



Form Without Meaning: Researching Undeciphered Ancient Writing

2019 Marion Adams Memorial Lecture

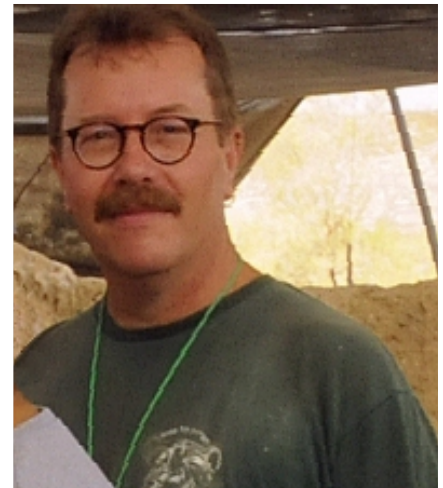
How does one actually research an undeciphered script? And what are the prerequisites for a successful decipherment?

Drawing on the ways in which some key ancient scripts have been deciphered in the past, with a focus on Egyptian hieroglyphs and Linear B (the Bronze Age writing-system of the Mycenaean Greeks), Dr Brent Davis will discuss in this lecture several potential ways of studying and analysing an undeciphered script so as to contribute something meaningful to its decipherment.

In this lecture, he will demonstrate the importance of contextual and linguistic approaches to decipherment, and outline the harm that can be done to the study of an

undeciphered script through the use of less rigorous approaches. He will also detail several fruitful methods of addressing an undeciphered script, including a new linguistics-based method of his own for determining the probability that two related undeciphered scripts encode the same unknown language.

Dr Brent Davis received his BA in Linguistics from Stanford University, and his PhD in Archaeology from the University of Melbourne, where he is now a Lecturer in Archaeology and Ancient Egyptian in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies. He is the 2019 recipient of the University of London's prestigious Michael Ventris Award for Mycenaean Studies.



Event Details

Date:
Thursday, 10 October 2019

Time:
6.30pm-7.30pm

Venue:
Forum Theatre
Level 1, Arts West - North Wing
Parkville

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Bookings:
Bookings are essential for this free public lecture.

Register at
[alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/
marionadams2019](http://alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/marionadams2019)