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Seminar Program for 2018 - Session 1

Convenors: Dr Gil Davis & A/Prof Boyo Ockinga

The Macquarie University Department of Ancient History in conjunction with the Macquarie Ancient History Association (MAHA) is proud to present the seminar program for S.1, 2018. Seminars will be held in **Y3A, room 212** for one hour on **Tuesdays commencing at 1.00pm** sharp (unless otherwise stated). The convenors appreciate the support given by MAHA to ancient history at Macquarie.

Week	Date	Seminar
1	6 Mar	A/Prof Peter Keegan (MQ): The <i>Fasti</i> and the Curious: critiquing critical receptions of Ovid in the 21 st century Ryan Strickler (PhD candidate, MQ): This Too Shall Pass: Narratives of Deliverance in Seventh-Century Apocalyptic Discourse
	Friday 9 Mar	Special lecture at 4pm in the Museum of Ancient Cultures Seminar Room (X5B321)- Prof. Chris Faraone (Chicago): From Gemstones to Foil and Papyrus: The Transformation of Greek Amulet Recipes in Late-Antiquity
2	13 Mar	Prof. Hans Taeuber (University of Vienna): Daily Life in Ancient Ephesos - the Evidence from the Graffiti A/Professor Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides (MQ): Turnus and Aeneas: Greek Tragedy and Vergil's Debate on Violence
3	20 Mar	Dr Karin Sowada (MQ): The Old Kingdom Abroad: Levantine exchange patterns and imported pottery from Giza
4	27 Mar	Prof. Ray Laurence (MQ): Birthday, Numbers and Centenarians in the Latin West: Understanding Age via its Anomalies Dr Louise Pryke (MQ): Bad blood in Byblos
5	3 Apr	Dr Kyle Keimer (MQ): Results from the 2018 Excavations at Khirbet el-Rai, Israel
6	10 Apr	Alex Kujanpaa (MRes candidate, MQ): Putting Women in their Place: The Importance of the Emperor's Sisters during the Reign of Theodosius II Jenny Ferber (PhD candidate MQ): TBA on Abu El Makarem. The Arab view of Christendom

Mid-semester break

7	1 May	Dr Christopher Forbes (MQ): Presocratics and Paradigms Dr. Troy Martin (St. Xavier University, Chicago): Dating First Peter to a Hairdo: Roman Coiffure and the Embroiding of Hair in 1 Pet 3:3
8	8 May	Prof. Miljenko Jurković (University of Zagreb): New Archaeological Research in Early Medieval Istria Prof. Tzvi Abusch (Brandeis University): Before the Patriarchs: Biblical Accounts of Prehistory
9	15 May	Dr Susan Lupack (MQ): TBA
10	22 May	Dr Yann Tristant (MQ): The Necropolis of Dendara (Upper Egypt): new results of the combined Macquarie University/IFAO expedition 2nd archaeology talk (Yann's friend): TBA
11	29 May	Dr Meaghan McEvoy (MQ): TBA
12	5 Jun	

Abstracts:

Prof. Tzvi Abusch (Brandeis University): Before the Patriarchs: Biblical Accounts of Prehistory

The biblical text of Genesis 1–11 presents two competing accounts of the birth of humanity. These texts draw upon ancient Near Eastern accounts and are themselves not unitary. I shall treat the biblical texts as a mythological account with the hope of entering its inner world and understanding its metaphors and meaning. Given the limitations of time, I shall limit my discussion to a presentation and interpretation of the earlier yahwistic account.

In the earlier account (Yahwistic), the human stands in a tenuous relationship with God comparable to that of an immature child who is in conflict with a punitive parent. The second account (Priestly) was intended to temper this portrayal by presenting the world as an orderly creation and humanity as its intended caretaker. But neither scheme works out. In both accounts God brings a flood in order to destroy creation, and in both a sense of balance is only restored once the relationship between humanity and God is renegotiated, albeit in differing ways. Within the context of ancient Near Eastern primeval histories, both biblical stories stand out due to their focus on the relationship between man and deity, rather than on the internecine contentions among the gods. The particular appeal of the biblical accounts for the modern humanist is that the struggle between man and God represents a projection of internal psychological conflict and reflects the complexity of the human experience.

