

Workshop

The Epigraphic Habit: Everyday Politics in Chinese Histories of Infrastructure

Conference Room 3, Irish College

Janseniusstraat 1, Leuven

November 21-23, 2024

Abstract Book



KU LEUVEN



Workshop Program

21/11

1:00 pm Registration

1:15 pm Welcome address by the conference organizers

Session 1. Epigraphy as Public Rhetoric

Chair: Sunkyu Lee (KU Leuven)

1:30 pm Caroline Waerzeggers (Leiden University) "Silent Messages: The Muting of Babylonia's Epigraphic Landscape after the Persian Conquest"

2:00 pm Liu Zhiwei (Sun Yat-Sen University) "Evolved from a Stone: The Prototype of Ritual Buildings in the Rural Society in South China"

2:30 pm Discussion 1

3:00 pm Break

3:15 pm Hannibal Caleb Taubes (UC Berkeley) "Epideixis and the Early-Modern North-Chinese Built Landscape: Ming-Qing Temple Steles as Public Rhetoric"

3:45 pm Chen Ruilin (Peking University) "The Collective Local Memory of Infrastructures: Inscriptions Recorded in Gazetteers"

4:15 pm Discussion 2

4:45 pm End of the Session

6:00 pm Dinner

22/11

9:00 am Registration

Session 2. The Everyday Politics of Infrastructures

Chair: Mao Yuan-Heng (IISH Amsterdam)

9:15 am Cao Jiaqi (Sun Yat-Sen University) "Construction and Management of the Shu Roads and Local Daily Administration in the Song Dynasty: A Case Study of the 'Record of Baishui Road (Xinxiu baishui lu ji)'"

9:45 am Wang Jinping (National University of Singapore) "Quanzhen Daoist Genealogical Steles from Southwestern Shandong under Mongol Rule"

10:15 am Discussion 1

10:45 am Break

11:00 am Wang You (University of Chicago) "Manuscripts, Steles, and Printed Records: Hidden Archives of Community-Organized Infrastructural Maintenance in Qing Jiangnan"

11:30 am Iguro Shinobu (Otani University) "Traditions Re-carved in Stone: Water Management and Lineage System in Shanxi"

12:00 pm Discussion 2

12:30 pm Lunch

Session 3. Secular and Sacred

Chair: Sander Molenaar (IISH Amsterdam)

2:00 pm Lance Pursey (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem) "Inscribing Actors: Making Monuments and Monasteries in the Liao Dynasty"

2:30 pm Iiyama Tomoyasu (Waseda University) "Competition over Cemeteries: Evolution of the Cemetery Inscriptions during Yuan-Ming-Qing North China"

3:00 pm Discussion 1

3:30 pm Break

3:45 pm Eloise Wright (Ashoka University) "At the Foot of Jizu Mountain: Sacred and Secular Epigraphy in Binchuan, Yunnan"

4:15 pm Xi Duan (Ghent University) "The History of the Dengjue Temple: A Social Microcosm of the Southwest Frontier in the Ming Dynasty"

4:45 pm Discussion 2

5:15 pm End of the Session

6:00 pm Dinner

23/11

9:00 am Registration

Session 4. Epigraphic Space

Chair: Mark Depauw (KU Leuven)

9:15 am Lia Wei (INALCO) and Manuel Sassmann (Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities) "The Epigrapher's New Habits: Bridging Medieval Production, Antiquarian Reception, and Historical Perspectives on Sixth-Century Monumental Cliff Inscriptions in the Digital Age"

9:45 am Liu Jialong (Università di Napoli L'Orientale) "Where to Access Public Texts: A Temporal and Spatial Analysis of Tang Public Inscriptions (618-907)"

10:15 am Discussion 1

10:45 am Break

11:00 am Hilde De Weerdt, Sunkyu Lee, Marco Wing-Yin See, Xi Wangzhi and Dawn Lizao Zhuang (KU Leuven) "The Social History of Epigraphy: A Comparative Study of Gazetteer Inscriptions and Rubbings"

