

Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures cordially invites you
to a workshop on

Manuscripts at the Service of Epigraphy: Master Copies, Templates, and Other Exemplars in the Production of Pre-Modern Inscriptions

Tuesday, 29 June 2021, 10:00 am – 05:00 pm CEST

Zoom Meeting

Registration: <https://www.csmc.uni-hamburg.de/register-workshop7.html>



Captions:

Left: A Siamese inscription of graphic poems at Wat Pho monastery, Bangkok. Dated 1831–1832. Photograph by Peera Panarut.

Right: A detail of a Siamese royal manuscript containing a template for inscribing graphic poems at Wat Pho monastery, Bangkok, now preserved at the National Library of Thailand (Ms no. 229, *Khlong* Sub-section). Dated circa 1831. Reproduced with permission.

About the Workshop

One of the important albeit generally neglected features of formal inscriptions is the fact that they were often produced on the basis of a manuscript exemplar (*Vorlage*), be it a tailor-made master copy or a generic template. As any copying process, the transfer between the manuscript and epigraphic medium was not free of errors and distortion. This was especially true in cases where the production of a whole set of inscriptions followed a single exemplar. Over the past two centuries, scholars in various fields have only occasionally treated inscriptions as witnesses of their long-perished exemplars, yet even these sporadic instances succeeded to manifest how the text-critical approach can enhance our understanding of inscriptions as well as of the underlying manuscript cultures.

However, by considering the transfer between the two media, not only can we gain a better understanding of occasional mistakes or textual discrepancies, but more importantly, we are compelled to appreciate all other possible facets of the relationship between an inscription and its exemplar, including the aspect of form. The questions we should ask are thus not limited to just how faithfully the text of an inscription followed that of its master copy – we should also inquire whether the visual organization (size, script, layout, colour, etc.) or decorative motives of an inscription were assigned in the exemplar, and whether or not they were carried out successfully in the inscription. In short, how faithful are our inscriptions to their original design? And how was the challenge of the transfer tackled in different epigraphic traditions?

These questions are impossible to answer without considering the materiality of inscriptions' exemplars and practices related to their use. Towards this end, this workshop presents pioneering contributions undertaking the daunting task of recovering information about such (often lost) manuscripts and related epigraphic practices around the globe, exploring what the exemplars looked like, what information they contained, how exactly they were used in the production of inscriptions, or how they differed depending on the materiality of the epigraphic medium. By bringing to the fore the complex manuscript background of the epigraphic production and considering it in a comparative perspective, this workshop aims at refining our understanding of inscriptions not only as outcomes of textual composition but also of the fertile tension between prescriptiveness and creativity in the *chaîne opératoire* of their production.

Programme

Morning Session: 10:00 am–01:00 pm

Chair: Ondřej Škrabal (Hamburg)

- 10:00-10:10 Kaja Harter-Uibopuu (Hamburg): *Welcome and Opening Remarks*
- 10:10-10:50 Christelle Alvarez (Berlin): *Manuscripts, Templates, and Vorlage for the Inscription of Pyramid Texts in Ancient Egyptian Tombs*
- 10:50-11:30 Rocío Da Riva (Barcelona): *Models, Variants and Versions in the Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions: The Mistakes and Errors in the Brisa Rock Monuments of Lebanon*
- 11:30-11:40 Coffee break
- 11:40-12:20 Michele Faraguna (Milan): *The Materiality of Texts: From Stone Inscriptions to the Original Documents in the Epigraphy of Greek 'Poleis'*
- 12:20-01:00 Peter Kruschwitz & Victoria González Berdús (Vienna): *Connecting the Dots: Some Thoughts on the Spread and Diffusion of Recurring Carmina Latina Epigraphica*
- 01:00-02:00 Lunch Break

Afternoon Session: 02:00 pm–05:00 pm

Chair: Peera Panarut (Hamburg)

- 02:00-02:40 Annette Schmiedchen (Berlin): *Vorlagen, Drafts, Templates: The Production of Royal Copper-plate Charters in India*
- 02:40-03:20 Claudia Wenzel (Heidelberg): *Manuscripts and Buddhist Epigraphy in Medieval China*
- 03:20-03:30 Break
- 03:30-04:10 Michel Lorrillard (Vientiane): *Crossed Views on Epigraphic and Manuscripts Traditions in Laos*
- 04:10-04:50 Peera Panarut (Hamburg): *Organising before Inscribing: Manuscripts as Master Copies of Inscriptions in the 19th Century Thailand*
- 04:50-05:00 General Discussion and Closing Remarks

