

This conference undertakes a comparative exploration of archival agency in ancient and medieval societies, drawing on the expertise of scholars of different periods and regions of the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The goal is to examine the dynamics and effects of archives, both at the level of institutions and administration, and in the domains of documentary culture and knowledge production. Papers will consider institutional aspects (such as record-keeping procedures and strategies of information management) as well as theoretical and cultural dimensions of archiving (e.g. archives as an epistemic infrastructure or as reflecting a particular administrative ideology) while focusing specifically on questions of agency: how does the conception and configuration of archives, the work archives are intended to perform and practical manifestations thereof, affect and shape behavior, ideas, norms, and power dynamics in a given society or administrative system? In other words: how and why did ancient and medieval archives matter?

A further goal of the conference will be a critical examination of scholarly notions of the premodern, revisiting traditional classifications of administrative systems based on their (in)capacity to store and wield information, and reconsidering what have been theorized as the hallmarks of the modern state.

ORGANIZER

Anna Dolganov, Austrian Archaeological Institute
at the OeAW

ZOOM

2-3 July only
<https://tinyurl.com/OEAI0726>

Photo: Portrait of Terentius Neo (Pompeii, 1c. CE) © <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pompeii-couple.jpg>

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International Conference

Archival Agency from Antiquity to the Middle Ages



1-4 July 2026

Austrian Academy of Sciences,
Otto Wagner-Postsparkasse,
Papyrus Collection of the
Austrian National Library

Programme

WED, 01.07.2026

Austrian Academy of Sciences
Dr. Ignaz Seipel-Platz 2, 1010 Wien
Aula and Johannessaal

15:30

Welcome Coffee and Registration
Austrian Academy of Sciences Aula
(Ground Floor)

16:00

Opening Remarks
Johannessaal (First Floor)

Anna Dolganov, Austrian Archaeological
Institute, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Heinz Faßmann, President of the Austrian
Academy of Sciences

Chair: Roman Gundacker, Austrian
Academy of Sciences

16:20

Michael Jursa, University of Vienna
The Voice of the Archive

17:00

Caroline Waerzeggers, Leiden University
*Archivalization in Babylonian Society
(750–350 BCE): Why, When, Who?*

17:40–18:10

Coffee Break

18:10

Keynote Lecture: Marina Rustow,
Princeton University
Archives and the Cairo Geniza

19:40–21:00

Reception
Aula (Ground Floor)

THU, 02.07.2026

Austrian Archaeological Institute,
Österreichische Postsparkasse
Georg-Coch-Platz 2, 1010 Wien
3rd Floor, Rooms 2-3

Chair: Robert Rollinger, University of
Innsbruck

09:00

Roman Gundacker, Austrian Academy
of Sciences
*Records of the Past as a Departure into the
Future: Archival Activities and the (Re)Use of
Archival Accounts in Ancient Egypt*

09:40

Gian Pietro Basello, University of
Naples “L’Orientale”
*Acting Archives: The Agency of Elamite-
Language Administrative Archives Before and
Within Empire*

10:20

Remi Bois, École Pratique des Hautes
Études Paris
*The “Policing Function” of the Persepolis
Administrative Archives*

11:00–11:30

Coffee Break

Chair: Claude Eilers, McMaster University

11:30

Nino Luraghi, University of Oxford
*Documents and Archives in Athenian
Antiquarianism*

12:10

Michele Faraguna, University of Milan Statale
*Archival Agency in the Classical and Hellenistic
Greek Cities: The Case of the Property Records*

12:50–14:00

Lunch Break

Chair: Anne Kolb, University of Zürich

14:00

Charikleia Armoni, University of Köln
ἄρχεῖα: Public Archives in Hellenistic Egypt

14:40

Thomas Kruse, Austrian Academy of Sciences
*Two Edicts of the praefectus Aegypti on the
Archives in Alexandria*

15:20

Torben Schreiber, University of Münster
Archaeological Museum
*Hellenistic and Roman Archives from
Archaeological Contexts: What We Know and
What We Don’t Know*

16:00–16:30

Coffee Break

Chair: Bernhard Palme, University of Vienna

16:30

Anna Dolganov, Austrian Academy of Sciences
The Rhetoric of Roman Archiving

17:10

David Smith, Northeastern University
AI as an Archival Science

FRI 03.07.2026

Austrian Archaeological Institute,
Österreichische Postsparkasse
Georg-Coch-Platz 2, 1010 Wien
3rd Floor, Rooms 2-3