11:30 am Laura Soffiantini (KU Leuven) "To the Map and Beyond: Relational Spatial Data Extraction from Ancient Inscriptions"

12:00 pm Discussion 2

12:30 pm Lunch

Session 5. Epigraphy in Motion

Chair: Hilde De Weerdt (KU Leuven & IISH Amsterdam)

2:00 pm Julie Verlinden (Ghent University) "Writings on the Wall: The Key Role of Epigraphy in Understanding Patterns of Architectural Decoration in Roman Imperial Asia Minor"

2:30 pm Mario Cams (KU Leuven) "Stone, Paper, Silk: Yang Ziqi's Map and the Mapping of the Ming State"

3:00 pm Soojin Kim (Sungkyunkwan University) "The Power of Monumentality and Mobility: The Historical Transformation from Stele to Embroidered Parasols Honoring Officials' Merits in Joseon Korea"

3:30 pm Discussion

4:15 pm Break

4:30 pm **Final Roundtable: The Social History of Epigraphic Practices**

5:30 pm End of the Roundtable

Session 1. Epigraphy as Public Rhetoric (Chair: Sunkyu Lee, KU Leuven)

Caroline Waerzeggers

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Leiden University

Silent Messages:

The Muting of Babylonia's Epigraphic Landscape after the Persian Conquest

Babylon's transition to Persian rule in 539 BCE is often described in terms of continuity, with the inscriptional monument known as the "Cyrus Cylinder" as chief testimony of the alleged persistence of local traditions. However, beyond the Cylinder, there is a notable lack of Persian-era inscriptions from Babylonia. Whereas, for example, the 17-year rule of Nabonidus (the king dethroned by Cyrus in 539) yielded 9 steles and 29 inscriptions on dozens of cylinders and tablets, two hundred years of Persian rule generated only a handful of Babylonian cuneiform inscriptions, almost entirely clustered in the reign of Cyrus. These inscriptions are heir to the local Babylonian tradition but they are a poor testimony to "continuity": these texts conclude, rather than continue, the tradition. After Cyrus, a near-total inscriptional silence sets in in Babylonia.

This paper asks what this silence signifies. It will argue that the absence of political messaging in the urban landscape of Babylonia had a tangible, material dimension to it. Experienced by wide sections of the population, quiet was an integral part of state-controlled discourse and served a new politics of memory.

Liu Zhiwei

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Sun Yat-Sen University

Evolved from a Stone:

The Prototype of Ritual Buildings in the Rural Society in South China

TBD

Hannibal Caleb Taubes
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UC Berkeley

**Epideixis and the Early-Modern North-Chinese Built Landscape:
Ming-Qing Temple Steles as Public Rhetoric**

This presentation is based on a chapter of my PhD dissertation, entitled “Murals After Murals: Paint on Walls in North China, ~1000 CE to Present.” I begin by briefly introducing the overall project, which is in part a re-study of the surveys of temple steles and iconography conducted by Belgian missionary-scholar Willem Grootaers (1911-1999) in the 1940s. Marshaling quantitative data from hundreds of temple steles, village gatehouse inscriptions, and dated mural paintings, I show how the built landscape of walled villages and temples that Grootaers surveyed was created in a very short period between roughly 1500 and 1560, and then repaired and expanded in distinct stages over the course of the Qing and Republican periods.

In the second half of this talk, I discuss Ming-Qing temple steles as a public rhetorical genre, the hermeneutics of which are tied up in historiographic assumptions about the presence or absence of civil society in early-modern China. Speaking of my own research area, I suggest that the great majority of Ming-Qing steles pertain to self-organizing associations (hui), which construct or repair public buildings (temples, gatehouses, etc.), and then commission (i.e. often pay) literate, ideally prestigious individuals to compose epideictic texts describing and legitimizing these public actions. These social processes, as well as the modes of communal organizing, public affect, and aesthetic response described within these documents, literally constructed the early-modern north Chinese built landscape.

