



XVII CONGRESSVS INTERNATIONALIS EPIGRAPHIÆ GRÆCÆ ET LATINÆ

BONONIÆ MMXXVII | 30th August – 4th September 2027

Panel 07: Post-Classical Epigraphy Epigraphies Following Those of Antiquity, Not Necessarily in Classical Languages

Chairs: Antonio Felle, Muriel Moser-Gerber

About thirty years ago, at the 11th International Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy in Rome in 1997, D. Feissel observed that “l'épigraphie de l'antiquité tardive n'est plus... le parent pauvre qu'elle fut.” It was at this same meeting that Silvio Panciera established – for the first time – a section dedicated especially to the Greek and Latin Epigraphy after Constantine. Dedicated sessions for the epigraphy of Late Antiquity (disappeared in the successive three international epigraphy congresses: Barcelona 2002, Oxford 2007, Berlin 2012), were brought back to life in 2017 in Vienna (Late Antique and Byzantine Epigraphy), and in 2022 in Bordeaux (Epigraphic traditions after the reign of Diocletian).

The approach taken at the 1997 epigraphy congress in Rome, namely Greek and Latin Epigraphy after Constantine, appears to consider the beginning of Late Antique epigraphy as coinciding with the inception of a Christian Empire: Silvio Panciera also opened the way to regarding the religious element as a particularly important aspect of the epigraphy of this period. This has helped in deconstructing the obsolete and misleading artificial separation of the Early Christian inscriptions from the general frame of Late Antique epigraphy, as efficiently synthesized also by A.E. Cooley: “The rooting and growth of Christianity in the Roman Empire was the catalyst for many significant changes in political ideology, society, and culture that together created the distinctive character of the period now known as ‘late antiquity’” (Cooley 2012, p. 228). In addition, it is beyond doubt that the Early Christian epigraphy of Late Antiquity constitutes the foundation of what may be defined as “Christian epigraphy” proper—that is, Byzantine epigraphy in the East and medieval epigraphy in the West. These epigraphic traditions possess little substance outside the religious sphere, as can be observed in Coptic, pre-Islamic, and early Islamic inscriptions, as well as—within Europe— in Anglo-Saxon and Gothic examples.

Indeed, not only the rise of Christianity, but also migrations and the consequent post-classical cultures – also in languages other than Greek and Latin – did not only transform the world of Classical Antiquity, but also the usual epigraphic habit. New contents, forms and rules were applied, other players, languages and audiences involved, new locations, objects and contexts used. What, then, is post-classical epigraphy, and where do we find it? This session about the epigraphic cultures of the Post-Classical world, from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages, seeks to offer a window into the rich field of late-antique, Byzantine and Medieval epigraphic phenomena with a view to highlight the added value of





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studying these “late” transformations also for the analysis of “Classical” Greek and Latin inscriptions. We therefore invite contributions on the epigraphic habit of late-antique, Byzantine and Medieval communities (4th to 13th centuries). Papers tracing «transformation» in respect of Classical epigraphy, also in languages and communities other than Greek and Latin, are particularly welcome.