Chair: Anna Dolganov, Austrian Academy of
Sciences

09:00

Valentina Arena, University of Oxford
*Republican Archives, Antiquarians, and the
Production of Knowledge in the Late Roman
Republic*

09:40

Clifford Ando, University of Chicago
*Property, Abstraction, and Empire. Knowledge
of Property in Land in Roman Law*

10:20–10:40

Coffee Break

10:40

Karin Wiedergut, University of Vienna
*The Epigraphic Dimension of Archiving: The
archeia of Roman Asia Minor*

11:20

François Kirbihler, University of Lorraine
*Asia: A Documentary Landscape with Many
Nuances*

12:00–13:10

Lunch Break

Chair: Bernhard Palme, University of Vienna

13:10

Christian Gastgeber, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Byzantium: Archives after the Papyrus

13:50

Helmut Reimitz, Princeton University/
University of Vienna/Austrian Academy of Sciences

*Decentralization and Plurality:
Transformations of the Late Roman Archive in
the Merovingian World*

14:30

Petra Sijpesteijn, Leiden University
*Summaries on Arabic Fiscal Documents:
Functional or Alternative Archival Practices*

15:10–15:40

Coffee Break

15:40

Bernhard Zeller, Austrian Academy of Sciences
*Archives and Archival Organization in the
Carolingian Period: St. Gall and Beyond
(8th–10th Centuries)*

16:20

Walter Pohl, Austrian Academy of Sciences
*Archival Practices and Institutional Memory in
a Medieval Monastery: Montecassino in the 9th
and 10th Century*

17:00–17:30

Concluding Discussion

SAT, 04.07.2026

Papyrus Collection of the Austrian National
Library, Neue Burg, Heldenplatz, 1010 Wien

09:00

Closed Session for Speakers

12:00

End of the Conference

Abstracts

Clifford Ando | Anderson Distinguished Service Professor of Classics and History,
University of Chicago

Property, Abstraction, and Empire. Knowledge of Property in Land in Roman Law

The law of property in land in classical Rome took for granted that knowledge of the boundaries of agricultural land can be had. At the same time, Roman lawyers recall an earlier era when disputes were common and boundaries could only be determined by inspection, indeed, by autopsy on the part of a magistrate with jurisdiction. Roman accounts locate the impetus for change in the increasing scale of the Roman polity: farms within the territory of the city-state were simply too far away for the praetor to walk. The major drivers of change appear, however, to have been, first, the need to distribute land in colonial contexts and, more crucially, the need to tax land outside Italy. It is these latter contexts that first generate references to survey maps, and these appear to have recorded the size and boundaries of private plots at a high level of abstraction. This form of state knowledge was then influential on state fiscality, insofar as tax burdens could be assessed on an ideal rather than a reality of agricultural cultivation.

Valentina Arena | Camden Professor of Roman History, University of Oxford

Republican Archives, Antiquarians, and the Production of Knowledge in the Late Roman Republic

This paper aims to investigate the antiquarian development of a new form of knowledge in the late Republic. By drawing on Rome's documentary archives, distributed among the houses of elite members and politically embedded in a system of status preservation, the antiquarians extract, systematise, and organise scattered archival material, transforming customs into structured knowledge. This new intellectual system functions as a philosophically coherent framework that, on the one hand, confers Republican legitimacy on new political practices and agents and, on the other, serves as a template for imperial archival centralisation.

Charikleia Armoni | Professor of Papyrology, University of Köln

ἀρχεῖα: Public Archives in Hellenistic Egypt

On the basis of papyrological sources, this paper attempts to shed light on public archives in Ptolemaic Egypt. The organization and modes of operation of these institutions, as well as the practical and theoretical conditions that led to their establishment, have not yet been fully investigated. Although the extant evidence is not particularly abundant, it derives from all three centuries of Ptolemaic rule. From the early Ptolemaic period onward, for instance, there existed the practice of registering contracts of various kinds—drawn up privately, usually with the involvement of witnesses—with specialized institutions charged with overseeing legal transactions. We are also aware of a specific register that, within the framework of a procedure known as *katagraphē*, recorded transactions involving real property and slaves. Demotic contracts, initially drafted primarily by notaries in Egyptian temples, could be registered with state authorities through the so-called *kibotos* procedure. From the second century BCE onward, institutions known as *agoranomeia* or *grapheia* were empowered to undertake both the

notarization and the registration of private transactions, thereby functioning as state notarial offices and archives.

