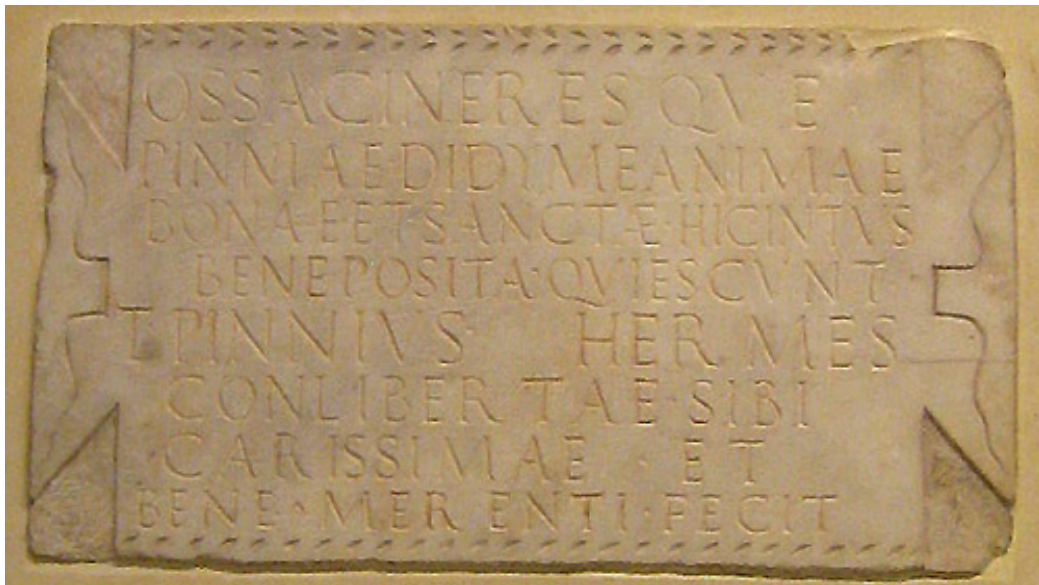


Project 1: Roman Funerary Inscriptions

Transcription of Inscription

OSSA CINERESQVE
PINNIAE DIDYM[a]E ANIMAE
BONAE ET SANCTAE HIC INTVS
BENE POSITA QVIESCVNT.
T[itus] PINNIVS HERMES
CONLIBERTAE SIBI
CARISSIMAE ET
BENE MERENTI FECIT
[hoc monumentum].



Description of Monument

This rather lovely funerary plaque is made of marble and was discovered on the Appian Way. This plaque was originally attached to a columbarium, a tomb typically used for members of the lower class, freedmen, and slaves. There were niches in the walls of the *columbarium* which held these funerary plaques. These niches also held vases containing the ashes of the deceased. The *columbarium* was a structure which allowed for group burials. Therefore, it may be assumed that Titus Pinnius Hermes planned on having his ashes joined with Pinnia Didyma's upon his death.

This funerary inscription is rather difficult to date, as are any inscriptions of Ancient Rome. However, the structure of the letters suggests that this piece may have been erected during the 2nd century CE. For, the letters are characteristic of those contrived during the Imperial period. The letters take the form of the Monumental Alphabet developed during the Republic but perfected during the time of the Empire.

There is a defined edge around the funerary inscription containing a simple design. This seems to suggest that the dedicator of this monument had at least enough money to provide a proper memorial for his significant other. There are what seem to be images of wings on either side of the inscription. This may be one of the many types of designs placed on the less expensive monuments of freedmen.

This inscription was written for a freedwoman, Pinnia Didyma. It is important to note that there is a misspelling in her name. One may speculate that the scribe did not take proper care in etching this inscription, leaving the "a" out of Didymae. The dedicator of this plaque is Titus Pinnius Hermes. This is made clear by the rather large lettering used in his name; a technique used by many scribes to identify the dedicator. One may speculate that the

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relationship between these two individuals is one similar to marriage. However, it is clear the individuals are not legally wed because Titus neglects to refer to her as his *coniunx*. He would have done so had they been legally bound in matrimony.

Translation of Inscription

Within this place, the bones and ashes of Pinnia Didyma's good and pious soul having been positioned well are at peace.

Titus Pinnius Hermes made this monument for his dearest and very well-deserving fellow freedwoman and for himself.

Lexical and Interpretive Commentary

Line 1:
os, ossis n. *bone*
ciner, cineris n. *ashes*

Line 2:
Pinnia, Pinniae f. *This is the nomen of the freedwoman being memorialized in this inscription; Pinnius is the family name of her former master. Therefore, her nomen is the feminine form of this name.*
Didyma, Didymae f. *This is the cognomen of the freedwoman being memorialized in this inscription. It is her slave name she acquired either before she became enslaved or while in slavery, given to her by her master. These names often refer to the individual's country of origin or a personal characteristic. Didyma is the name of a Greek city. Therefore, the reader may assume that she is a slave from Greece.*
DIDYM[a]E *This is a discrepancy in the inscription. The scribe may have not been careful when creating this piece and consequently misspelled Pinnia's slave name. Another possibility is that this was the pronunciation most people used to refer to the woman. Therefore, the scribe may have merely recreated this colloquial spelling.*

Line 3:
intus adv. *within, inside*

Line 4:
pono, ponere, posui, positus v. *put, place, set*

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quiesco, quiescere, quievi, quietus v. *rest, be at peace*

Line 5:

T[itus], Titi m. *This is the first of the three names given to the dedicator of this funerary plaque, a freedman. He has taken the praenomen, Titus, of his former master.*

Pinnius, Pinnii m. *This is the nomen, the family name, of the freedman's former master.*

Hermes m. *This is the last of the three names, the cognomen. This is the freedman's slave name. An individual may speculate that he was named after the Greek God Hermes. Hermes was the messenger god of Zeus and was known to be quite shrewd and cunning.*

-This is a rather interesting line because of the rather large spacing in the middle. The individual's name is also written larger than the other letters in the inscription. One may, at first, be a bit confused by the spacing as, most often, those who write inscriptions look to minimize the amount of spaces. However, it is quite common for an engraver to do this, showing that this is the dedicator of the monument.

Line 6:

conliberta, conlibertae f. *fellow freedwoman*

sibi pron. *Although this word is clearly in the dative case, an individual may construct two possible meanings when translating. The first is that an "et" may have been left out of the inscription, either as a discrepancy on the part of the scribe or for spacing purposes. This possibility suggests that this portion of the text be translated "and for himself". Another possibility is that the word "sibi" be translated as the indirect object of "carissimae". In this case, the line would read "most dear to himself".*

Line 7:

carissimus, -a, -um adj. (superlative) *dear, beloved, precious*

-It is important to note the beautiful language that is used to describe Pinnia Didyma throughout the inscription. It is difficult for an individual to believe that she was not legally married to Titus Pinnius Hermes. However, upon re-evaluation of the text, it becomes evident that he never once refers to her as a "coniunx". He would have done so if they were legally wed.

Line 8:

bene adv. *well, quite, very*

mereo, merere, merui, meritus v. *deserve, merit, have right; present participle agreeing with conlibertae*

fecit *understand as direct object hoc monumentum which is sometimes included but always understood when not.*

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<http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass/>

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