Thinking Like a Computer Scientist About Ancient Roman Graffiti

Sara Sprenkle
Ancient Graffiti Project:
http://ancientgraffiti.wlu.edu
Washington and Lee University

http://agp.wlu.edu/graffito/AGP-EDR145008
Graffito found in Herculaneum, House of Stags (IV.21)
My Background

➢ Research Focus: Automated Web Application Testing

➢ Teaching Focus: Software Development
Spiral Design Process

From CSCI209: Software Development
Welcome to The Ancient Graffiti Project, a website that provides a search engine for locating and studying graffiti of the early Roman empire from the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. At present, the search engine and database are under construction, so searches are running on only some of the handwritten wall-inscriptions from Pompeii and Herculaneum. Most of the graffiti from Herculaneum (ca. 250) are now available in preliminary form. Another 200 graffiti from Pompeii (from Insula I.8 and the Lupanar at VII.12) are also searchable. More will come online after summer 2016, when we return to the field for further research.

Click on a map to search

Special acknowledgements to Eric Poehler for the map of Pompeii and the creators of ImageMapster for the highlighting map feature.
Search by Map

Click on one or more properties within the map, then hit the "Search" button below.
Search Results

Filterable results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Refine Results</th>
<th>Property: VI.1 X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insula</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Type</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing Category</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyword Search</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20 results found in property VI.1

Result 1

City: Herculaneum
Findspot: Central Baths (VI.1)
Graffito: Stirisco[us?---]
[M]oschus Noeto [salutem?]

See more information →

Result 2

City: Herculaneum
Findspot: Central Baths (VI.1)
Graffito: [?--- acce]pit Secundus Crusali ser(vus?)
et Valentina ((:phallus))

See more information →

Result 3

City: Herculaneum
Findspot: Central Baths (VI.1)
Graffito: (h)eribus miscella

See more information →
## Filtered Results

### Results Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Herculaneum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Findspot (VI.1)</td>
<td>Central Baths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graffito</td>
<td>Stirisc[us?]---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravetext</td>
<td>[M]oschus Noeto [salutem?]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Result 1

- **City:** Herculaneum
- **Findspot:** Central Baths (VI.1)
- **Graffito:** Stirisc[us?]---
- **Gravetext:** [M]oschus Noeto [salutem?]

See more information →

### Result 2

- **City:** Herculaneum
- **Findspot:** Central Baths (VI.1)
- **Graffito:** [?--- acce]pit Secundus Crusali ser(yus?)
- **Gravetext:** et Valentina ([:phallus])

See more information →

### Result 3

- **City:** Herculaneum
- **Findspot:** Central Baths (VI.1)
- **Graffito:** ([:herma viri cum palma])
- **Gravetext:** ([:bust of man with palm])

**Translation of Description:** bust of man with palm

**Drawing Categories:** Plants, Human figures

See more information →

---

Working on translating graffiti
Browse All Figural Graffiti

Drawing Subject:
- Animals
- Boats
- Erotic images
- Geometric designs
- Gladiators
- Human figures
- Plants

Result 1
- City: Herculaneum
- Findspot: The Grand Taberna (IV.15-16)
- Graffito: Euhodus et Satura Puteolani Gladiators

Result 2
- City: Herculaneum
- Findspot: House of the Grand Portal (V.35)
- Graffito: (class gladiatoria cum crista ad sin.)
- Translation of Description: gladiator helmet with a plume facing left
Filtered Results

Result 1

City: Herculanum
Findspot: House of the Grand Portal (V35)
Graffiti: ("galea gladiatoria cum crista ad sin."")
Translation of Description: gladiator helmet with a plume facing left

Drawing Category: Gladiators

Result 2

City: Herculanum
Findspot: House of the Grand Portal (V35)
Graffiti: ("galea gladiatoria cum crista ad dext."")
Translation of Description: gladiator helmet with plume and visor? facing right
View Details of Graffito

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City:</th>
<th>Herculaneum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Findspot:</td>
<td>House of the Grand Portal (V.35)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Graffito:     | (C: galea gladiatoria cum crista ad sin.)
               | gladiator helmet with a plume facing left |
| Drawing Category: | Gladiators |
| Measurements: | height: 6.70 width: 8.30 letter height: |
| Writing Style: | Graffito/incised |
| Reference(s): | CIL 04, 10711 (nota) (1)
               | M. Langner, Antike Graffitizeichnungen: Motive, Gestaltung und Bedeutung.
               | Weisbaden 2001, n. 970
               | (Gladiatoren) (2) |
| Apparatus Criticus: | Textus secundum (2). Beall, Bey IV,
                         | McCrory, Opdenhoff, Tomasi, et
                         | Zimmermann Damer contulerunt et
                         | mensurasprehenderunt a. 2014. Prope
                         | EDR143814, EDR143815, EDR143832,
                         | EDR143833, EDR144659, EDR144783,
                         | EDR144784, EDR147158. |