Gian Pietro Basello | Professor of Assyriology, University of Naples “L'Orientale”

Acting Archives: The Agency of Elamite-Language Administrative Archives Before and Within Empire

This paper investigates the agency of administrative archives in Elam through corpora written in the Elamite language, from pre-Achaemenid contexts (Tappe Goshtaspi, Tal-e Malyan, Susa) to the Achaemenid archives of Persepolis. It argues that these documents functioned as active instruments of governance: they produced accountability by assigning responsibility, segmented administrative practice into distinct operational domains, and structured action through specific textual typologies such as memoranda, letter orders, and recap texts. Particular attention is given to the ways archives shaped temporal regimes, from short-term cycles based on month dating to more complex systems incorporating regnal years, enabling different scales of control and memory. The choice of Elamite as an administrative language is also considered as a form of agency, mediating communication, standardizing practices, and integrating diverse actors within a shared bureaucratic framework, often in multilingual settings. Finally, the paper briefly examines how material features (tablet formats and sealing practices) contributed to the performative and operational capacity of these archives. Through this perspective, Elamite-language archives emerge as dynamic infrastructures that both preceded and underpinned the administrative expansion of the Achaemenid Empire.

Remi Bois | Research Fellow in Elamite Studies, École Pratique des Hautes Études Paris

The “Policing Function” of the Persepolis Administrative Archives

The administrative archives from Persepolis are a major source for the study of the administration of the Achaemenid Persian empire (ca. 550-330 BCE). Mainly written in Elamite, the “Persepolis Fortification Archive” (also known as PFA) records daily disbursements made to workers, administrators, officials, members of the court (etc.), in the Persepolis area. This sophisticated redistribution system relied on records of transactions carried out in localities surrounding Persepolis, which were then sent to the city for collection by the central administration. However, irregularities did occasionally occur. A particularly striking case is given by the text PFa 28. The tablet is a letter sent by an administrator to one of his subordinates, in which he states that a previous report pointed out that accountants were not delivering the accounts. The letter adds that the man who was carrying this report has gone missing. The recipient of the letter is then ordered to seize that man and to send him to Media, where he will be interrogated. This text (along with a few others from the same corpus) illustrates what has been labelled by scholars working on the Persepolis administrative archives as the “policing function of the archive” (an expression inspired by Moses Finley). The archival institution in Persepolis had an essential role in recording commodities, workers, slaves, livestock and everything else needed to organise the economy of the imperial heartland. Mismanagement or irregularities were therefore taken seriously by the administration, especially by officials called “lance-bearers”, who were responsible for inspections, record-keeping and investigations. These officials were one of the most direct manifestations of the state within the Achaemenid landscape.

Anna Dolganov | Research Fellow in Ancient Legal History, Austrian Academy of Sciences

The Rhetoric of Roman Archiving

Evidence from Rome and the Roman provinces showcases archives and their systemic organization as a hallmark of Roman administration, both in practice and in public communication and perception. Roman archival institutions were formidable systems of information and vehicles of administrative knowledge, whose operations are illustrated in detail in epigraphic and papyrological documentation. However, the impact of Roman archives was not limited to their de facto functionality. Central to Roman archival agency were specific, well-articulated ideas of how Roman archives and archival systems were supposed to work and what knowledge they were designed to capture and transmit. The communication and maintenance of these ideas set the rules of the game for administrators and private individuals. The role of Roman archival ideology is thrown into relief in episodes where its underlying institutional claims were disrupted or could not be sustained, revealing the importance of Roman archives as a belief system.

Michele Faraguna | Professor of Greek History, University of Milan Statale

Archival Agency in the Classical and Hellenistic Greek Cities: The Case of the Property Records

One of the most significant advances in the scholarship of the past thirty years has been to establish that archival practices in the Greek cities of the Classical and Hellenistic period were much more systematic and sophisticated than previously assumed. The ‘material turn’ and the ensuing new approaches to the materiality of texts – including writing media and their interplay, layout, organization of documents, dockets and seals – have greatly enhanced our understanding of such practices. The agency of archives, in other words to what extent and in what ways they were integrated in the day-to-day administrative process or rather only functioned as a symbol of the collective life and collective identity of the polis, is on the other hand still an open question which requires more in-depth attention from scholars. The aim of this paper is to tackle this key question by focusing on property records, a limited, yet fundamental category of documents where political membership in the citizen community, administration and society become tightly entwined.

