LEGACY DATA: USING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

Legacy data present an immensely rich and varied body of largely unstudied information that allows present-day scientists and researchers further understanding of Turkey and the Black Sea region. The British Institute at Ankara's own historical collections, including paper and photographic archives as well as archaeological collections, offer insights into the evolution of the topic or material under study as well as information about assets now lost. The Institute owns collections of squeezes and ceramic sherds as well as large photographic collections and archives that offer excellent study material for scholars in many disciplines, including archaeologists, historians, anthropologists and specialists in epigraphy and ethnology. This strategic research initiative aims to promote interdisciplinary academic research that relates to legacy data concentrating on Turkey and the Black Sea region. Work on the Institute's collections will be an important focus, as will research on other legacy data available in Turkey and the Black Sea region.

The British Institute at Ankara's digital repository

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Galleries, libraries, archives and museums are cultural-memory institutions that store, preserve and share information and knowledge as cultural heritage. One such institution is the BIAA, and the Institute's Digital Repository Office and Library team has been working hard over the past 12 months to make the BIAA's collections open access whilst adhering to FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable) principles, which are important elements of open-access archives.

Organising and barcoding the physical archives are key to the preparation of the material for digitisation. The old folders used to store the BIAA's photographic collection have been replaced by special acid-free plastic files and guidelines for the conservation process have been prepared for interns. Meanwhile, the Resource Manager, Assistant Librarian and interns have continued work on barcoding and organising the physical drawings of archaeological objects and trench and ground plans for the digitisation process.

The Institute's library catalogue (www.biaatr.org/library) is being transformed in accordance with the new open-source library catalogue system (KOHA) and will be accessible via http://library.biaa.ac.uk/. MARC 21 standards are being used for cataloguing books, journals, pamphlets, audio-visual material and e-publications. The Resource Manager and Assistant Librarian are currently verifying the data in KOHA.

Meanwhile, the setup and configuration of the Institute's digital repository system is continuing. The system is in the test stage now and will be open to the public in 2022. The digital repository will use an open-source system, Islandora 8, on Amazon Web Services. Records have been prepared using Qualified Dublin Core metadata schema, and controlled vocabularies have been created for the use of standard terminology and linking data (people, geolocations, subjects, flora and fauna, etc). Authorities such as LOC, FAST, VIAF, GBIF, POWO, IPNI, Wikidata, Getty TGN and Pleiades have been selected as appropriate datasets. The creation of geolocational information requires additional effort and alignment with other authority sources. Issues related to linking data for archaeological settlements in Turkey have been discussed at the online 'Linked Pasts 6' conference held at the University of London and British Library on 2–16 December 2020.

Cataloguing and verifying collections data is a time-consuming process, but adding new subject headings will increase the accuracy and availability of search results. Liam Devlin (Research Scholar 2020–2021), Eloise Jones (Research Assistant 2021) and Burcu Akşahin (Research Scholar 2021–2022) have worked on projects, events and photographic collection data to help create vocabularies. The BIAA is also supporting a number of interns (Aslı Batırbaygil, Ezgi Özdemir, Saliha Yıldız and Nabila Nabila) and volunteers (Muhammed Ali Akman, Gamze Kaya, İlayda Dumlupınar, Vildan Toprak and Deniz Çit) from information and records management and other academic departments. These interns and volunteers have continued to work on the BIAA collections both remotely and in-person. Digital Archivist Orhun Uğur took up his post on 1 October 2021 and is currently preparing and verifying data for the new system.

Burçak Delikan and Nihal Uzun barcoding a long squeeze drawing (squeeze maker: Richard Harper; © British Institute at Ankara-PH15303).

The Institute's botanical reference collection incorporates a herbarium (Index Herbariorum code BIA) created in 1970 to support archaeobotanical research. At the beginning of 2021, the herbarium digitisation project started with the support of the Charlotte Bonham-Carter Charitable Trust, the Seven Pillars of Wisdom Trust, the Stevenson Family Trust and the Imagining Futures Project (University of Exeter). The Digitalising Turkey's Botanical Heritage project aims to preserve the herbarium specimens physically and to establish a virtual herbarium containing images of and information about all the specimens in the BIAA's historical herbarium. To achieve this, botanists (Ilgın Deniz Can and Barış Necdet Uğurman), interns and volunteers are mounting specimens, cleaning old mounted sheets and labelling (creating labels from handwritten notes) and barcoding the specimens to prepare them for our photographer, Gücügür Görkay. Consultants Necmi Aksoy (Düzce University) and Mark Nesbitt (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew) are providing advice and helping with the project. Naomi Miller and Sue Colledge have also been helping the BIAA team to understand the Gordion Project specimens and Gordon Hillman's specimens.

To increase awareness of the importance of digital archives in archaeology and of sharing best practices and technical knowledge, SEADDA (a community of archaeologists and digital specialists working together to secure the future of archaeological data across Europe and beyond) conducted a training activity with the Digital Preservation Coalition at which the Digital Repository Manager gave a presentation on the BIAA's experience.

SEADDA also prepared a special issue of *Internet Archaeology*, to which Nurdan Atalan Çayırezmez, in collaboration with Piraye Hacıgüzeller and Tuna Kalayci, contributed a piece titled 'Archaeological digital archiving in Turkey' (https://doi.org/10.11141/ia.58.20).

Collaboration and partnership are important when sharing knowledge, and so the British International Research Institutes (BIRI) are working together to create linked open datasets that use the same terminology, and so allow the saving of time and effort when creating linked data. The BIRI Digitisation Initiative started with a virtual meeting at which the BIAA, British School at Athens, British School at Rome and Society for Libyan Studies made presentations. The aim was to share possibilities, options and obstacles, but, above all, the meeting marked the beginning of closer collaboration on this important topic. The BIRI institutions also explained the approaches, progress and challenges they face at the 'Discovering Collections, Discovering Communities' conference (DCDC21) on 28 June 2021 (https://dcdcconference.com/).

Finally, we would like to thank all the staff, consultants, scholars, interns and volunteers who have contributed to the work on the digital repository over the past 12 months.

Barış Necdet Uğurman working on the herbarium data (© British Institute at Ankara-PH15304) and Gücügür Görkay taking a photograph of a herbarium specimen (© British Institute at Ankara-PH15302).