Abstracts and Contributors

Manuscripts, Templates, and *Vorlage* for the Inscription of Pyramid Texts in Ancient Egyptian Tombs

Christelle Alvarez (10:10–10:50)

Abstract: Ancient Egyptian kings and queens of the Late Old Kingdom (ca. 2350 to 2100 BCE) inscribed the subterranean areas of their pyramid with ritual texts known as Pyramid Texts. Hundreds of these spells carved in hieroglyphic script cover the walls and corridors of eleven pyramids. However, no evidence of manuscripts nor intermediate models with such texts has been found. This paper first gives an overview of the *Vorlage* for tomb inscriptions known in later periods, specifically in the New Kingdom. It discusses the materiality and function of different media in ancient Egypt, including ostraca, wooden boards, and papyrus. It then addresses the practical aspects of copying the texts in the pyramids by investigating marks linked to sketching the texts on the walls and mistakes deriving from the copying process. The aim is to explore the relationship between the stone inscription and hypothetical text carriers in order to better grasp how these texts were transferred to their monumental context.

Christelle ALVAREZ is a postdoctoral researcher with the Collaborative Research Project 980 ‘Knowledge in motion’, Freie Universität Berlin, where she focusses on the transmission of mortuary literature from the Old Kingdom to the Middle Kingdom Egypt. She was a postdoctoral research associate in the Department of Egyptology and Assyriology at Brown University in 2020–21. She holds a doctoral degree from the University of Oxford, writing her dissertation on *Inscribing the pyramid of king Qakare Ibi: scribal practice and mortuary literature in late Old Kingdom Egypt*, which was supervised by Prof. Baines and Prof. Parkinson (publication in preparation). As a member of the Mission archéologique franco-suisse de Saqqâra, she is in charge of the updated publication of the texts of king Qakare Ibi, including the hundreds of fragments found in 2015, as well as the publication of the stone and metal vessels of queen Neit. She is also a board member of the Centre for Manuscript and Text Cultures, University of Oxford, where she is currently a co-editor and contributor to the Centre’s first journal issue *Monumentality of writing in premodern cultures*.

Models, Variants and Versions in the Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions: The Mistakes and Errors in the Brisa Rock Monuments of Lebanon

Rocío Da Riva (10:50–11:30)

Abstract: The kings of the Neo-Babylonian period (626–539 BCE) recorded their official activities on durable material supports, such as bronze, stone, or clay. The basic function of royal inscriptions was to ensure the king a place in the human and divine world through the long-lasting testimony of the written word; they guarantee the *zikir šumi*, the “naming” of the king, his reputation in the present, and his projection in the future. A royal inscription is a complex unit formed by “text”, “material support (of the text)”, “duplicate” or “copy” and “version”. In the process of composition of a royal inscription one could theoretically distinguish an initial concept

(*Ausgangskonzept*), written down in several drafts (*Entwurf*), one of which is approved and becomes the original inscription (*Urschrift*). From the *Urschrift* emerge the models (*Vorlage*), and the final result (*Endausführung*) is the fixed written composition, which may be the result of several models. The (written) object is the support that, combined with the place the inscription is set (setting), gives a function to the text. In other words, when the text is connected with a support situated in a particular place, we have an inscription. The various inscriptions of the same text are called duplicates; if the duplicates present considerable variations, then we are dealing with versions, which may be the result of different models used to create the text. It is difficult to know whether the practice responded to the rigid model referred to above; the reality was probably more flexible, but also more complicated. I would like to test this heuristic framework on the basis of the mistakes and errors observable in the Brisa inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar II carved on the rocks of a ravine in northern Lebanon.

Rocío DA RIVA studied in Madrid, Ghent, Erlangen and Würzburg. She obtained her PhD at the University of Würzburg (2002). She has worked on the cuneiform collections of museums in Europe, North America and the Middle East, and has studied and edited the corpus of the Neo-Babylonian royal inscriptions. Her main research interests are Neo-Babylonian administrative and historical texts, the political history of Babylonia in the first millennium BC, temple ritual texts from Hellenistic Babylonia and literary texts from the Late Babylonian period, including the *Divine Love Lyrics* (in co-edition with Nathan Wasserman). She has published several articles and books on these topics, given lectures and seminars in the main universities and research centres around the world, and has been visiting researcher in several international institutions during stays of various lengths. She has also been visiting professor at the Venice International University and has taught courses at the Yarmouk University of Irbid and at the Universität Tübingen. At present she is the director of the archaeological excavations on the site of Sela, in Jordan, where she carries out research on Iron Age Edom. Rocío Da Riva is currently full professor in the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Barcelona.