Christian Gastgeber | Senior Research Fellow in Byzantine Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Byzantium: Archives after the Papyrus

The paper is dedicated to the archives of the chanceries in Byzantium when papyrus was replaced by parchment and (Oriental, Western) paper. The existing material is limited and today scattered across a multitude of modern archives and libraries. From the two big chanceries of the capital, of the emperor and the patriarch, no archives are preserved; their agency can only be reconstructed from recipient documents. A few monasteries have maintained continuity from the Byzantine period to the present day and provide some insight into local archives, but with regard to incoming documents. The main chanceries in the capital, Constantinople, were also confronted with the loss of documents due to the capture in 1204 by the Crusaders and the transfer of the imperial and patriarchal court to Nicaea until 1261.

On the other hand, there is enough evidence of an archival organization: the role and position of the chartophylax, the registration notes on privilege documents of the emperors or the unique register book of the patriarchal chancery of the 14th century (generally outgoing documents). The import income of taxes must also have been documented, and exemptions must have been registered as well. Some lists of the chancery personnel (of the emperor and patriarch) stress the organization of these chanceries with their departments (and archives).

The most important insight is provided by the so-called Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople since these texts were simultaneously entered by the notaries in charge. From this source, we can also follow the careers of some notaries and innovations in the chancery. An interesting aspect of this register book is the political and religious circumstances of this time of crisis and its impact on the archival agency.

Roman Gundacker | Senior Research Fellow in Egyptology, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Records of the Past as a Departure into the Future: Archival Activities and the (Re)Use of Archival Accounts in Ancient Egypt

In the ancient Egyptian Old Kingdom (c. 2700–2200 BC), a thriving system of archives formed the backbone of royal power and elite culture. Archaeological finds and written sources provide direct and indirect evidence of archives holding a wide variety of writings, ranging from everyday business to long-term records. With the demise of the Old Kingdom, many archives were abandoned and left to their fate, although, with limited resources, some archives must have been continued, maintained, and preserved. Yet with the rise of the Middle Kingdom (c. 2000–1750 BC), kings and officials at all levels sought to justify their actions and claims by referring to sources from the “good old days”. The records of the Old Kingdom thus became an important source for the king and the cultural and religious elite, who eagerly rummaged through the archives, searching and researching. This very special archival agency, its traces in culture and writing, and its foundational role for a new centralised regime developed into a topos to legitimise the new through the old. The early Middle Kingdom was thus an era which took a particular interest in archival records to construct everlasting continuity and engaged intensively in archival activities to reinvent itself to the likeness of the past and to present the past as a model for the future.

Michael Jursa | Professor of Assyriology, University of Vienna

The Voice of the Archive

Babylonian temple archives of the 6th century BCE contain a number of documents that could be considered temple administrators’ ‘notes to self’. They come in a variety of forms but are generally recognizable by the appearance of unexplained first-person forms, usually in the plural: ‘we shall do x, we should do y, we have done z’. The paper will explore - for the first time - what might be considered the only extant meta-discourse on archive keeping we have from Ancient Babylonia.

François Kirbihler | Senior Research Fellow in Roman History, University of Lorraine

Asia: a Documentary Landscape with many Nuances

This study aims to examine several points. It will establish the existence of personnel specialized in the creation and maintenance of archives for both the proconsul and the procurator of Asia; it will then examine the possibilities for information and investigation in terms of archives in a highly urbanized province, which had a justice system based on the circuit of conventus capitals by the proconsul and the existence of epigraphic copies of certain documents; and finally, to question the apparent absence of certain types of documents that exist in other provinces (such as the census). The result is a complex picture and a contrast in the quality of the information available.

Thomas Kruse | Senior Research Fellow in Papyrology, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Two Edicts of the praefectus Aegypti on the Archives in Alexandria

The paper deals with two edicts issued by the Roman governor of Egypt, Titus Flavius Titianus, in 127 CE. These edicts regulate the work of the two central archives of the province of Egypt in Alexandria, the Nanaion and the recently established “Library of Hadrian.” Among other things, they contain very detailed regulations on the archival treatment of documents submitted to these archives, which clearly illustrate the great interest that Roman officials in the provinces took in archiving and its role in legal transactions and the administration of the country.

Nino Luraghi | Wykeham Professor of Greek History, University of Oxford

Documents and Archives in Athenian Antiquarianism

My talk will explore the connection between archives and antiquarian research in Hellenistic Athens, starting from three curious documents attached at the end of a collection of short biographies of Athenian orators, dating probably to the second century CE or thereabouts. If original, these documents would date from the very last years of the fourth century to the year 270 BCE. While all three reflect texts of decrees of the Athenians, none of them represents the actual text voted by the Athenian assembly. Where they may possibly have come from and how they ended up in the appendix of the biographies, and whether any of them could be called an archival document, will be questions I would like to discuss with the participants.

