

Postgraduate Course Roman Epigraphy

Arrival on Thursday 27 June – Departure Saturday 6 July 2024

Course information

The seventh biennial taught course in Roman Epigraphy will take place on the 27th of June 2024. Based at the British School at Rome, this taught course offers a ten-day introduction to the scholarship, editorial practice, and publication of epigraphic materials from a variety of different approaches. The course's aim, intended for postgraduate scholars of ancient history, archaeology, museum studies and the classics, is to provide training and practical experience in epigraphy as a source. The course will examine the numerous contexts in which epigraphy is presented (*in situ*, *museums*, archives and in published formats (e.g., reference works and online databases) and explore the process of editing and publishing epigraphic materials. The use of digital resources, catalogues, and the process of publishing texts in these formats will be addressed in lectures and interaction with the *CIL* (volume 6) archives at La Sapienza with Prof. Silvia Orlandi. Evening lectures by leading international scholars in the field will allow participants to examine certain epigraphic topics and ongoing research projects in greater detail.

The course, which divides epigraphic materials into themes of a technical and cultural, consists of daily lectures, museum visits, epigraphic *ambulatio* through the city of Rome as well as research sessions at the British School's library and a trip to Ostia. Museum and site visits will include gallery lectures by curators and special permits to collections that are not open to the public.





Workshops at a series of different sites will develop skills in creating practical study materials such as drawings, rubbings, squeezes, and photographs of inscriptions. A component of this will be on epigraphic journal, which will be used to record one's work at each stage of the research process. Participants will also have an opportunity to further their own research in an independent project (a specific area of his/her epigraphic research) which will be developed during the course and presented in a short paper on the final day.



The BSR

The British School at Rome is Britain's leading humanities research institution overseas and is an ideal base for postgraduate study of Roman Epigraphy.

Cost and accommodation

The *estimated* course cost is €1400

This includes:

- membership to the British School at Rome
- 24/7 access to the library
- all in-course travel and site fees
- full board accommodation in a shared room at the BSR. A limited number of single rooms at €1700 is also available on a first come-first serve basis.
- Breakfast & dinner at the BSR (except for Saturday nights & Sunday lunch)
- classroom for the course
- entrance and special permits to sites in and around Rome.
- supplies for rubbings
- support from the course director

Please note that the cost of the course does not include the student's travel to or from Rome, insurance or Saturday dinner and Sunday lunch, or any other costs arising from your personal research project.

Students are strongly encouraged to seek funding from their own institutions.

Bursaries for travel have been generously offered in the past by the British Epigraphy Society and the Classical Association, further details will be provided to successful applicants.



How to Apply

Applicants will be accepted on the basis of merit and suitability for the course. The selection of participating students will be made by the course director in consultation with the BSR. Please note that this course is physically demanding with hours of walking in (at times) intemperate heat, students are expected to prepare accordingly.

With COVID, students may also be asked to provide proof of vaccination.

A prospective student's application must include:

- A cover letter with details of his/her current course and a consideration of how the BSR Postgraduate Epigraphy Course will contribute to the current/future studies, outlining the reasons for application
- A curriculum vitae
- A 350-word summary of a proposed topic for an independent research project during the course
- One letter of reference from his/her current institution
- One letter of reference from his/her undergraduate institution (for first year MA students or Ph.D students at a 'new' institution). Referees may email references directly to Abigail.graham@sas.ac.uk

Details of the upcoming course, Reports from previous courses (including a Syllabus), as well as application information can be found on the course webpage:

<http://www.bsr.oc.uk/welcome-to-rome/taught-courses/epigraphy>

Please email any further queries to the course coordinator Dr. Abigail Graham

Abigail.graham@sas.ac.uk

Deadline for applications: Wednesday 31 January 2024

(It is the responsibility of applicants to ensure that references are received by the deadline.) Applicants will be notified whether they have been accepted by the end of February.

Previous Course Report

Dr Abigail Graham

Course Director

The 2022 BSR Postgraduate Course in Epigraphy (July 10th-20st), 10-day immersive course based at the British School at Rome, had another phenomenally successful run. This 6th course marked a decade since the course was founded in 2012. This year we hosted a dozen participants from five countries and two continents. Ph.D. track students with a broad range of historical, archaeological, economic, linguistic, and didactic interests: inscribed poetry, Flavian women, representations of nationality, social networks & immigration, teaching Latin through epigraphy, the role of foster parents, orthodoxy & appearance of inscriptions, builders & guilds, representations of weight systems, and lightning strikes. The BSR was a wonderful host with excellent supporting staff, facilities, and resources, especially permit access (Stefania Peterlini). As a result, we were able to visit sites and museums, such as the Capitoline museums, Vatican museums, Ostia Antica, and the Forum Romanum, as well as the Tomb of the Scipios, the Catacombs, a Roman house on the Caelian Hill, often with reduced entry fees. These visits offered invaluable opportunities to engage with the text & contexts of inscriptions and to compare museum displays and reconstructions with original sites and texts.