A/Professor Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides (MQ): Turnus and Aeneas: Greek Tragedy and Vergil's Debate on Violence

The conflict between Turnus and Aeneas in the final books of the Vergilian epic has left many generations of readers puzzled about Vergil's intentions. In the so-called most Iliadic, and therefore violent part of the *Aeneid*, the dutiful son of Venus is increasingly transformed into a ruthless soldier, determined to claim his new bride and kingdom through merciless killings. The epic culminates with the duel between Turnus and Aeneas in which Aeneas, despite a brief moment of hesitation (Aen.12.940-941), slaughters his opponent securing the opportunity to re-found Troy and fulfil his destiny. My paper re-examines the circumstances of the conflict between the two contenders for

Lavinia's hand and argues that in the final books of the *Aeneid* Vergil reflects on the role of violence in political affairs making important distinctions regarding the types of violence that are, in his view, permissible in state-building. To this direction, despite the scholarly focus on his Iliadic model, Vergil draws on a number of Greek dramas, which offer crucial insights to his reflection on political power; while some of these parallels have been identified in scholarship (Panoussi 2009; Mac Góráin 2013; Fratantuono 2015), others are yet to be revealed and/or discussed more systematically. Taken together, Vergil's tragic adaptations present an authoritative narrative on the kind of leadership that Jupiter endorses which can be read both as the poet's nod of approval of Augustus' new regime, but, at the same time, as a bold warning against mishandling of political power.

Indicative Bibliography:

Fratantuono, L. 2015. "Lethaeum ad fluvium: Mercury in the Aeneid," *Pallas* 99: 295-310.

Mac Góráin, F. 2013. "Virgil's Bacchus and the Roman Republic," in J. Farrell and D. Nelis (eds), *Augustan Poetry and the Roman Republic*, Oxford, 124-145.

Panoussi, V. 2009. *Greek Tragedy in Vergil's "Aeneid": Ritual, Empire and Intertext*. Cambridge.

Prof. Chris Faraone (University of Chicago): From Gemstones to Foil and Papyrus: The Transformation of Greek Amulet Recipes in Late-Antiquity

This lecture begins with two questions: (i) among the many inscribed amulets, why do we find so many circular designs written on square or rectangular pieces of on papyrus or foil? And (ii) why do we find so few recipes for gemstone amulets in the Greek magical papyri of late antiquity? There is, I will argue, a single answer: because of declining personal wealth in Late Antiquity and the declining skill of artisans these circular or oval designs were transferred from gems to less expensive and more easily workable media like papyri or metal foil. As we shall see, there is indeed much evidence for such a transfer, both in the extant recipes for foil and papyrus amulets and in the texts of the amulets themselves, where we can see from time to time that a scribe has mistakenly copied handbook instructions onto the amulet or has made other such illustrative mistakes. In my lecture I will focus primarily on transfers that involve the *ouroboros*, an Egyptian design of a snake devouring its own tail, which in Roman times was often used on oval and elliptical magical gems as a border, in the midst of which we often find powerful words or symbols associated with the famous Seal of Solomon.

Jenny Ferber (PhD candidate MQ): TBA on Abu El Makarem. The Arab view of Christendom

Dr Christopher Forbes (MQ): Presocratics and Paradigms

From as early as the time of Aristotle, early Greek philosophy has been studied from teleological paradigms. How closely did it approach Aristotle's own point of view? How did the successions of school founders lead to the contemporary mix of views? And (more recently) how did the "presocratics" (itself a teleological term) pave the way for modern "scientific" thinking? The paper will show how this "Greek enlightenment" paradigm has distorted our understanding of early Greek philosophy and its relationship to traditional Greek religion, using case studies from Xenophanes, Heraclitus and Democritus.

Prof. Miljenko Jurković (University of Zagreb): New Archaeological Research in Early Medieval Istria

As recently as 20 years ago, early mediaeval Istria was perceived as a region dominated by Byzantine culture. However, a series of archaeological excavations and large extensive land surveys has revealed the existence of a Carolingian Istria. The presentation will deal with those findings and data, explaining the political and diplomatic context of the newly discovered settlements, their architecture and sculpture.