Links to AGP:

EDR ID: #EDR143634  Links to EDR
Ancient Graffiti Project Goals

- Digital resource of graffiti of Herculaneum and Pompeii
  - Starting in Herculaneum, growing to Pompeii
- Search and analyze the graffiti
- Engage audiences with various levels of expertise
  - Epigraphists, Scholars, Latin students, the curious

https://github.com/AncientGraffitiProject
Opportunities and Challenges

- **In Situ**
  - Context -- spatial
  - Additional measurements

- **Messages of common people**
  - “social media”

- **Drawings!**

- **Medium: fragile**
  - Losing at rapid rate
  - Hard to find
  - Photographing
  - Report property but not more specific

- **Interpretation of graffiti**
  - Meanings
  - Esp drawings

Ancient Graffiti Project  http://ancientgraffiti.wlu.edu/
Data Collection

- In Herculaneum
- Locating graffiti
- Different houses available than in 2016
- Clearer, higher resolution photos
- Measurements
  - Height from ground
AGP in Context

Collect on-site in Herculaneum

Digitize and process

Customized tools for ancient graffiti

EDR
Epigraphic Database Roma

EAGLE
The Europeana network of Ancient Greek and Latin Epigraphy

Ancient Graffiti Project

Epidoc

Pleiades

Just Herculaneum and Pompeii

Big Ancient Mediterranean 2016

Ancient Graffiti Project http://ancientgraffiti.wlu.edu/
Towards Linked Open Data

➢ First steps

  • JSON API
    ➢ All graffiti: http://agp.wlu.edu/all/json
    – This URL will likely change

  • JSON ➔ Epidoc by Pietro Liuzzo

➢ Next steps

  • Epidoc API

  • JSON API – all graffiti by a search
(Close-to) Stable URIs

- **Individual graffito**
  - http://agp.wlu.edu/graffito/AGP-EDR124967

- **Graffiti by location**
  - http://agp.wlu.edu/region/city/insula/property/id
    - http://agp.wlu.edu/region/herculaneum
    - http://agp.wlu.edu/region/herculaneum/VI.1
    - http://agp.wlu.edu/region/pompeii/I.8/17
In Progress: Greatest Hits

- Lower barrier to explore graffiti
- Curated graffiti
In Progress: Greatest Hits

Greatest Hits

Graffiti from Herculaneum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Original Script</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Image (If Available)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIL IV.10565</td>
<td>Vinum acceptum ab domino VII Idus Aprilis</td>
<td>Wine was accepted from the master on April 6th.</td>
<td>Conc. Min. BB. AA. CC., divieto di riproduzione</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIL IV.10574a</td>
<td>L(uci) Aviani votus (votum)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIL IV.10501</td>
<td>Ἰάνσις solus (ex) ε(νατος) κ(ονσυλτο)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

➢ For use in Latin classes
In Progress

- Greatest hits
  - Selecting graffiti
  - Finalizing interface

- Graffiti translations

- More graffiti!
  - All of Herculaneum
    - Handling locations not in properties (e.g., water tower)

- Admin Web interface
  - Easier data manipulation
Next Steps

- Drawings – controlled vocabulary
  - Tagging graffiti
  - Enable browsing, searching
- “Epidocified” content/edition of graffiti
  - Indexing
- Pleiades locations – finer granularity
- More filters
  - Alphabet
- Analyzing graffiti, metadata!
Teacher/Scholar Model

- Ancient Graffiti Project integrated into several courses
- CSCI335: Software Engineering via Web Applications
- LATN350: Epigraphy
Acknowledgements

- **Leadership Team**
  - Rebecca Benefiel
  - Holly Sypniewski
  - Jackie DiBiasie Sammons
  - Mackenzie Brooks

- **Application Development**
  - Jamie White ’17
  - Paul Jang ’15
  - And more undergraduates

- **EAGLE/EDR**
  - Pietro Liuzzo
  - Silvia Orlandi
  - Silvia Evangelisti

- **Collection Teams**