Activities included tours by curators as well as private entry to the Galleria Lapidaria (Vatican museums). Profssa. Carlotta Caruso welcomed us at the Museo Nazionale Romano delle Terme, offering a tour of the collections and hosting a drawing session of boundary inscriptions in the Michelangelo courtyard. Profssa. Silvia Orlandi invited us to La Sapienza University, for a tutorial in the CIL Archives. Valentina Follo hosted our rubbing sessions at the American Academy. Evening papers by the coordinator: Dr. Abigail Graham (Institute for Classical Studies) included techniques for online searches and websites, advised by the creator of digital RIB and collaborator for the ERC project “Latin Now” Scott Vanderbilt. Dr. Grace Funsten, a Rome prize scholar at the AAR, presented her new research on poetic epitaphs in Rome. Finally, our “wine, cheese and squeeze” evening with resident artists, offered hands-on engagement with inscriptions in the BSR courtyard. Participants benefitted, by developing practical skills, collaborating in ongoing research projects, and forging lasting relationships with international postgraduates and scholars. Their final presentations were an excellent reminder of how important a hands-on approach to inscriptions can be and the value of a group dynamic.

After 10 years the course has become an invaluable resource and a catalyst in research & collaboration with a considerable cross-field impact (cf. <https://bsr.ac.uk/carrying-the-past-into-the-future-the-bsr-postgraduate-epigraphy-course-after-a-decade-2012-2022/>). Our Alumni include several founders & editors of the *New Classicists* (a postgraduate publication) <https://www.newclassicists.com/>, Two Rome Prize winners at the AAR (2022 and 2023), keynote speakers at BSR conferences, an award-winning letter carver at Westminster Abbey, and most especially: as guest speakers on subsequent BSR epigraphy courses. We are very grateful to the Classical Association and the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, whose continued generosity has played such a key role in supporting the course.

Testimonials

The course leader, Abigail Graham, had tailored the itinerary so that all the participants' research interests were covered, and had highlighted relevant inscriptions for each person at each site. She provided excellent tuition in the techniques and methods of epigraphy, which I always found accessible.

The course was extremely well organised, and Abigail's enthusiasm is infectious. It was amazing to see so many sites that are usually not accessible to the public. The schedule was full and intense, but relaxed enough that it did not feel rushed, and the techniques we have learned for contextualising and analysing epigraphy will benefit my research for many years to come.

This was an unparalleled opportunity to develop my professional skills and to connect with outstanding colleagues.

Learning in the academic environment of the BSR is again quite different from doing so in a conventional Classics department in the UK, and it allowed me to meet new and interesting people and hear their ideas. The variety of backgrounds of the participants on the course, and their different research interests, was one of its greatest strengths....It has also opened multiple opportunities for conferences, projects, and guest lecturing that I would not have had.

Staying at the BSR, having 24-hour access to an excellent library and dining together with an amazing amalgamation of visiting scholars and artists was an experience unlike any other. The staff are so friendly and helpful that the BSR soon feels like a second home.

Being able to experience epigraphic sources in various environments, and in particular museum collections and at ancient sites taught me to appreciate both settings - on one hand, seeing inscriptions in situ helps to understand how they interact with their immediate surroundings, while within a museum, detailed labels can provide historical and social context for an inscription.

Among my favourite experiences in the course was being taught how to do rubbings and squeezes, which provide a hands-on experience which allows details that no photograph ever could.

This experience truly deepened my understanding of inscriptions and their role as sources to shed light on the Roman world.

A thoughtful, inspiring, edifying and downright enjoyable tour of the world of Roman epigraphy.

Course sample

Day 1 Arrival

2.45 pm Epigraphic Ambulatio and Gelato

4.30 Library Tour

6.30: Lost in Translation? The Journey from Text to Monument (A. Graham)

Day 2: Crash course in Epigraphy and Methodology Location: Museo Epigrafico (Terme di Diocleziano)

9.30 Museum: introduction by Curator: Prof.ssa. Carlotta Carusso. (PERMIT) 11

AM: Genres & Dating in Epigraphy: Friend or Foe? An exploration of how we classify and date inscriptions, through the ground & upper floors.

1.30 PM: Activity in Museo Cortile with Prof. Silvia Orlandi (La Sapienza) Blank Spaces: Students are given a series of courtyard text to draw, photograph, document & study. Back at the BSR, we will compare notes and try to restore these inscriptions.