A/Prof Peter Keegan (MQ): The *Fasti* and the Curious: critiquing critical receptions of Ovid in the 21st century

Leslie Cahoon once noted the degrees of difference in "understandings of the interpretative task" brought to bear on classical literature in general and the Ovidian corpus in particular. (1) This apprehension of critical reception should not necessarily surprise the reader of ancient (or modern) texts, but its implications for the continuing appraisal of gender relations, sexuality, and the body are

considerable and warrant discussion. To that end, this paper explores the history of praxis underlying different interpretative receptions of canonical narratives, with particular reference to the first two books of Ovid's *Fasti*; and the extent to which these variations illuminate or occlude the (con)textualised female figures which often feature as entrées to critical exegesis. Specifically, it is the speaker's contention that the ways by which Ovid engages in the process of meaning-production regarding *l'autre femme* are reflected (refracted?) in the interpretative practices of certain modern literary-critical commentators. (2)

References:

1. Cahoon, L., 'Let the Muse Sing On: Poetry, Criticism, Feminism, and the Case of Ovid', *Helios* 17.2 (1991): 197-212, at 202.
2. Barchiesi, A., 'Discordant Muses', *PCPS* 37 (1991): 1-21; Fantham, E., 'Rewriting and Rereading the *Fasti*: Augustus, Ovid, and Recent Classical Scholarship', *Antichthon* 29: 42-59; Hinds, S.J., *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse*

Alex Kujanpaa (MRes candidate, MQ): Putting Women in their Place: The Importance of the Emperor's Sisters during the Reign of Theodosius II

The descendants of Theodosius I (AD 379-395) are remembered in the literature as weak-willed and ineffectual rulers who were controlled by women and eunuchs. Theodosius II (AD 402-450), the longest reigning Roman Emperor and grandson of Theodosius I, is victim to this rhetoric with some sources claiming his slightly elder sister, Pulcheria, controlled affairs and ran the state. Until quite recently, this image of Pulcheria still held true: Edward Gibbon proclaimed her to be the only Theodosian descendant who inherited any ability of note; and Kenneth Holm in 1983 attributed all pivotal events of her brother's forty-two-year sole reign to the empress – to the exclusion of Arcadia and Marina, Theodosius' two other sisters. Even in 2006 an article by Kathryn Chew further overstates Pulcheria's actual power to the detriment of not only the emperor but of the governing bodies – the Consistory and the Senate. What has often been neglected in these works is the important role of Arcadia and Marina. Therefore, in this paper, I reassess the role of the Theodosian women during the reign of Theodosius II, focusing primarily on how their actions enhanced the image of the emperor and contributed to ensuring his position remained secure. I will argue that Pulcheria was not a dominant force within the government, as some ancient and modern commentators relate. Rather, for a time she represented one half of an 'imperial couple' with her brother. Moreover, in this paper I will demonstrate that Arcadia and Marina were equally important in enhancing Theodosius' imperial image through their piety, *philanthropia* and active participation with the populace of Constantinople. Through assessing the activities of these three imperial women, this paper will show that the presentation of unity within the imperial family added to the early stability and security of Theodosius II's long and prosperous reign.

Prof. Ray Laurence (MQ): Birthday, Numbers and Centenarians in the Latin West: Understanding Age via its Anomalies

Birthdays are something, we take for granted – but these days each year accumulate to create chronological age. The ages recorded in inscriptions of women and men said to have been even 161 years of age, when they died, can be seen as something of anomaly. However, of a sample of c. 26,000 epitaphs mentioning age more than 2% commemorate ages over 100 years. Of course, this is a demographic impossibility. However, it is a phenomenon worthy of analysis and the paper will explore the cultural meaning of statements of considerable longevity, the use of counting systems, and mistakes in counting ages. In doing so, the paper will have a focus key texts, such as Pliny *Natural History* 7.151ff or Valerius Maximus 8.13, and broaden the scope of vision beyond epigraphy to include the very old amongst the elite of the first century CE, including some of their drinking habits ('he spent a night and two whole days feasting and drinking'). An explanation of the centenarian phenomenon will be suggested as a means to relate time in the present to events of the past, as well as looking forward into the future.

Dr. Susan Lupack (MQ): TBA

Dr. Troy Martin (St. Xavier University, Chicago): "Dating First Peter to a Hairdo: Roman Coiffure and the Embroiding of Hair in 1 Pet 3:3"
The most reliable textual clue for dating First Peter is the unusual expression ἐμπλοκῆς τριχῶν ("embroiding of hairs") in 1 Pet 3:3. This expression is an apt description of the orbis comarum

hairstyle with its braided braids and braids piled upon braids in a large braided bun, and this hairstyle is in vogue during the reigns of the Flavian and Trajanic emperors but unknown during the Julio-Claudian Age. The reference to this hairstyle dates the writing of First Peter sometime in the decade between 79 and 88 CE.

