

University of Warwick

Department of Classics and Ancient History

Postgraduate Colloquium Summer 2020



'In the arcade of the Colosseum', John 'Warwick' Smith, (1749-1831)

Organisers: *Kieren Johns & Simone Mucci*

Schedule

THURSDAY 21ST MAY

09:00 - 09:10 – Opening Remarks

09:10 – 10:00 – Panel 1: *Numismatics*

Chair:

Charlotte Mann - *A 'Model of Liberality': Military Patronage and Imperial Power Under Antoninus Pius*

Alessandro Bona - *Cut Coins from Milan and Lombardy: Economic and Chronological Remarks*

10:00 – 10:10 – Coffee Break

10:10 – 11:00 – Panel 2: *Intertextuality*

Chair:

Alessandra Tafaro - *Compressing and Distilling, Quoting and Fragmenting. Epigrammatic Epic in Martial's Xenia and Apophoreta*

Lucrezia Sperindio - *Tragic Intertextuality in Horace's Odes*

11:00 – 11:30 – BREAK

11:30 – 12:20 – Panel 3 – *Galen and the Interpretation of Ancient Medical Texts*

Chair:

Simone Mucci – *Guintorius and Stuthius: Humanistic Translations of Galen into Latin*

Manuela Marai - *Galen's Pharmacological Texts as a Potential Source of New Plant-Derived Antimicrobial Agents*

FRIDAY 22ND MAY

13:00 – 13:10 – Opening Remarks

13:10 – 14:00 – Panel 1: Imperial Ideologies

Chair:

Kieren Johns - *Happy Families? The Disruption of the Domus Divina and the Construction of Caracallan Authority*

Jonathan Madge – *Understanding the Fires of Heaven*

14:00 – 14:10 – Coffee Break

14:10 – 15:00 – Panel 2: Space in the Ancient World

Chair:

Jacqui Butler – *Andromeda in Pompeian Wall Paintings*

Matt Evans – *Gymnasia: Problems and New Approaches*

15:00 – 15:30 – BREAK

15:30 – 16:20 – Panel 3: Ancient Art, Modern Interpretations

Chair:

Carlo Lualdi – *The Missing Decoration: New Observations about the Funerary Base from Ugento*

Giles Penman – *Why Were Classicizing Images Used On Peace Day Souvenirs After the Great War?*

THURSDAY 21ST MAY

PANEL 1: NUMISMATICS

Charlotte Mann - A 'Model of Liberality': Military Patronage and Imperial Power Under Antoninus Pius

Posterity has commended Pius to history as an emperor of 'suffocating passivity', who ruled without personal involvement in conflict or revolts. The iconography contained within Roman imperial coin hoards, however, suggests the opposite- that Pius' involvement in military affairs and interaction with the Roman army though from afar- was an important part of his public image that defined the emperor in highly militarised areas such as Western theatres of conflict and volatile border zones. Coinage suggests instead that Pius built a public relationship with the army based upon imperial generosity and patronage. Imagery that communicated these ideas dominate conflict areas and highly militarised zones, where they appear alongside a high concentration of military reverse types conspicuously absent in regions without a permanent military presence. These distribution patterns suggest that images of generosity and abundance were deliberately communicated to the military populations of the Empire and challenges the impression of military disengagement that has grown to character Antoninus Pius. Rather, they reveal Pius to be the master manipulator of his public image, who overcame his distance from the legions by representing himself as their patron and the legions as the recipients of his imperial munificence.

Alessandro Bona – Cut Coins from Milan and Lombardy: Economic and Chronological Remarks

This paper provides an updated view of the cut coins found in Milan and Lombardy during archaeological excavations. The findings in Milan are still little known (in whole or part) to the scientific community. I will examine the coins found during the research carried out in the courtyards of the Catholic University, the very recent discoveries made during the construction of the underground line 4 and many others. The published material will refer primarily to the papers of Ermanno A. Arslan, who has also made available to me his archive containing unknown documentation. Most of the unpublished coins also come from the catalogue of my PhD thesis.

The situation in Lombardy will instead be analyzed only based on the published works.

The documentation will be presented first from a chrono-typological point of view, to highlight which coins of which periods were preferably cut. Second, the analysis will be focused on the contexts of discovery from a stratigraphic point of view, to understand the circulation length of the fractionated specimens, despite when the mint originally produced them.