Chen Ruilin
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Peking University

**The Collective Local Memory of Infrastructures:
Inscriptions Recorded in Gazetteers**

Inscriptions and steles recorded in gazetteers formed an essential part of collective local memory. The documentation of steles in local archives can be dated back at least to the Western Jin dynasty (266-316), serving as an indispensable source of information in the local-central administrative reporting system. Hundreds of years later, steles and inscriptions became explicitly stipulated contents with the issuance of decrees on the compilation of Tujing during the Tang dynasty. From merely location recording to brief introduction, and even full text, how to record and what to select evolved significantly during medieval and early modern China, reflecting the rise of local political authority and growing social cohesion, as well as changes in the way the public viewed and read local memory. The compilation of gazetteers provided guidance for epigraphers in searching for and even visiting steles in person, further in turn promoting the prosperity of records of these inscriptions in local literature. This paper mainly focuses on the involvement of inscriptions and steles in both local and general gazetteers by exploring the development of various categories in gazetteers and the information exchange network between epigraphers and local governors.

**Session 2. The Everyday Politics of Infrastructures
(Chair: Mao Yuan-Heng, IISH Amsterdam)**

Cao Jiaqi
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Sun Yat-Sen University

**Construction and Management of the Shu Roads and Local Daily
Administration in the Song Dynasty:
A Case Study of the “Record of Baishui Road (Xinxu baishui lu ji)”**

TBD

Wang Jinping
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National University of Singapore

Quanzhen Daoist Genealogical Steles from Southwestern Shandong Under Mongol Rule

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, under Mongol rule, Quanzhen Daoists installed thousands of stone steles across north China. Among these, a distinctive type known as “Chart of Lineage” (Zongpai zhitu 宗派之圖) emerged. I call them Quanzhen genealogical steles, and they often provide a genealogical record of a specific Quanzhen lineage, including its line of succession, members, monastic establishments, and sometimes lay patrons and followers as well. These steles offer a unique perspective on religious lineage-making on the ground. Quanzhen Daoist genealogical steles also share similarities with kinship genealogical steles, which, often known as steles of ancestral graveyard (xianying bei 先塋碑), were funerary monuments erected by elite families. While scholars have extensively studied the latter, Quanzhen Daoist genealogical steles remain under-investigated. This article focuses on a group of extant Quanzhen genealogical steles from southwestern Shandong, a region witnessing a flourishing of both Quanzhen and kinship genealogical steles during the Mongol-Yuan era. It explores how different Quanzhen Daoist communities used genealogical steles to make lineage claims and how they established themselves within specific regional and local contexts. Furthermore, the article delves into examining genealogical steles erected within Quanzhen monasteries alongside those found at other local sites like the Temple of Mencius and kinship group cemeteries. This comparative approach sheds light on the shared cultural meanings embedded in these genealogical steles as well as the distinct ways these steles served the social and political aspirations of religious and lay actors.

Wang You
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University of Chicago

Manuscripts, Steles, and Printed Records:

**Hidden Archives of Community-Organized Infrastructural
Maintenance in Qing Jiangnan**

Jiangnan (aka “a world of water”) relied on effective water management for agriculture and navigation. While the region documents extensive official initiatives to improve hydraulic infrastructure, evidence of community-organized management remains elusive, reinforcing the conventional narrative that large-scale hydraulic infrastructure was solely the state’s domain.

Based on stele inscriptions and other texts in a locally circulated river record, this study reveals how ordinary people developed enduring institutions for infrastructural maintenance with minimum state intervention. Between 1653 and 1821, the Taiping River—a major local river in Danyang, Zhenjiang—was regularly maintained by local communities, involving approximately 3,000 laborers in 200 riverine settlements. These communities crafted a range of mechanisms to sustain the collaboration; they also actively changed the medium—from handwritten manuscripts to steles and then to printed booklets—to record and enforce such institutional arrangements, resolve internal and external disputes, and claim ownership of the riverworks and the river.

Juxtaposed with 19 local genealogies and scattered records of other collective riverworks, the evolving documentation for the Taiping case suggests a set of “hidden archives” for community infrastructural maintenance in Qing Jiangnan. It explains the general absence of records while illuminating the likely prevalence of such unrecorded community involvement.