<http://www.ub.edu/prehist/component/tlpteam/team/dra-rocio-da-riva-munoz>

<http://ub.academia.edu/wwwubedu>

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Rocio_Da_Riva

The Materiality of Texts: From Stone Inscriptions to the Original Documents in the Epigraphy of Greek *Poleis*

Michele Faraguna (11:40–12:20)

Abstract: This paper deals with administrative documents in Archaic and Classical Greece, both at Athens and in other *poleis*. It starts from the assumption that ancient literate habits were complex and that the Greeks, as indicated by a substantial number of terms which are not always perfectly understood, used a variety of writing media, including papyrus, leather, wooden boards (waxed or whitened), lead, bronze, and stone. Only a limited number of administrative documents (i.e. laws, decrees, treaties, inventories, accounts, lists, etc.) were selectively committed to writing in permanent form for display on stone (or bronze) in some public or sacred space. Since the original documents on perishable materials are now lost, the question therefore arises

why (and according to what criteria) some texts were deemed worthy of public display and whether the inscribing of documents was a functional or symbolic act (or something else).

The aim of my presentation is to show how an approach focusing on writing materials can bring new insights into this question by exploring the interplay between documents on different media. The first part of this paper will briefly deal, as an introduction, with the role played by public documents on perishable materials – first of all wooden tablets and papyrus – as a means for both temporary display and archival safekeeping. In the second part, it will focus on some aspects concerning the layout of texts in inscriptions and, in particular, with columnar formatting and with the use of diacritical signs, especially the *paragraphos*, which appears in a number of epigraphic decrees, lists, and accounts mainly on stone *stelai* but occasionally also on bronze and lead plates (and sometimes in surprisingly early texts). It will be suggested that such devices could have reflected, and originated from, the formatting of the original copies written on perishable materials.

Michele FARAGUNA is Professor of Greek history at the University of Milan. His work has focused on Greek political, administrative, economic, and legal history from the Archaic age to Hellenism. He is about to complete a book on archival practices and public archives in the Greek cities.

Connecting the Dots: Some Thoughts on the Spread and Diffusion of Recurring *Carmina Latina Epigraphica*

Peter Kruschwitz & Victoria González Berdús (12:20–13:00)

Abstract: There is a wide-spread view of the *Carmina Latina Epigraphica* as a body of poetry that not only builds on a (fairly narrow) set of topics and formulaic expressions, but also to a significant percentage rests on a limited number of stereotypical, recurring forms. This is linked to an idea of an empire-wide use of pattern books, assisting stonecutters in their design of such texts, almost giving users a menu from which to choose their respective form of poetic commemoration. In our presentation we will tackle this question from two different ends: on the one hand, we will assess the number of actually recurring pieces as well as try to trace the spread of one of them, and on the other hand we will raise if there could be different reasons for the existence of recurring pieces linked to forms of mobility during the empire (especially with a view to the military).

Peter KRUSCHWITZ is Professor of Ancient Cultural History at the University of Vienna, Principal Investigator of the ERC-funded project 'MAPPOLA – Mapping Out the Poetic Landscape(s) of the Roman Empire' and Co-Investigator of the ERC-funded Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Innovative Training Network project 'CARMEN – Communal Art: Reconceptualising Metrical Epigraphy Network'. He was previously Professor of Classics at the University of Reading. His research interests lie in the field of Roman poetic and song cultures, with particular emphasis on non-elites. He has published broadly on Roman verse inscriptions, Roman drama, and Latin linguistics (especially in the fields of sociolinguistics and linguistics as history of mentality).

Victoria GONZÁLEZ BERDÚS earned her doctorate in Classical Philology at the University of Seville with the dissertation *Carmina Latina Epigraphica de la Galia Bélgica, edición y estudio*. Between 2014 and 2019, she worked as a doctoral student within the project ‘Hacia un nuevo volumen del CIL: XVIII/3: Carmina Latina Epigraphica de las Galias, edición y comentario – Transferencia online de resultados’. She also worked as an external collaborator for the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. Since October 2019, she is a post-doctoral researcher in the ERC project MAP-POLA at the University of Vienna, where she further studies the regional diversification of Latin epigraphic poetry, with a strong interest in the Gallia Belgica and Germania Superior. She is also a member of the research project ‘Carmina Latina Epigraphica como expresión de la identidad del mundo romano: estudios interdisciplinarios’ at the University of Seville.