Walter Pohl | Professor of Medieval History (emeritus), University of Vienna, Director of the Institute of Medieval Research (emeritus), Austrian Academy of Sciences

Archival Practices and Institutional Memory in a Medieval Monastery: Montecassino in the 9th and 10th Century

Much of what we know about the period of the Lombard principates in Southern Italy in the 9th and 10th centuries comes from texts produced, and at least initially archived in the ‘workshop of memory’ in Montecassino. Our knowledge is mostly based on three manuscripts, one of the Rule of St Benedict, one of Lombard law, and the third a mainly historiographical compilation that was preserved in Salerno. Apart from the main texts, all of these manuscripts contain a variety of smaller texts and snippets which allow tracing the practices of preserving relevant information in the monastery. It was a rather patchy practice, further disrupted by Saracen destructions and archival losses caused by fire. This evidence can be confronted with the great archival reconstruction of c. 1100, when Leo of Ostia’s chronicle of Montecassino and Peter the Deacon’s chartulary were compiled, systematizing and revising the existing material and probably also filling in lacunes. Overall, we get a good impression of archival agency, and of what was considered important at which stage of the troubled history of the monastery of St Benedict.

Helmut Reimitz | Professor of Medieval History, University of Vienna, Director of the Institute of Medieval Research, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Decentralization and Plurality: Transformations of the Late Roman Archive in the Merovingian World

The Merovingian kingdoms have often been seen as the period of the decline and fall of the Roman archive. As older research saw it, the critical administrative infrastructure of imperial rule such as the *gesta municipalia* were replaced by new documentary practices. Instead of the preservation of documents in the archives, the original document itself came to represent the main proof of legal claims and privileges. This story of the rise of the medieval charter has for a long time been connected to the idea of the replacement of the late Roman constitution by a Germanic legal culture and mentality after the dissolution of the Western Roman empire at the end of the fifth century and the ensuing establishment of the ‘barbarian’ kingdoms. A closer look at archival practices in the Merovingian world, however, shows that the new documentary culture of the post-Roman kingdom was not a process by default but rather a process defined by specific choices of the various elites and governors (old and new) of the Merovingian world making deliberate and informed decisions to either continue or abandon late Roman archival practices in more regional, local or even individual settings. The paper will explore the changing panorama of possibilities of archival agency before the background of the reconfiguration of the late Roman legal landscape into a different kind of legal pluralism in the post-Roman Merovingian world, that came to influentially shape the legal landscape of the post-Roman West for many centuries to come.

Marina Rustow | Khedouri A. Zilkha Professor of Jewish Civilization in the Near East, Princeton University

Archives and the Cairo Geniza

The Cairo Geniza, a cache of 400,000 pages of fragments of pages discarded in a medieval Egyptian synagogue, is famously an „anti-archive,” the „sacred trash” of the Jewish communities of Cairo and beyond. But embedded within the Geniza are also discrete sub-archives of state

officials, long-distance traders, local tax collectors, Jewish legal experts, and motley other individuals. The sub-archives sit along a spectrum from coherence to chaos, from institutional power to anxious self-defense. If some hoarded documents to project their authority, others did so to defend against it, assembling counter-claims in anticipation of an accusation that would perhaps never arrive. If for some, to archive was build institutions, for others, to archive was to worry.

Torben Schreiber | Curator of the Archaeological Museum, University of Münster

Hellenistic and Roman Archives from Archaeological Contexts: What We Know And What We Don’t know

An estimated 200,000 sealed document closures from the Hellenistic and Roman periods have survived. However, these have only been preserved because the archives in which they were stored were destroyed by fire, which fortunately fired the only air-dried sealed clay lumps. But this unfortunately means that these lumps of clay, which originally closed and sealed documents, have been decontextualized twice: The archives have been destroyed and the documents stored there have been lost. What remains are countless lumps of clay, which must first be explained in their own right. What can these artifacts tell us about ancient archiving practices? What was sealed, by whom, and with what? What characterizes official seals, and how do ‘private’ seals differ? This lecture provides an overview of the current state of research into archaeologically proven archives and their inventories from the Hellenistic period, drawing on the seal impression conglomerate from Doliche for comparison. This site has yielded 22,000 sealed lumps of clay from roman times. Of course, the same questions arise here: who, what and with what?