PANEL 2: INTERTEXTUALITY

Alessandra Tafaro – Compressing and Distilling, Quoting and Fragmenting. Epigrammatic Epic in Martial's *Xenia* and *Apophoreta*

Martial's *Xenia* and *Apophoreta*, collections of verse food-items and gift-tags composed to accompany munera distributed at dinner feasts and lotteries, bring the reader in to the festive atmosphere of the Roman Saturnalia, a background which puts to the fore the social and occasional dynamics of Flavian epigram. The characteristic Saturnalian gift-giving affords a fitting premise for further exploring the (already amphitheatrical) interchangeability of poem and munus.

While critics have considered both collections as crucial to investigate the workings of Imperial textual materiality and the epigram's embeddedness in Roman life, this paper will explore epigrammatic strategies of intertextual allusion and investigate parallel techniques of compression, quotation, distillation and fragmentation of epic works in both epigraphic tradition and graffiti culture. Within Saturn's mundus inversus and the related temporal suspension of social (and literary) hierarchies, epigram can claim parity with and even overthrow epic.

The *Xenia* provide fertile terrain for grasping with epigram's epicisation and epic's epigrammatisation, whose range and scope have been rarely appreciated. By evoking the epigraphic origin of epigram and the Hellenistic heritage of poems on/as objects, Martial plays with the deathly association of munus and deploys epitaphic rhetoric to enhance the humorous depiction of agonising food-poems. A close reading of epigrams 13.25 and 13.33, alongside with Virgil's pseudo-epitaph and Pompeian graffiti, will bring to prominence questions of voice and spatial authority and the (controversial) relationship between epigram, epitaph and epic.

Lucrezia Sperindio – Tragic Intertextuality in Horace's Odes

In this paper I investigate the intertextual dialogue between Horace's *Carm.* 1.2 and 2.1 and some choral passages from Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*. Firstly, I will explore how the Roman poet models the representation of the recent civil war on tragic principles and shapes it through tragic imagery. In particular, Aeschylus' tragedy focuses on the notions of fratricide and inherited guilt. Eteocles and Polyneices kill each other in fulfilment of the curse that their father Oedipus has cast on them. Their death is the eventual outcome of the inherited guilt originating with Laius and perpetuating across generations. In *Carm.* 1.2 and 2.1, Horace represents civil war by evoking tragic concepts and images modelled on the choral utterances from the same Aeschylean tragedy. Further, following Calame's interpretation of Aeschylean tragic choruses as carrying out mediating functions through a polyphony of voices, I will suggest that Horace seems to shape his own lyric voice through the evocation of the Seven's tragic chorus, in order to achieve similar mediating purposes. Therefore, I will claim that, through intertextuality with the chorus of the Seven, Horace both portrays Roman civil war and shapes his own poetic role. By adopting specifically Aeschylean tragic concepts and images, he identifies a literary antecedent that allows him to present the unspeakable historical reality through a tragic filter. Further, by recalling the Seven's chorus, Horatian lyric performs similar narrative and mediating functions, as the poet comments on and negotiates the recent historical crisis with the Roman audience.

PANEL 3: GALEN AND THE INTERPRETATION OF ANCIENT MEDICAL TEXTS

Simone Mucci – Guinterius and Struthius: Humanistic translations of Galen into Latin

The first Latin translation of Galen's *De Antidotis*, published in Paris in 1533, is that of Johann Winter von Andernach (Latinized as Joannes Guinterius Andernacus; 1505-1574), a humanist and physician who translated numerous Galenic works. His translations are well known by Galenic scholars because they also appear in the XIX century pre-scientific complete edition of Galen, i.e. K. G. Kühn's *Galenus Opera Omnia*, along with the Greek text of the works. Guinterius is also famous for his cursory and sometimes inaccurate working method - and this notoriety, as shown in the paper, is not only recent. Josephus Struthius (Józef Struś; 1510-1568 or 1569), a Polish physician and professor of medicine at the University of Padua, published a Latin translation of *De Antidotis* only three years after Guinterius' one. His translation is accompanied by several notes in which Struthius mainly criticises (and rarely approves) Guinterius' choices; Struthius names his colleague *difficilis* or *negligens*, assesses the Greek text employed by Guinterius and resorts to further sources (like the *antiquissimus codex* which sometimes appears in the notes). In my paper I aim at comparing key passages of the two translations to the Greek text of *De Antidotis* in order to assess the quality of the translations and, even more importantly, to establish what manuscript or printed sources were used by either translator. I intend to investigate in particular the linguistic choices made by the two humanists (e.g. to translate the names of plants or other ingredients, or Greek particles which are an essential comparandum in the case of Latin translations).

