



Accessing the Inaccessible

The Contribution of EDR to Improving the Accessibility of Inscriptions from Roman Etruria

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Epigraphic Database Roma (EDR) is an ongoing project aiming to eventually provide an open-access online database of all published Greek and Latin inscriptions of ancient Italy up to the 7th century AD (www.edr-edr.it). It is part of the **Electronic Archive for Greek and Latin Epigraphy (EAGLE)** – a federated network of epigraphic databases – and a contributor of **Europeana**, the internet portal of European cultural heritage. The current roster of the EDR team in charge of most of **Roman Etruria** is as follows: co-ordinator, Prof. Giovanni Ceconi (University of Florence); supervisors, Prof. Eleonora Salomone (University of Genoa), Dr. Andrea Raggi (University of Pisa); editors, Dr. Federico Frasson; Dr. Ugo Fusco; Dr. Chantal Gabrielli; Dr. Carolina Megale; Dr. Novella Lapini; Dr. Andrea Raggi; Dr. Alice Rossi and Dr. Carlo Slavich. Besides, Dr. Andrea Raggi and Dr. Chantal Gabrielli have edited the inscriptions of a few cities of Roman Aemilia. To date, the team have contributed over 3.000 inscriptions to the EDR database, a figure that is expected to double by the end of proceedings.

Despite being acknowledged as an invaluable resource for historical research, epigraphy is hardly the most enticing legacy of Graeco-Roman antiquity in the eye of the general public, and whenever it comes to allocating exhibition space in a museum, many inscriptions are likely to wind up behind locked doors, never to be seen again – except by authorised personnel. The EDR crew enjoy the privilege of peeking into storage areas that are ordinarily restricted to visitors, and thanks to an agreement struck with the Italian Ministry for Culture and Heritage in 2005, they are allowed to share their findings through the EDR website. More often than not surprises are in store, as the saying goes: long-lost inscriptions reappear out of nowhere far away from where they were last seen; unimportant fragments reveal themselves to be adjoining pieces of meaningful evidence; texts that were barely legible when discovered can be read afresh with the aid of such amazing new technology as electric light, and so on.



The location of the Roman towns of Etruria discussed in this poster

Hidden Epigraphic Treasures from Ancient Luna The Collection of the Marquis A. A. Remedi in Florence

The excavations conducted from March 1837 in the fields of the Marquis Angelo Alberto Remedi, which were located at the site of the ancient Roman colony of *Luna* (nowadays Luni, near to Ortonovo, SP), led to the discovery, among other things, of a good number of inscriptions, which have significantly contributed to increase the knowledge about the ancient town of northern Etruria. The inscriptions, along with most of the other finds, made up the remarkable archaeological collection of the Marquis, which attracted the attention of many scholars; among them, there was Eugen Bormann, who in 1874 visited Remedi to personally examine the inscriptions of his collection in view of the publication of volume XI of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. A few years later, however, Remedi himself, in order to deal with the financial problems that afflicted his family, was forced to enter into negotiations for the sale of all the material. The Archaeological Museum of Florence proved to be interested in buying Remedi's collection, which was surveyed by Luigi Adriano Milani in 1882 and officially purchased at the beginning of the following year. After this acquisition, the majority of the epigraphic material from Remedi's collection was placed in storage in the Museum of Florence.



(fig. 1)



(fig. 2)

Following the ruinous flood that struck the city of Florence in 1966, the Museum underwent restoration and in the 1980s the material was transferred to the Corsini Villa of Castello, in whose cellar (fig. 1) the inscriptions, which still bear evident traces of the alluvial mud, are even now kept. Because of the placement, unfortunately, nobody, except for the experts, can access the material which, although of some importance, can't be admired by an average visitor of the National Archaeological Museum of Florence. The obstacle to the enjoyment of the public, however, is now somewhat overcome, thanks to the Epigraphic Database Roma (EDR), which includes all the surviving inscriptions of Remedi's collection. By consulting the online records, anyone can now access relevant data on individual inscriptions (e. g. the find spot, the material and measures of the monument, the type of inscription), read the transcripts of the texts and the related bibliography and examine the photographs of the objects. It is, thus, easier to access inscriptions of considerable interest, such as a statue base (*CIL* XI 1341 = EDR125445, inv. 71657) and two slabs (*CIL* XI 1345 = P² 2092 = EDR120424, inv. 71656; *CIL* XI 1347 = P² 2094 = EDR112634, inv. 71655), all dating to the Augustan age, in which the supreme magistrates of the colony (*duoviri*) are celebrated, a slab with a dedication to Fulvius Plautianus (fig. 2), powerful praetorian prefect of Septimius Severus (*CIL* XI 1337 = EDR129464, inv. 71659), and the funerary inscription of a certain Vigilius, a senator of the 6th century AD (*CIL* XI 1412 = EDR122004, inv. 71667).

(F. F.)



(fig. 3)

Lingering Post-war Chaos: Civitavecchia

On 14 May 1943 Allied bombs laid the Archaeological Museum of Civitavecchia to waste along with 70% of the urban centre. As soon as the dust settled, whatever scraps of the Museum's collection could be salvaged amidst the rubble were hastily heaped inside improvised storerooms to prevent plundering and further destruction. Twenty-five years years were to pass before the Museum would reopen in its current location; meanwhile, post-war reconstruction had provided a unique chance for an extensive survey of underground Civitavecchia, delivering a flurry of important findings that were just crammed in with little or no record being kept of the findspots. In spite of the valiant effort of museum staff to put the pieces back together, the messy aftermath of World War II still lingers on to some degree in the storerooms – which is why the EDR campaign in Civitavecchia turned out to be very challenging at the start, and extremely rewarding in the end.