Then check these texts in the CI L @ the library.

Questions: How do scholars study and document on inscription? What can we learn from a hand-on interaction with the stone? What physical aspects of an inscription can be employed in dating a text? How can we use a series of similar monuments to support textual reconstructions? What do variations among similar texts suggest?

Evening: 6.45pm "Armchair Epigraphy": session in the library

Day 3: Inscriptions in Different Contexts:

Location: Forum Romanum and the Capitoline Museum.

9.30: PERMIT FOR ENTRY TO FORUM ROMANUM

Questions: How does the Forum Romanum present its epigraphic materials? How is context presented? What are the advantages/ disadvantages of this site.

11.00 PERMIT: Capitoline from 11.00/ 11.30 am CONFIRMED (SNACK!!!)

Activity: Object History: Students choose a text from this collection and try to document its history as an object.

Questions: What does object history add to our understanding of an inscription? What info can a museum display provide? How does this improve our understanding of an object?

PM. Optional walk back on the Triumphal route through the Campus Martius/ GELATO.

7 PM Leo Mitchell to present on Ostia.

Day 4: The Epigraphic Habit in Ostia Epigraphy Quotidien:

PERMIT FOR OSTIA (Leave BSR at 9am sharp) TBC

Activity: Seeing is Believing: Site Experience. Choose one in situ inscription at Ostia (from a funerary text on a tomb to a mosaic floor). Consider the roles of context and genre.

What does viewing and experiencing context add to our understanding of an inscription? Do genre classifications work well in an archaeological context (e.g., "private" vs "public" "honorary" vs. "dedicatory")

What role does an inscription play within a broader archaeological context?

PM: Research time. Optional visit to see inscriptions at Museo Montemartini + Gelato

Evening: Fantastic Texts & How to Find them: A Guide to using online databases.

Day 5: Funerary Monuments in Context Part II. the Via Appia. AM Catacombs of San Sebastiano, Caecilia Metella Museum. AM PERMIT: Caecilia Museum TB at 10am, Tour of San Sebastiano 11.30

PM Columbarium of Pomponius Hylas & Tomb of the Scipios (PERMITS) Columbarium of Pomponius Hylas at 3pm *Gelato by Circo Maximo Tomb of the Scipios at 5pm

Activity: Pick one text from the Caecilia Metella museum. Try to document, translate, and date it. Can you guess its context? Christian Vs. Pagan. What are the distinctions between "Pagan" and Christian epigraphy? Are these ancient or modern constructs? How would the ancient viewer have experienced these differences (in context)?

Day 6 * Leave BSR at 9.10AM

10 AM PERMIT St. Agnese. the visit to Epigraphic Gallery.

11.45AM: Recycling Monuments, Reusing inscriptions, rewriting history? Campus Martius in Reverse: Circo Maximus> Forum Boarium> Pons Fabricius (CIL I. 751)> (Cite of Restaurant: opt*: Claudian Pomerium in situ (Via Pellegrino). Piazza Navona (Stadium of Domitian), Pantheon, Horologium Obelisk Ara Pacis & Mausoleum of Aug. *gelato

Activity: Choose any reused monument in Rome and consider the following. How does reuse change the function and meaning of the original monument?

Does a different context, additional inscriptions, erasures, fundamentally change the function of an inscription? How might an ancient audience have viewed this phenomenon? How can we represent & record these changes in an epigraphic publication?

2PM: Research.

7.45: Leave for Dinner *8.30

Day 7: Research Day: Start Presentations in the Evening.

10am Water, Curses and Abraxas... *Optional trip to Anna Perenna (nearby) **

Evening: 5.30 -7.00: First presentations

7.00-8 pm: Wine, Cheese & Squeeze: Practical Workshop of photography & squeezes in the Courtyard at the BSR.

Day 8: Monuments out of context:

AM: Vatican" Galleria Lapidaria: Talk w/ Prof. Vania De Stefano Manzella

PERMIT 9.30 AM: for the Vatican (admission) and the Galleria Lapidaria

4 PM Activity: American Academy Rubbings with Valentina Follo.

"Hands-on" How does a tactile experience change our understanding of an inscription?

Day 9: Student Presentations.

9.30 Student Presentations & Lunch

2.30 PM: EAGLE/ CIL VI: Something old, something new: Publishing

Inscriptions and Using Archives with Profssa. Silvia Orlandi@ La Sapienza.

4-45 Battle of Gelati in the Campus Martius.

6.30 pm. Live Carving Demonstration & Drinks in the BSR Courtyard by Wayne Hart.

Day 10: Farewell.