Vorlagen, Drafts, Templates: The Production of Royal Copper-plate Charters in India

Annette Schmiedchen (14:00–14:40)

Abstract: Thousands of inscriptions from ancient and medieval India, mainly engraved on either stone or copper plates, are preserved. In contrast to many other regions of the world, epigraphs are the most important, and often the only, sources for the (re)construction of the pre-modern history of South Asia. Despite their large numbers and great importance, we still know rather little about the actual processes underlying the production of Indian inscriptions. However, there is evidence for the fact that drafts or templates were used while producing many epigraphs, in particular royal inscriptions. In the medieval period, copper-plate inscriptions, a characteristic, pan-Indian epigraphic medium, were the most widespread type of royal inscriptions in many parts of the South Asian subcontinent. They are often called ‘copper-plate grants’, because they predominantly record donations, mainly royal endowments in favour of religious recipients. Copper-plate charters were issued to serve as title-deeds for the donees of the grants, enabling them to prove their legal claims over landed property or other assets which they had received.

Unfortunately, no manuscript exemplars for such copper-plate charters have survived. It is not known whether these copper-plate charters were actually copies of documents originally written on other (perishable) materials, or whether they were themselves the ‘originals’ and no ‘tailor-made master copies’ ever existed. The inscriptional evidence, however, proves that some kind of generic templates must have been used, at least for certain parts of the texts on the individual charters. The vast majority of the extant endowment records engraved on copper plates have a threefold structure, consisting of a panegyric account on the dynasty of the royal donor, a description of the endowment proper, and verses to protect the grant from confiscation. It is primarily the panegyrics (in Sanskrit: *praśasti*) which show clear traces for the fact that drafts or templates were used in their production. Epigraphical evidence from early medieval western and central India will be discussed to illustrate the process of textual composition of Sanskrit inscriptions.

Annette SCHMIEDCHEN is an Indologist and a specialist of premodern Indian history and Sanskrit epigraphy. She has focussed on editing the inscriptional corpora of the Maitraka and Rāṣṭrakūṭa dynasties of Western and Central India, studied religious patronage and its legitimation function in Buddhist, Hindu and Jaina contexts, and done research in an intercultural ERC project on medieval foundations and endowments. Annette Schmiedchen has a Master and a PhD in Indology

from Humboldt University, Berlin. She received her Habilitation degree in Indology from Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Germany. Since May 2019, she has been acting as one of the Principal Investigators of the ERC project DHARMA, based at Humboldt University, Berlin.

Manuscripts and Buddhist Epigraphy in Medieval China

Claudia Wenzel (14:40–15:20)

Abstract: Buddhist epigraphy, i.e. the carving of Buddhist sacred text in their entirety or in excerpts into stone, is a relatively short-lived phenomenon in China that mainly flourished from the sixth to the ninth century. While the process of copying and dissemination of the carved texts through rubbings taken with ink on paper is well understood, not much is known about the role of manuscripts in the production of these inscriptions. However, Buddhist epigraphy in China provides a few examples where the exemplar of the text to be carved may have influenced the layout or the visual organization of the stone texts. During the earliest phase of production, texts were written in large characters—measuring 40–300 cm in diameter—directly onto the rock surface, probably with the help of enormous brushes. A network of clerics and laypeople appears to have shared a set of manuscripts when they commissioned and produced such inscriptions in Shandong province in the second half of the sixth century. The Dunhuang manuscript S. 2653 (not dated) is the closest text witness to the so-called 98-character passage repeatedly carved by the donors in Shandong.

From the seventh century onwards, Buddhist texts were also carved inside caves. At one of these sites, the Grove of the Reclining Buddha (Wofoyuan) in Sichuan, a stone relief sutra shrine was discovered that may have served as storage for the manuscripts used in the production of the texts carved in 15 caves at this large complex. The world-largest Buddhist carving project ever, the stones sutras of the Fangshan canon, relied in its first phase from 616 to the end of the Tang dynasty (618–904) on manuscripts. In 740, the hand-written Kaiyuan canon (completed 730) was donated to the project to ensure the continuation of the sutra carving. During the ninth century, we finally see that the most common format of Chinese manuscripts—long scrolls inscribed in vertical columns from right to left—was adopted for the stone slabs to be carved. At the latest from 894 onwards, the text on the slabs was arranged in horizontal registers placed on top of each other, probably to ease the making of rubbings from the stones. At the end of the 12th century, the Fangshan carving project was abandoned, possibly because the evolution of woodblock printing had turned stone carving unprofitable.