Iguro Shinobu
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Otani University

Traditions Re-carved in Stone:

Water Management and Lineage System in Shanxi

I will restore the process of the formation of tradition related to water management through the analysis of the steles at the Dragon King Temple in Xihai Village, Quwo County, Shanxi. The tradition was established after Mongol conquest of North China in the thirteenth century, from the perspective of its impact on the subsequent generations, its direct origin can be traced to the reconstruction after the great earthquake in the early fourteenth century. After then, in the eighteenth century, the tradition was reorganized in the name of restoration of the tradition, and in the nineteenth century, it was reconfirmed by the construction of re-carved steles. It should be noted that the formation of the Jin lineage in this region, including the maintenance of their cemeteries and ancestral temples, followed the same trajectory as that of the water management tradition, but the re-carved steles played an important role in clarifying specific points in the past to which they should return. As proof of water rights, steles and water books were mutually referenced in water management, and if one was lost, the other served a backup role to restore the tradition. In addition, the three kinds of materials, steles, water books and local gazetteers, have a relationship that compensates for each other while constantly changing their contents. This relationship is similar to the relationship between steles, genealogies, and local gazetteers in the formation of the lineage.

Session 3. Secular and Sacred (Chair: Sander Molenaar, IISH Amsterdam)

Lance Pursey

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The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Inscribing Actors:

Making Monuments and Monasteries in the Liao Dynasty

In this presentation I seek to examine primarily non-funerary Buddhist inscriptions found in the Liao dynasty (907-1125CE). These I divide into two types, the first are inscriptions that commemorate and narrate the construction and renovation of institutional architecture such as temples, shrines, and schools, the second are “auto-commemorative” inscriptions such as Dharani pillars, in which the text of the inscription is an account of the creation of the very object upon which it is inscribed, often listing the actors behind its creation.

Between these two kinds of inscriptions we not only find fascinating information about labour, resources, and the process of construction, but also between the lines these socially entangled textual objects reveal dynamics between different political actors and social strata, including the Kitan emperor and imperial court, Kitan aristocrats, Buddhist clergy, local officials, and non-elite local villager communities. Using qualitative readings of the construction narratives and quantitative approaches to the lists of donor names I inquire into how epigraphy mediates between different social stratum in the Yan region (Beijing), in comparison to the Liao heartlands north of the wall (SE IM, West Liaoning). In the process I suggest approaches for studying social history using inscriptions beyond funerary epitaphs.

Iiyama Tomoyasu
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Waseda University

Competition over Cemeteries:

Evolution of the Cemetery Inscriptions during Yuan-Ming-Qing North China

Cemeteries played an important role in both the ideological and socioeconomic infrastructure of patrilineal kinship organizations in Late Imperial China. In a narrow (ideological) sense, especially in North China, membership in kinship organizations was based on the principle of “kinship burial” (zuzang 族葬), which meant the right to be interred in the same cemetery as fellow kinsfolk. In an expansive (socioeconomic) sense, cemeteries could legitimate or enhance one’s economic and social influence through properties in various forms associated with cemeteries, most typically sacrificial fields (jitian 祭田), which often came with customary and institutional privileges such as untaxed landholding.

This paper examines the evolution of a genre of stele inscriptions (called “genealogical steles”) which detail the establishment, maintenance, and renovation of cemeteries in Yuan-Ming-Qing North China. By comparing these inscriptions with lineage genealogies and court documents, this paper aims to contextualize the epigraphic habit within the power dynamics between various actors of local society. This will help reveal the tensions between the kinship organizations and the state over landholdings, the Northern Chinese mode of kinship centered on cemeteries and steles, and how stele inscriptions influenced genealogical texts and local gazetteers in the negotiation between the two parties.