Manuela Marai – Galen's Pharmacological Texts as a Potential Source of New Plant-Derived Antimicrobial Agents

This paper will explore the use of Galen's texts as a contribution to bioprospecting, the systematic search of natural products with pharmaceutical potential. Herbal medicine has been used in every continent for millennia. While this approach is still extremely popular in some areas of the world, Western medicine in the 20th century tended to dismiss its value and its effectiveness. However, the past decades have witnessed an increasing interest in medicinal plants and a rise in new drugs from natural products. A great effort has been put into the search for new antimicrobial agents, in the attempt to overcome the global health emergency caused by antimicrobial resistance. Ethnopharmacology (the study of medicinal plant use in specific cultural groups) has been a remarkable source for bioprospecting. Nevertheless, a new alternative tool is emerging: the use of historical medical texts. So far, these texts have been used mainly to corroborate the current use of specific plants in traditional medicine, and secondary to suggest new simple and compound drugs. The Greek physician Galen of Pergamon (129-216 AD), considered one of the fathers of medicine together with Hippocrates, has so far been overlooked in this type of studies, despite his undisputed legacy and his massive (and potentially very informative) production. This paper will unveil Galen's potentiality in this area of research through a preliminary analysis of some of his works, focusing in particular on the identification of potential bacterial infections and their treatments within his complex system of medicine.

FRIDAY 22ND MAY

PANEL 1: IMPERIAL IDEOLOGIES

Kieren Johns – Happy Families? The Disruption of the Domus Divina and the Construction of Caracallan Authority

Modern scholarship has moved the debate on the women of the Severan dynasty (AD 193-235) away from their alleged corrupting ‘Eastern’ influences towards a recognition of their ‘connective’ political potency.¹ This relates particularly to the ideological significance of the *domus divina* as a guarantor of dynastic – and thus political - stability. The purpose of this paper is to focus on how this connective capacity evolved during the reign of the emperor Caracalla (AD 212-217).

Drawing primarily on the quantitative approach to epigraphic data at the core of my thesis research, this paper aims to show how the reign of Caracalla is marked by a clear decrease in the representational significance of dynastic links in the establishment of imperial authority. Connections to imperial predecessors diminished as the military virtues of the emperor were lauded instead. However, despite Caracalla’s fratricide and the rumours of maternal incest and parricide, this period remains characterised by the enduring significance of the *domus divina*, embodied in the figure of his mother Julia Domna.²

Caracalla’s reliance on the ideological stability represented by his mother is indicative of the decisive change of Severan politics: this was an era characterised by unprecedented engagements with the political potential of dynasty.

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¹ Rowan (2011) 242

² Davenport (2017) 75-100

Jonathan Madge – Understanding the Fires of Heaven

In Book VII of his *Naturales Quaestiones*, a book entirely dedicated to the study of comets, Seneca the Younger (c. 4 BC - AD 65) posited that a comet of AD 60 “did away with the ill repute of comets” (Sen. NQ 7.17.2). Whether composed with a sense of irony, sycophancy, or sincerity, Seneca’s comment proved false. Only four years later another comet was thought to signify imminent ruin - notably by foreshadowing the exposure and punishment of the Pisonian conspiracy in AD 65 (Tac. Ann. 15.47.1; Suet. Nero 36.1). The baleful reputation of comets has, in fact, endured and comets have been habitually associated with dire historical events, including the Battle of Hastings in 1066, the Great Fire of London in 1666, and even the ongoing Covid-19 epidemic of 2020. The following presentation is set to explore this notion of ill repute and its consequent impact on Roman society.

Comprising two parts, the first half of this presentation will examine the reputation of comets as it was in Seneca’s day, that is, during the 1st century AD. It was during this time that Roman comet ideology transformed, incorporating classification sciences and terminology from Greece that made it more applicable to the newly established Principate. In the second half, I will investigate the Neronian comets of AD 60 and 66, highlighting how the Roman perspicacity towards these comets in particular was reflective of contemporary perceptions towards Nero’s pre-eminence.

Ultimately, this presentation is about how the Romans assessed the remarkable appearance of comets, about how they related celestial torches to their own socio-political happenstance. It is about how they understood these fires of heaven.

PANEL 2: SPACE IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

Jacqui Butler – Andromeda in Pompeian Wall Paintings

A variety of female characters from Greek myth appear in a diverse range of visual media and material culture in Roman art in different contexts. This paper will briefly outline the potential scope of my research into this specific set of images, which takes a multidisciplinary approach and uses methodologies of visual and spatial analysis together with different frameworks to explore the societal norms and ideals evident within the imagery.