Claudia WENZEL is a senior researcher in the research unit ‘Buddhist Stone Inscriptions in China’ hosted by the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. She is the editor of two of a total of seven volumes so far published in the series *Buddhist Stone Sutras in China* (Series editor: Lothar Ledderose): Volume 2 on *Buddhist Stone Sutras in Shandong Province* (together with Wang Yongbo) and Volume 3 on *Buddhist Stone Sutras in Sichuan Province* (together with Sun Hua). Apart from more contributions to all volumes in this series, she has also separately published on Chinese epigraphy and related art-historical topics.

Crossed Views on Epigraphic and Manuscripts Traditions in Laos

Michel Lorrillard (15:30–16:10)

Abstract: The existence of textual correspondences between the manuscript and epigraphic traditions of the ancient Lao kingdom of Lan Xang (14th–19th centuries) does not seem obvious at first. A few dozen inscribed steles found in Laos and Northeast Thailand commemorate religious foundations: their purpose and function then seem quite different from those of the rare royal chronicles that have survived. A closer look at these two categories of sources, but also and above all the consideration of other types of manuscript documents hitherto ignored or left aside, shows however similarities and intertextual relations between these corpora. If it is true that historiographical traditions convey, in a more or less altered way, some information provided by stone inscriptions, it also appears that these belonged in fact to a larger group of texts that have largely disappeared. Because of the durability of their material, the inscribed steles have thus become the almost exclusive evidence of an ‘administrative’ written production that was undoubtedly important. The masterpieces of this production, using media as diverse as metals (gold, silver, bronze), palm leaves, paper and cloth, were obviously the *rājā ājñā* or royal orders, but to these were associated the correspondences and instructions of the principal dignitaries, territorial charters, law texts, and even inscribed seals of different origins. The Lao inscriptions on stelae, whose form very quickly became fixed, bear the mark of all these documents, both in their rhetoric and in certain material or aesthetic aspects.

Michel LORRILLARD is a lecturer in Southeast Asian History at the École française d'Extrême-Orient. For several years he has directed the EFEO centre in Vientiane. His research focuses on the ancient history (5th–19th centuries) of the Middle Mekong Valley, particularly of Laos and Northeast Thailand, based on written sources (manuscripts and inscriptions) and archaeological remains. Most important themes of his current work include the role of Khmer and Mon substrates in the development of Lao culture, the diffusion of Buddhism in the Lao milieu, and the development of the Lao historiographic tradition.

Organising before Inscribing: Manuscripts as Master Copies of Inscriptions in the 19th Century Thailand

Peera Panarut (16:10–16:50)

Abstract: Despite their different traditions and use of materials, in many writing cultures manuscripts are often employed as master copies for the textual and visual organisation of inscriptions. In the case of Thailand, traces of epigraphic organisation are found in Siamese manuscripts of the 19th century. For instance, some manuscripts which preserve texts prepared for being inscribed on stone and golden-plates also contain paratexts recording the calculation of the inscribed lines, sometimes also the size of the inscription. Royal scribes, furthermore, were even assigned to produce the master copy of some inscription texts in the form of manuscripts with the intention to ask for the King’s approval prior to the realisation of the inscriptions. This is testified in several cases of Wat Pho inscriptions (1831–1832) within the confines of the royal palace in Bangkok, especially for inscriptions of graphic poetry (*khlóng konlabot*) since here the presentation of texts and diagrams appears to be more complicated than for other inscriptions

merely containing only texts. Though not much evidence has survived, this group of manuscripts reveals a careful textual and visual organisation in the preparation process of inscription production. This is another aspect of the Siamese writing culture which deserves more scholarly attention.

Peera PANARUT is a postdoctoral researcher at the Cluster of Excellence 'Understanding Written Artefacts' at the University of Hamburg. Having graduated with his Bachelor in Thai language and literature at Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok, Thailand) in 2012, Peera earned his Master of Arts in 2015 in Thai Studies at the University of Hamburg and his PhD in 2019 at the same university with a doctoral dissertation on paratexts and textual transmission of Ayutthaya literature. His publications and research interests cover Thai philology (textual criticism, manuscript studies, epigraphy and palaeography), Thai literary and book history as well as Thai classical poetry.