Dr Meaghan McEvoy (MQ): TBA

Dr Louise Pryke (MQ): Bad blood in Byblos

In 1969, Robin Winks noted the similarities between the historian and the detective: "The historian must collect, interpret, and then explain his evidence, by methods which are not greatly different from those techniques employed by the detective, or at least the detective of fiction." Following in the footsteps of Poirot, Columbo, and J.B Fletcher, this lecture examines the evidence for a series of unexplained murders in the ancient city of Byblos. The rulers of the vassal cities of Egypt's Western Asian Empire ruled in a time of great regional upheaval, where disputes over territory and trade could threaten more than a vassal's political survival. With Rib-Addi of Byblos as chief witness, we consider possible motives for the Amarna Letter murders, and what the bloodshed in Byblos can tell us about the political environment of late Bronze Age Canaan.

Dr Karin Sowada (MQ): The Old Kingdom Abroad: Levantine exchange patterns and imported pottery from Giza

The so-called Combed Ware jar is a ceramic hallmark of Levantine commodity exchange during the Early Bronze Age. Significant quantities are known from elite tombs of the Fourth to Sixth Dynasties at different sites in Egypt, with the broadest chronological range of vessels coming from Giza. A large part of this material is now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA). These vessels have been subjected to archaeometric study, revealing origins in the Central Levant for much of the corpus examined. Yet the jars have never been investigated petrographically. This paper presents the results of petrographic analysis on a number of Fourth Dynasty two-handled Combed Ware jars from Giza held in the MFA. The work is being conducted in association with Dr Mary Ownby from the University of Arizona. The results enable a larger assessment of the origin of the vessels, and thus the nature of Levantine exchange patterns during the early Old Kingdom.

Ryan Strickler (PhD candidate, MQ): This Too Shall Pass: Narratives of Deliverance in Seventh-Century Apocalyptic Discourse

For most of the long seventh century, Byzantine subjects found themselves in difficult times. Those on the Eastern *limes* faced peril on the front lines of the Persian, Avar, and later Arab invasions. The century ended with Byzantines of Syria and Palestine under Arab domination. Even Constantinople failed to guarantee safety, narrowly warding off sieges in 626 by the Avars, and by the Arabs in 674-678. Jewish subjects, after being afforded a modicum of autonomy during the Persian occupation of Jerusalem, found themselves persecuted by the Heraclian dynasty. God's favour for the Roman Empire, or his chosen people, the Jews, seemed absent. Nevertheless, hope prevailed. Jewish and Christian authors employed apocalyptic discourse to imagine a future in which God would avenge their plight, deliver his people, and restore their lost paradise. While scholars such as Paul Magdalino, Wolfram Brandes, and Andras Kraft have drawn attention to the eschatological aspects of the major apocalypses composed during this period, less attention has been paid to the more immediate restoration of autonomy imagined by Byzantine authors. This paper examines the narratives of deliverance imagined by Jewish and Christian authors of the seventh century. Here we include the restoration of the Roman Empire, final defeat of the Arabs, and material restoration by the "last King of the Greeks" predicted by pseudo-Methodius, and the messianic Jewish kingdoms predicted by Jewish author of the *Sefer Zerubbabel*.

Prof. Hans Taeuber (University of Vienna): Daily Life in Ancient Ephesos - the Evidence from the Graffiti

There is no better way to get close to people who lived almost two thousand years ago than to read what they scratched into the walls of their living rooms. Out of a momentary emotion, an immediate necessity or just a playful mood they took a sharp instrument and wrote (or drew) whatever was on their mind. In Ephesos, we have the fortuitous situation that a whole insula ("Terrace House 2") was destroyed by an earthquake in 262 AD and never re-used; thus, much of the original decoration, including huge spaces of wall paintings, has been discovered and preserved by the Austrian excavators. The numerous graffiti on these

frescoes allow fascinating insights into the interests and activities of an upper-scale household.

Dr. Yann Tristant (MQ): The Necropolis of Dendara (Upper Egypt): new results of the combined Macquarie University/IFAO expedition

Dendara, capital of the 6th province of Upper Egypt, is one of the most ancient Egyptian community and one of the best-preserved religious complexes in Egypt. For more than a century archaeological work in Dendara focused mainly on the study of the Ptolemaic temple and its monuments without any real consideration of the territory in which the complex was established and developed. The preliminary results of the new archaeological investigation on the necropolis already bring new light to the origins of Dendara at the dawn of the Pharaonic period.

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