Looking closely at the mythical sacrificial character of Andromeda and her depiction solely in domestic Roman wall painting in Campania, the paper assesses key elements of her representation specifically in landscape scenes, largely in the Third Style of Pompeian wall painting. Previous scholarship has already categorised depictions of Andromeda, and although following a similar pattern, I have modified these categories to aid more in-depth analysis and comparison.

The paper aims to demonstrate that these landscape settings were significant in acting as a visual and atmospheric aid to the viewer's comprehension of the scene. Using a painting from the House of the Priest Amandus in Pompeii as a case study, it will firstly discuss the poly-scenic aspect of the composition. Drawing on visual and iconographic analysis, I aim to show that the representation of Andromeda herself is intended to present her clearly as a victim in these landscape paintings, and that there is also a strong erotic element to her depiction therein. The inclusion of specific objects accompanying Andromeda will also be discussed and how these aid the interpretation of her portrayal.

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Matthew Evans – Gymnasia: Problems and New Approaches

Ancient Greek *gymnasia* were socio-culturally significant institutions in poleis throughout the Greek world. As a result, they have attracted classical scholarship since the mid-nineteenth century. Specifically, studies have aimed to understand the developments of both the various institutional functions (mainly athletic training, military and intellectual education, and religious activities, among others) and architectural form and structure of *gymnasia*. The accepted narrative in these studies is that function dictates form. However, such a simplistic, linear causal relationship fails to recognise the complex and dialectical nature of the interrelationships between the built environment and activities of *gymnasia*. In reaction, this paper presents an integrative approach that combines sensory archaeology with formal spatial analysis to the study of the form and function of *gymnasia* and ancient Greek space in general. I will critically analyse each aspect of the approach, including the principal methodologies and theories of sensory archaeology and spatial analysis, as well as the possibilities of incorporating three-dimensional reconstructions and modern psychological/physiological studies. Overall, the aim is to make the (socio-culturally variable) individual, who is the producer, user and perceiver of the built environment, the focus of study. Analysing *gymnasia* through the experience of individuals in a three-dimensional, ground-floor perspective will provide a more nuanced understanding of the interrelationships between the built environment and the functions/activities of *gymnasia*, in turn, elucidating the significant roles of *gymnasia* in society (*poleis*) and Greek culture at large.

PANEL 3: ANCIENT ART, MODERN INTERPRETATIONS

Carlo Lualdi – The missing decoration: new observations about the funerary base from Ugento

The funerary base from Ugento can be considered as a material *unicum* that shows the contacts between the Greek city of Tarentum and the Messapian city of Ugento. The four sides of the base are decorated with reliefs showing fights and activities related to the martial sphere. In addition to this, some elements which can be observed on the upper side of the base can allow us to hypothesize that the decoration of the base could be more complex. As a matter of fact, the upper side of the base shows two holes which are both crossed by two diagonal casts. The quadrangular hole was related to an architectural element, such as a circular column or a rectangular pillar as presented in the recent study about the base from Ugento written by Dr. Lorenzo Mancini. The analysis aforementioned does not elaborate on the function of the second hole, that can be seen near the lower left corner of the upper side of the base. The aim of my analysis is to fill this gap by proposing a new reconstruction of the decorative elements of the monument.

Giles Penman – Why were classicizing images used on Peace Day souvenirs after the Great War?

In this presentation, I will explain why Greco-Roman imagery was employed on Peace Day souvenirs. Local councils distributed mugs and medals to children as part of festivities on Peace Day, 19th July 1919 to commemorate the end of the Great War. Local councils wanted children to remember the sacrifices of British men and women during the conflict and the benefits of the subsequent peace, since children would 'carry the memory of it farthest into the future' (The Bournemouth Guardian (July 19, 1919) 3.).

Peace Day mug and medal designs, publicized by manufacturers and chosen by local councils, often featured Greco-Roman imagery including winged Victory, Britannia, laurel wreaths, palm branches and Latin inscriptions.

I argue these classicizing images, familiar to the public through their long history in visual culture, were employed for several reasons. Greco-Roman imagery sanitized the Great War by removing it from its historical context and placing in the distant past, and heroized servicemen by likening them to ancient mythical and historical heroes and soldiers. The imagery also encouraged recipients and others to unite in a shared commemoration of the Great War with a shared visual culture heritage, despite the social and economic difficulties of the early post-war period. Further, by shrinking the war metaphorically to the size of a mug or medal with familiar non-threatening imagery, mugs and medals with Greco-Roman imagery aided the grieving process and made memories of the conflict more manageable.