Eloise Wright
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Ashoka University

At the Foot of Jizu Mountain:

Sacred and Secular Epigraphy in Binchuan, Yunnan

When Mt Jizu, in northwest Yunnan, became a major Buddhist pilgrimage centre in the sixteenth century, it drew visitors from around Yunnan, Tibet, and the sinophone world. In addition to the temples and monasteries built on the mountain itself, the pilgrim's visits required roads to travel on and places to sleep during the journey to the mountain. In fact, the growth in Mt Jizu's religious prominence coincided with increasing state presence in the area. In 1494, Binchuan subprefecture had been established under Dali Prefecture, along with Daluo garrison. Like other directly administered districts in the area, centrally-appointed officials promoted the construction of government offices, schools, city walls, and transport infrastructure.

In this paper I discuss not the multitude of stele inscriptions on Mt Jizu but those erected in the basin to its southeast, around the subprefecture seat and the garrison. From the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, over a dozen steles were set up in clusters at sites around Binchuan. Taking their spatial relationships to each other as the starting point, this paper examines the interactions of secular infrastructure with local temples and Buddhist networks. How did the mountain's translocal importance shape the spatial organisation of its surroundings?

Xi Duan
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Ghent University

The History of the Dengjue Temple:

A Social Microcosm of the Southwest Frontier in the Ming Dynasty

The Dengjue Si 等覺寺 (Dengjue Temple) can be regarded as the most significant Buddhist temple in the Menghua area of Yunnan Province during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Menghua is the birthplace of the Nanzhao Kingdom (738-937). The construction of the Dengjue Temple dates back to the Nanzhao kingdom, which saw significant expansion during the Ming Dynasty. It gained official recognition as the administrative institution for Buddhist affairs in the Menghua region during the Ming and Qing dynasties. The temple's prosperity was primarily due to its patrons, the Zuo family, who were the native chieftains of Menghua. This paper analyzes an important inscription, Chong xiu Dengjue si bei ji 重修等覺寺碑記 (Stele of restoration of the Dengjue Temple) which has been preserved in the Dengjue Temple. The inscription meticulously records the historical context of the Dengjue Temple's restoration, the individuals involved, the architectural layout, and the temple's rise and fall during the early to mid-Ming Dynasty period. The findings address the previous shortcomings in the case study research on Dengjue Temple. This not only vividly illustrates the intertwined fate of the Dengjue Temple with the Empire, local Chieftains, and Famous monks in the Menghua region but also serves as a microcosm of Ming Dynasty governance in the southwestern borderlands.

Session 4. Epigraphic Space (Chair: Mark Depauw, KU Leuven)

Lia Wei

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INALCO

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Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities

The Epigrapher's New Habits:

Bridging Medieval Production, Antiquarian Reception, and Historical Perspectives on Sixth-Century Monumental Cliff Inscriptions in the Digital Age

Two distinct groups, first Daoist and then Buddhist monumental cliff inscriptions from the sixth century, cover the rugged mountains of Shandong province. They stand out from the majority of Chinese epigraphic habits by their size and internal cohesion. Like all Chinese stone inscriptions, they have been part of a culture guided by explicit or implicit rules for making inscriptions and also for looking at, reading, reproducing, or writing about them, with rubbings, images, and codified genres of texts produced during more than a millennium. Only recent academic scholarship has emphasized that the inscriptions are no agglomerates of single isolated phenomena but derive their meaning from their place in epigraphic landscapes both physical and imaginary that form sacred geographies for religious practices and unique lexical landscapes.

While the advances of modern perspectives in understanding the context of production are out of the question, probing into a yet-to-be-written “history of Chinese epigraphers’ habits” shows how to critically acknowledge pre-modern antiquarian accomplishments can enrich our understanding of inscriptions as historical phenomena. Based on the experiences with cliff inscriptions in the Altergraphy (INALCO, Paris) and Stone Sutras (HAdW, Heidelberg) projects, the present talk investigates how to integrate those insights with digital approaches to Chinese inscriptions. It explores how thinking about stones, rubbings, and texts as milestones in past and present scholarly infrastructures is conducive to drafting conceptual guideposts for future collaborative research habits in the digital age.

