular focus on Augusta Emerita (Mérida, Spain), Augusta Lugdunum (Lyon, France), Iulia Carthago (Carthage, Tunisia), Actia Nicopolis (Preveza, Greece), and Iulia Augusta Philippensis (Filippoi, Greece)].

This paper proposes an in-depth analysis of the role Latin epigraphy played in shaping the cultural and social landscapes of the Augustan veteran colonies [with the particular focus on Augusta Emerita (Mérida, Spain), Augusta Lugdunum (Lyon, France), Iulia Carthago (Carthage, Tunisia), Actia Nicopolis (Preveza, Greece), and Iulia Augusta Philippensis (Filippoi, Greece)].Through these colonies, the Augustan regime introduced Latin inscriptions as both a medium of communication and a tool for cultural assimilation.

The core focus of this presentation will be on how Latin inscriptions operated at the intersection of Roman power and local traditions, facilitating the co-habitation of Latin and other languages while simultaneously reflecting the rebirth of Latin epigraphy in the provinces. I will explore how these inscriptions functioned as markers of Roman authority, monumentalizing Roman identity and law while also revealing signs of cultural negotiation, local adaptation, and resistance.

The development of regional epigraphic habits will be examined through a comparative lens, emphasizing how different colonies exhibited unique epigraphic traditions that combined Roman forms with local influences. This analysis will also address parallel processes across these regions, shedding light on how similar and divergent practices emerged in response to the imperial presence.

Finally, the paper will discuss the materiality, epigraphic support, and iconography of these inscriptions. By focusing on the physical aspects of the inscriptions—such as the stones used, placement, and visual elements—this presentation will provide insights into how these epigraphic monuments contributed to the process of Romanization and the redefinition of local identities.

This proposal seeks to contribute to the growing field of Latin epigraphy and Roman provincial studies, offering a poly-comparative approach that enhances our understanding of cultural dynamics in the Roman Empire. The study will provide valuable insights into the role of writing as an active agent of cultural transformation in the context of Roman colonialism.