

CRITICAL

MARCH—
JUNE 2024

ANTIQUITIES

WORKSHOP

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NETWORK



THE UNIVERSITY OF
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The seminars will be held online on Zoom or in a hybrid format. All are welcome. For more information on the Critical Antiquities Network please email fass.can@sydney.edu.au. To register, please **sign up** for the Critical Antiquities Network mailing list and you will receive CAN announcements and Zoom links.

March
20/21

Philology and Music: Uncomfortable Entanglements

Sean Gurd (University of Texas, Austin)

Wed, March 20 30: 17:30–19:00 (Austin)

Thurs, March 21: 09:30–11:00 (Sydney)

This paper presents an overview of the interactions between the two arts (*technai*) which in the ancient world set themselves the task of disciplining the voice, that is, of taking what Plato called the “infinite” material of vocal expression and imposing limits and form upon it. These arts were music (*technē mousikē*) and philology or grammar (*technē grammatikē*). I argue that our view of music is unavoidably clouded by the fact that so much of the evidence about music comes through us through a grammatical filter, and I attempt to identify some of the ways in which philology’s disciplinary biases and self-defining procedures can be seen to inform, and even warp, written evidence for musical practice. As a case study, I treat the history of the debate over the relationship between the pitch accent and melodic contour, a debate which, I argue, is decisively conditioned not by any musical constraint or rule, but by the internal procedures and ideological consequences of the system of grammatical knowledge, above all as these are reflected in the *technē grammatikē* attributed to Dionysius of Thrace and the commentaries which accrued around it.

April
10/11

“The nomadic alternative”: Classics in motion

Marco Formisano (Ghent University)

Wed, April 10: 19:30–21:00 (New York)

Thurs, April 11: 09:30–11:30 (Sydney)

Note: this event will be in a hybrid format broadcast from the School of Humanities Common Room (Rm 822 Brennan-MacCallum Building, University of Sydney)

Nothing seems to be so alien to scholarly activity than nomadic life, i.e. a non-sedentary existence, in constant motion and with an unstable identity, an identity that is not strictly connected to a specific place. Moreover,

nomadic culture almost sounds like an oxymoron from a certain perspective: culture is always connected with fixed places and their possible transformations through the ages. But what if classicists adopt a nomadic perspective in order to read ancient Greek and Latin texts? Is there a textuality that can be defined as nomadic? Philosopher Rosi Braidotti discussed and identified a “nomadic theory” that resists dominant neo-liberal concepts of culture by emphasizing alterity, post-human otherness and the relevance of the environment. In this talk, bearing the title of a book that British writer Bruce Chatwin wanted to write but was not able to accomplish, I launch the hypothesis of a nomadic approach to ancient texts, with the purpose of offering a new perspective on current debates proliferating around the discipline of Classics, its role in contemporary culture, and its uncertain future.

May
15/16

The *hybris* of the downtrodden: honour and social control in ancient Greek society (and today)

Mirko Canevaro (University of Edinburgh)

Wed, May 15: 19:30–21:00 (New York)

Thurs, May 16: 09:30–11:00 (Sydney)

Note: this event will be in a hybrid format broadcast from the School of Humanities Common Room (Rm 822 Brennan-MacCallum Building, University of Sydney)

The paradigmatic form of *hybris* in the Greek sources (consistently with how the concept is conceptualised in modern psychology and business studies) had to do with the self-assertion of the rich and powerful, which resulted in their disrespecting their subordinates in arrogating to themselves claims to respect they were not entitled to. This paper looks at the flipside of this scenario, because *hybris*, as the arrogating of *timē* to which one has no right, can also proceed in Greek thought in the opposite direction: from the bottom up. The concept of *timē*, that is, can accommodate also instances of individuals of subordinate status overstepping the remit of their position in the social hierarchy and arrogating to themselves prerogatives that are reserved for those higher

up in the social ladder. While denouncing the hybris of the powerful has egalitarian implications – it defends the right to equal respect (or at least to some respect) of those who are disrespected – denouncing the hybris of the downtrodden towards their superiors is a tool for maintaining and reproducing a social hierarchy by grounding it on an allegedly shared (yet heavily asymmetrical) recognition order.

June
12/13

Amongst Wolves: On the Origin of Police

Andrew Poe (Australian Catholic University)

Wed, June 12: 19:30-21:00 (New York)

Thurs, June 13: 09:30–11:00 (Sydney)

Note: this event will be in a hybrid format broadcast from the School of Humanities Common Room (Rm 822 Brennan-MacCallum Building, University of Sydney)

Wolves once triggered a crucial anxiety in early domesticated human life. It is perhaps no surprise that many pre-modern myths problematize wolves as a fundamental danger, both to flocks, and to the human communities that rely on them. As herds of sheep and goats proved crucial resources for meat, milk, cheese, clothing, and tools, shepherding communities sought protection from such an existential threat. Security, it seems, was once synonymous with protection from wolves. This essay maps some of the origins of that desire for security by tracing the beginning of the concept of police. As I hope to show, the “wolf” is such a crucial character in the dialectic origin story of the police because it provides an exterior force to counteract and develop against. Ancient iterations of police – always included in the security forces of the state – had the maintenance of the boundary of the state as a crucial function. This boundary was both the perimeter of the civil order, and the perimeter of the human world (the human world safe from wolves). I argue that, as police power transforms, so too does the problem of the wolf. From religious figurations of the wolf as evil to bourgeois lessons in moral psychology and the growth of civil administration, the figure of the wolf continues to occupy a significant place in the psychic space of civil society. And, as police develop from a segment of security forces to civil administration and then an independent political institution, the contrast to wolves remains constant. I offer a portrait of a world before police, and the ways that “before” has found itself continuing in justifications of both the constitution of the police as a security force, as well as the continuation and expansion of the powers of that force. Read this way, fear of specific manifestations of disorder (“wolves”) can help explain the beginning of a developmental logic of policing.