Petra Sijpesteijn | Professor of Arabic, Leiden University

Summaries on Arabic Fiscal Documents: Functional or Alternative Archival Practices

At the turn of the seventh century Greek fiscal demand notes on papyrus from Egypt and Palestine show a new feature. In a summary at the bottom of the document the most important elements of the text such as the amounts and date are repeated in an abbreviated form. This innovation is generally associated with the influx of new personnel from regions (most notably the Levant) where Greek/Byzantine administration was in use that might have differed from practices further west. Arabic fiscal documents similarly attest such abbreviations, but in later Arabic tax receipts such summaries appear at the top of the document in the upper margin as well as or instead of the bottom margin. In this paper I will present an overview of the chronological development of the abbreviating summaries in fiscal documents produced by the Arab chancery, analysing them as evidence of archival practices or the absence thereof.

David Smith | Professor of Computer Science, Northeastern University

Artificial Intelligence as an Archival Science

Language models owe many of their capabilities to ingesting the archives of big government, big business, and big science, although LLM builders often rely on informal methods for structuring and selecting these sources. As reflected in the name, however, language models are also abundant creators of language, most notably when used „agentically“, as actors in systems of selecting, summarizing, and transforming information. By understanding the role of „documentation“ (Briet 1951) from the point of view of information theory and the „sciences

of the artificial“ (Simon 1996), I seek to provide an account of both the abundance and loss of archival information.

Caroline Waerzeggers | Professor of Assyriology, Leiden University

Archivalization in Babylonian Society (750–350 BCE): Why, When, Who?

Today we know 6th-century BCE Babylonia as a place of intensive record-keeping. The practice of collecting and curating texts was widespread and took place in temples, palaces, and especially also in domestic homes. For many decades, we (historians) have scrutinized the testimony of these archives to study the region’s society, economy and political history. Yet, many fundamental questions about the text corpus itself remain unanswered. In this lecture, I want to zoom in on one such basic question.

After the end of the Kassite period in the mid-twelfth century BCE, archival activity ceased in Babylonia until the mid-8th century when archival mentalities re-emerged. This new trend sets off, quite punctually, from the time of Marduk-aplu-iddina II onwards (r. 722–710 BCE) when several families began to curate archives at home. This raises the question why archive-keeping became a socially appealing activity around this time.

So far, answers have been sought in the political and economic sphere: political stability allowed the economy to grow, transactions to increase and, therefore, records to be made. It also seems significant that the process of archivalization ran in sync with two other developments that happened around the same time: the emergence of a lineage society and the end of the kudurru tradition. In this lecture, I will examine this social and textual background of the re-emergence of an archival culture in Babylonia in the second half of the 8th century and I will trace how archivalization further developed in Babylonian society (albeit only in broad strokes) into the late Achaemenid period.

Karin Wiedergut | Research Fellow in Greek Epigraphy, University of Vienna

The Epigraphic Dimension of Archiving: The archeia of Roman Asia Minor

Taking up the question of how and why ancient archives mattered, this paper is concerned with the public archeia of Roman Asia Minor and the services they provided. Even though the contents of these polis archives did not physically survive, the region’s specific epigraphic habit allows for a closer look on some of the institution’s core competences. Especially important here are the region’s numerous tomb inscriptions, which, oddly enough, form the largest group of extant evidence on the archive’s services. By discussion of a subject present in a comparatively large number of texts, namely the transfer of tomb monuments between private individuals, the presentation aims at (1) reconstructing how the archeia assisted the contracting parties while maintaining public demands, (2) examining whether overarching regulatory mechanisms implemented by the poleis or the Roman provincial government to be executed by the archives become tangible, and (3) showcasing motives for—literally—setting in stone information on private real-estate transactions, thus contributing to the unique epigraphical landscape of Roman Asia Minor.

Bernhard Zeller | Senior Research Fellow in Medieval History, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Archives and Archival Organization in the Carolingian Period: St. Gall and Beyond (8th–10th Centuries)

This paper examines archives and archival organization in the Latin West, with particular emphasis on the Carolingian realm. After a brief general overview of the transmission and preservation of both ecclesiastical and lay archives, it focuses on the exceptional charter archive of the former abbey of St Gall (in present-day Switzerland), where more than 800 original documents dating from the eighth to the tenth centuries have survived. The paper analyzes the nature of this archive and offers insights into its internal organization and archival practices in the early Middle Ages.