Liu Jialong
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Università di Napoli L'Orientale

Where to Access Public Texts: A Temporal and Spatial Analysis of Tang Public Inscriptions (618-907)

This paper studies public inscriptions that were carved or written on steles, walls, bells, or vessels in the Tang Dynasty, to which the public had access. Based on the Complete Tang Prose, a textual database including 1,617 public inscriptions has been built to study their temporal and spatial distributions. The An-Shi Rebellion (755-763) was the turning point of the Tang Dynasty. Correspondingly, the average number of epitaphs created per year declined dramatically after it. However, the average number of public inscriptions created per year after the rebellion was even higher than before it. More public inscriptions were created per year from 763 to 826. A spatiotemporal analysis of the inscriptions proves that the two capitals, Chang'an and Luoyang, were the center of public inscriptions throughout the dynasty. However, their central position was gradually challenged in the mid-late Tang period. The number of public inscriptions outside of the capitals increased significantly after the rebellion, particularly in Southeast China. It is generally believed that the Chinese economic center began moving southwards after the An-Shi Rebellion. This research demonstrates that the center of public inscriptions also gradually moved southwards after the rebellion.

**Hilde De Weerd, Sunkyu Lee, Marco Wing-Yin See, Xi Wangzhi and
Dawn Lizao Zhuang**
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KU Leuven

**The Social History of Epigraphy:
A Comparative Study of Infrastructural Inscriptions in Stelae,
Rubbings and Gazetteers**

Prior research has suggested that reproductions and transcriptions of inscriptions carved on stone not only transform their size, materiality, layout, and graphics but also omit textual elements that may be present on all sides of a stone slab. It has been suggested that the names of donors in particular may have been frequently omitted. In this piece of exploratory research we aim to compare how different individuals, state agents and social groups were represented on steles relating to infrastructural events and in their transcriptions in gazetteers, covering mainly late imperial Chinese history.

We will first introduce the dataset and corpora we have collected, including metadata and the full text of transcriptions of both stele (or rubbing) and gazetteer inscriptions. The corpora are structured in three types: the full text of stele inscriptions which were not included in gazetteers, of those that were fully transcribed in gazetteers, and of the corresponding texts in gazetteers.

Next we discuss the methodology we developed to compare the composition of the social world articulated in stele/rubbing and gazetteer inscriptions. We employ automated entity recognition through machine learning pipelines to annotate all mentions of personal names, official titles, and social categories and our in-house text annotation platforms ENTMARKUS and COMARKUS to curate and enrich the results.

On the basis of this approach we examine the criteria by which gazetteer compilers selected texts for inclusion and how steles compared to gazetteers in referencing the social worlds within which they were circulated. We also aim to re-examine how different state agents and different social groups utilized inscriptions to shape the spaces they inhabited.

Laura Soffiantini
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KU Leuven

To the Map and Beyond:

Relational Spatial Data Extraction from Ancient Inscriptions

Ancient Greek and Latin inscriptions provide an invaluable resource to investigate the Mediterranean ancient civilizations. After the spatial turn in the Humanities, several studies emphasized the role of space to analyze ancient epigraphic texts. Numerous projects focused on the **geo-referencing** tasks (The Inscribed city) by linking inscribed objects or mentions of place names to authoritative gazetteers. Other projects (Deep-Mapping Sanctuaries) explored the application of **deep mapping** techniques to investigate the place-making process in antiquity by highlighting the interconnections between inscribed objects, their materiality and the spatial context. However, historical documents convey a wide array of culture-specific **spatial data** encompassing orientation systems, units of measurements, spatial categories ('river', 'mountain') and spatial concepts ('boundary'). With my presentation, I aim to show the current trends in the use of spatial analysis in the field of ancient epigraphy. Moreover, I will discuss to what extent, and through which approaches **relational types** of spatial data (expressions distance, orientation, connections) can be extracted from texts and analyzed. Focusing on ancient materials will also contribute to the general discussion of the conference allowing to explore under-investigated comparisons of ancient Mediterranean and modern East Asian epigraphic habits.