The most remarkable finding historywise was a few fragmentary inscriptions discovered in 1953 in a small bath complex between Trajan's harbour and the *via Aurelia*, at the very center of Roman *Centumcellae*, where they were re-used as marble cladding at some point in the late 4th-5th century AD. Most seem to have been scrapped from Ostian buildings and cemeteries, providing some much needed evidence that *Centumcellae* was actually regarded as an integral part of Rome's suburban harbour system in Late Antiquity. After narrowly escaping publication in the 1960s due to the untimely passing of the appointed editor, these fragments were dispersed – some on exhibition, some in different storerooms – and their common background entirely forgotten.

Also surprising was the re-emergence of a number of inscriptions that had gone missing from Ostia in the mid-19th century. Although no record could be found of the transaction (if there was any, it perished in 1943 with the Museum's archive), it seems a safe assumption that the owners of the estate quietly smuggled them to their *palazzo* in Civitavecchia; the heirs later donated the whole collection to the Museum, but saw it better not to come clean about its provenance. The inscription in the picture (fig. 3), a highly pretentious funerary epigram for the 14-year-old son of an imperial freedman (EDR101552), was mistakenly dated to the Renaissance and stored amidst pontifical coats of arms. Notice the flame scars.

(C. S.)

The Contribution of EDR to the Accessibility of Epigraphic Documents: the Case of Museo Archeologico Versiliese "Bruno Antonucci" of Pietrasanta

An example of the contribution given by the EDR project to the knowledge of the epigraphic heritage is represented by the publication of the inscriptions stored in the depot located in via Marconi in Pietrasanta after the temporary closure of Museo Archeologico Versiliese.

The documents involved are just three, but of meaningful historical interest. Two funerary inscriptions from Pievecchia represent the only evidence of the burial area existing on the spot where later was built the Pieve of San Lazzaro, destroyed by Lucca in 12th century AD with the dispersion of the ancient marbles reused in its construction. In fact, even during the 20th century AD human remains, pottery fragments and Roman epigraphs came to light in this area, unfortunately lost during World War II. The first document found postwar in Pievecchia is the funerary inscription of *Oppia Cyrifilla* (*AE* 1980, 477 = EDR077889), probably a *liberta*, published in 1955 by Lopes Pegna and recomposed in 1973 with a second fragment discovered by Gruppo Archeologico Versiliese directed by the honorary inspector Bruno Antonucci. The second fragment testified the presence in this area of the *nomen Oppius* and was found with another epigraphy (fig. 4) which shows the dedication to *L. Cornelius Macer*, a legionary, and to his son, *Primus* (*AE* 1991, 658 = EDR033174). These two inscriptions – as testified by the notice sent by Antonucci to Soprintendente G. Maetke (February 1973) – in Villa Moroni, in which a few years later was housed the Museo Archeologico Versiliese, whose first organization is due to the activity of Antonucci himself. However, this museum has had a rather complex story. A new organization date to 1995, when the museum was dedicated to Bruno Antonucci and an excellent catalogue was published, where appears a new inscription from Montiscendi (fig. 5), in honor of a *liberta* probably belonging to the *gens Ducetia* – attested here for the first time in Etruria (EDR140498) – edited by G. Ciampoltrini. The temporary closure of the museum due to construction works at Palazzo Moroni – still in progress – caused considerable difficulties in accessing to the archeological finds, that were stored in a depot located in via Marconi. So the latest publications don't mention the storage place of these inscriptions and the new text published by Ciampoltrini in 1995 is practically unknown.

However, a visit to this depot in July 2014 – favored by the cooperation of the municipality – and the subsequent publication on EDR database of these texts has allowed to solve at least partly this inconvenience and to make these inscriptions available to the public.

(N. L.)



(fig. 4)



(fig. 5)

Florentia and Faesulae: Two Examples of Private Collectors

The nobleman Giovanni Gaetano Antinori (1705-1763) was an important Florentine politician, a member of the Etruscan Academy of Cortona but above all a collector of antiques. He loved Etruscan, Greek and Roman Art and in 1744 exhibited his collection in a Gallery on the ground floor of his Palace in Florence (formerly known as the Antinori Collection, currently closed to the public) (fig. 6). Some pieces had been walled up and the result of the setting up was a curious mix in accordance with the fashion of the day. The *Museum Antinorium* was excellent and well known; Anton Francesco Gori described it as *lectissimum*. It was composed of about two hundred pieces: statues, sarcophagi, oil-lamps, funerary urns and above all Latin inscriptions mainly from towns in the *regio VII-Etruria* such as *Florentia*, *Faesulae*, *Arretium*, *Clusium* and *Pisae*. Thanks to the EAGLE-EDR project it is now possible to get virtual access to previously unavailable epigraphic material.

In some cases, it may happen to discover by chance in private collections of antiques the existence of inscriptions, considered lost even if recorded by Bormann, the editor of eleventh volume of *CIL* covering furthermore the colony of *Florentia* and its territories. That occurred for *CIL* XI 1605 = EDR103714 (figg. 7-8), an epigraph concerning Caspia Tertulla, a priestess of the Imperial cult (*flaminica Augustae*). The stone, probably the base of statue, represents a typical example of multiple reuse of epigraphic material also. When Bormann saw it, the stone was used as a baptismal font in Pieve di S. Andrea at Cercina (FI) and the text was not completely readable having been obscured by *certo tartaro*, a layer of concretion due to the passage of water over it. In the 1950s the church was restored and the baptismal font was replaced with a new one. For a while, a farmer used the stone as a drinking-trough for animals until a private collector (Ing. Rindi) recognized the real value of the piece, bought it and put it in his house where we can now admire it.

(C. G.)



(fig. 6)



(fig. 7)



(fig. 8)