

## *Epigraphy and Roman law in the Twenty-First Century*

The first two decades of the twenty-first century have seen both a remarkable revival of the work on Roman law by 'general' historians and its expansion into new areas, such as the study of the interactions between Roman law and local law in provincial and municipal contexts, and the role of law and legal institutions in the development of Roman economy. This has been accompanied by important new work on the dissemination of law and legal knowledge in the Roman world, notably the REDHIS project.

Epigraphy has played a central role in this revival of scholarly interest in legal history in three important interlocking respects. First, naturally enough, major new epigraphic finds continued to attract research in new directions. While the effect of the publication of the *lex Irnitana* and of the *sc. de Cn. Pisone patre* is far from being entirely spent, we may note the role of such finds as the treaty of Rome with Lycia, the so-called *lex portorii provinciae Lyciae* found at Andriake, the letters of Hadrian from Alexandria Troas or Naryca, the *lex municipii Troesmensium*, or the *lex Hadriana de agris rudibus* from Henchir Hnich, in shaping the research questions. Secondly, the interdisciplinary expansion of Roman legal history beyond its traditional focus on the writings of Roman jurists and their context in Roman and Italian elite classes inevitably entailed a growth of interest in documentary sources and expansion of interest to the types of inscriptions that have not traditionally attracted much interest from legal historians, e.g. epitaphs. We note here, by way of example, the groundbreaking work of K. Harter-Uibopuu on penalties in Asia Minor epitaphs. Thirdly, not the least of the developments of the last two decades, has been the steady work on updating the key tools of our discipline, such as the revision of Rotondi's *Leges populi Romani* by the LEPOR project, the preparatory work for the revision of the *Fontes Iuris Romani Anteiustiniani*, or the work on senatorial decrees in the *Acta Senatus* series directed by P. Buongiorno, to name but a few important initiatives.

Much work, however, remains to be done, both in terms of the necessary task of editing and providing commentary on inscriptions or tools for their interpretation, and in terms of bringing together the increasingly diverse work conducted in different countries in the field of Roman (including provincial) legal history. There is an urgent need for further exploration of the methodology of using epigraphic documents as evidence for legal history, and of further reflection on what the methods of legal history can do for an epigraphist. It is a good moment to take stock of the work done so far in this century, particularly as no attempt at methodological reassessment of the discipline so defined has been made at the last three congresses.

We shall aim to arrange a panel which, while retaining always a close connection with the epigraphic material, will reflect this diversity closely. We would envisage a 3-hour panel, including an initial presentation to survey the state of the field as we see it, presentations from six speakers (at 20 min for presentation + question), and also a closing discussion to bring our deliberations together (involving, if possible, comments and responses from some scholars who have not had a chance to give a paper of their own in the panel).

**Panel organizers: Georgy Kantor (University of Oxford), Andrea Raggi (Università di Pisa)**