Session 5. Epigraphy in Motion **(Chair: Hilde De Weerd, KU Leuven & IISH Amsterdam)**

Julie Verlinden
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Ghent University

Writings on the Wall:

The Key Role of Epigraphy in Understanding Patterns of Architectural Decoration in Roman Imperial Asia Minor

In my PhD research, I explore the phenomenon of similarity in Roman Imperial cultural expressions in Asia Minor via a detailed analysis of the region's architectural decoration, a touchstone that has been largely neglected until now. To enable foregrounding the actual people behind the stones—the historical actors who planned, built, and lived within and alongside these decorated buildings—the information on architectural decoration is in need of thorough contextualization by metadata about the buildings (such as chronology and location) and their related actors. Specifically, these are the epigraphical attestations, including building inscriptions, votive inscriptions, honorific inscriptions for elite benefactors, and civic decrees, which provide information on the commissioners/commissioning parties of the buildings and monuments involved.

The core idea is to investigate whether the decorative similarities observed by archaeologists and ancient historians correlate with other (un)known forms of connectivity between the cities in Asia Minor and their elites, as revealed by these written sources. Although these inscriptions have been published in accessible corpora and many have been digitized, they often remain unintegrated with a building's decorative design. Therefore, this PhD invests in a novel method of connecting ornamental-architectural data with historical and epigraphical data by combining a relational NodeGoat database with state-of-the-art pattern recognition AI techniques.

At the Epigraphic Habit conference, I would like to present a first step in this workflow: the results of our semantic segmentation algorithm, which automatically identifies decorative patterns and inscriptions on Roman ornamented construction blocks. Building on these results, this paper will also briefly evaluate how this method can enhance our historical understanding of the diverse cities and regions of Roman Asia Minor.

Mario Cams
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KU Leuven

Stone, Paper, Silk:

Yang Ziqi's and the Mapping of the Ming State

In the fall of 2015, a stele measuring 177 x 86 x 24 cm was unearthed during restauration works at the temple to Confucius in Changshu, a city in the heart of China's Jiangnan region. It carries the title *Dili tu* 地理圖 (Map of the Patterns of the Earth) and features a map-diagram of the entire administration of the Ming state, as well as a textual explanation underneath. Carved in stone to display an overview of imperial-administrative geography at a prominent site of learning, the stele map is the only extant example of an empire-map carved onto stone during the Ming. Even so, it stands in a tradition of similar stele maps from the Song period and enjoyed a remarkable afterlife that transferred the map onto other materials such as silk and paper. Because of this, the map took on different sizes and new formats as it travelled onto large maps, into books of geography, and onto exquisite albums and fans. Each of these instances invited other modes of presentation and consultation, illustrating the potentially wide circulation of texts and images found on steles.

Soojin Kim
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Sungkyunkwan University

The Power of Monumentality and Mobility:

**The Historical Transformation from Stele to Embroidered Parasols
Honoring Officials' Merits in Joseon Korea**

This study explores the transformation of the Songdeokbi, a fixed epigraphic form traditionally used to honor officials during the Joseon Dynasty, into the lightweight parasol known as Maninsan. Originally carved into durable stone and erected across regions by local communities, these inscriptions symbolized monumentality. By the 19th century, this tradition evolved into parasols featuring poems praising officials and embroidered with thousands of local residents' names. Parasols differed from traditional epigraphy due to their portability, mobility, and collapsible canopy. Historical records indicate that residents carried these parasols in ceremonial processions to petition for officials' promotions.

The tradition of honoring processions with canopies or parasols for religious or political leaders has existed in various cultures since ancient times. However, this new tradition continued without the direct presence of the authority figure, using a portable 'monument' with inherent 'mobility.' The study examines the evolution and cessation of epigraphic practices, the local agency reflected in embroidered names, and the significance of stone engraving versus embroidery by illuminating previously unknown examples housed in Korean and American institutions.

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肅世子識宏謹書

This workshop is part of a project that has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program (Grant agreement No. 101019509)