

Demosion, the origin of Democratic Archives in Ancient Athens

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Abstract:

This poster presentation is one of the series on ancient archives, in which a poster was presented at Research Forum in 2010, 2014, and 2018. In these days, we recognize the importance of Democracy, especially in the context of archives as foundation of Democracy. Classic Athens is considered the cradle of democracy. Democracy means Demos Power, that is citizens' power, Demosion means what belongs to Demos. In the last decade of 5th century BCE, people of Athens built a new Bouleuterion, the building for the Council. Then old Bouleuterion became an office to codify the laws and decrees by Anagrapheus. So, Athenians called it Demosion. This building would become Metroon, which is known as the central archives of Athens. Demosion held Boule's records. We can find about Demosion in Orators' survived texts. This presentation will examine those texts to see whether the Demosion was to citizens, who took care of records, and what the media was stored. Some archives started after the compilation of history or legislative codifications, so it is necessary to discuss this issue about the origin of archives.

About the authors:

Yayoi Tsutsui is a certified archivist through the Academy of Certified Archivists and Nominations Committee Member. She is an Archivist Certified by the National Archives of Japan. She is also a registered archivist of the Japan Society for Archival Science. She serves as a researcher at the University of Tsukuba Archives. She is a D category member of the International Council on Archives. Tsutsui is a part-time student of Gakushuin University. She earned a Master of Arts in Archival Science degree from Gakushuin University, the first graduate school of Archival Science in Japan, in March 2010. She has been a part time lecturer of Hitotsubashi University, a part-time staff at National Institute of Japanese Literature, the University Museum of the University of Tokyo, and the Shibusawa Memorial Foundation. She has been involved in the construction of several exhibitions and databases. She received her Certificate of Museum Studies from Harvard University Extension School in 2001 and her Bachelor of Arts from International Christian University in 1980, majoring in classics. She plans to attend General Assembly of ICA at Abu Dhabi with her poster presentation titled the Foundation of Democracy: Learning from Ancient Greece, II.